

REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

**Address by HE Pierre NKURUNZIZA, President of the
Republic of Burundi and the Chairperson of the EAC at
the 9th Extraordinary Summit of EAC Heads of State**

Dar Es Salaam, 19 April 2011

Your Excellency the President of the United Republic of Tanzania;

Your Excellency the President of the Republic of Kenya;

Your Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda;

Excellency Ali Mohamed Shein, President of Zanzibar;

The Right Honourable Bernard Makuza, Prime Minister of the Republic of Rwanda;

Honourable Ministers;

Honourable In-coming Secretary General of the East African Community;

Honourable Outgoing Secretary General of the East African Community;

Honourable Ambassadors and High Commissioners;

Distinguished Delegates;

Honourable Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

1. It is my great honour and pleasure to address this important gathering, at the solemn opening of the 9th extraordinary Summit of Heads of State of the East African Community.
2. Before I go any further, I would like to praise the Lord for blessing everybody's trip to Dar es Salaam! And for blessing our deliberations!

3. Allow me first and foremost to take this opportunity, to most sincerely thank the Tanzanian people and Government, particularly His Excellency Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, for a very warm welcome extended to us in this East African Land of Tanzania.

4. Your Excellency the President and Very Dear Brother, I cannot say it enough, but let me stress that the Cities of Dar es Salaam, Arusha and Mwanza, are and will remain for Burundi and its people, a living symbol of our recent history. I am grateful, and sincerely thankful for the Regional Initiative for Peace in Burundi. Your valuable contribution led our country to regain peace and stability, bringing us close to you, to write glorious pages of our beloved East African Community.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

5. During our last Summit in December 2010, we were congratulated for the successful holding of general elections in Burundi, the Constitutional Referendum in Kenya, the presidential elections in Rwanda, and the general elections in the United Republic of Tanzania. We also wished the same success to our brothers and sisters of the Republic of Uganda, who were preparing to do the same great patriotic duty in February this year.

6. Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda, on behalf of other East African Community Heads of State here present, our respective Governments and Peoples, I thank God the Almighty who answered our prayers for successful elections in your country; and I sincerely congratulate you, and through you, the people of Uganda, for renewing their confidence to your Excellency, in order to continue the development work that you are doing so well since you preside over the destiny of Uganda.

7. The same wishes for success go to the Kenyan people and government, during this period of the implementation of the New Constitution, and the preparations for General Elections, due in 2012. Similarly, we stand with our brothers and sisters of the Republic of Kenya, in these moments they are working for an acceptable outcome of the cases pending before the International Criminal Court.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

8. The successful elections in our respective countries, were a clear and eloquent sign sent to the world and our partners, that our community has reached a political maturity and stability, that meet the necessary preconditions for its development, and which reassure our partners for development, both public and private.

9. The East African Community congratulates the Southern Sudan people, for expressing themselves by referendum for an independent and sovereign State. The Southern Sudan has historical relations with our region, as well as growing relations of trade and investment, which make her a natural **ally** of the East African Community.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

10. The 9th Summit of the Heads of state of the East African Community is therefore of a particular importance, as it **coincides** with the end of the mandate of the Secretary General, and the arrival of a new one.

11. Allow me, on the behalf of my colleagues, to solemnly thank Ambassador Juma Volter Mwapachu, the outgoing Secretary General, for the work done as the head of the Secretariat General of the East African Community.

12. I recognize him as a **worthy** son of East Africa who, during the five years of his term in office, has been devoted to the Community, producing the results that we have today.

13. Ambassador, the East African Community highly appreciates your contribution in building the East African Community, and we can say it without hesitating that you are leaving with your mission accomplished!

14. As a matter of fact, you have set the Community's bar high, and your successor's mission is to keep it up, and even bring the performance to greater heights, as the East African Community has engaged its gear for the second decade of integration.

15. I am taking this opportunity to warmly congratulate the Incoming Secretary General of the community. Honourable the Secretary General, We assure you before this majestic assembly, that you have our full support in **executing** your new and exciting mission. May God bless you and guide you in your new **endeavors**.

