



In this Issue

- President Museveni Addresses EALA in Kampala
- EAC Secretary General Concludes Working Visit to USA
- Germany Announces to Make Available 70 Million Euros for Development Cooperation with the EAC
- EAC Secretary General Commends Kigali Independent University for Driving the Integration Agenda
- Secretary General Urges Private Universities in the Region to Let East African Students Pay Fees as Locals
- EALA Swears in New Counsel To The Community as Ex-Officio Member
- Regional Economic Blocs Key to Attaining Pan-Africanism
- Nairobi Hosts 2nd EAC Women in Business Conference
- Kampala Hosts 9th EAC Military Games and Cultural Event 2015
- Artistes Set to Benefit as House Passes Bill on Culture and Creative Industries
- Regional Legislators Push for Disaster Preparedness in Light of Climate Change
- Prosecute Human Traffickers –EALA Says
- EALA Adopts Report on Child Rights, Wants Them Fully Protected

PRESIDENT MUSEVENI ADDRESSES EALA IN KAMPALA



President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni on 21 August 2015, addressed the 1st of the 4th Session of 3rd Assembly at the Parliament of Uganda in Kampala.

In his address, the President termed prosperity and security of the region as two key ingredients necessary to keep integration process on track. He urged the EAC to support prosperity of the producers in the agricultural sector to support integration.

“Prosperity is about services, markets and it is important to leverage and take advantage of the market”, H.E. Museveni said. The President maintained that it was time for the region to consolidate on the gains realised in the region.

The President said that Uganda was key to export its agricultural products in the EAC region including sugar products. “Uganda is today producing more sugar than it needs.

(Continued on page 2)

... terms prosperity and security as key to integration

(Continued from page 1)

Following the discussions with H.E. President Uhuru Kenyatta recently, we have agreed to open the market for this products further", he said.

The President maintained that Uganda was similarly open to receiving goods from Kenya under the integration arrangement. President Museveni said Kenyan exports to Uganda are estimated at \$700 million up from \$200 million in 1986 compared to imports worth \$150 million up from \$12 million in the same period.

He thanked President Kenyatta for agreeing to remove non-tariff barriers, deepen commercial ties and widen the regional market. President Museveni remarked that Uganda produces about 465,000 tonnes of sugar annually against a consumption of 320,000 tonnes, leaving it with a 145,000-tonne surplus.

He called on the EAC bloc to negotiate together with other blocs in the globe. "We have a reasonable market now and we can effectively compete. Let us negotiate with China and other big players", he said.

The President called on Partner States to add value to production in order to enjoy competitiveness. "The Federal Republic of Ethiopia which has a population of 90 Million people, today assembles its automobile industries and this has led to creation of employment of over 160,000 jobs for the locals. Automobile assemblage can reduce costs by 57%," he said.

President Museveni said he submitted proposals to the Summit of EAC Heads of State to explore the possibility of local assemblage of vehicles. "We need to create jobs, transfer technology for the region to be prosperous", President Museveni told the attentive audience.

The President maintained that the EAC was on course and its progress irreversible. The President noted that the Community was on the verge of prosperous economic development and better quality of life for its citizens following the significant progress in a number of socio-economic and political spheres.

The Head of State hailed the forefathers of EAC for their visionary leadership. "I hail President Moi and Mwinyi who together with myself resurrected integration after seeing the benefits. I am grateful to them and we have since moved together, making tremendous progress" he added.



He lauded EALA for initiating the EAC Creative and Cultural Industries Bill saying it gave citizens such as performing artists to advantage of integration and to widen their markets.

On Security, the Head of State said that strategic security was key. "We must put our interests first and secure ourselves from those who want to dominate us, he said, adding that it was time for challenges such as NTBs to be weeded out once and for all.

He said Uganda was mapping strategies to be a first world country in the next 20 years and thus deemed it necessary to fight for its competitive space. "Even if these were to happen, the question is how secure would Uganda be by itself? The President paused.

The Head of State said the region was opening up and clearing up strategic bottlenecks to be more prosperous. He said the market fragmentation was now been consolidated. He however cited the challenges of insecurity faced in Burundi, South Sudan and Congo and said solutions were necessary.

H.E. Museveni said a better infrastructure was now been realized and said the region was on the way to deepening economic integration. The President gave a nod to EALA Speaker's request on modalities to streamline assent of Bills during the meeting of the EAC Heads of State.

"The principle of jointly signing (assent) of Bills when we sit as Summit is a good idea if we can finalise on the modalities", H.E. Museveni said. The Head of State remarked that what the region now needed was to strengthen competitiveness, address costs doing business and reduce risks.



