

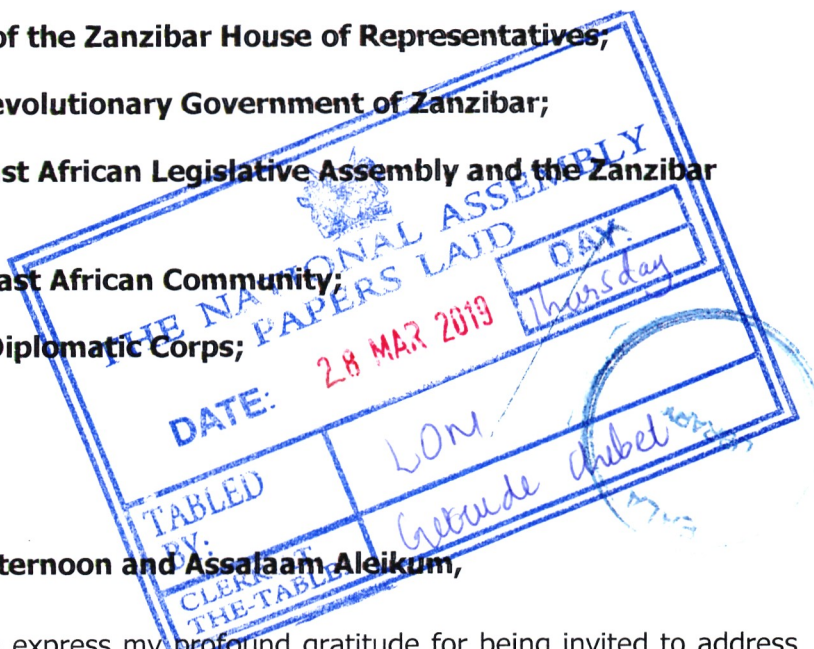
**SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF ZANZIBAR AND CHAIRMAN OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL, H. E. DR. ALI MOHAMED SHEIN AT THE 4TH MEETING OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY HELD IN ZANZIBAR
DATE: 26th FEBRUARY, 2019**

Honourable Martin K. Ngoga, Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly;
Honourable Ambassador Seif Ali Iddi, the Second Vice President of Zanzibar,
The Chairperson and Council of East African Community Ministers;
Honourable Zubeir Ali Maulid, Speaker of the Zanzibar House of Representatives,
Honourable Former Speaker of the Zanzibar House of Representatives;
Honourable Ministers of the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar;
Honourable Members of the East African Legislative Assembly and the Zanzibar House of Representatives;
The Secretary General of the East African Community;
Excellencies Members of the Diplomatic Corps;
Distinguished Guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Good Afternoon and Assalaam Aleikum,

First and foremost, I would like to express my profound gratitude for being invited to address the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) for the second time. I recall the first time that I opened the Second Meeting of the Fifth Session of the Third Assembly on 11th October, 2016 here in Zanzibar.

I feel greatly honoured to once again been given this valuable opportunity to exchange my views with one of the key organs of the East African Community. Indeed, this distinguished Assembly plays multiple and significant roles in making and amending laws which are vital in our efforts to promote, peace, unity and economic prosperity in the region. It is gratifying to see that the Assembly routinely handles various complex issues that call for a great deal of consideration and has stood out as a strong legislature that enormously performs good job.



As I proceed with my speech, I extend my immense congratulations to you Honourable Speaker, on your being elected the Speaker of this reputable Regional Legislative organ as well as the fifth Speaker in the history of EALA. It is well understood that this position is intensively competitive and your success depicts the trust and confidence that the people of East Africa through the Members of this Assembly have in you as a person.

Secondly, allow me to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to Honourable Members of this Assembly for being selected to serve in the capacity of Regional Legislators. I cordially welcome you Honourable Speaker and other EALA members to Zanzibar and request you to make the most of your stay, despite your busy schedules, to explore the scenic beauty of Zanzibar through its beaches and other points of attraction. For those of you who are not fluent in Kiswahili, I hope you will get chances to practice and polish it.

Honourable Speaker,

I am very appreciative of the rotational principle that is practised by the Assembly which offers chances to different partner states to host the Assembly's sessions. This arrangement not only portrays how EALA nurtures the deep attachment and respect towards the partner countries of the East African Community, but also goes in line with common slogan that prevails since the re-establishment of the East African Community that says '*One people, one destiny.*' Likewise, this arrangement makes the people aware of the activities of the Community as the joint organization that operates towards the common good of the East African people.

Honourable Speaker,

It came to my notice that among the bills that will be dispensed this time are the Ethics and Anti - Corruption as well as Gender and Disability. I have also been informed that the Motion to condole with the Republic of Kenya with regard to terrorist attack and the one regarding the amendment of the name of Lake Victoria have also been tabled for this current session. Similarly, the Standing Committee Reports and those of Sensitization work are among the agenda of this meeting. These significant agenda items reflect the seriousness of the Assembly in leaving no stone unturned in the journey towards the realization of full economic integration of the region's economies.

Honourable Speaker,

It is encouraging to know that EAC maintained its position as the fastest growing sub region in Africa with accelerated growth of 4.6 percent in 2017 compared to 4.4 in 2016. This milestone has influenced the growth of the Sub-Saharan Africa's GDP of 2.7 percent in 2017 compared to 1.4 of 2016. This achievement can reach greater heights in the years to come if, among other things, we become vigilant of corruption and strongly abide by the principal values that guide our work within the Community.

