

**OPENING REMARKS BY THE RT. HON 1ST DEPUTY PRIME
MINISTER AND MINISTER OF EAC AFFAIRS AT THE 2ND
ANNUAL EAST AFRICAN COURT OF JUSTICE JUDICIAL
CONFERENCE 26TH OCTOBER 2022 AT MESTIL HOTEL
KAMPALA**

The Rt Hon Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Uganda

The Hon chief justice of Republic of Uganda

The Hon Chief Justices of EAC Partner states

The Hon Deputy Chief justice of the Republic of Uganda

Judge president of the East African Court of Justice

The Minister of Justice and Constitutional affairs, Republic of
Uganda

The Hon Attorneys General of all the EAC Partner States

The chairperson of the EAC Council of Ministers

The Hon Ministers Responsible for EAC Affairs of all partner States

The Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly

The Secretary General of the East African Community

Hon members of the East African Legislative Assembly

Hon. Judges of the East African Court of Justice

Hon Judges from the national courts of Judicature

Former Judges and Registrars of the East African Court of Justice

Counsel to the Community

Members of the diplomatic corps

Permanent secretaries from ministries Responsible for EAC Affairs
of all Partner States

The Solicitor General of the Republic of Uganda

President of the Uganda Law Society

Technical staff

Distinguished delegates

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is yet another honour and opportunity to address you our dear guests on the occasion of the 2nd Annual East African court of Justice Judicial conference. On my behalf and on behalf of the people of Uganda, I welcome you all to Uganda.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the tireless efforts of every player, singularly and jointly, towards advancing the EAC regional integration agenda. I congratulate our friends from the Republic of Kenya for the successfully concluded presidential and Parliamentary elections and the constitution of the New Government. This is further of the commitment by the Republic of Kenya in nurturing and entrenching democracy. In the same spirit, I congratulate the Chief Justice and the Supreme Court of Kenya for having successfully handled the presidential election petition and on record time.

Our distinguished delegates, the East African Community (EAC) bloc has had its membership grown in heights and bounds especially with the recent admission of the Democratic Republic of Congo, culminating into an aggregate population of approximately 300 million persons. This calls for heightened and structured cooperation as members of the Community.

Dear delegates, the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community (hereinafter “the Treaty”) espouses Good Governance and rule of law as cornerstones to sound regional integration and development. The same Treaty provides for the establishment of the East African Court of Justice as a judicial organ of the Community. The core mandate of this court is the interpretation and application of the Treaty. This is very instrumental in consolidating the EAC regional integration agenda through enhancing access to justice and ultimately concretising investment.

We are convened here for three days to deliberate on the theme; **“Transforming access to justice in the East African community”** under the auspices of the East African Court of justice. This is an opportunity for us as to devise mechanisms for ensuring systematic dispensation of justice at both the national and regional levels. It is a Partner States obligation under Article 126 of the Treaty to enhance cooperation in legal and judicial matters through harmonization of legal trainings and certification, standardization of judgements of courts and publication of law reports for jurisprudential purposes. To this end, the EACJ has since its inception done a commendable job in passing judgements that have impacted Human rights jurisprudence within the region and beyond as well as strengthening the East Africa Community. It is therefore our noble obligation as citizens of the East African community to relentlessly support this court for the meaningful realization of the integration agenda.

Suffice to note that this conference seeks to strengthen collaboration between the national judiciaries and the East African court of Justice, increase awareness among the judges, judicial

officers and legal practitioners in the region on their role in enhancing access to justice by the citizenry, including the business community, who are most affected by cross-border engagements. Indeed, the EAC integration agenda is people driven and market centered. The two events are therefore a means of popularizing and bringing the Court closer to the people.

I'm fully aware that after this conference, the East African Court of justice shall hold its court session in Uganda where several cases have been cause-listed at both the First Instance and Appellate divisions of the Court. Enough preparations have been made and the government of Uganda shall provide all the requisite support to make the stay of both the judges and other court users and staff as comfortable as possible.

Distinguished delegates, Uganda is fully committed to supporting the East African Court of Justice and the East African Community integration agenda particularly through observing her obligations under the Treaty. It is our cardinal duty as citizens of Uganda to make the EAC regional integration a reality through entrenching the spirit of good governance and rule of law.

Colleagues, as I conclude, I take this opportunity invite you to maximally utilize your stay in Uganda by exploring a wide range of touristic sites including but not limited to the Source of the Nile on Jinja, Uganda Martyrs shrine in Namugongo, Wakiso, Kasubi tombs, a UNESCO site, the beautiful beaches at the shores of lake Victoria and above all enjoy the beautiful Pearl of Africa.

With that, I declare this conference officially opened and wish you fruitful deliberations.