

EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY



EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Report of the First Annual General Meeting and Launch of the
Eastern Africa Parliamentary Alliance for Food Security and
Nutrition**

15th to 17th April 2019

Mount Meru Hotel, Arusha, Tanzania

*Tabled by Hon. Dr. Woda
on 14/5/19.*

PARLIAMENT
OF KENYA
LIBRARY

Clerk's Chambers
EALA Wing
EAC Headquarters
Arusha, Tanzania

May 2019

1. Background Information

African leaders committed through the Malabo Declaration, to improve food security and nutrition, and in particular, to eliminate child under-nutrition in Africa. Recent data from the State of Food Insecurity (SOFI) suggest that after a continuous improvement, the food security and nutrition situation has worsened in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly, in Eastern Africa – most notably in situation of conflict and civil insecurity and conflict combined with droughts or other extreme weather events.

Evidence has shown that food security and nutrition indicators have significantly improved in countries where food and nutrition programmes and projects are grounded on appropriate laws, policies, strategies and sound investments. The critical role of Parliamentarians in advancing food security and nutrition agenda makes them important partners in achieving food and nutrition security. This has galvanized several Parliamentarians' initiatives and there currently is an increased momentum for legislators' action to achieve Food Security and Nutrition by 2030. These initiatives include, but not limited to:

- i. Memorandum of Understanding between FAO and the Pan African Parliament (PAP) for the support to the PAP alliance for Food Security and Nutrition (PAPA-FSN); and
- ii. The Global Parliamentary Summit against Hunger and Malnutrition, co-organized by FAO, the Spanish Parliament, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) AND THE Latin American and the Caribbean Parliamentary Front against Hunger on 29-30 October 2018 in Madrid.

In November 2017, Members of Parliaments from six Eastern African countries gathered in Kigali with support from FAO, to discuss the role of lawmakers in ensuring food and nutrition security and foster the support of Members Parliament to ending hunger and malnutrition in the sub-region. The participant of that meeting committed to establish national Alliances in each country and to form a sub-regional platform that will promote cross border sharing of experience and best practices. A follow up meeting held in Mombasa, Kenya in November, 2018 to deepen the discussion on Eastern African perspective on legislative actions for improving FSN and pave that way for institutionalization of a sub-regional alliance of Parliamentarians. The Mombasa meeting agreed on the creation of the Eastern Africa Parliamentary Alliance or Food Security and Nutrition (EAPA FSN) and to hold the first annual meeting of the General Assembly, which will also provide an opportunity to officially launch the Alliance in early 2019.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the 1st Annual General Meeting of the Assembly was to follow up both the 2017 and 2018 dialogue and to finalize the institutionalization process of the EAPA FSN. The specific objectives were:

- i. Discuss the Parliamentary actions for ending hunger and malnutrition in Eastern Africa;
- ii. Validate the EAPA FSN founding document;
- iii. Elect the Executive Committee members; and
- iv. Provide capacity building training on the voluntary guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure and right to food.

3. Participants

The meeting was attended by two MPs from each of the 9 Eastern African Countries, namely; Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda as well as the RECs namely; EAC and IGAD. In addition, there was one clerk from each National Assembly and Regional Parliaments. Likewise, there were officials from FAO, IFAD, UNICEF and RUFORUM.

4. Workshop Proceedings

The First Annual General Meeting and Launch of the Eastern Africa Parliamentary Alliance of Food Security and Nutrition was held in the following proceedings:

4.1 Adoption of the draft EAPA FSN founding document

The AGM considered and adopted the Founding Document for the Eastern African Parliamentary Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition (EAPA -FSN). The Founding document is hereby attached as Annex 1.

4.2 Election of the Executive Committee of the EAPA FSN

After adoption of the EAPA FSN founding document, the AGM elected the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee comprises five Members: Three Members elected from the National Assemblies forming the Alliance and Two Members representing the Regional Parliaments (RECs). The Executive Committee will hold its mandate for the period of two years. The following is the Executive Committee elected by the AGM:

- i. Hon. Dr. Abdi Ali Hassan (Somalia): Chairperson
- ii. Hon. Agaba Abbas (Uganda): Vice Chairperson
- iii. Hon. Dr. Woda Jeremiah (EALA) General Secretary
- iv. Hon. Deng Tong (South Sudan) Member
- v. Absent (IGAD) Member

4.3 Official Opening and Launch of the EAPA FSN

The opening of the AGM and launching of the Founding Documents were officially made by the Speaker of the Parliament of Tanzania, Rt. Hon. Job Yustino Ndugai. Before his remarks, there was a welcoming remark by Hon. Mathias Kasamba, the Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture, Tourism and Natural Resources of EALA.

4.3.1 Remarks by Hon. Mathias Kasamba

Hon. Mathias Kasamba, the Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture, Tourism and Natural Resources of the East African Legislative Assembly thanked FAO, AU and other development partners for their dedicated efforts towards fighting hunger and malnutrition. He appealed to all National MPs to continue examining how much their governments are allocating towards Agriculture and Nutrition Sectors as per the Malabo Declaration.

Hon. Kasamba informed the meeting that, the Committee of Agriculture, Tourism and Natural Resources of EALA undertook an oversight activity in all the partner states to liaise with stakeholders on the budgetary enhancement in the Agricultural Sector. He challenged the MPs and delegates present to focus more on some key areas highlighted below:

- i. Parliaments should collaborate with Ministry of Agriculture Agencies to mobilise masses into Food and Nutrition Security;
- ii. Observe strict implementation of the planned activities;
- iii. Focus a lot on the mind-set change and readiness for majority communities that are under threat of malnutrition;
- iv. The Regional Economic Blocs like the EAC and IGAD should be more committed to push for budgetary enhancement in member states; and
- v. Access to food should be unlimited to allow food reach all places it's needed.