EAC Secretary General Concludes Working Visit to USA



The Secretary General of the East African Community, Amb. Dr. Richard Sezibera, concluded a three-day visit to the State of Kansas, United States of America on 17 August 2015.


During the visit, the Secretary General met and held talks with the Governor of the State of Kansas, Mr. Sam Brownback, as well as the Kansas Department of Agriculture.

Amb. Sezibera and his counterparts held discussions on how EAC can work together with Kansas State in areas of Trade and Investment, Agriculture, Education and Pharmaceutical industries.

Speaking during the meeting with the Governor, Amb. Sezibera described the progress registered in various regional infrastructure projects, noting that while these projects were negotiated at regional level, implementation was often done by the Partner States.

The EAC Secretary General informed the Governor that the EAC is open to more structured discussions with the State of Kansas on improving business environment in the region, adding that a bilateral investment agreement framework between both parties was welcome.

In his remarks, Governor Brownback commended the Secretary General for his leadership and commitment in the East African integration. He said the State of Kansas was elated with the developments within the EAC and would continue keeping tabs on progress of the integration.

Meanwhile, Amb Sezibera also met the team from Kansas Department of Agriculture and held discussions with the department on various issues including how the EAC Partner States and the State of Kansas can work together towards the introduction of a Smart Agriculture Programme in East Africa. 

Germany Announces to Make Available 70 Million Euros for Development Cooperation with the EAC



The Federal Republic of Germany announced on 14 August 2015, a new commitment to the East African Community (EAC).

In total, 30 million euros will be invested in vaccines and health supply chain management.

Earlier in 2015, Germany hosted the record replenishment of the global vaccination alliance GAVI. As a result, an additional 300 million children will receive live-saving vaccines, including in the EAC.

German bilateral cooperation will now provide 20 million euros for the procurement of vaccines against different diseases for children in the EAC. The programme will be implemented in collaboration with GAVI. This new commitment will bring Germany's contribution to regional immunisation programmes with the EAC to 60 million euro since 2012.

Inappropriate cooling systems result in high volumes of vaccines being wasted before they reach the people that need them. This is why Germany will also support the establishment of the EAC Regional Centre of Excellence for Health Supply Chain Management in Kigali with 10 million euros. The Centre will strengthen capacities and foster the dissemination of innovation for managing complex supply systems for health products, such as vaccines that need to be kept cool at all times.

With a view to strengthen the pandemic preparedness in the EAC Mrs. Grosse Wiesmann also announced the willingness of Germany to provide an additional 3 million euros (3,3 million USD) in technical assistance for the region's crisis response capacity (out of special funds for 2016).

EAC Deputy Secretary General Dr. Enos Bukuku: "Germany's expanded support allows us to further reduce the spread of infectious diseases and improve the accessibility of health products throughout the region."

Mrs. Gudrun Grosse Wiesmann, Director Sub-Saharan Africa at the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development: "Our support underlines that Germany wishes to further strengthen the long-standing and deep relationship it maintains with the East African Community in order to contribute to the well-being and prosperity of its citizens".

Regarding the upcoming bilateral negotiations on development cooperation with the EAC in September 2015 the Head of the German delegation underlined that Germany is willing to support the EAC in the fields of regional economic integration, health and water resource management. Germany is prepared to make available an additional 37 million euros for projects in these fields. 

EAC Secretary General Commends Kigali Independent University for Driving the Integration Agenda

Amb. Dr. Richard Sezibera, Secretary General of the East African Community graced a conference on Regional Integration recently held at Kigali Independent University (ULK), Rwanda, in collaboration with the Rwandan EAC Youth Ambassadors Platform.


At the occasion, Dr. Prof. Rwigamba Balinda, Founder and President of the University, expressed his gratitude to the Secretary General for showing his love and passion for the youth by taking time off his busy schedule to attend the conference.

Under the theme "Citizens Participation towards Sustainable Development, Peace and Security in the Region," over 700 participants from ULK students, officials, academic and administrative staff and members of the EAC Youth platform from other Higher Learning Institutions, embraced the Secretary General's recognition of their role as important players in the integration process.

"I would like to thank this University for helping young people upgrade their own abilities, which will then contribute to the region's overall future," said Amb. Sezibera. "I would also like to applaud the efforts that the students have made in fostering their creativity, innovation and leadership to raising the EAC flag amongst their peers," he said.

Further into his speech, the Secretary General talked about how the great late Mwalimu Julius Nyerere understood the 'oneness' of East Africans, a vision that influenced his decision in wanting to delay his country's independence so that the whole of East Africa attains independence together as one federation.

