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PRESIDENT JAKAYA KIKWETE DELIVERS STATE OF EAC ADDRESS



The President of the United Republic of Tanzania, H.E. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete on 19 March 2015, delivered the State of EAC Address in Bujumbura, Burundi.

President Kikwete who is the Chair of the Summit of EAC Heads of State urged Partner States to spare no efforts in ridding Non-Tariff Barriers in the region to spur the integration process. He re-affirmed his commitment during his term as Chairperson of the Summit to ensuring total removal of all barriers to trade.

"The progress made so far, at the ports of Mombasa and Dar es Salaam and, on the Northern Corridor with regard to road blocks shows that it is possible to eliminate these non-tariff barriers. Measures are being taken in earnest to reduce road blocks on the Tanzania side of the Central Corridor. I am sure in the next few months we will notice a huge improvement", President Kikwete said.

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...Tells region to rid itself of NTBs and “nationalistic tendencies” in approach to integration

(Continued from page 1)

The President remarked that roadblocks along the central corridor within the hinterland of the United Republic of Tanzania were on the verge of been removed.

“Police check points have been reduced from 15 points to 6. Our aim to reduce them to none except when need arises” the Head of State maintained.

He stated that the Tanzania Revenue Authority had also reduced the checks from 3 to zero along the central corridor. He noted that the revenue authority would further reduce the weighbridges from eight to three and to introduce weigh in motion technology.

The President informed the House that one such weighbridge was already installed in Vigwaza with another two on the way to Manyoni and Nyakahura on the central corridor.

“I am told with the current improvements alone, for a container to move from the port of Dar es Salaam to Kigali takes 3 days from the previous 8 days. It takes three and a half days to Bujumbura from the previous 8 days”, the President reiterated.

The President noted that improved infrastructure would bring down the costs of doing business. He said poor infrastructure had resulted in the upward and spiral effect of transportation costs resulting in skyrocketing of between 30-40% of the price of goods especially in the landlocked countries.

He thus urged the region to invest better on efficient ports, railways, roads, aviation services, energy and telecommunication.

In attendance were high ranking government officials led by the 2nd Vice president of the republic of Burundi, H.E. Gervais Rufyikiri, legislators, diplomatic corps and various stakeholders.

President Kikwete was emphatic that the incremental approach of the integration process had been a great success. He said under the Customs Union, the region benefited from enhanced trade through the Common External Tariffs.

“Indeed, goods which meet the criteria of rule of origin have been moving across borders without paying taxes however non tariffs barriers remain a challenge. Progress has been made but the matter has not been resolved fully yet”, he added.

“Trade is now at 23 % over and above intra African trade figure of 12 %. There has been a 300% increase in the value of trade from, 2 billion US Dollars in 2005 to 6 billion US Dollars in 2014, he said.

These numbers, coupled with the combined EAC GDP of 110.3 billion US Dollars with an average annual rate growth, of 2.6 percent makes our region a formidable trade and economic bloc in Africa according to President Kikwete.

The Head of State remarked that contrary to initial fears within the Partner States, an increase in government revenue had been recorded as a result of the Customs Union.

On the Common Market pillar, the Head of State lamented over its slow progress which he said was discouraging to the EAC citizens. He noted that the Common Market scorecard 2014 presented at the last EAC Summit in Nairobi shows more good be done.

He cited the example with regard to the free Movements of Services, where 63 measures out of 500 key sectoral laws and regulations of Partner States were identified to be inconsistent with the Common Market Protocol. 73 % of these are exclusively related to professional services.

The President challenged the Partner States to embrace the wider picture of regional integration in their approach.

In this regard, the Head of State lauded EALA for the introduction of the Community Cross Border Legal Practice Bill (2014); the East African Community Electronic Transactions Bill 2014; and the East African Community Competition (Amendment) Bill (2015) and urged EALA to treat the Bills with the urgency deserved.

On peace and security, President Kikwete termed subscription to the ideals of the democracy, good governance, human rights and rule of law as critical tenets of the economic bloc. He said the application of the Republics of Somalia and South Sudan into the EAC would undergo scrutiny on this criteria among others.

On the forthcoming elections in Burundi, the Head of State was categorical that the country should hold peaceful, free and fair elections. He remarked that any attempts to derail the electioneering in the country would be inappropriate.

“I appeal to the citizens of the country to adhere to the constitution of Burundi, the electoral laws and the Arusha Accord”, President Kikwete remarked.

He said that Tanzania would also vote at the plebiscite for the new constitution in April before the general elections in October.



The State of EAC Address is delivered annually to the EALA by the Chairperson of the EAC Heads of State.

President Nkurunziza Graces EALA Plenary



Burundi's Head of State, H.E. Pierre Nkurunziza on 17 March 2015, opened the 5th Meeting of the 3rd Session of the 3rd East African Legislative Assembly in Bujumbura, Burundi.

The President remarked that EALA had played a key role in bringing together the citizens of the region and hailed the Assembly for adhering to the principle of rotation in its meetings.

"We are all aware that EALA plays a key role in bringing the people of East Africa on board of the integration process, through the public hearings on Bills and the Nanyuki series that are conducted throughout the Region. It is crystal clear that the achievements by the EALA in this area would not have been possible without its Members' outstanding leadership", President Nkurunziza said.

The President further called on the Partner States to speedily implement the decisions of the Community. "Another top priority is the speedy implementation of decisions at the EAC Partner States' level and the implementation of the Protocols and commitments agreed upon by Partner States, if the benefits of regional integration were to be achieved", President Nkurunziza said.

"It is imperative, therefore, that the EALA and the Council of Ministers collaborate more on mechanisms to initiate laws to enforce the rapid implementation of the Single Customs Territory

and the Common Market Protocol so that East African citizens can reap benefits accruing from them" the President added.