16. This Mission is to lead our community in its second decade of integration, with a calendar of great commitments. Day by day, the Peoples of the community become very demanding, and require concrete results of the integration.

17. The requirement of results means there will be lots of challenges in your way. We share the same conviction; but as the saying goes, **“where there is a will, there is a way”**. Our sisters and brothers in Tanzania also have a saying **engraved** in golden letters which goes like: **“Palipo Nia pana Njia”**, meaning the same; and again to say **“Umoja ni Nguvu”** or **“Unity is Strength”**. United with your collaborators, and in harmony with the East African Community partner States, I assure you that obstacles shall be overcome.

18. Let me also welcome the new Deputy Secretary General, and the new Judge of the Court of Justice of the East African Community, who are also bringing in new blood and new energy, to serve the people of the East African Community.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

19. This Summit will allow us to examine deeply the proposal of establishing a single customs territory, which in my view, will positively improve the collection of customs revenue in our Community. A decision to this effect will greatly reduce tax evasion. We should know that a successful implementation of this option, requires the setting up of an East African Community Customs Management.

20. With a fully operational Customs Union, and a Common Market in progress, we are going to set up a solid foundation for achieving deeper integration, able to sustain our economies and to improve investment.

21. The launch of the Common Market is, for our Community, a great achievement that requires the setting up of legal and regulatory instruments, to implement the various provisions contained in the Protocol annexes on the Four Liberties and other rights.

22. The launch of the Common Market has almost **coincided** with the launch of negotiations of the Protocol establishing the Monetary Union of the East African Community, which is a complex process in the opinion of our experts. Its implementation will require much commitment from Member States, and strong support from Friends of our Community.

**Excellencies,
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Ladies and Gentlemen,**

23. In December last year, the Commission on the Lake Victoria Basin successfully organized the first Conference on Investment in Mwanza. The Conference attracted a lot of potential investors in the Region. The Conference was also an opportunity to see many expressions of interest for investment in the whole East African region.

24. At the same time, we need to respond and make the East African Community a destination Zone for Investors. As East Africans, we believe that a similar conference should be planned and organized for the Basin of Lake Tanganyika. I indeed believe that the development of Lake Tanganyika Basin could be another East African pole of development with great potential, that could have a positive impact on member States of the **Tripartite** EAC-SADC-COMESA.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

25. The Benefits of integration within our East African Community, will lie especially on a strong food security for our people and for our neighbors, who could benefit from **surplus** production from our region. Of course it would be difficult to achieve food security, without a good policy on Climate Change.

26. You will therefore understand the importance of, and the interest for the Implementation of the Action Plan on Food Security of the East African Community (2010-2015), and the Community Policy on Climate Change.

27. We have to increase the agricultural production through technological innovations, and the intensive irrigation schemes at the same time, as we add value to our agricultural products. This will contribute to the increase of intra-regional and regional trade. Our Community, with a little more effort, could be the breadbasket of the region, and why not for the whole Africa.

28. Reaching this important goal requires also mobilizing funds to invest in Agriculture and derivative sectors, because it will gradually leave hand-to-mouth agriculture, to develop a vibrant and modern agricultural industry. Hence, the urgent need to finalize the ongoing work on the establishment of Development Fund of the East African Community, and the **redefinition** of the Mission of the East African Development Bank. It should devote its work to Community Development, with particular emphasis on agricultural development.

29. The report of the Council of Ministers on the East African Development Bank has been analyzed with this understanding, to make it a real tool for Development.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

30. The East African Community is becoming a daily reality experienced by many people. It is important to work very hard to make it a daily reality for all the East African people, through the progress achieved.

31. The many actions undertaken at different levels and at specific stages, in the living history of our community, are eloquent testimony that the East African Community is heading towards the right direction. All Partner States, each within its competence, must appreciate the progress made individually and collectively. We are a good community, and our countries are making remarkable progress. We have a mission to **publicize** our resource potential with pride!

32. Allow me to finally conclude these remarks by strongly wishing this Summit every success, which will allow us to move forward and achieve more positive results, for the benefit of our countries and peoples.

Long Live our East African Community

Long live International Cooperation

May God bless you

Thank you.