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African Leaders' State of Africa Report

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Boston University

AFRICAN LEADERS

**STATE OF AFRICA
REPORT 2008**



**BOSTON UNIVERSITY
AFRICAN
PRESIDENTIAL
ARCHIVES AND
RESEARCH CENTER**

A P A R C

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APARC and Its Mission

Since the 1990s, a number of Sub-Saharan African countries have been making significant strides in furthering democratic and free-market reform. These changes reflect the vision and dynamism of the present generation of African leaders in those countries.

The African Presidential Archives and Research Center at Boston University (APARC) is collecting documents that chronicle this phase in Africa's development, taking a multidisciplinary approach to teaching about Africa, and

establishing a forum for African leaders to engage other political, business, academic, and public-sector leaders regarding Africa's global relationships.

To learn more about the center or to receive additional copies of this report, please contact the Boston University African Presidential Archives and Research Center, 141 Bay State Road, Boston, Massachusetts 02215, +1-617-353-5452, aparc@bu.edu.



From the Director

The *African Leaders State of Africa Report* is one of the major projects of the *African Presidential Archives and Research Center* (APARC) at Boston University. It was introduced in order to provide Africa's leaders with a forum to "speak" to the world about their hopes and dreams, as well as their programs and policies for their respective countries. This is the seventh Report that APARC has released.

Not only is this Report one of the premier projects of the *African Presidential Archives and Research Center*; more importantly, it is a part of a running commentary on the "state of Africa" over the past seven years. Each *State of Africa Report*, in many ways, mirrors the development on the continent, as well as the context in which that development has occurred. This year's Report is no different.

2008 has been a year of change. One of the most dramatic instances of change has been the historic election of Barack Hussein Obama as the forty-fourth President of the United States of America. Obama's election is a good place to start in understanding the context and concrete opportunities that 2008 held for Africa. There are a number of reasons that this election is of interest and importance to Africa.

In April 2008, in a private meeting with several former African heads of state, I was asked for my assessment of the "Obama phenomena." The first thing they wanted to hear was the back story of how an African American candidate, with a Muslim sounding name, could be on the verge of "thumping" Hillary Clinton and the vaunted Clinton machine for the Democratic Party presidential nomination.

Another question I was asked during this closed-door session with these former African leaders was "if Obama won, what did I think it would mean?" I said his election as President of the United States would be transformational—domestically and internationally. In this context, I will forgo what I said about what I thought Obama's impact on America might be and share what I said relative to what I thought it would mean for Africa.

I projected, and with his election we will see, what will be three primary affects of his Presidency on Africa's future. The first is symbolic (or in politics, what is called the "optics"). The other two are substantive (or opportunities).

In terms of symbolism, I suggested that the initial impact of Obama's election would be that the world would look at people of African descent differently; that is, in a positive way. In one sense, I literally felt this the morning after the U.S. election. After having voted and before the election results were announced, I left the U.S. on election night headed for Berlin. I arrived in Berlin wearing an Obama campaign button. Obama's election had been secured by the time we landed. (By the way, when the plane's captain announced the results as we taxied to the gate, the entire plane erupted in applause.) After we deplaned, and before I could get through immigration, dozens of people came up to congratulate me. In some cases it was because of what this meant for America and the world; but in more than one instance people commented that this was a great day for "my people." I don't think it is an exaggeration to suggest that this translates into a greater level of respect for Africa.

On the substantive side, I think the effects will be just as dramatic. I suggested then, and present evidence confirms, that the global geopolitical framework in which African issues will get addressed will be changed as a result of Obama's election. I based my initial assessment on what I believe will be a changed dynamic when the G8 meets and this African American President of the United States, the titular head of the free world, takes his seat at the table. At the least, when African issues come up they will be treated more respectfully; if not, in fact, taken more seriously. This change has been confirmed since the election. Less than a week after the 2008 U.S. Presidential election, in a speech to the Lord Mayor's Banquet, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown commented – "this is no time for conventional old thinking or tired old *orthodoxies*" (emphasis mine). Expanding upon his point, he expressed the belief that the global decision making matrix needs to be re-factored; meaning that the G20, and not the G8, offers the most promise for addressing the world's problems. He also intimated that who leads the World Bank and IMF needs to be rethought. I would suggest that it is no mere coincidence that the British Prime Minister struck this cord only days after Obama's historic victory. The net effect of this sentiment is that Africa will have a "seat at the table," and Africa's issues will have a more prominent place on the world's agenda.