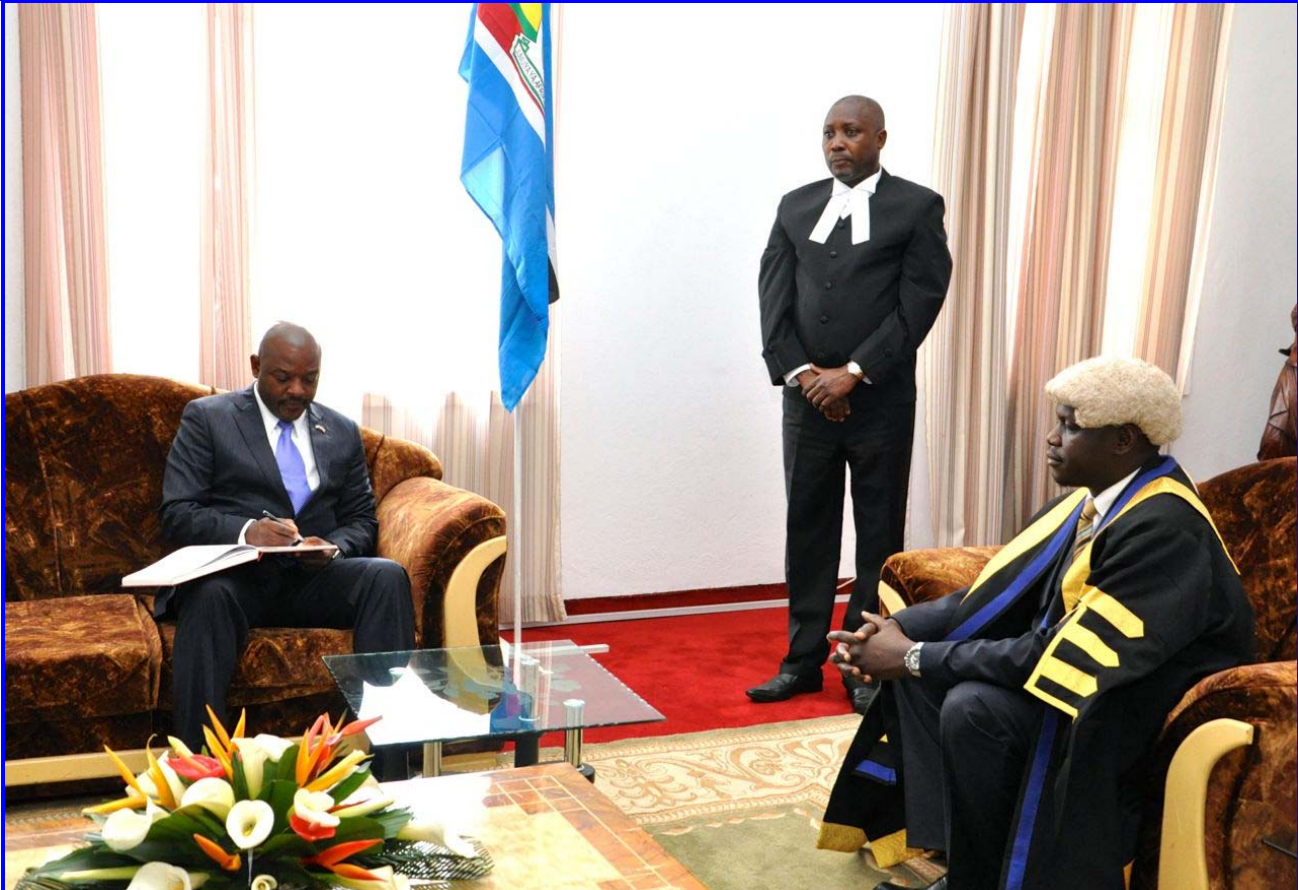
On the forthcoming elections in Burundi, the Head of State was categorical that the country would hold peaceful, free and fair elections. He thanked the EAC for its contribution towards ensuring the polls are done in a peaceful manner.

"In this perspective, I wish to commend the joint initiative of the East African Community (EAC) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) aimed at supporting the consolidation of Democracy, Reconciliation and Tolerance among Burundians and Political Actors, in view to achieving transparent and credible 2015 Elections", he said.

In this regard, President Nkurunziza termed the launch of the Round Tables Programme on elections in Burundi on 15th January 2015 as fundamental. He said the occasion presented Burundians and eminent persons of the region with an opportunity to tackle issues related to elections and electoral processes in view to consolidating regional stability through peaceful elections in Burundi.

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...Tells EALA to strengthen oversight role and promises credible elections in Burundi



(Continued from page 3)

The President announced that parliamentary elections would be held on 26th May 2015, and Presidential elections exactly a month later.

The Head of State further urged the Assembly to take collaboration with the National Assemblies to a higher notch. "I have also been informed of progress made in the area of co-operation between the East African Legislative Assembly and National Parliaments of East African Community Partner States.

I am of the strong view that such co-operation will continue to make it easy for the East African Community to work together and in doing so, be able to achieve integrated and harmonious development", President Nkurunziza said.

He thus urged EALA to reinforce its oversight mandate so as to ensure the citizens of the region genuinely enjoy the fruits of integration and in so doing, contribute to the eradication of poverty and illiteracy in the region.


In his welcome remarks, the Speaker of the EALA, Rt. Hon Daniel F. Kidega noted that the Assembly's meeting was taking

place at an irreversible time in the regional integration process.

He said EALA would strengthen its quest to enhance legislative, oversight and representative function with all due diligence.

The Speaker remarked that sensitization was key and cited the need to reach out to all stakeholders. He said the Assembly was gearing to meet with the youth populace, whom he termed, critical in strengthening the integration process.

Rt Hon Kidega lauded President Nkurunziza for leading the country to progressive development. He said the landmark achievements had been realized since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The Speaker wished the Republic of Burundi well in the forthcoming elections and urged the country to adhere to the principles of democratization and constitutionalism.

He mentioned that EALA would send a strong team as part of the EAC's Elections Observer Mission when the country goes to the polls in May and June this year. 

