**Monday, 10 August 2015**

*Parliament met at 11.30 a.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.*

*(The Uganda National Anthem.)*

*(The Kenya National Anthem.)*

 *(The East African Community Anthem.)*

PRAYERS

*(The Deputy Speaker, Mr Jacob Oulanyah, in the Chair.)*

*The House was called to order.*

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I welcome you to this special sitting. We have a great honour of hosting two presidents this morning but let me start by recognising our guests in the VIP gallery. We have the Cabinet Secretary of Foreign Affairs, National Treasury, Defence and Health from the Republic of Kenya.

We have the Leader of Majority in the Kenyan National Assembly and the Deputy Leader of Majority in the Kenya Senate. We have 13 Members of the National Assembly of Kenya, two Members of Senate and senior government officials.

We also have a delegation from Canada visiting Parliament of Uganda and amidst them we have Dr Opiyo Oloya, a renowned political commentator in Uganda but based in Canada. Please, join me in welcoming them. (*Applause)*

We also have in the Distinguished Strangers’ Gallery the following Ambassadors and High Commissioners: His Excellency Major General (Rtd) Geoffrey Okanga, High Commissioner of Kenya in Uganda; His Excellency Frank Mugambage, High Commissioner of Rwanda in Uganda; His Excellency Ladislaus Columban Komba, High Commissioner of Tanzania in Uganda; His Excellency Samuel Laute Laminsuk, Ambassador of South Sudan in Uganda; We have His Excellency Jean Bosco Barege, Ambassador of Burundi in Uganda; His Excellency John Chrysostom Alintuma Nsambu, Ambassodor of Uganda in Ottawa, Canada; His Excellency Ambassador Angelina Wapakhabulo, Ambassador of Uganda in Nairobi, Kenya; His Excellency Prof. Katatumba, Honorary Consular of Pakistan in Uganda. They have all come to observe the address of His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta.

Your Excellency, the President of Uganda, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni; Your Excellency, the President of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta; Your Excellency, the Vice President, Edward Kiwanuka Ssekandi; the Prime Minister and Leader of Government Business; The Leader of the Opposition; I should add, we have the President of the UN General Assembly as a member of this House, hon. Sam Kutesa; (*Applause)* Honourable Members of Parliament and all distinguished guests this morning.

Your Excellency, Uhuru Kenyatta, I wish to welcome you and all the other dignitaries in your various capacities to this special sitting of the Parliament of Uganda.

Honourable members, today we shall proceed in accordance with Rule 10 recognising the presence of His Excellency the President of Uganda and Rule 210 recognising the presence of a foreign dignitary addressing this Parliament.

Immediately after my communication, I will invite His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda to make his comments. Thereafter, he will invite President Uhuru Kenyatta to address Parliament. *(Applause)*

Your Excellency, for the avoidance of doubt, I normally like to recast the rules so that we are clear on how we are going to proceed. This comes from experience from my members. *(Laughter)*

Rule 10 says, “*(1) There shall be a Chair of State for the President in the House. (2)The House shall be called to order and stand in silence whenever the President enters or leaves the House. (3)The President may be accompanied in the House by an Aide-de-camp.”*

It continues and says, *“(4)The President, while occupying the Chair of State –(a) may make a presidential statement, which shall be heard in silence and not followed by any comment or question; (b)shall not otherwise participate in the proceedings of the House in any way.”* (*Laughter*)

The rule that governs a visiting dignitary, like we have President Uhuru Kenyatta is Rule 210(2): *“Distinguished persons from within or without the nation may be allowed by the Speaker to address the House on any matter of importance.”* President Uhuru Kenyatta being a President, Rule 10 also applies to him. He must be heard in silence. *(Laughter)*

Your Excellency, Article 7 (a) of the East African Community Treaty emphasises a people-centred and market driven cooperation. Parliament of Uganda appreciates the efforts of the Heads of State of the East African Community in fostering stronger collaboration within the region and fast-tracking the process of regional integration for sustainable development.