4.3.2 Official Opening by Rt. Hon. Speaker of United Republic of Tanzania

The Speaker of the Parliament of Tanzania Rt. Job Ndugai officially opened the Annual General Meeting and launched the t the Eastern Africa Parliamentary Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition. In his opening remarks, the Rt. Hon. Ndugai thanked FAO and other Development Partners for their endless efforts in the fight against hunger all over the world. He hailed the idea of forming an Alliance of Parliamentarians specifically for food security and nutrition in East Africa. The Rt. Hon. Speaker explained that ending hunger need joint efforts because the problem needs to be addressed by all stakeholder in a mult sector approach.

The Rt. Hon. Ndugai mentioned that Parliamentarians have a big role to play in this matter using their oversight and budgetary functions in their parliaments. Parliaments enacts laws, passes budgets and have the role of overseeing what government does and the policies they make. In this matter, the Rt. Hon. Speaker called the participating parliaments to take seriously the issues of food security and nutrition in their countries. He reiterated that there is no development when people are hungry. We will not realize peace and security when there is no food, likewise, we cannot depend on people from outside our region for our food. Food security

should be priority number one for any family/household and for any nation as a bigger family.

The Rt. Ndugai also expressed his concern that whereas there may be hunger on one area of the same country or region, you may find there is a plenty of food without market in another part. Therefore, he urged that we need to improve infrastructure that will facilitate food supply in the region. He also called governments to invest in storage facilities to reduce the post-harvest losses experienced in various parts of our countries.

The Rt. Hon. Ndugai warned of imminent hunger in the region sighting the extended dry spell that hit most parts of Eastern Africa whose rain pattern normally shows high rain peaks in the month of April. He expressed the need for improvement of agriculture by investing on irrigation instead of depending only on rain. On the other hand, Rt. Hon. Ndugai was expressed concern over the disappearance of donkeys within Tanzania and few parts of East Africa. He warned that if no actions are taken, we may observe the extinction of donkeys, something African cannot afford to, because donkeys are part and parcel of their history.

4.4 Presentation from Sub-Regional Co-Ordinator for Eastern Africa Parliamentary Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition.

Dr. David Chimimba Phiri, the FAO Sub-Regional Co-ordinator for Eastern Africa and Representative to the AU Commission and the UN Economic Commission for Africa, informed the meeting that at least 7.1 million households in the region were expected to experience food gaps in agro-pastoral areas during the October to December rainy seasons of 2019.

Dr Phiri urged countries to formulate and apply national and regional agricultural investment plans and other policies and legislative frameworks. He expressed his concerns over the slow speed at which governments' efforts to achieve a world without hunger and malnutrition by 2030. He mentioned the challenges that affect the efforts to address hunger in some of the African countries which include failure to put food security and nutrition on national agendas, lack of streamlined policies and legislation for land tenure and access to financial resources, conflicts, civil insecurity, terrorism, climate change, displacement and immigration.

4.5 Presentation on the Selected Areas to Focus on Food Security and Nutrition

Dr. Patrick Okori from the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics made a presentation on the selected areas which we should focus in addressing the problem of hunger in Africa. In achieving food security and improved nutrition in Eastern Africa by 2030 attention should be paid to some of the following areas:

- i. Build resilience to shocks, adaptation to climate change and strengthen institutional response mechanisms to handle disasters and address food insecurity more effectively.
- ii. Build capacity for monitoring of the goals, generation and dissemination of reliable data for policy information and action.
- iii. Harmonize governance of food security and nutrition policies for better coordination across sectors and stakeholders.

5. High Level Panel Discussion on Collaboration Between Parliamentarians and Development Partners on Food and Nutrition Security

The High-level Panel discussed the role of enhanced collaboration between parliamentarians and development partners in enhancing food and nutrition security and observed the following:

- i. Countries that were committed to the values and principles of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), and that effectively implemented their National Agriculture Investment Plans, performed better in successfully reducing food insecurity and malnutrition;
- ii. Members of the EAPA-FSN had the responsibility to strengthen commitments to the CAADP goals and to accelerate efforts towards formulating and implementing National and Regional Agricultural Investment Plans and other policies and legislative frameworks;
- iii. EAPA FSN need to ensure governments are on the right path to transform the agricultural sector from its existing rudimentary stage to a modern system, where the youth can benefit in terms of employment and investment;
- iv. East Africa Bloc is a net importer of maize, wheat and rice which worth \$2 billion a year. The resources used to import food can be directed towards other development projects if we will invest in agriculture.

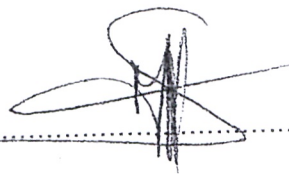
6. Operationalisation of EAPA-FSN

- i. It was resolved that the Executive Committee would be having its meetings twice a year and there will be one Annual General Meeting of EAPA-FSN. This year's AGM would be held for two days before the World Food Day on 16th October, 2019 in Kampala, Uganda; and
- ii. It was proposed that EAPA-FSN should have a secretariat to oversee and facilitate the parliamentarians Alliance. The AGM requested EAC/EALA or IGAD to host the Secretariat. Hon. Mathias Kasamba, on behalf of EALA informed the meeting that EALA/EAC can host the Secretariat.

7. Conclusion

On the last day, the participants undertook a guided tour of the EAC Headquarters where the EALA Public Relations Officer together with the EAC agricultural officer briefed the participants about the operations of the EALA and EAC.

1. Hon. Mathias Kasamba



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2. Hon. Dr. Woda Odok Jeremiah



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