Kigali Hosts 7th East African Petroleum Conference & Exhibition 2015 (EAPCE'15)



The Prime Minister of the Republic of Rwanda, Rt. Hon. Anastase Murekezi on 4 March 2015, officiated the 7th East African Petroleum Conference and Exhibition (EAPCE'15) that took place 4 to 6 March 2015 at the Kigali Serena Hotel in Rwanda.

Addressing the over 500 delegates attending the Conference, Rt. Hon. Prime Minister said the Community was committed to the provision of sufficient, reliable and affordable electricity to the citizenry and that the Partner States were in the process of linking each other with high voltage transmission lines and developing the necessary framework for power exchange and trade amongst themselves.

The Rt. Hon. Prime Minister disclosed that last year alone, the region commissioned over five hundred megawatts of new generation capacity and noted that by 2018, the EAC is projected to have installed capacity growth from the current 4,000 megawatts to more than 12,000 megawatts.

"I therefore invite the Private Sector, Development Partners and all stakeholders in the energy and gas sectors to partner with EAC Governments in these efforts" affirmed the Rwandan official and assured the international oil companies and related service companies attending the Conference of the region's commitment to support the oil and gas exploration, development, as well as production.

Speaking on behalf of the Chairperson of the EAC Council of Ministers Dr. Harrison Mwakyembe, the Deputy Minister of East African Cooperation of the United Republic of Tanzania, Hon. Dr. Abdullah Saadalla noted that the confirmation of commercial petroleum reserves of approximately 6.5 billion barrels in Uganda, an estimated over 600 million barrels in Kenya, and approximately 53 trillion cubic feet (TCF) of gas in Tanzania, together with discoveries in Mozambique indeed confirm that the East African region is emerging as a new and exciting frontier for oil and gas exploration and investment.

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Partner States developing necessary framework for power exchange and trade amongst themselves



(Continued from page 5)

He reiterated that the EAC Council of Ministers recognizes the role played by sector in the region's growth and development, and that the EAC Treaty not only underscores the need for Partner States to cooperate in joint exploration and development of energy resources found within the Community but also promote sustainable utilization of natural resources and encourage regional energy sufficiency within the sector.

Rwanda's Minister of Natural Resources, Hon. Dr. Vincent Biruta noted that the Conference provides an opportunity to show case to the world the petroleum potential of the Region through sharing information on the status of hydrocarbon activities in the region.

On his part, the Secretary General of the East African Community, Amb. Dr. Richard Sezibera noted that the theme of the Conference *Proven Destination for Investment in Petroleum Resources for Regional Energy Sufficiency and Lasting Socio-Economic Development* was geared towards attracting capital investment required to explore and develop petroleum resources of the Partner States in a sustainable manner.

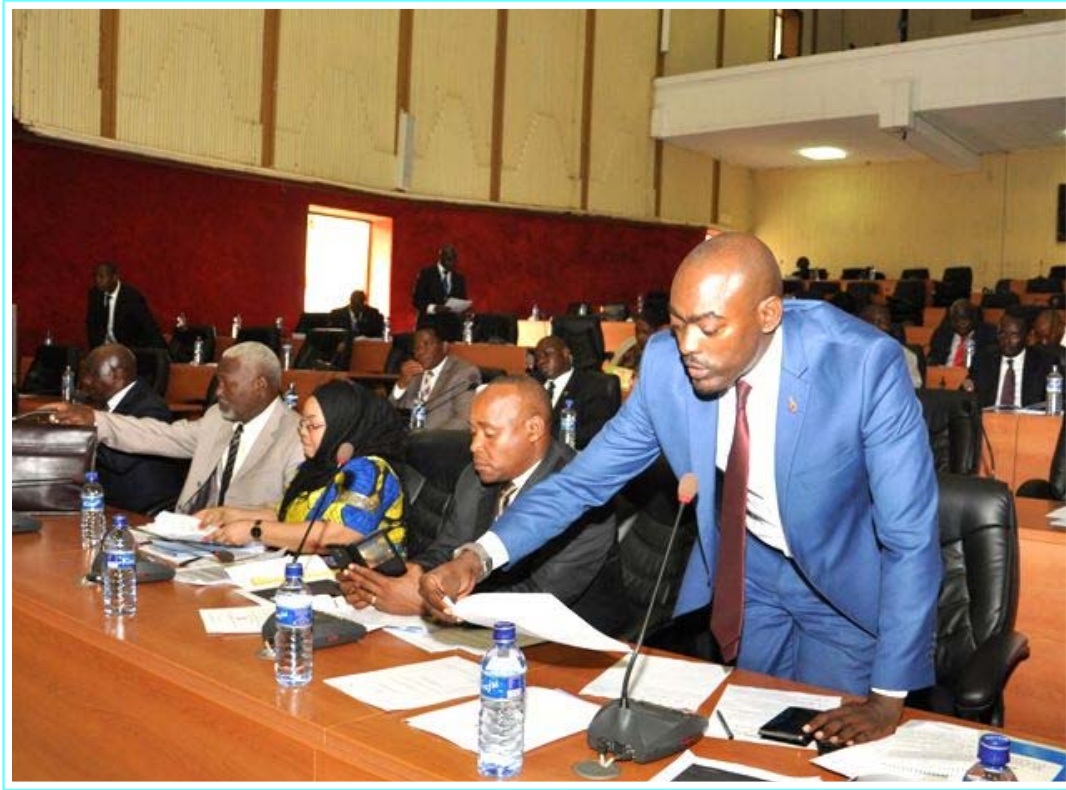
Amb Sezibera disclosed that a number of investors had billed East Africa as the world's most promising frontier for oil and gas exploitation for the past 10 years and there is good reason for their optimism. He said that 2.3bn barrels of recoverable oil had been discovered in Uganda and Kenya and more than 50 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in Tanzania, and that there were exciting signs of oil and gas in Burundi and Rwanda.

