



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF THE ASSEMBLY URGING THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS TO RECOMMEND THE PARTNER STATES TO ENHANCE GENDER EQUALITY IN ACCESS TO FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY IN THE COMMUNITY

*(Moved under Articles 49(2d), 59(1), 105, 110, 118 (h), 121 and 122 of the Treaty and
Rule 26 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly)*

WHEREAS under Chapter 18 of the Treaty all Partner States undertook to cooperate in the area of agriculture and food security with the overall objective to achieve food security and rational agricultural production within the Community;

WHEREAS under Articles 121 and 122 of the Treaty, the Partner States recognise the indispensable role of women in socio-economic development and in business and have committed, under (Article 5(3) (e) of the Treaty) to ensuring gender mainstreaming in all the Community's endeavours, in line with the principle of gender equality as one of the Fundamental Principles of the Community under Article 6 (d) of the Treaty;

AND WHEREAS Marginalised population groups such as women continue to bear the heaviest burden of food insecurity and malnutrition, as people around the globe, including in the EAC region struggle to end hunger and the devastating effects of malnutrition, despite the fact that more than enough food is produced to feed the global population;

RECOGNISING that all Partner States are parties to the the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) of 1966, which recognises the right to adequate food for everyone (Article 11, para. 1 and 2) and subscribed to to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, especially SDG 2 to “**end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture**” and SDG 5 to “**Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**”, particularly in relation to ending all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere and giving women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources;

FURTHER RECOGNISING that Partner States, together with other African countries recognise that nutrition is a major pillar of the continent's socio-economic development and subscribed to the Agenda 2063 whose Aspiration 1 calls for the promotion of a healthy and prosperous population and reducing malnutrition, as a foundation for Africa's socio-economic foundation, and committed to ending hunger under the 2014 Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agriculture Growth and Transformation;

APPRECIATING the various initiatives undertaken to ensure food and nutrition security, such as the Africa Regional Nutrition Strategy 2015 – 2025 (ARNS); the Declaration on Nutrition Security for Inclusive Economic Growth and Sustainable Development in Africa; the Resolution on the establishment of an Inter-African Centre for Food Science, Technology and Nutrition; the African Region Initiative for Stunting Elimination (ARISE 2025 initiative); the 6th EAC Development Strategy 2021/2022-2025/26 (which includes Food Security and Nutrition as one of the Strategic Development objectives of the Community); the EAC Food and Nutrition Security Policy (FNSP), 2016; the EAC Food and Nutrition Security Strategy 2019-2023; and, particularly the current EAC Food Security Action Plan 2019-2023 whose overachieving objective is to contribute to elimination of hunger, malnutrition, and extreme poverty in the East African region by the year 2023.

NOTING WITH CONCERN that despite the ever-increasing number of policy frameworks on addressing hunger and malnutrition, food insecurity remains one of the eminent threats confronting the EAC region (especially in its vast area facing persistent drought) and that women and girls are twice as likely to suffer from malnutrition as men and boys, due to a combination of biological, social and cultural factors, including limited access to productive resources (such as land, financial services, agricultural inputs and technologies), discriminatory socio-cultural norms that limit their ability to make autonomous decisions within their households and communities and food taboos that force women and girls to abstain from especially nutritious and beneficial foods during critical periods in their reproductive cycle (such as menstrual period, pregnancy, childbirth, and lactation);

FURTHER CONCERNED that food insecurity and malnutrition put mothers at greater risk of dying in childbirth and of delivering low-birth-weight babies who fail to survive infancy, subsequently, transferring the broad economic disadvantages of malnutrition in their own lives to the next generation, thereby perpetuating the vicious cycle of gender inequality in accessing food and nutrition security;

CONVINCED that it is necessary and urgent for the Community to enhance gender equality in access to food and nutrition security by considering women as potential agents of change for accelerated agricultural growth and transformation for shared prosperity and improved livelihoods in the Region;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY AS FOLLOWS: -

THAT in accordance with Article 49(2) (d) of the Treaty, the Assembly recommends to the Council of Ministers to:

- (a) Establish a gender sensitive regional food crisis response plan, including a regional food reserve that would cater for the needs of small-scale farmers and herders in drought-ravaged rural areas, especially women and children who are always the mostly affected disadvantaged population;
- (b) Mainstream gender in the implementation of the EAC Food and Nutrition Security Strategy 2019-2023 and the EAC Food Security Action Plan 2019-2023;
- (c) Urge the Partner States to put in place appropriate measures to address gender-based restrictions to agricultural land and other productive resources, to put an end to the existing discriminatory socio-cultural norms (including food taboos forced on women and girls) and promote positive and equal gender norms at the household and community level;
- (d) Urge the Partner States to enhance women's involvement in agribusiness and enterprises as well as participation in nutritious food production;
- (e) Urge the Partner States to integrate Nutrition Education into the school curricula to raise awareness and promote healthier consumption patterns and conduct outreach activities on the role of nutrition as a critical aspect of safe pregnancy and motherhood;
- (f) Urge Partner States to implement consistent and inclusive school-feeding programmes to ensure that both young girls and boys enrol, stay and perform well in school, especially for children in vulnerable circumstances.

Moved by:

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Seconded by:

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