He reiterated that not all African leaders shared the same views as the late Mwalimu Nyerere, but had their different ideologies of running their countries. Amb. Sezibera cautioned the students not to repeat the same mistakes of yesteryear, reminding them to think of themselves as leaders who can start making a difference today.

The Secretary General applauded Prof. Dr. Balinda for his dedication and efforts in building the University up to its current level stating that, "it's amazing to see a place that was once a bush, now turn into a learning centre." 



Secretary General Urges Private Universities in the Region to Let East African Students Pay Fees as Locals

The Secretary General of the East African Community, Amb. Dr. Richard Sezibera has urged Private Universities in the region to let East African students pay similar fees like local students for their university education as per the EAC Council of Ministers' decision.

The Secretary General, who was on 28 August 2015, delivering a lecture on Leadership and Entrepreneurship to students at the Kampala International University (KIU)'s Main Hall, commended entrepreneurs for meeting the unmet needs in the education sector in Uganda and the region in general.

He said the region had seen unprecedented growth of universities in the past few years and KIU is one of those that has taken the lead in shaping and molding the youth with the East African identity.

Amb. Sezibera congratulated KIU for attaining the international status and for being an active member of several international organizations and associations including the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), Association of African Universities, Association of Commonwealth Universities; Uganda Vice Chancellors' Forum and International Association of Law Schools.

The Secretary General urged the students to use their time in the university to develop character and vision, expand their intellect, and have self/physical discipline so as to become good leaders and entrepreneurs.

Welcoming the Secretary General to the campus, the Vice Chancellor of KIU, Prof. P. Kazenga Tibenderana said through membership to international associations, KIU was striving for meaningful participation in the internationalization of higher education, which was becoming one of the most critical facets of higher education of the 21st century.

The vice chancellor affirmed that KIU was an effective tool in the process of forging East African identity and unity and "we should be regarded as partners in the regional integration and development process". Present at the public lecture were; Hon. Mawanda Michael Maranga, Vice Chair of the Board of Trustee; Mr. Amutenda Salvatore Tumwine, the Principal Education Officer, Productive and Social Sectors at Uganda's Ministry of East African Community Affairs; Academic staff and students.



EALA Swears in New Counsel To The Community as Ex-Officio Member

...Dr Kafumbe takes over from Hon Kaahwa



The East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) on 27 August 2015, swore in Hon Dr Anthony Luyirika Kafumbe, the new Counsel to the East African Community (CTC) as an Ex-Officio Member of EALA. The Oath of Allegiance to the House was administered by the Clerk of EALA, before the EALA Speaker, Rt. Hon Daniel F. Kidega.

Hon Dr. Kafumbe took the oath in accordance with Rule 5 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly. The Rules of Procedure say in part that: "No Member can sit or participate in the proceedings of the House until the Oath or Affirmation of Allegiance to the Treaty is taken".


Rule 5(5) specifically states that "when a Member first attends to take his or her seat other than at the first sitting of a new House, he or she shall be brought to the table by two Members and presented by them to the Speaker who shall then administer the Oath or Affirmation of Allegiance".

The Counsel to the Community was ushered into the House by Hon Emmanuel Nengo and Hon Dora Byamukama.

Hon Dr Kafumbe, was appointed Counsel to the Community by the Council of Ministers at its 32nd Meeting in Arusha in August 2015. This followed the retirement from service of the Community by long-serving CTC, Hon Wilbert Kaahwa last year. His duties shall include inter alia offering legal advise to the EAC, attending and advising Council of Ministers and representing the Community at the East African Court of Justice (EACJ).

Prior to his appointment, Hon Dr. Kafumbe was the Principal Legal Officer of the Community having joined the Service of the Community in July 2008.

Hon Dr. Kafumbe holds a Ph.D from the University of Glasgow, Scotland (2006). He further holds LLM from University of Pretoria, South Africa (2000) and a Masters of Business Administration earned from ESAMI, Arusha, Tanzania (2003).

Prior to joining the Community, Hon Dr Kafumbe lectured at the Makerere University. He has also served as a Senior State Attorney, Ministry of Justice in the Republic of Uganda. 

Regional Economic Blocs Key to Attaining Pan-Africanism

Strong Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are the key to Africa's long term goal of creating a vibrant, united and prosperous continent.

South Africa's High Commissioner to Tanzania and the East African Community, His Excellency Thamsanqa D. Mseleku, said his country was committed to the creation of strong and viable RECs across the entire continent, adding that RECs were the surest way to achieve the founding fathers' dream of Pan-Africanism.