Parliament of Uganda also recognises that peace and security are a prerequisite to the attainment and safeguarding of sustainable development in the region. It will, therefore, spare no effort to play its role in supporting regional efforts towards fighting insecurity and terrorism within the region and further abroad.

To that effect, Your Excellences, this Parliament has ratified all the pacts that you signed. Therefore, they are now fully constituted in Uganda. Several initiatives that the presidents have taken, this Parliament has had the opportunity to act on them and where necessary ratify them; to give support to the thinking and aspirations of the leaders of the region.

Honourable members, join me in appreciating the contributions of the Heads of State of Uganda, Kenya and Burundi in ensuring peace and security in Somalia. *(Applause)*

In line with the above, I wish on behalf of the Parliament of Uganda and the people of Uganda, to express our solidarity with the Government and the people of Kenya. We stand with them and continue to stand with them in relation to all scrapes to the security including terrorist attacks that have shaken that country for a while now. These have bedevilled the country and affected the region as a whole.

Honourable members, I ask you to join me in congratulating President Uhuru Kenyatta, the Government and the people of Kenya for successfully hosting President Barrack Obama when he visited Kenya. *(Applause)*

I believe honourable members and the nation are anxiously waiting to hear what Your Excellency has to present to this country. It is now my singular honour and pleasure to invite you, Your Excellency, to say a few words and invite His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta. *(Applause)*

11.45

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA (Gen. (Rtd) Yoweri Kaguta Museveni):** The Rt Hon. Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Jacob Oulanyah, His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta and the First Lady of Kenya - they were talking about the Vice-President but I do not see him - Rt Hon. Prime Minister, honourable ministers, honourable Members of Parliament and all other dignitaries; and the Rt Hon. Leader of Opposition –*(Laughter)–* although it is my task to make sure that in the next Parliament, there will be less opposition. *(Laughter)*

Your Excellency, Uhuru Kenyatta, the issue about integration of Africa is centred on two issues: one of them is prosperity. How can we ensure prosperity for our people? Prosperity in a modern context and prosperity based on production.

When you produce, you must sell. When you sell, somebody should buy. If you produce and nobody buys, you will not thrive; you will not be prosperous. Therefore, when we talk of integration, we are talking about the prosperity of the families, Africa and business groups in Africa. We are trying to create space for these people to be prosperous. That is why integration is not just a fashion; it is a necessity.

The second point about integration is strategic security. These days, the Americans are talking about superiority on land, at sea, in the air and in space. They say they want to gain superiority in all those four dimensions. Where does that leave Africa? How will Africa exist in that type of situation where somebody is superior in all those four dimensions?

We are here just like these insects which eat sugar. They are called *ebinyomo* in *Luganda*. You look at them but they do not see you. You are like God in Heaven while they are down there.

Therefore, when His Excellency Uhuru Kenyatta is here, we are very pleased. This is because we get time to discuss more of those issues. *(Applause)*

More importantly, when President Uhuru Kenyatta came to power, because he is conscious of these two points, he immediately solved one of our problems. This is the movement of goods from Mombasa to Kampala.  *(Applause)*Before he became President, it would take a container of goods 18 days to move from Mombasa to Kampala now it takes three days. *(Applause)*

This is on account of the steps he took to convince the Kenyan authorities and officials that goods moving faster to Uganda is good for Uganda and for Kenya as well.

I salute his contribution in that area. *(Applause)* We are going to build the Standard Gauge Railway together with Kenya and once it is complete, it will take 24 hours for a container to move from Mombasa to Kampala. It will no longer take three days but one day.

Therefore, it is with a lot of pleasure that I invite His Excellency Uhuru Kenyatta to come and address the Parliament of Uganda. I did not know that you are still staying in a *Akafunda - (Laughter) -* Swahili is *Kubanana.* This Chamber – this where I have a problem with many of my colleagues here, because what they call history, I call it current affairs.