The annual East African Petroleum Conferences have provided increasing awareness of the potential for petroleum development in the region and other important developments in the petroleum sector including technological advancements in exploration, development and production.

The 7th East African Petroleum Conference and Exhibition (EAPCE) 2015 brought together participants from international oil companies, oil industry service companies, government institutions, academic institutions, international geoscientific journals, non-oil and gas institutions as well as the media.



Assembly Enacts EAC Customs Management Bill, 2015



The East African legislative Assembly on 26 March 2015, enacted the East African Community Customs (Amendment) Bill, 2015 in a move to ensure the smooth operationalization of the Single Customs Territory (SCT) and boost trade in the region.

The Bill was introduced by the Council of Ministers in January 2015 at the sitting of EALA in Arusha.

The object of the Bill is to amend the East African Customs Management Act, 2004 to facilitate the discharge of the functions of the Directorate of Customs and Trade as provided for in the Act and to facilitate smooth implementation of the Act, particularly on the procedures that facilitate the implementation of the EAC Single Customs Territory.

The passage of the Bill was preceded by adoption of a report of the Committee on Communication, Trade and Investment. The report was presented by the Chairperson of the Committee, Hon Mukasa Mbidde.

In his remarks, the Chair noted that the Committee had discussed the provisions of the Bill with experts and the council of Ministers and introduced a number of amendments to the Bill.

He lauded the Council for the initiative to facilitate smooth implementation of trade noting that it would anchor the Single Customs Territory.

The Committee proposes changes to 5 clauses across the EAC Customs Management Act, 2004.

A new section (248A) is introduced providing for persons intending to import goods to make a written application to the Commissioner for advance rulings on either tariff classification, rules of origin or customs valuation.

The Bill was scrutinized on clause by clause mode at the Committee stage during the second reading before it sailed through the third reading. ●

Judges of the National Courts & Civil Society attend Workshop of the role of EACJ



A workshop for Judges of the National Courts and Civil Society Organizations on the role of the East African Court of Justice in the East African Community integration convened by the EACJ opened on 25 March 2015, at the Dar es Salaam Serena Hotel.

Officiating the meeting, Hon. Dr. Harrison Mwekyembe, Minister for East African Community Cooperation - Tanzania commended the work of the Court and the leadership of the President of the Court and the Registrar for organizing workshop that was significant in educating users of the regional Court on how to access it.

The Minister noted that the Court's early cases speak for themselves on the Court's serious quest from the outset for highest standards of independence and integrity. He added that as a result, there is growing public trust and confidence in the region in this supranational institution as evidenced by a growing number of cases before it and on a range of issues.

Hon. Dr. Mwekyembe informed the meeting that, the work load by the Court (EACJ) is bound to grow by leaps and bounds in the months ahead with growing public awareness in the region not only of the role and integrity of the Court but also of the right by individuals and legal persons to access the Court as per Article 30 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community and repeated pronouncements by the Court.

East African Community Heads of State at their 16th Ordinary Summit held in Nairobi in February 2015 approved and signed a Protocol to operationalise the extended jurisdiction of the East African Court of Justice to cover matters of trade and investment, as well as matters associated with the implementation of the Protocol of the Establishment of the East African Monetary Union.

The Protocol extending the Court's jurisdiction has been ratified by all the five Partner States. The Hon. Minister reiterated the Summit's commitment to the Court by setting a definitive time line for Partner States to ratify the Protocol on the extended jurisdiction of the EACJ and deposit all the instruments of ratification with the Secretary General by 30th November 2015.

Hon. Dr. Mwekyembe commended the Court on the establishment of Sub-registries in the Partner States which has brought justice closer to the people and has enabled litigants to save on the costs, improved visibility of the Court and hopes the National Courts will be encouraged to refer to the Court questions requiring preliminary rulings in accordance with Article 34 of the Treaty. It is anticipated that this will accelerate the process of harmonization of the laws of the Partner States and avoid duplicity in the interpretation and application of the Treaty provisions.

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... future and effectiveness of EACJ depends on relationship with National Courts

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The Sub-registries are also expected to serve as focal points of the Court within Partner States, thus addressing the current challenges encountered by the Court's Registry in serving various court processes to the Partner States' Attorneys' General and other parties to the suits.

"The Ministry of EAC Cooperation Tanzania is willing to support the Sub-registry in Tanzania in any way possible as part of their direct contribution to the realization of the EAC Region integration agenda", the Minister stated.


His Lordship, Justice Dr. Emmanuel Ugirashebuja, President of the East African Court of Justice commended the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania and the Judiciary of Tanzania for being reliable partners in organizing the workshop. The President acknowledged Raoul Wallenberg Institute for supporting the Court to make the workshop a success and for making it happen in the 3 East African Partner States so far (Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania).

This being the 3rd workshop of this kind after conduction similar workshops in the Republics of Uganda and Rwanda in 2014, Justice Ugirashebuja is convinced that the future and effectiveness of the Court will largely depend on its relationship with National Courts and the role of the national courts is very crucial in the development of the EAC Laws, jurisprudence and uniform interpretation and application of the EAC Laws through the channel of preliminary references.

Representing the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights, Mr. Josh Ousted expressed gratitude to the EACJ for the good cooperation and partnership, pledging continuous support to the Court in increasing visibility of the Court.

The workshop was attended by the Judges of the Tanzania Judiciary, Members of Civil Society Organizations, Bar Association and other legal institutions, Private Sector, Academia, and Media.

In attendance were the EACJ Principal Judge Hon. Justice Jean Bosco Butasi, Hon. Justice Fakihi Jundu EACJ Judge of the First Instance Division, former Judge President of the Court Hon. Justice Harold Nsekela, former EACJ Registrar Prof. John Eudes Ruhangisa/ currently Judge of the High Court Tanzania among others.

The EACJ shall conduct similar workshop in the Republics of Kenya and Burundi in the course of the year. 