RECs are the first step to the African Union's ultimate goal of creating an African Economic Community.

Amb. Mseleku said South Africa was keen to ensure that African countries build on the gains made in regional integration, democratisation, economic growth, good governance, security and political stability.

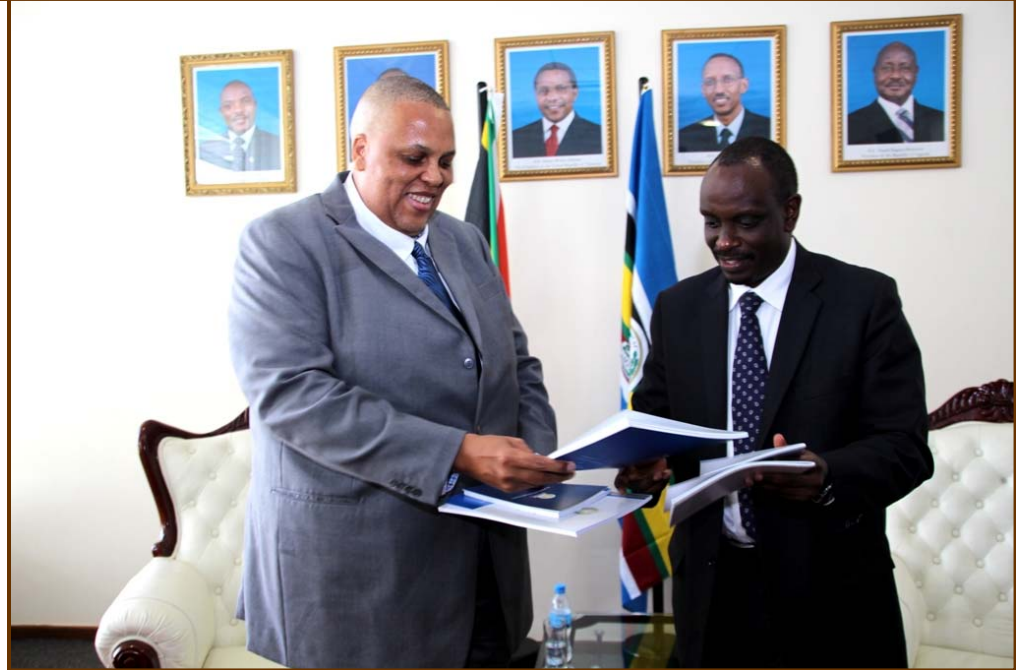
He noted that while Africa had made significant gains in these areas, there were still major challenges to be surmounted citing the situations in Burundi, South Sudan, the Central African Republic and Somalia.

"On the economic front, there are sudden problems emerging in the world which have a negative impact on African economies most of which are mainly resource based," he said.

The envoy said his country was open to increased cooperation and partnerships with the EAC, which he described as Africa's fastest growing economic bloc.

Amb. Mseleku was speaking when he presented his credentials to the EAC Secretary General, Amb. Dr Richard Sezibera, at the EAC Headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania on 31 August 2015. The High Commissioner was accompanied by Mr Manqoba Mdluli, the Third Secretary Political Affairs at the South African High Commission in Dar es Salaam.

In his remarks, Dr Sezibera hailed Amb. Mseleku on his appointment as South Africa's High Commissioner to the EAC.




"We consider South Africa as a very strong partner of the EAC. South Africa is a strong leader in terms of Pan-Africanism. South Africa's leadership cuts across regional economic blocs and countries," said Dr Sezibera.

Dr. Sezibera said the EAC was trying to form a Political Federation as its contribution to Pan-Africanism, the realisation of which he said would reverse the negative legacy of colonialism on the continent.

"We have a Customs Union, a Common Market and are working towards the attainment of a single currency for the region by 2024. We are also working together with the South African Development Community and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa to create a free trade area and to make it work," said the SG, adding that he looked forward to South Africa providing leadership during the tripartite negotiations.

He said that for regional integration to succeed, big economies must be willing to make sacrifices more because in the end they will be the biggest beneficiaries.

"There will be a temporary loss but big economies like South Africa, Kenya and Egypt will inevitably gain more in the end," he said.

He praised South Africa's efforts in trying to mediate a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Burundi and South Sudan. 

Nairobi Hosts 2nd EAC Women in Business Conference



The Deputy Speaker of Kenya's National Assembly, Rt. Hon. Dr. Joyce Laboso, has called for more investment in training to equip women, especially those in the informal sector, with skills to increase productivity and also manage their businesses in order to enhance the participation of women in economies of the East African Community Partner States.