There is big misunderstanding. This Parliament was built for 82 people. The Members of Parliament in 1962 were just 82. You are now almost 400 - 500 Members of Parliament! That is subject for another day. *(Laughter)*

It is my pleasure you Excellency to invite you to come and say words of wisdom to the honourable Members of Parliament. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

11.52

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA (Mr Uhuru Kenyatta):** *Asante*. The Rt Hon. Speaker, Your Excellency President Yoweri Museveni, First Lady Janet Museveni, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, Rt Hon. Leader of the Opposition, honourable Members of Parliament, distinguished ladies and gentlemen. Let me begin by saying that it is a great pleasure and indeed, an honour, on behalf of my Government and the people of Kenya to be given the opportunity to address this august House.

I speak to you today not only as a friend but one of your closest neighbours and indeed, steadfast friend in a turbulent world, as well as a committed partner in our historic task of building a lasting union that shall not only be secure but also prosperous.

Indeed, it is my intention today to try and share with you a little bit of what I see as a destiny that awaits us, as East Africans. I do so, so that we can be strengthened by the hope that the future stands to bring.

However, more than that, we can in solidarity stand together and defend the future with all the arms of our collective strength. To attain that bright future, however, it demands that we pay heed to where we have come from, to what has forged us into independent and ambitious Africans of Kenya and Uganda and indeed, of East Africa.

Mr Speaker, we rose as independent nations from the ruins and carnage of colonialism; from the damage to our bodies and minds by the colonisers; even before them, the enslaver had inflicted damage to us to try and break our spirit; from these considerable attempts to permanently undermine our sense of self-worth and our independent spirit. However, as Africans, we did not break. There had been civilisations for millennium throughout Africa before the colonial misfortune came upon us. Our people had ruled themselves; inventing, innovating social formulae that became the traditions, underlying humane and just society.

Our people had traded with one another, explored each other’s lands and signed treaties of peace with one another, for generations without count. It also raised brave warriors, ready to make the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of their people.

From these enduring qualities, we rejected and our fore fathers defeated colonialism. Having done so, we did not go back to relive the nations of the past. Instead, we forged new nation states, expanded our sense of national identity and adopted grander visions that had never been known before. The greatest of these is the Organisation of African Union (OAU), now the African Union whose goal for a half a century has been to erase the borders between us that were drawn in distant imperial capitals.

Here in East Africa, our own East African Community with its great East African dream, is becoming realised more concretely as one of the fastest integrating regions in Africa and indeed, in the world.

Kenya and Uganda as each other’s trading and investing partners are at the heart of this integration. Northern corridor integration projects have led the way; an example has been mentioned by President Museveni is the Standard Gauge Railway line, with construction starting in Mombasa. It is progressing on schedule. On its completion, it will dramatically reduce cargo transport costs by at least 60 per cent, to the benefits of Ugandan businesses, farmers and consumers alike. *(Applause)*

Kenya is also expanding the port of Mombasa and taking strong steps to rapidly improve its efficiency to global standards. We are also going ahead with the development of other projects, which will offer the region yet another world class outlet for its goods.

These infrastructure efforts are driven by the recognition that they are not just for Kenya. We recognise that these programmes are for Uganda and our region; Uganda and East Africa. Together, we must prosper. *(Applause)*

Honourable members, we are also working to exponentially increase power generation in both our countries. We are looking to making transmission and interconnectivity reliable and broadly accessible.

We have also agreed to build pipelines for crude oil and refined petroleum products and Kenya will join you, alongside other East African partners, in the development of an oil refinery here in Uganda whose impact *–(Applause)-* will be regional.

Our governments have worked together to ensure that our borders are firm or efficient and people-friendly, meaning that our citizens, businesses and investors are becoming even closer. These important initiatives are only a start to a long journey that we must undertake together. These initiatives, and our destination, to put it simply, are to ensure that as a region, we have dignity; we are secure; and we live as prosperous people governed democratically and justly. How we achieve it, is by understanding and playing our respective roles, as branches of Government, together with our citizenry, the political opposition, civil society and the private sector. We all have a role to play. I suggest to you, that our different efforts at this time in our history must be united in seeking above all else prosperity for our people.

Every endeavour we undertake and every dream that we have are impacted by a single reality. About 50 years into our independence, we are yet to fully achieve the socio-economic aspirations of our people. This is not to say that we have not made progress but to acknowledge that much more still needs to be done. Changing this reality is our generational responsibility.