Judges and Magistrates Vetting Board pays visit to EACJ

The Judges and Magistrates Vetting Board composed of members from Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania on 12 March 2015, visited the Court to see and understand its operations. The team led by Roseline Odode the Vice Chairperson of the Board paid courtesy call to the Judge President Hon. Justice Dr. Emmanuel Ugirashebuja to familiarize themselves with the Court.

The Judge President welcomed the team and thanked them for considering the Court in their programs. He also informed them that the Judge President and the Principal Judge are currently the only resident Judges at the Court the rest of the Judges are still serving on ad-hoc basis at the same time some serving in their respective National Courts and they come to Arusha only when there is business.

Justice Ugirashebuja also informed the team that the Court has the jurisdiction to interpret and apply the Treaty for the establishment of the East African Community. He added that a number of cases filed to EACJ are disputes on violation of principles of the Community under Article 6 of the Treaty on good governance, including adherence on principles of democracy, rule of law, democracy, accountability, transparency among others.


His Lordship disclosed to Judges and Magistrates Vetting Board that the Summit in February extended the jurisdiction of the Court to cover matters on trade and investment; he however stressed the challenge of limited jurisdiction to handle matters of human rights issues.

He noted that the Court cannot purely handle Human rights disputes until the Courts jurisdiction on human rights is extended. The President of the Court informed his visitors that the Court has jurisdiction to entertain arbitration disputes and so far received one matter.

His Lordship expressed the challenge of delay in determining the cases pending before the Court due to ad-hoc nature of work of the Judges especially in the First Instance Division. He noted that it would reduce on the back log of the Court if the Judges of the First would be permanent residents at the location of the Court.

Finally the EACJ Judge President disclosed to the group that the Court established Court Sub-registries in the Partner States in order to bring justice closer to the people of East Africa. That the Court has also introduced the online Case Management System which will support the Court to run the process of filing cases so fast as well as litigants after the EACJ Rules of procedure have been adopted.

The Vice President of the Judges and Magistrates Vetting Board Ms. Roseline Odode thanked the Judge President and commended the Court for the good work especially in information storage and digitization which was the main purpose of their visit and recommended the Court to ensure it starts the operation of the System.

The Board members currently include members from the three Partner States Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania and planning to include Rwanda and Burundi on Board. 

End of the Road for Non-Tariff Barriers as EALA Enacts Key Legislation

It is now official.... Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) shall soon be a thing of the past following the enactment of the **EAC Elimination of Non-Tariff Barriers Bill, 2015** by EALA. The Bill sailed through the third reading after intense debate by legislators on 24 March 2015.

Debate on the Bill commenced 23 March 2015 but was adjourned following a motion introduced in the House by the Chair of the Council of Ministers, Hon Dr Abdullah Saadalla Abdullah to allow for further consultations. Prior to that, several Members had risen and made pertinent submissions in support of the Bill.

Hon Peter Mathuki called for an end to the encumbrances saying NTBs were responsible for slowing progress of integration.

In his maiden speech shortly after swearing in, Hon Martin Ngoga said it was necessary for safeguards to be inculcated in the bill. He cited the clause (clause 14) on exchange of information related to NTBs by the national focal points as one that needs regulation in terms of specific reporting timeframe.

Hon Abdullah Mwinyi said it was time to institute effective sanctions for non-performance to stem out NTBs, which he stated often recurred.

Other Members who rose in support of the Bill were Hon Chris Opoka, Hon Valerie Nyirahabineza, Hon Straton Ndikuryayo, Hon AbuBakr Ogle and Hon Leonce Ndarubagiye. When the House resumed, the Bill sailed through the second reading prompting the House to reconstitute itself into the Bill Committee Stage to scrutinize it on a clause by clause mode. At this stage, various amendments to the Bill were introduced by Members.

The object of the Bill, which is moved by the Council of Ministers, is to provide a legal mechanism for the elimination of identified non-Tariff barriers in Partner States.

The Bill according to the Council seeks to give effect to Article 13 of the Protocol on the Establishment of the EAC Customs Union in which Partner States agreed to remove with immediate



effect, all existing NTBs to the importation into their respective territories of goods originating in the Partner States. At the same time, this would have the effect of not imposing any new NTBs. The Council Bill also sought to establish a mechanism for identifying and monitoring the removal of NTBs within the Partner States.

The debate was preceded by adoption of the report of the Committee on Communication, Trade and Investment which considered the Bill earlier in March. The Committee led by Hon Mukasa Mbidde met with the Council of Ministers and experts from the Customs and Trade Directorate at the EAC Secretariat and proposed amendments to the effect that respective Ministries of the EAC in each Partner State be mandated to be national focal points for matters related to NTBs.

The Committee further proposed an amendment to clause 12 (on failures of removal of NTBs) to provide for reference at the East African Court of Justice by any person aggrieved by a directive, decision or recommendation of the EAC Council of Ministers or the EAC Committee on Trade remedies.

EAC prepares a quarterly report on the status of the elimination of NTBs. This boosts on-going efforts by the National Monitoring Committees and the EAC Regional Forum on NTBs to redress NTBs affecting intra-EAC Trade. 

South Sudan High-Level Delegation Meets EAC Team to prepare for Accession Negotiations



A High Level Mission from the Republic of South Sudan with their counterpart EAC Partner States' Team converged in Arusha on 24 March 2015, to discuss, among others, the roadmap for technical negotiations process for the accession of the Republic of South Sudan to the EAC Treaty.

This meeting followed the adoption of the Negotiations Roadmap by the EAC Council of Ministers in November 2014, based on which the negotiations would end by August 2015.


The Republic of South Sudan High Level Mission, comprises of Hon. Aggrey Tisa Sabuni, Presidential Advisor for Economic Affairs, and Hon. Mou Mou Athian Koul, Secretary General of the South Sudan EAC Accession Negotiation Secretariat, Executive Secretaries, Directors General and representatives from the Academia among others.

The visiting delegation spent two days with the EAC Partner States' team to discuss and have a common understanding on the negotiations processes as well as other matters critical to the success of the negotiations.