Dr Laboso, who officially opened the 2nd EAC Conference on the Role of Women in Socio-Economic Development and in Business on 20 August 2015, at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre in Nairobi, further said that leaders in the region should ensure women are included in the regional integration process as spelt out in the EAC Treaty and in the constitutions of the Partner States.

"We are keen to show the rest of the world that we can do this on our own and in doing so, we shall achieve long-term sustainable change and attract talented women and men to the global market place," said Dr Laboso.

The Deputy Speaker told the over 450 women entrepreneurs and exhibitors from diverse sectors in the entire region that it was important to put in place policies that specifically seek to empower women in business, for example, initiatives such as thirty per cent Access to Government Procurement Opportunities

(christened AGPO) by women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities; increased access to finance through Women Enterprise Fund and UWEZO Fund in Kenya.

She said that there was need to encourage women to move into large-scale enterprises such as manufacturing, infrastructure, transport and mining sectors, which are high growth areas that are still largely unexploited.

"Achieving gender equality is more than 50-50 representation. It is also about recognizing and respecting women's rights as human rights, treating women with dignity, offering them equal opportunities to participate fully in the socio-economic and political development of their individual countries and communities at large," said Dr Laboso.

Speaking at the same function, Hon. Phyllis Kandie, Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for East African Community Affairs, Commerce and Tourism said that the conference had provided a platform for engagement between policy makers, regulators, cooperating partners, implementing institutions, financial and lending institutions and women entrepreneurs on the challenges and opportunities for accelerating financial inclusion of women specifically

Continued on page 10)

“Harnessing the power of women entrepreneurs is central to maximizing the equity and sustainability of development in our region” ~ Amb. Sezibera

(Continued from page 9)

access to finance in the region.

She said Partner States’ governments were all supporting women initiatives and reaffirmed Kenya’s commitment to the participation of women in business and other socio-economic development programmes.

EAC Secretary General Amb. Dr. Richard Sezibera said empowering the women of East Africa was neither philanthropy nor charity, but simply smart politics and smart economics.

Dr Sezibera said women had to be part of the development process in all the Partner States including playing an active role in the regional integration process, adding that they must be informed on all steps being undertaken by the Community especially policies, programmes and projects aimed at enhancing the wellbeing of the people of East Africa.

“Harnessing the power of women entrepreneurs is central to maximizing the equity and sustainability of development in our region,” said the Secretary General.

He called on financial institutions and developmental partners to recognize women as not only consumers but as decision-makers, thinkers, innovators, formulators and drivers of the economy in wealth creation.

The two-day Conference is being held under the theme “Advancing and Expanding the Participation of Business Women in Intra-EAC Trade.”

The overall goal of the Conference is for women in business in the East African region to come together to network and explore the opportunities offered by the EAC Single Customs Territory and the Common Market as well as exchange ideas on ways and means of increasing affordable financing for women owned businesses.

Participants at the conference consist of Women Entrepreneurs/ Exhibitors, East African Women in Business Platform and East African Business Council representatives, Civil Society Organizations, MPs from the East African Legislative Assembly and National Assemblies, and representatives from line Ministries in the Partner States.

Among other outputs, the 2nd EAC Conference on the Role of Women in Socio-Economic Development and Women in Business is expected to identify sources of affordable financing for women in business and recommend a way forward, strengthen and expand the Network of the East African Women in Business Platform and draft a Conference Report with an Action Plan to implement existing EAC Policy Frameworks and projects on Women in Socio-Economic Development and Women in Business.



Kampala Hosts 9th EAC Military Games and Cultural Event 2015



The Defence Forces of the EAC Partner States (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi) concluded the Ninth Edition of the East African Community Military Games and Cultural Event on 26 August 2015, at the Mandela National Stadium in Kampala, Uganda.

Officiating at the closure of the 11-day event, Uganda's Minister of State for Defence, General Jeje Odong said that the EAC had come along way from the humble and bold steps taken in 1998 with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation in Defence Matters by the three original Partner States (Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania), amid the suspicions, mistrust and misunderstanding prevailing then among the Partner States.

He said the enthusiasm among the leadership in the armies within the region to renew the bond among them paved the way for the greater cooperation in the defence sector leading to the revision of the MoU in 2001.

"There is no doubt that today the military in our region have made remarkable and exemplary progress in the integration of their operations and if all other sectors could borrow a leaf from the defence sector, we would realize the EAC dreams that we all cherish sooner than later"

The Secretary General of the East African Community, Amb. Dr. Richard Sezibera noted that it was a great inspiration to see members of the great profession gathered together under the auspices of the Community participating in the various sports

and cultural events and that it was a living testimony that EAC integration was moving towards greater heights and the event offered concrete hope and prospects for future integration and progress for the people of East Africa.