Mr Speaker, in our lifetime and in the lifetimes of many sitting here, we have been witness to the fastest sustained economic growth in human history. Its benefits have been felt mostly in Asia and in particular in the countries of the greater Indian Ocean realm. We have observed, from a far, countries travel from wretched poverty while many of our people still suffer. These countries have managed to move from poverty to great wealth in just two generations. We must look at this and see our own future.

We today are growing at the same pace as the Asian tigers did at the time of our independence. We today understand that the only way to catch up with them is to produce more goods and services that are globally competitive, to trade more with each other regionally and to access exponentially greater amounts of investment. Our partnership as countries is critical in making this happen.

A connected Kenya and Uganda today are part of that Indian Ocean realm whose markets, investment and technological know-how have changed the power balances in the world. We must harness an African interior with a rising middle class, precious natural resources and society is eager for economic transformation.

Our political, economic and security partnership will be the key to ensuring that East Africa becomes the hub and brings these two worlds together. Adding to this dynamic access, would be the deepening of our trade and investment ties with traditional markets of Europe and North America.

The coming East Africa will be a leading global choice for an investment because of our determination to forge a single uninterrupted market governed by business rules that allow enterprises to be secure and cost efficient*. (Applause)* Our growing youth population will draw the world’s manufacturers, bankers, technological companies and a host of others. The education that our youth are acquiring as well as the connectivity to the world and our common aspirations to a better tomorrow will give us a globally competitive labour market.

However, honourable members, in order for this project to prosper, we must secure it from its enemies and detractors. In this task, we will draw shared purpose and make it stronger by bonds of brotherhood between the people of East Africa. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, what better examples can I give of our own brotherhood than our very own ex-Vice President, the hon. Moody Awori, whose brother is none other than hon. Aggrey Awori *–(Laughter) -* a distinguished former Member of Parliament here in Uganda – oh! He is coming back! *(Laughter)*

Our people are to be found on both sides of the border interacting and living together as one. There are couriers who straddle both sides of Kenya and Tanzania at our borders in Sibania, the Masai and Namanga, the Bagisu and Samia on both sides of the Kenya-Uganda boarder.

Indeed, Mr Speaker, who can forget Stephen Kiprotich? When he won the marathon gold in 2012 at the London Olympics, many Kenyans at once celebrated yet another one of our runners *–(Laughter) –* winning another gold medal, only for it to turn out that he was a Ugandan. *(Laughter)*

Mr Speaker, this is who we are? A people virtually indistinguishable from one another. It is such shared identities and people-to-people links that tie our partnership. We will need this partnership more than ever before in the coming years. We have challenges almost on every side.

Mr Speaker, our armies stand shoulder to shoulder in Somalia, battling a foe whose aim is the destruction of hope and the bitter division of our people according to faith. These extremists use faith as an excuse for their evil ambition to enslave and conquer our people. However, we must continue to forge an even more powerful security framework to ensure that they do not have their space nor the space to operate in our region.

On the same note, Mr Speaker, our neighbours in South Sudan, Burundi and Congo are also facing major security challenges. Our dreams of becoming a prosperous hub that connects us to the world will never become a reality, if our neighbours continue suffering from serious instability. Kenya and Uganda must therefore work closely together, to forge the security and stability that can ultimately be turned into sustained peace for our region. (*Applause*)

This is particularly true of Burundi within the East African Community. We are all working hard to secure the peace in Burundi and we will remain on the frontline to ensure that it is realised.

At home both in Kenya and Uganda, the corrupt, criminals and the purveyors of ethnic hatred continue to accost us. We must build robust institutions that can face and defeat these enemies of our progress. Corruption, especially, damages our ability to grow at the pace we desire. We, in Kenya and Uganda, must remain steadfast in fighting this vice because it is one battle that we have no choice but to win. *(Applause)*

We must win if we are indeed to be a single uninterrupted market. Our institutions will need to converge around common standards of excellence and effectiveness. This shall require our parliamentarians; our respective judiciaries; our respective agencies that fight corruption; and our public; to remain in constant contact, guided by a strong desire to keep pace with one another and to win over this vice.