Not only must the "state of Africa" be gauged within the context of dramatic change; as this *State of Africa Report* reflects, Africa has been a site of dramatic change in 2008.

In 2008, the world watched with interest and anticipation as political events unfolded in South Africa. The African National Congress (ANC), which has embodied the hopes and dreams of black South Africans for decades, found itself at the precipice of change. With Thabo Mbeki being forced to relinquish his seat as head of the ANC, and subsequently the Presidency of the country, a new political party has emerged. The question remains: is this the prelude to a new level of dynamism for South Africa's nascent democracy or a prescription for disaster?

This theme of change is also reflected in the politics and policies of leaders in every region. 2008 marked a changing of the guard in Botswana. With the appointment of His Excellency Seretse Khama Ian Khama as Botswana's new President, we witnessed a generational change. With the untimely death of Zambia's Levi Mwanawasa, we were reminded that change can be an unwelcomed visitor on occasion. However, in his final words on the "state of Africa," Mwanawasa had something to say that punctuates the extent to which change characterizes where Africa is at this point in history. He reminded us:

"Even where progress is modest, we must still recognize it because it signals that, at least for now, the worst may be over if we continue to make the progress that we have been making. ... [For] the first time in many years after independence, our economies have shown strong, consistent economic growth."

He seemed to be saying that Africa is finally on the right side of the trajectory when it comes to change.

This positive trend is reflected in some very specific ways in other countries as well. In his State of the Nation address, outgoing Ghanaian President John Kufuor made a point of underscoring the change in government policy so that Ghanaians could provide more value added when it comes to the cash crops that are the staple of its economy.

Malawi President Bingu Wa Mutharika echoed a similar sentiment in underscoring the need for changes in policy as it relates to the issue of food security on the continent. To paraphrase his position, he suggests if Africans are to have full stomachs, it will be because Africans create their own "green belts ... to grow rice, wheat, maize, cassava, potatoes, beans, and lentils for the local and international markets."

In the healthcare and housing sectors, the trend towards changed policies has resulted in positive outcomes. President Hifikepunye

Pohamba of Namibia touts the progress that has been made in expanding treatment capacity to stem mother-to-child transmission of the HIV/AIDS virus. After a concerted effort by the government, that capacity for treatment has increased by sixty percent. The number of people receiving anti-retroviral treatment has increased and “now stands at more than 41,000 people.” On the housing front, South African President Thabo Mbeki notes that the national government, in conjunction with the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), is well on the way to “providing 260,000 housing units per annum.” That’s change!

In the abstract, change can be good or bad. As it has played out in Africa during the past year, change has been a pretext for progress, prosperity, and promise. In the same vein, this year’s cover was designed to capture pictorially this theme of change. This year’s cover is a world map; the silhouette of Africa dominates the page. Most people would conclude that this is an exaggerated depiction of Africa, done for dramatic effect.

Actually, the map is a facsimile of the Peters Map, which more accurately captures the proportion of the world’s continents than the Mercator maps we are most accustomed to seeing. The decision was made to use this map in order to represent one of the most dramatic changes taking place in the world today. That is, Africa now assumes a more prominent position in world affairs. It is moving from the margins and toward a more central role on the global stage. In a sentence, this change is long overdue!



Ambassador Charles R. Stith,
 Director, African Presidential Archives and
 Research Center at Boston University, and
 Senior Editor, *African Leaders State of Africa
 Report 2008*
 Boston, Massachusetts
 January 2009



Foreword

Democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa

Dafur, Somalia, Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad, and the Central African Republic monopolise the headlines regarding news in Africa. Rightly so, because conflict and its associated human rights violations and atrocities, and internal and external displacement of people, merit the attention of the international community. It is also so because the abnormal is news and the normal or routine is not news.

There is also the accumulated impact of negative events in Africa on the psyche of reporters and everybody else. Consequently, even reportable good news about Africa tends to escape the attention of reporters. This tendency has come to be labeled as Afro-pessimism. There is so often bad news about Africa that it seems normal to believe anything bad about Africa. The obverse is that it is not easy to believe good news about the continent.