He said today the people of East Africa increasingly express confidence and pride in their bright future as one people bound in one destiny under the banner of the Community.

"Their aspirations are for an East Africa that, first and foremost, continues to be peaceful, secure and stable and whose overriding agenda is to raise productivity and savings; and attract foreign investments in order to create wealth and improve the living standards of the people".

The Secretary General commended the Armed Forces for promoting the use of Kiswahili, the lingua franca for the East Africa Community and also for adopting a Regional Counter Terrorism Strategy as adopted by the EAC Council of Ministers, and sharing of Intelligence among themselves.

He noted that so far all the Partner States, except one, had ratified the Protocol on Cooperation on Defence and urged that Partner State to expedite the ratification process.

He also commended the sector for agreeing to use Defence Technical Facilities offered for joint utilization by the Partner

(Continued on page 12)

●●●Rwanda to host the 10th Edition of the Military Games and Cultural Event 2016



(Continued from page 11)

States namely; Muzinda Engineering Unit in the Republic of Burundi; Defence Technical College (DEFTEC) and the Defence Mobile Field Kitchen (DMFK) in the Republic of Kenya; the Kinyinya Asphalt and Concrete Plant in the Republic of Rwanda; Tanzania Automobile Technical Centre (TATC) Workshop facilities in the United Republic of Tanzania; and Uganda Mechanical Engineering College (UMEC) in the Republic of Uganda.

Uganda's Chief of Defence Forces, General Katumba Wamala, who spoke on behalf of the other CDFs, said EAC Military Games and Cultural Event was a unifying factor in the regional integration and development process. He said at the parade, all the contingents were marching in unison and were in steps irrespective of which Partner States they were coming from.

"I wish the Partner States and all of us could march in steps in the regional integration process, in fact EAC should march in unison so as to achieve our desired goal," said Uganda's CDF.

General Katumba Wamala hailed the EAC Council of Ministers, the Sectoral Committee on Cooperation in Defence and the EAC Secretariat for the support they have continued to give to the defence sector including permission to host the games and cultural event.


He commended the performance of the Contingents and wondered why the Military was not producing country and international champions in the various disciplines.

The East African Community Military Games and Cultural Event is an annual rotating event that started in 2005 when the first edition was held in Kampala, Uganda. Other editions of the games have been held in Nairobi, Kenya (2006), in Zanzibar, Tanzania (2007) and in Kampala (June 2008).

The primary objective of the Military Sports and Culture Week is not competition but to contribute to confidence building and esprit de corps among the EAC Defence Forces; as well as for the individual soldiers to appreciate their diverse cultures.

The Military Games and Culture event is held within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation in Defence Matters, which was signed in 1998 and revised in 2001. The MoU has specific provisions for Sports and Cultural co-operation as well as Joint Military Exercises, among other joint activities among the EAC Defence forces.

The MoU has been upgraded into a Protocol. Under it, the EAC Partner States pursue an elaborate programme of activities, which include exchange of visits and regular meetings of Defence Chiefs and other cadre of the defence forces; joint training; joint exercises and promotion of various joint sports, and cultural activities and seminars; and mutual assistance in disaster management, and technical co-operation.

The Chiefs of Defence Forces agreed and announced that Rwanda will host the 10th Edition of the EAC Military Games and Cultural Event 2016 in August 2016 in Kigali, Rwanda. 

Artistes Set to Benefit as House Passes Bill on Culture and Creative Industries

Culture and Creative Industries in the region on 25 August 2015, received a shot in the arm following the passage of the EAC Culture and Creative Industries Bill, 2015 by EALA.

The Bill sailed through the 3rd Reading after intense debate on the floor of the House.

The key Bill recognizes people with talents and skills and creates an environment that promotes talents and the necessary infrastructure to develop the industries, many of which are considered nascent, while removing existing barriers.

The object of the Bill is to promote the Culture and Creative industries at the EAC.

The Bill seeks to establish the Culture and Creative Industries Council that shall provide an environment conducive to the enhancement and stimulation of creativity and innovative endeavours among the citizens of the Community.

Once formed, the Council shall provide high quality training for skills and creativity development and formulate policies and strategies to stimulate creativity and innovations among the youth to ensure long term supply of talents.

Culture and Creative Industries are considered one of the fastest growing sectors in the global economy and contribute significantly to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of many developed and developing countries.