Mr Speaker, let me be clear; these challenges are the other side of the coin to peace and prosperity. We cannot run away from them. We must own these challenges because it is in solving them that we will forge the countries and region that we desire.

Mr Speaker, please do not take my comment on them as an occasion to engage in the often negative tendency of too many of us lamenting as if we are helpless. We are not helpless. *(Applause)* I stand before a Parliament representing the incredible vitality and desire for self-improvement of the Ugandan people. I am President of a nation that shares precisely these attributes.

On the subject of the role of the young people and our future, I would like to be especially clear. They are not, as we are often told by outsiders, a youth bulge that threatens war and misery. Instead, our youth are tomorrow’s entrepreneurs and workers in world-class enterprise. Our youth pray only to make an honest wage for an honest day’s work. They are also a brave multitude that will defend our communities, countries and region from terrorists and criminals.

I, personally, have no doubt that it is not gold or oil that lies beneath our soil that will make us wealthy; it is our young people. *(Applause)* We have indeed in them, the world’s most precious resource.

Just two weeks ago, I co-hosted a global entrepreneurship summit, and young men and women, from every corner of our continent and indeed all over the world were represented. They had in common, budding entrepreneurial success that came from their ability to recognise opportunity, where most others see challenges.

The spirit and ability to transform our region is no better exemplified than by the story of Clare Masinde, a young woman who has brought hope to thousands of women, by offering a way out of obesity and helping them to restore good health. She has done this by building a fat-lose laboratory in East Africa, and the business has grown by 40 per cent in the last couple of years and is spreading throughout Kenya and East Africa.

There is a story of Michael Macharia, who at 25 years of age founded Seven Seas Technology that now has over 100 employees in East, West and Southern Africa, and has pushed outside of Africa, through acquisitions and partnerships. This business is testament to the power of a Pan African and global vision by young East Africans.

Here in Uganda, large multinationals like Coca-Cola and Pepsi have been given a run for their money by Yasser Ahmed of Riham Soda. *(Applause)* Along the way, he has produced over 1,000 new jobs for Ugandans, and shown that we have what it takes to be competitive and ambitious enough to take on global players.

Our historic task is to make the way for them and for tens of thousands of other young people yearning to join them, and we will do this by removing the barriers to their building, thriving and growing enterprises.

We will know we have succeeded when taxes are low enough to allow them compete and grow; where contracts are enforceable and where rent-seeking and bureaucratic red tape, are made impediments of the past.

Honourable members, it is your duty, as legislators to help us bring this reality into being. I urge you to regard this duty of ensuring widespread economic participation in this era of our history to be as important as the drive to broaden political participation.

Economic marginalisation is not merely the citizens’ distance from Government services. It is also the inability for them to have a good idea and to get it through the painstakingly difficult bureaucratic processes of moving an idea to a product in the market. We must help them and we must make it easier for them to do so. *(Applause)*

When all branches of Government and indeed all society works together to achieve this vision, we will unleash a great wealth-building machine. Our strong economic growth will transform into a vibrant eco-system, productive enterprises that will provide decent employment and hope for all.

Honourable members, the African saying we all know states that, if you want to go fast, go alone; but if you want to go far, go with others. *(Applause)* This proverb applies to our East African Community. We have travelled far to achieve a Common Market and a single Customs Union yet these were but transitional stages to an integral part of a subsequent Monetary Union and ultimately a Political Federation.

The different parts are all interconnected and in the long run, we need one another to achieve them. Their implementation will mean the attainment of a grand Pan-African dream of eliminating the remnants of colonial boundaries and bringing our people together. The federation that will emerge will be prosperous and secure. It will be a powerful member of the community of nations. It will be able to defend our interests much more robustly and more successfully than we can do individually at the moment. We can manage this movement and we can move together.