Corruption corrodes the common good. It impairs good governance. It is a strong constraint on economic prosperity. It may be analogized with termites that can slowly and gradually eat up an upright standing piece of strong wood to its ultimate collapse. It is a menace and we should earnestly act against it. It is encouraging to see that different strategic measures are being taken by the individual partner countries to combat the detrimental effects of corruption. The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar has established a special body through its Act No. 1 of 2012 known as the Zanzibar Anti-Corruption and Economic Crimes Authority (ZAECA) to deal and combat this malpractice. The Government recognizes the fact that anti-corruption war needs citizens' engagement. Hence, huge efforts are being taken to ensure full involvement of the people in the fight.

In the same vein, the 5th Phase of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania under the leadership of President Dr. John Joseph Magufuli has intensified its efforts in battling with corruption of which the outcomes are seen to pay dividends. The launching of the Phase III 2017-2022 National Anti- Corruption Strategy and Action Plan gave rise to the establishment of Economic, Corruption and Organized Crime Division of the High Court as well as the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB). As further impetus to these endeavours, both the Governments i.e the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar and the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania have shored up law enforcement, increased judiciary budgets and manpower to expedite judgment of corruption cases.

Therefore, tabling an Ethics and Anti-Corruption Bill for discussion is a promising step towards uprooting corruption in the region. Hence, as a link between institutions of the EAC and the East Africa people, EALA should come up with robust piece of legislation that will highly support

the enactment and enforcement of our laws within individual partner states to strengthen our anti- corruption efforts.

Honourable Speaker,

Ethics and law both govern human actions, as the latter establishes standards of behavior and hence act from the outside, the former controls from the inside. The advancement of technology has increased the life concomitants that most of the times render the legislative staff to encounter situations that place them at the crux of ethical dilemmas. In view of this therefore, legislators have to exercise extreme caution, watching over their every move to avoid pitfalls.

Honourable Speaker,

Among the expected outcomes of Regional integration in East Africa is to create wealth, raise the living standards of all people of East Africa and enhance international competitiveness of the region. It is our duty to ensure we work closely together to meet our goals.

Our combined population of over 162 million people forms a strong and large market base, together with a land of over 1.82 million square kilometers and a combined GDP of about USD79 billion, the potential is there for steady and sustainable growth that will elevate our Region to a middle income status. This growth, however, calls for addressing more seriously the basic governance issues at both national and regional levels.

We recognize that the Summit of the EAC Heads of State has been doing a wonderful job of spearheading our efforts in promoting good governance, strengthening the rule of law, as well as reinforcing peace, security and stability. Their guidance is crucial to policy harmonization. I convey my sincere appreciation to all EAC Heads of State for the exemplary leadership of the Community and various initiatives they have been undertaking to explore other areas that call for regional intervention for strategic development of the integration.

It is noteworthy that Kiswahili has been unanimously accepted as one of the promising contributing factors towards the East African Community (EAC) efforts of regional integration and sustainable development. We feel elated that the East Africa Kiswahili Centre (EAKC) is

based in Zanzibar. We are also proud that with the re-establishment of the EAC, the language has now formally been our regional lingua franca.

We compliment the initiatives taken by the EAKC for promoting the use of Kiswahili within the region and beyond. The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar through its Kiswahili Council (BAKIZA) launched an international Symposium in December last year with the aim of calling together Kiswahili experts around the globe to share ideas on how further we could realize the language's potential to greater heights nationally and globally. The symposium also aimed at recognizing and acknowledging literary and artistic works of local Kiswahili authors and artists. It was a remarkable occasion that attracted the interest of most of the participants and urged the Government to continue with the practice. There are a number of various avenues that could be examined in the language. Hence, we should strengthen our determination to ensure proper harmonization and coordination of the development and use of Kiswahili that could aptly accord its wide status as the language of formal and non- formal communication in the EAC Partner States.

Honourable Speaker,

It is evident that our Community has the potential for speedy growth that will place it as one of the most powerful economic blocs in the world. More efforts now should be directed to the consolidation of the Single Customs Territory that will enable the faster clearance of goods and a more effective Customs regime. Likewise, we need to step up efforts towards full implementation of the Common Market Protocol to stimulate production and investment projects that encourage job creation, especially in industrialisation, innovation, SMEs and Tourism. The small and medium scale enterprises sector embodies tremendous potential and hence requires considerable support to generate local employment with dual effect of curbing employment problem on one hand and boosting economy on the other.

EALA's work is vital in creating legislative contexts that will affect the promotion of business environment for value- added production and exports. It is high time for EALA to hasten the pace towards making key legislations that shall further anchor the East African Monetary Union Protocol. A strong financial regulatory framework is equally important in order to isolate our economies from illicit activities including money – laundering. Together, we need to improve the

Transportation Infrastructure and ICT to facilitate and streamline trade and other interactions among our people as essential tools to rapid development. We should add more efforts in aiming at deeper EAC integration by removing the crucial impeding challenges.

There is a need for the Assembly to liaise with the National Parliaments of the Partner States on matters relating to the Community as stipulated in Article 49 of the East African Community Treaty. The existing synergy between the Assembly and the National Parliaments of the Member States that has given rise to the EAC Bureau of Speakers and other initiatives is extremely valuable. However, we should proceed with these efforts to the next level. Let me underscore the confidence that we have in you and in your capacity to positively impact on the current and future generations. On our part, we stand ready, as we have always been, to support your efforts in solidifying this integration. Once again I welcome you to Zanzibar. I wish you fruitful deliberations and great success for the remaining part of the sitting.

Despite that you have been in session for a week, I take this opportunity today to declare the Plenary sitting officially open.

Thank you for your kind attention.