The Council is also to conduct a comprehensive mapping of individuals or groups involved in creative industries and design practical tools that assist individuals to effectively use and diversify their products to be locally and globally competitive.

According to the mover of the Bill, Hon Dr. James Ndahiro, there are citizens with talents and if such (talents) are well exploited, then individuals and the nation would greatly benefit.

The Bill, Hon Dr Ndahiro states, seeks to provide a legal framework for East Africans to excel in all forms of talent and creativity and contribute to the welfare of the Community.

We need to celebrate the integration aspirations but only if we take into consideration and overcome challenges been faced in the cultural and creativity industries. Such include unfair treatment in terms of permits to operate, discrimination of citizens from Partner States despite our co-operation and the opening up of region due to the Common Market Protocol, Dr Ndahiro maintained.



Regional Legislators Push for Disaster Preparedness in Light of Climate Change

A key policy report on Climate change and gender is calling on Partner States to promote pro-active approaches through adequate preparedness and appropriate strategies in light of climate change.

The Report which follows a regional Parliamentary workshop held in Burundian Capital, Bujumbura in March 2015 was on 26 August 2015, debated and approved by EALA. The Report was presented by the Chairperson of the Agriculture, Tourism and Natural Resources Committee, Hon Christophe Bazivamo.

The Report says that approaches such as early warning systems and modalities for flood and drought management need to be inculcated. Closely related to this aspect is the need for the Partner States and the East African Community to advocate for strong institutional and governance structures.

In addition, the Assembly is of the view that the Secretariat invests in climate/disaster focused research and tools Participatory Capacity and Vulnerability Analysis (PCVA) to boost the preparedness of the region.

The objectives of the workshop was to create awareness amongst Members of EALA on the critical cross-cutting subjects of climate change and gender; and to consider existing international and regional policies, strategies and regulatory instruments and frameworks on climate change and gender. At the same time, the workshop sought to identify the role of Parliamentarians in implementation of Gender Sensitive Climate Change Policies and Practical measures.

In the past, EALA has passed several environmental Bills including Transboundary Ecosystems Management Bill (2010), the EAC Polythene Material Control Bill, 2014. The EAC Disaster Risk Reduction and management Control Bill (2014) is under consultation. Work has also commenced on the EAC Climate Change Bill and a Climate Change Fund.

During debate, Hon Abdullah Mwinyi called for demarcation of specific areas for cattle keepers so that enough fodder is realized and sustainability is realised.




We need a recommendation to that effect from the report such that it adds to the dimension of Climate Change and Gender. "Farmers are predominantly women while cattle keepers are pre-dominantly men", he said. "There is need for a region-wide policy to deal with any imminent clashes that may arise", he added.

Hon Mumbi Ngaru said natural and man-made events both contribute to Climate Change. "We have the Disaster Risk Reduction Bill pending before the House. It needs to be brought forth immediately by the Council of Ministers", she said.

Hon Susan Nakawuki lauded the city Council of Arusha for greening the City by planting more trees. We should all borrow from the successes of the City.

She called on the Partner States to ensure the EAC Climate Change Fund received funding.

Hon Valerie Nyirahabineza said the Assembly could champion the importance of the Climate Change Fund. "As an Assembly, we can support the Fund in a symbolic manner", she said.

Hon Dora Byamukama, Hon Dr. Odette Nyiramilimo and Hon Sarah Bonaya also supported the Report. 

Prosecute Human Traffickers ~EALA Says



With the region grappling with major issues of human trafficking, the Assembly on 20 August 2015, took a bold step to arrest and stem the illegal trade.

The Assembly passed a Resolution calling for urgent action to prevent trafficking in persons, protect the victims and persecute the perpetrators of trafficking.

EALA is also keen to see a regional law on anti-trafficking in persons enacted so as to address the cross-border aspect of trafficking in persons. With it, EALA also urged the Partner States to enact comprehensive anti-trafficking persons legislation in accordance with the Palermo Protocol which incorporates the prevention of trafficking in persons, protection of the victims and the prosecution of offenders.

Once again, EALA urged the Council of Ministers to operationalize Article 27 of the Treaty of EAC and conclude a protocol to extend jurisdiction of the East African Court of Justice to handle human rights cases which encompass trafficking in persons.

The motion was moved by Hon Dora Byamukama and seconded by Hon Frederic Ngenzebuhoro. The Motion received overwhelming support on the floor of the House. The Resolution avers that EAC Treaty provides that Partner States agree to enhance co-operation in the handling of cross-border crime and provision of mutual assistance in criminal matters. This it says includes the arrest and repatriation of fugitive offenders and the exchange of information on national mechanisms for combating criminal activities.