To that end, I wish to commend President Yoweri Museveni for his steadfast dedication to the cause of an East African Federation. (*Applause*) He has inspired us, leaders and indeed millions of other East Africans. I hope that all of us, and particularly the leadership of our countries, truly understand that alone we will only go so far but together we can scale the global heights and bring the African back to the peak of the achievement he enjoyed when he looked on the rest of the world from the mighty pyramids.

Ladies and gentlemen, as I come to close, I cannot finish without speaking of the future of democracy in our region. For the last half century, it has had trouble flourishing in our region, frustrated by ups and downs of building new countries from rotten colonial foundations, contending with the geopolitics of the Cold War and in some instances selfish leadership. However, this does not mean that democracy is alien to us; no, not by any means.

The values of open consultation, debate and accountability of leadership are old here in Africa. The councils of elders who guided us, counsellors to kings and queens of the past who spoke up for the people without fear of censure, the long lasting elders consultations under trees seeking wise and wide consensus; our democratic sensibility is no foreign import. It is part of us. It is a central part of our diverse cultures and now only needs to be updated to the new national and original identities we have built since independence.

So it was in the past and I believe so it shall be in the future that even as we recognise this truth, we also know from bitter experience in recent global history that attempts to impose democracy have also led to mass atrocity and state failure. There is no appropriate one-size-fits-all approach neither should there be any attempts to turn countries into similar copies. (*Applause*) In our region, there are those countries that have been torn apart by violence brought on by deep ethnic and racial enmity. They now seek, above all, stability, security and economic growth. This is understandable and we must support them.

In time, however, they too must embrace a full democratic character that is part of our African heritage; –(*Applause*)– that is to say, honourable members, that even as we all tread different roads, our destination is to become full democracies whose leaders are subjected to the people’s will as it is expressed by the ballot.

Kenya has travelled this difficult path, at great cost and pain at times, but we have worked to internalise the principle that political opposition is not enmity. (*Applause*) However, this is not only a principle limited to those who are in government or authority. The Opposition itself must not exploit democratic freedoms and its legitimate platform –(*Laughter*)– to try and delegitimise government and undermine the peoples’ will. It should be patriotic and loyal to the stability and effectiveness of government even as it opposes policies and offers different remedies. (*Laughter*.)

Democracy does not mean that we should make political and civil society careers of using distortions and narrow lenses and even sometimes outright lies –(*Applause*)– to paint our countries as failures; they are not. It does not mean campaigning on crude ethnic terms to divide people and even trigger violence so that they may be rewarded with government positions. We must, honourable members, be able to make political progress without destroying our countries in the process. (*Applause*)

Mr Speaker, a living democracy is anchored in love of country, respect for those with different views, an adherence to debate based on facts, and a willingness to learn from one another. This is the African character which we must all embrace; we must embrace it fully as East Africans.

Mr Speaker and honourable members, let me take this opportunity to also thank Uganda, from the bottom of my heart, for the sacrifices that you have made so willingly in the course of regional security. There are Ugandan heroes outside this country today who are sacrificing to make our region safer. Kenya applauds them and stands with them and we pray that they may return home safe. (*Applause*)

Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate President Museveni’s Government for producing such a successful presidency of the United Nations General Assembly. (*Applause*) Hon. Sam Kutesa deserves special applause for so ably guiding the General Assembly as its president during this historic 69th Session. Under his watch, the 193 members of the United Nations agreed on the Post-2015 Development Agenda covering the ambitious Sustainable Development Goals.

East Africa’s contribution to this achievement has been immense. Kenya is proud as the tough debates that went into crafting the Sustainable Development Goals and the Post-2015 Development Agenda were co-chaired by the Kenyan Ambassador to the United Nations in New York. Such achievements, Mr Speaker, show the heights we can achieve as a region when we work together and aim to change the world for the better.

Mr Speaker and honourable members, I would like to take this opportunity once again to thank you for according me this opportunity to share some small views together with you and once again, in my conclusion, restate my willingness to work closely with President Museveni, the Government and the people of Uganda –(*Applause*)– to ensure that East Africa’s children enjoy happier, more peaceful and prosperous lives. I thank you and God bless you. (*Applause*)

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Your Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta. I am sure His Excellency President Yoweri Museveni would like to make a comment on this. If not, then we will close.