The meeting aimed at enabling the High Level Mission from Republic of South Sudan gain a better understanding of the task at hand as well as provide them with valuable guidance on the way forward with regards to the negotiations.

According to the negotiations road map the technical negotiations are divided into four thematic clusters. These are: Trade, Economics and Finance Matters; Infrastructure and Services; Legal, Security, Political and Defence matters; and Cross cutting issues covering Agriculture, Food Security, Natural Resources Management, Energy and Human Resource Development

Welcoming the High Level Mission from Republic of South Sudan was the EAC Deputy Secretary General in charge of Political Federation Mr. Charles Njoroge, reassured the High Level Mission from Republic of South Sudan that the EAC team was committed to work closely with the Government of South Sudan to ensure a smooth negotiation process.

In his part Hon. Aggrey Tisa Sabuni, stressed the expectation that the Republic of South Sudan expected to learn more about the negotiations undertaken by the EAC in the past and inform better preparations for the negotiations process ahead. 

EAC Parliament to Start Forum on Climate Change

The East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) has agreed to form a regional Parliamentary Forum on Climate Change.

The proposal was made during a policy dialogue on Climate Change and Gender for members of EALA to identify the role of parliamentarians in implementation of gender sensitive climate change policies.

The dialogue held on 27 and 28 March, 2015 in Bujumbura, Burundi, was organized by the EAC Secretariat in partnership with the EALA Women Forum. It was also attended by the EALA Committee on Agriculture, Tourism and Natural Resources and the General Purpose Committee.

"We need to establish a parliamentary forum on Climate Change for EALA so that it can feed into the global parliamentary forum and also provide leadership in the regional framework on climate change," said Hon. Abubakar Zein. The resolution on this proposal will be passed during the next EALA sitting in May.

The impact of Climate Change is most severe for the world's poor and marginalized communities who often live in stressed environments and have fewer means for coping. Women are especially vulnerable because of their limited access, control and ownership over resources, unequal participation in decision and policy-making, lower incomes and levels of formal education and high workloads.

As such climate change impacts men and women in different ways and interventions aimed at addressing climate change impacts must include a gender perspective.

Hon. Valerie Nyirahabineza, the leader, EALA Women Forum, stressed that Africa is most vulnerable to climate change and noted that the region's communities and governments are sometimes constrained to handle challenges of climate change. "Women play a critical role in food and nutrition security and are also responsible for growing, buying, selling, and cooking the food.

Majority of food produced in developing countries is by women, yet only 2% of land is owned by women," she said. She added that there was need for the legislators to address the underlying causes of gender inequality such as unequal land rights and land tenure through legislative reforms.

Hon. Dora Byamukama noted, "Unless women feel secure as users and owners of land, there will always be a problem of climate change."

Hon. Kessy Nderakindo said that many people are acquiring things that they don't need. "Human beings are not respecting the earth and we need to ask, what are the little things we can do to stop climate change?" Hon. Zein also said that the EAC Climate Change Fund be capitalized.

"It is not acceptable to have an EAC Climate Change Fund that we have not put money into, we are only depending on devel-

opment partners to do something." He added that it is critical to have seed money from Partner States to support climate change related concerns.

The parliamentarians agreed that climate change be considered in the EAC Partner States budgeting process, and pledged to make individual contributions to the Fund. The Climate Change Fund was established in 2011.

Hon. Leonce Ndarubagiye decried the overdependence on Development Partners and called for home grown solutions to climate change. The EAC Secretariat, in partnership with the East African Development Bank, is in the process of applying to be a Regional Implementing Entity to the Climate Change Adaptation Fund and Green Climate Fund.

The Members agreed to revive their pledge where each EALA Chapter is to plant 50,000 trees in their Partner States by 2017. The MPs also observed that East Africans need to revive their traditional knowledge that was sensitive to nature. "We need to look into traditional knowledge and revive what worked before that has been abandoned," said Hon. Mike Sebalu.

They called on Partner States to promote environmental friendly practices such as the use of renewable energy like biogas and solar power, water harvesting, and irrigation. Hon. Mumbi Ng'aru urged national governments to reduce the cost of materials used in the construction of biogas units.

The Members urged for the finalization of the draft EAC Disaster Risk Reduction Bill noting its urgency and the need for administrative and coordination structures for timely response to climate change induced disasters in the region that are increasing in intensity and frequency.

The EALA members conveyed their sympathies to the government and the people of the United Republic of Tanzania for the climate related hailstorm in Kahama and flooding in Dar es Salaam in March which claimed lives and left many people displaced.



EAC Develops a Chemical Emergency Response and Management Framework



The EAC Secretariat in collaboration with the Organization for Prevention of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) held a three-day 'Chemical Emergency Response and Management Framework' meeting from 23 to 25 March 2015 at the EAC Headquarters.

The purpose of the meeting was to assess the capacity and readiness of the EAC Partner States and to find ways for the region to respond to and manage chemical emergencies. The meeting also assessed and built the capacity of the region to respond to the use of chemicals for possible terror attacks.

Participants were drawn from the designated National Authorities responsible for coordinating the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), the UN Interregional Crime and Justice

Research Institute and from the Government of the Czech Republic which is supporting the EAC Regional Project.

The 23– 25 March session involved in group trainings while expert field trainings have been scheduled for the end of this year to pre-test the capacities developed.

The implications of the use of industrial chemicals result in the region been exposed to industrial and chemical incidents, thus the call for mitigation arose. Importation, transportation, storage and the use and re-exportation of chemicals must be closely regulated and monitored to minimize leakage, theft and diversion. The implementation of guidelines and safeguards are outlined in the Chemical Weapons Convention.



EAC-COMESA Women's Dialogue Ends with Promising Changes toward Peaceful Elections in Burundi

As part of its objective to increase the participation of women in the electoral process in Burundi, the EAC Secretariat, together with joint efforts from the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), held plenary discussions with women groups in the town of Gitega, Burundi from 11 – 12 March, 2015.