Article 5(3) (a) and (b) provides that the Community shall ensure inter alia the attainment of sustainable growth by promotion of balanced and harmonious development of Partner States and this is anticipated to lead to improvement of quality of life among Partner States.

However the Resolution states that trafficking in persons which is also known as modern day slavery is a grave abuse of human rights and is caused by several drivers including poverty, unemployment, promises of better life and corruption. This, the Motion states must be stemmed using a multi-faceted approach.

In her justification, Hon Dora Byamukama, the mover of the Resolution says all EAC Partner States are source countries and destination countries. All countries have legislation on human trafficking but there is need for harmonization of the same, the legislator said. The number of prosecutions, and convictions are low, she added.

She called for protection of victims and urged Government and Non-Governmental Organisations to collaborate on the same. During debate today, Hon Pareno called for more stringent laws to punish perpetrators of the crime. We must prevent recurrence and punish the wrong-doers she said. "We also need psychosomatic counselling to help victims recover and give evidence. The Partner States could go ahead and give them safe houses and legal counsel services as they recover, the legislator said.

She added that training of immigration officers was necessary to enable them detect cases of trafficking. Hon Patricia Hajabakiga said data with regards to numbers and gravity on the matter was alarming. According to the legislator 70-80% of the trafficking cases are women, who are sold for slavery or sex work.

In the last century, the continent went through slavery and we were never able to stop it. It is against African values, democracy and governance. Africa and EAC in particular must sit down and see how to protect itself.

She urged the Council of Ministers to debate the Resolution further.



EALA Adopts Report on Child Rights, Wants Them Fully Protected

The EAC needs as a matter of priority to embrace a regional approach to combat child related criminal acts, the Assembly has recommended.

At the same time regional legislators want Partner States to strive for uniformity in the delivery and management of child related services.

They further recommend a regional approach that shall also comprise uniform standards on location of facilities, juvenile courts within local jurisdiction, their numbers and standards as well as guidelines on management and funding.

On 19 August 2015, EALA passed a report of the Committee on General Purpose (GPC) on the legal framework and implementation of policies on the rights of children.



The report was a result of oversight activities undertaken by the Committee in the Partner States on February 2015.

The objective of the oversight activity was to assess the legal framework and implementation of policies related to rights of the child as well as to update on the challenges faced.

The Committee report recommends the fast tracking of cases of violence against children by specialized and specific institutions that handle such matters within the framework of the law.

In undertaking the Oversight activity, the Committee interacted with actors in the area of protection of the rights of the child including concerned Government officials from the respective Ministries, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Civil Society, representatives of National Commissions among others.

The report presented to the House by the Chair of the GPC, Hon Dr. Odette Nyiramilimo further implores the EAC to establish a regional fund and sustainable financing for child related issues of protection, prevention and management.

The institutional basis of such a fund would be coordinated at the regional level by the EAC and any children's Committees as the case may be. Such is notwithstanding the other sources of financing at national level, Hon Dr. Nyiramilimo told an attentive House.

"The Committee is of the view that children and youth are without doubt a very important part of the Community and have to be protected as the future depends on the quality of

care, education as well as values inculcated into them", the report says in part.

It cites some of the forms of child abuse as violence against children, denial of rights to play and corporal punishment and other forms of punishments. Other challenges that children carry to school include diminishing job opportunities, drug abuse, sexual abuse and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

Partner States have put in place policies that protect child rights but that they face various challenges in the implementation. In Burundi for example, the Committee observes that Burundi has ratified most of the international legal instruments relating to rights of the child – but there is need to harmonise and align the same to the national principles and legislations.

In Kenya, the Committee observes that Female Genital Mutilation continues to be a major challenge terming the act detrimental and causing medical and psychological repercussions and calls for an immediate end to the practice.

In Rwanda, the Committee finds that a large number of children are orphaned as a result of the Genocide against the Tutsi in 1994 and as a result of the HIV and AIDS pandemic.

In Uganda, the report cites the lack of enforcement of existing legislation and notes that only few Family and Children's Courts were operational and with irregular Sittings. On its part, in Tanzania, the report cites inconsistencies between the Law on Marriage and that of Child.



**Editorial Team:**

Owora Richard Othieno; Simon Peter Owaka; Aileen Mallya; Bobi Odiko; Florian Mutabazi; Damaris Wambui; Alice Maro; J.R.Luwali (Photographer) & Mukhtar Abdul Bolyao (Photographer)

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*For further information please contact:
Richard Owora Othieno, Head of Department | Email: othieno@eachq.org | Tel: +255 784 835021*