Honourable members, let me take this opportunity on yours and my behalf to thank President Uhuru Kenyatta for the speech –(*Applause*)– and to thank President Museveni for making President Kenyatta available to us this morning. (*Applause*) I was having a light moment with President Uhuru Kenyatta that in the last weeks, I have had difficulty in filling this House and today because he has come, I have more than I needed to do business last week. (*Laughter*) So I might have to ask President Museveni to extend President Uhuru’s stay so that we are able to transact business.

Mr President, you commented on the *kafunda* status of this House and I think it was a strong statement. That is why today I do not have the Opposition, the Frontbench or the Backbench; I had to order free sitting for every Member to fit. I see ministers at the back, at the front and I see strong NRM people on my left. I only do not see any strong Opposition person on my right –(*Laughter*)– oh! She is strong indeed. I had not seen hon. Cecilia Ogwal, who is the Chief Opposition Whip, sitting on my right.

Honourable members, we should not miss the significance of this sitting. It is a symbolic significance of a meeting of this nature that when it comes to a country or the East African Cooperation, even if physically we might sit differently, in our minds this symbolic significance must be emphasised. It does not matter which side of the House we sit, front or back bench, Opposition or Government, we are all one in delivering the purpose for the people of Uganda and the region. That is why it is of symbolic significance that we should sit the way we have sat today, and I thank President Uhuru Kenyatta for making this possible.

Honourable members, Prof. Caroline Elkins’ writing on the Mau Mau rebellion in Kenya, in doing an assessment of the violations of the people’s rights that took place during that war, said this: *“A country cannot become a nation without its past but the past should not be used as a way of dividing people but as a way of uniting them because the common joys and sorrows must cement unity to create nations.”*

This history is important as emphasised by President Kenyatta. We should never, for any reason, misrepresent our past because if we do, if we distort our past and deliberately misrepresent our past, we will distort our future and that is something we cannot afford to gamble with. No reason is big enough for us to misrepresent our history. The past, therefore, of essence must be a great resource for us and for our investments in our shared future.

President Kenyatta’s coming today has demonstrated that the border that divides us is no deeper than the blood that connects us as a people, than a history that connects us as a people. Therefore, we should celebrate this. After all, the white man who dominated us for years told us unity is strength - divided we fall - but they used it the other way. They sat somewhere in Europe and balkanised us and divided us so that we can become weak. It is up to us to recognise that we have been weak, divided and therefore we must come together to collapse the borders and the walls and build bridges to connect our countries and people.

Because the colonialists knew that when they divide us we will fall, since colonialism Africa has been in free fall; we have been falling freely. It is only the efforts of people like President Yoweri Museveni and his counterparts in the East African region, who are now saying we must stop the free fall and come together, unite and become stronger. I congratulate you, President Museveni, for these efforts in making this vision realised in our own time, and President Uhuru Kenyatta for joining the team that will sharpen the cause for the East African cooperation and make it a reality in our own time. Thank you very much.

Honourable members, this has been a great morning and I find pain bringing this to a stop – (*Laughter*)– but I have to pave way for other business for the Presidents to finalise for our people of the region. I also do that with great honour, but I must use this moment to appeal to you, Members, that this same spirit we have shown today should extend to tomorrow afternoon, –(*Laughter*)– so that we are able to transact the urgent business. This is because my intention, which I will be implementing in consultation with the President, is to see if we can send the Members on recess soon to deal with other urgent matters as well. I will have to consult with His Excellency the President, who has to do that.

This special sitting will be adjourned but the ordinary sitting of the House will resume tomorrow at 2.00 p.m. Honourable members, at 2.00 p.m. tomorrow, let us be here and do that business. This special sitting therefore stands adjourned.

*(The East African Community Anthem.)*

*(The Kenya National Anthem.)*

*(The Uganda National Anthem.)*

*(The House rose at 12.36 p.m. and adjourned until Tuesday, 11 August 2015 at 2.00 p.m.)*