The participants were drawn from the provinces of Gitega, Karuzi, Muramvya, Kayanza and Mwaro, in the northern and central parts of the country.

The women's dialogue brought together women leaders from political parties; civil society organizations (CSOs); faith-based organizations (FBOs); national and local administration; security and defence; members of the press and eminent persons from the EAC and COMESA regions, to a roundtable discussion to tackle the challenges facing women in the electoral process.

Some challenges were identified as the fear of women to participate in the forthcoming elections due to discouraging messages from politicians, concerns of fewer women candidates to vote for, inadequate participation of women in intra-party policy formulation, lack of self-belief among women that they can achieve anything thus the lack of mutual support for women candidates, lack of awareness on the existing electoral laws, lack of common understanding on the provisions of the Arusha Agreement and the Constitution in regards to the number of presidential terms, poor security and lack of resources for women to participate in electoral politics.

In response to these challenges, eminent persons from the EAC-COMESA committed themselves to working in solidarity with the Burundi Women in the period prior, during and after the 2015 general elections for promoting peace, dialogue, national unity, reconciliation and cohesion among the different stakeholders.

Further commitment was extended to strengthening security for women participating in the electoral process as candidates and voters, to raising awareness on the existing electoral laws through theatre, games and sketches, to sensitizing women to participate both as voters and candidates in the electoral process, to working with men to encourage their wives to getting involved in the upcoming elections, to working with political parties, CSOs, religious groups and women on mechanisms towards peaceful elections and consolidating with local media in promoting messages depicting peace.

Peaceful elections will promote peace and stability in Burundi which is crucial to strengthening democratic principle, boosting the country's economy and improving the standard of living for the people.

Drawing from a myriad of experiences working with and for women in Africa and beyond, HE Dr. Speciosa Wandira-Kazibwe, Former Vice President of the Republic of Uganda, and current member of



the African Union (AU) Panel of the Wise and EAC Eminent Person, urged the women attending the Women's Dialogue to courageously come up with a women's manifesto.

The manifesto, she continued, would help take stock of the achievements registered since the Arusha Agreement signed at the start of the New Millennium, while also strategizing for full emancipation.

Dr. Wandira-Kazibwe shared graphical examples from her experience as a surgeon and mother of twins, calling upon the Burundi to reject any cultural practices that negate women, stating that "women should stop stereotyping men, and must nurture their children to appreciate the reality that what men can do, women can do even better." She iterated the need for more women to thrive in politics, medicine, engineering, law, journalism and other professions.

"When women are elected to critical positions in their leadership ranks, their participation and influence are sometimes undermined through marginalization or critical decisions being taken outside the main formal party decision making structures," said Mr. Charles Njoroge, the Deputy Secretary General in charge of the Political Federation. "By actively involving more women at all levels of the democratic process, countries would achieve good governance, peace, democracy, accountability and a representation of a demography that would have otherwise been absent from the policy making process." he said.



Bujumbura Hosts 2nd Extra-Ordinary Meeting of the Sectoral Council on Environment and Natural Resources

The 2nd Extra Ordinary Meeting of the Sectoral Council on Environment and Natural Resources concluded 13 March 2015 at the Royal Palace Hotel in Bujumbura, Burundi. The overall objective of the Meeting was to consider the report of the Senior Officials to the 2nd Extra Ordinary Meeting of the Sectoral Council on Environment and Natural Resources held on 29th October 2014 in Nairobi, Kenya that considered three policy issues namely; the way forward on the issues raised by the United Republic of Tanzania on the ratification of the Protocol on Environment and Natural Resources Management; the Concept Paper on the justification for a Regional Climate Change Bill as directed by the 29th Meeting of the Council of Ministers; and the revised EAC Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Bill as directed by the 28th Meeting of the Council of Ministers.

The Sectoral Council of Ministers responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, which was chaired by Hon. Stephen J. Masele, Tanzania's Deputy Minister, Vice President's Office, established a Multi-Sectoral Technical Task Force comprising of Experts in Environment and Natural Resources including but not limited to Water, Wildlife, Forestry, Energy, Minerals and Legal Experts to study the issues raised by the United Republic of Tanzania and any other comments from any other Partner State. The Sectoral Council directed the EAC Secretariat to develop the Terms of Reference including composition and Road Map with clear timelines for a Technical Task Force to study the issue raised by the United Republic of Tanzania and from any other Partner State and submit to Partner States for comments.

A Meeting of the Multi-Sectoral Technical Task Force will be convened by 30 June 2015; and the EAC Secretariat will submit the Report of the Technical Task Force on the Protocol on Environment and Natural Resources to the 4th Sectoral Council on Environment and Natural Resources.

The Sectoral Council directed the Partner States to undertake national consultations on the draft concept paper for the justification of the EAC Climate Change Bill by 30 April 2015 and submit comments to the EAC Secretariat. It also directed the Secretariat to support the Republic of Burundi to undertake national consultations on the draft concept paper for the justification of the EAC Climate Change Bill by 30 April 2015. The Secretariat is expected to consolidate the comments with a team of Partner States Experts by 30 June 2015 and submit the revised concept paper to the 4th Sectoral Council on Environment and Natural Resources

The Sectoral Council took note of the status of the revised EAC Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Bill, 2014 and directed the EAC Secretariat to develop a Technical Paper on an appropriate institutional arrangement for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management by 30 April 2015 and share the Technical Paper with the Partner States for their comments.

The Sectoral Council directed Partner States to submit their comments on Technical Paper on the appropriate institutional arrangement for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management by 15 May 2015. It also directed the EAC Secretariat to expedite the process of re-drafting the revised draft Bill taking into consideration the Technical Paper on institutional arrangement on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management that is in conformity with the standards of the Regional Bills through technical experts and legal drafters by 15 August 2015.

The Secretariat is expected to submit the revised draft to a joint Sectoral Council on Environment and Natural Resources and Interstate Security prior to its consideration by the Council of Ministers scheduled for November 2015.



