



COMMUNIQUE OF THE PARTICIPANTS ATTENDING EAST AFRICA LOCAL GOVERNMENT FORUM CONFERENCE FROM EALGA AND MINISTRIES RESPONSIBLE FOR LOCAL AND COUNTY GOVERNMENTS IN PARTNER STATES:

VENUE: FOUR POINTS SHERATON HOTEL ARUSHA, 7-8 FEBRUARY, 2022

1. Noting that one of the fundamental principles of the East African Community (EAC) is that the Community is people-centred and market-driven, as provided for in Article 7 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community;
2. Noting that Article 127(4) of the Treaty states “*The Secretary General shall provide the forum for consultations between the private sector, civil society organizations, other interest groups and appropriate institutions of the Community*” while Article 129 (2) requests the Council to “*establish modalities that would enable the business organizations or associations, professional bodies and the civil society in the Partner States to contribute effectively to the development of the Community*”
3. Noting that the Local/Sub National levels of Government are closest to the people and key stakeholders in the integration of citizens of the EAC, occupying an important place in the governance of the Member States and the integration process;
4. Noting that the EAC has four pillars namely; Customs Union, Common Market, Monetary Union and ultimately, the Political Federation, and that participation of citizens is fundamentally interdependent on reinforcing a common East African identity and in deepening and widening the integration process;
5. Noting that citizens have a right to timely, accurate information and communication on the EAC integration and cooperation processes and activities, and for the EAC Secretariat and the Ministries responsible for

EAC affairs to realize this, they need collaboration with the County and Local Governments;

6. Noting that the EAC integration, although designed to generate and realize economic benefits for the citizens of the region, is a political process requiring political will and the involvement of political actors at all levels. However, County and Local Governments can only succeed in enabling citizens to internalize the externalities of regional integration through building alliances with National states, the East African Legislative Assembly, the East African Community Secretariat, and other actors. This connectivity is essential in strengthening the role of County and Local Governments in the integration process in addition to empowering the citizens to participate from an informed position.
7. Noting that while the EAC is working to build connections with the County and Local Government sector, policies such as the East African Common Market Protocol (CMP) which will have far reaching implications on the regions local governments (on regulatory frameworks, revenue generation, service provision and trade management) and have been developed without consultation or feedback from the County and Local Governments.

We, the participants of the East Africa Local Government Forum Conference from the East African Local Governments Association (EALGA) and the Ministries responsible for County and Local Governments in the Partner States therefore resolve and recommend as follows:

- (i) The Memorandum of Understanding between the EAC and EALGA has been endorsed and now should be operationalised to provide the foundation for partnership and joint action including joint resource mobilisation for identified interventions by the EAC and EALGA that grow the EAC Agenda and build the capacity of EALGA as a representative regional body.
- (ii) EALGA and EALGF work towards ensuring that there is in place a functional platform/ system through which key regional policy and operational issues are discussed, agreed upon and advocated for.
- (iii) Establishment of comprehensive National Dialogue consultations to be carried out jointly between the, Ministries responsible for EAC Affairs in the Partner States, Ministries of Local Government, the Civil Society, Private Sector and Local Government Associations and umbrella bodies being EALGA members, in partner states.
- (iv) Formalization of the East Africa Local Government Forum at the EAC level, whereby EALGA Secretariat in cooperation with EAC and other

relevant partners will, through evidence based research, coordinate, monitor and support the operations of this forum to widen the space for consultations, discussions and sharing of information on decentralisation and other regional policies which pertain to Local/Sub National levels of Government in Partner States

- (v) Cooperate and mainstream the implementation of the EAC Integration process, in our institutions and partner with EALGA and other stakeholders to promote joint and or individual cross-border activities to enable citizens to be the drivers of regional integration and cooperation;
- (vi) Commit ourselves to quickly organise and roll out sessions of national dialogue consultations, to fast-track the regional policy formulation process;
- (vii) EALGA shall promote the EAC integration process in all levels of subnational level structures comprised of Local and County Governments in the EAC and ensure that the citizens of East Africa are made aware of the institutionalization and operationalization of the sustainability of the EAC.
- (viii) EALGA shall promote the agenda of Sustainable Urbanization in the Local and County Governments of member states in order to initiate dialogue and deliberations that will inform the agenda of the upcoming Commonwealth Local Government Conference in August, 2022.
- (ix) EALGA shall assist South Sudan to develop a Local and Regional Government Forum
- (x) Globally build strategic partnerships that are engaged in decision making with the EAC policy space so that they are overtime EALGA is reviewed more as partners and not just as lobbyists
- (xi) EALGA and EALGF to work towards building a case for the inclusion of a County and Local Government representative from each member country on the East African Assembly.
- (xii) Continue to strengthen the capacity of local and county governments to deliver key services in support of sustainable development and closer integration in the region. EALGF and EALGA should enhance its work with partners such as CLGF and VNGI, as well as donors and development partners in this regard, and in exploring ways of supporting EALGA and EALGF's vision to support Local and County Government to initiate dialogue and deliberations on issues facing citizens especially, informal ownership of land, matters of Building Permits, local economic development, youth engagement, and Citizen Participation in implementation of Local and County Government's budgets to mention but a few.

- (xiii) EALGA should support Local and County Governments among member states to overcome structural institutional challenges such as loss of institutional memory through change of leadership in local and county governments. This will include, among others, capacity building of technical persons in both Local and County Governments who are in civil service.
- (xiv) EALGA collaborates with National Local and County Governments' Forums in member states which are focusing on empowering and strengthening marginalized groups such as youth, women and persons with disabilities in leadership and should assist in facilitation of training and capacity building.
- (xv) There should be an Annual Consultative Forum for Decentralised and Devolved Institutions of Local Governance, hosted by the EAC to facilitate discussions with the EAC and monitor progress.

We acknowledge the President's Office Regional Administration and Local Government, Commonwealth Local Government Forum and the EALGA Secretariat, in coordinating, facilitating and supporting this Conference. We also thank the EU for their support. We do hereby express our appreciation and commit ourselves to be the Champions of this process for the good of the East Africans.

We, the participants, have agreed to designate the Chairperson EALGA to sign this Communiqué on our behalf witnessed by the Minister, President's Office regional and

Done at Arusha in the Republic of Tanzania, this 9th day February, 2022

Signed By:

Cllr. Innocent Uwimana
Chairperson,
EALGA

Hon Innocent Lugha Bashungwa
Minister/Chair - EALGF
PO – RALG, TANZANIA