EAC Celebrates International Women's Day

The EAC Secretariat on 8 March 2015, celebrated International Women's Day as part of its strategy to increase the participation of women in the EAC's regional integration process. Under this year's theme '**Make it Happen**,' the Deputy Secretary General, together with the Arusha City Council, Women Organisations, Staff members of the EAC and other invited guests, took part in a 'Walk for Gender Equality' around designated areas in Arusha town, visited the Maternity Unit of Mt. Meru Regional Hospital, launched the EAC International Women's website, and benefitted from various presentations and key note addresses on women's rights and gender equality.

"International Women's Day is a time to reflect on the achievements that women in the EAC have attained in the last 20 years, as well as to identify the challenges that still impede their full potential," said Hon. Jesca Eriyo, EAC's Deputy Secretary General in charge of Productive and Social Sectors.


"We recognise that women make a significant contribution towards the process of economic transformation and sustainable growth, and that is why we want to emphasise the importance of their effective participation, empowerment and development in EAC's integration process," she said.

'Make it Happen' stands as a global call for women and men to concretize Gender Equality, which is a follow up to the prepositions from the 20th Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995.

Gender equality can only be attained when women and men enjoy the same rights and opportunities across all sectors of society, including economic participation and decision-making, and when the different behaviours, aspirations and needs of women and men are equally valued and favoured.

On average women are paid lower salaries than men for the same work. Women also continue to be victims of violence, with rape and domestic violence listed as significant causes of disability and death among women worldwide.

As a way of fulfilling their commitment to an East African Community where women are able to participate as equal partners, decision makers, and beneficiaries of the sustainable development of their societies, the EAC has created a Sectoral Council on Gender to handle gender issues by proposing legal and policy frameworks accordingly.

To this end, this would make meaningful and sustainable changes for women and girls. 



EAC- German Cooperation Review Priority Areas for Cooperation in 2016-2019



Officials from the East African Community and the Federal Republic of Germany on 16 March 2015, held a consultative meeting to review the current cooperation and to prepare for the forthcoming EAC-German Governmental Negotiations on development cooperation envisaged to take place in the first half of 2015.

The EAC Deputy Secretary General in charge of Planning and Infrastructure, Dr. Enos Bukuku led the EAC Team while the German delegation was led by Mr. Georg Rademacher, Deputy Head of the East Africa Division at the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Bonn, Germany.

The Deputy Secretary General, Dr. Enos Bukuku, commended the Government of Germany for its long-standing and substantial support. He acknowledged the excellent work and close working relationship with the GIZ team in particular

Dr. Bukuku noted that the achievements under the EAC-German cooperation had helped the Community to make great strides in the realization of the Single Customs

Territory and to develop substantial requisite platforms that will underpin the implementation of the Common Market and the Monetary Union. Further that the support had assisted the EAC to interface itself and the citizens of EAC through youth programmes, support to the East African Business Council among other technical support.

Mr. Georg Rademacher, highlighted the progress made in the integration process and announced Germany's readiness to continue and deepen the cooperation with EAC. He stressed the additional commitments made in 2013 and 2014 that underline the importance given to the EAC by the German Government. A special highlight was the visit of the President of the Federal Republic of Germany to the EAC in February 2015.

Both sides expressed their interest to focus the future cooperation on two priority areas namely; Regional Economic Integration and Health.

In addition, Germany will support the EAC in the area of water and sanitation in the Lake Victoria Basin as well as training of media professionals. ●

JAMAFEST 2015 Preparations Kickoff



The Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Sports, Culture and the Arts; Dr. Hassan Wario Arero, on 5 March 2014, brought the first meeting of the regional steering committee in preparation of the second edition of the EAC Arts and Culture Festival (JAMAFEST) to a momentous close at the Hilton Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya.

In her welcoming remarks, the EAC Director of Social Sectors, Mary Makoffu acknowledged that the EAC Secretariat was delighted to note that the Republic of Kenya was committed to hosting the 2nd edition of JAMAFEST 2015 in Nairobi, Kenya and Cabinet Secretary's presence in the planning meeting re-affirmed the dedication and commitment.


The significance of the Arts and Culture in the integration process is clearly underscored in the EAC Treaty provided in article 119. It is in fulfilment of this provision of the Treaty that the 23rd Council of Ministers held in 2011 in Arusha, Tanzania decided that the EAC shall hold a regular Arts and Culture Festival after every two years on rotational basis.

This year's JAMAFEST is themed; 'Unleashing the economic potential of cultural and creative industries in the EAC.' The cultural extravaganza offers East Africans a great platform for cultural

interaction and dialogue as well as contributing to the visibility of the EAC to the International Community.

In addition it provides an exciting opportunity to East African Cultural practitioners to show case the extent to which they have tried to exploit the economic potential of the rich and diverse cultural heritage through culture and creative industries.

The Cabinet Secretary while giving his closing remarks exhibited high spirits in anticipation of the upcoming event. He noted that culture is the identity of the Community, emphasizing; "EAC through such initiatives as JAMAFEST aims to empower creators and cultural entrepreneurs as well as map local cultural assets in order to support a creative cultural economy to ensure that our culture becomes a driver and enabler of economic, social and environmental development processes.

The Director of Administration within the Kenyan Ministry of Sports, Culture and the Arts; Amb. Anne Nyikuli, on 2 March 2015, graced the opening of this first meeting of the regional steering committee in preparation of the 2nd edition of the EAC Arts and Culture Festival (JAMAFEST). 

Taking Integration Matters to Students



EAC's Corporate Communication and Public Affairs Department Head, Mr. Owora Richard Othieno presents library resources and other IEC materials to Sr. Dr. Lando who led Undergraduate and Post-graduate Students from the School of Communication, Language and Performing Arts at Daystar University in Nairobi to the EAC Headquarters on a study tour of the Communication and Public Affairs Department on 20 March 2015. •

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