One of the mistakes one commits by believing that only bad news comes out of Africa, especially regarding democracy and governance, is treating Africa as if it is a country. The fact of the matter is that there are 53 African countries, some very big, others small and very small. In spite of all the bad news that always seems to come out of Africa, there are many African countries that are democratically governed, where multi-party elections take place every five years and where accountable governance is practiced.

Botswana, like Mauritius and Senegal, has practiced multi-party Parliamentary democracy from day one of its independence. I call its good governance “accountable” because there have always been lively debates in Parliament on the Government’s policies and its performance pursuant to agreed programs and policies. The oversight institutions include opposition parties, a free press, an independent judiciary, a Public Accounts Committee of Parliament, a constitutionally entrenched Auditor-General, and an active civil society.



The Botswana system is not perfect, since democracy in a developing country is necessarily a job in progress. The point is that there has been political stability and peace in Botswana. Above all, Botswana is not an exception, especially at the present time. There was a time when most of West Africa was ruled by soldiers who had come to power through unconstitutional means; this is no longer the case. That is, while there are still rulers who have come to power through coup d’etats, they are exceptions rather than the rule. While some of the countries, such as Liberia, Togo, and Cote d’Ivoire, are still engaged in post-conflict national reconciliation and economic reconstruction, others, like Ghana, Benin, Mali, and Sierra Leone, have established functioning democratic systems.

In Southern Africa, most countries, including Zimbabwe, hold multi-party democratic elections at five yearly intervals. That is why we know that the opposition Movement for Democratic Change won the March 2008 elections.

Mozambique, a country that was afflicted by a vicious civil war, has not only accomplished reconciliation and reconstruction, but also did so under democratic conditions. It was as a result of this achievement that Joachim Chissano came to be the first former African Head of State to win the *Mo Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership*.

There are currently vibrant democracies in South Africa, Namibia, Lesotho, Tanzania, Malawi, and Zambia. Angola is engaged in post conflict reconstruction and certainly has achieved national reconciliation. It might appear to some that I am painting a rosy picture of Africa, especially Sub-Saharan Africa, to which I confined myself.

While I would acknowledge that there are still many imperfections of democratic practice, change is gradually taking place. The events that occurred in Kenya, regrettable as they are, demonstrate that African civil society is no longer prepared to abet and connive at electoral malpractice or attempts at it.

The African Union has undertaken not to recognize any regime that comes to power through unconstitutional means. While it remains to be seen how far the Union is willing to go in keeping out those who effect “coups,” it is a far cry from the days when one would come to power by violent means and the very next year invite the OAU to his country and thereby become Chairperson of the Organisation.

Former Presidents have formed the Africa Forum, membership of which must be applied for and the applicant assessed in terms of what they did to promote democracy in their country. Some former presidents have been kept out. While action speaks louder than words, the climate of opinion is certainly anti-dictatorship and pro-democracy.

His Excellency Festus Gontebanye Mogae
Former President of the Republic of Botswana
APARC African President-in-Residence
Gaborone, Botswana
December 2008

Foreword

It is a privilege to introduce the reader to the *African Leaders State of Africa Report 2008*, which sets out the history, method, and implications of democratic governance in African countries. Ambassador Stith's interest in democratic processes and political analysis is highly regarded. As the founder and the visionary director for Boston University's African Presidential Archives and Research Center (APARC), Ambassador Stith's choice of having an educationalist comment on the value of this product and the process that has led to its creation underscores the importance that APARC places on Africa's development. Education is the backbone of development. Establishing sound and sustainable education systems can effectively address the multiple development challenges in Africa.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), through the Africa Education Initiative (AEI), has been a proud partner with APARC for the past five years in working toward our shared goals of engaging the greater community of Africanists—particularly students and university faculty. APARC has been remarkable in the use of imagination, pragmatic judgment, strategic partnerships, and immense energy required to engage with past and present African presidents to take stock of their experiences and develop a useful compilation that shows Africa's future generations the way forward.

Only recently has there begun a political discourse related to the critical link between democracy and development. An array of factors has explained the apparent failure of development in Africa, including colonial legacy, political conditions, corruption, poor planning and incompetent management, and limited inflow of foreign capital and investment. Alone or in combination, these factors are serious impediments to development. However, the alternatives that are struggling to emerge now—good governance, multipartite elections, economic development based on traditional agriculture, political development based on decentralization of power and



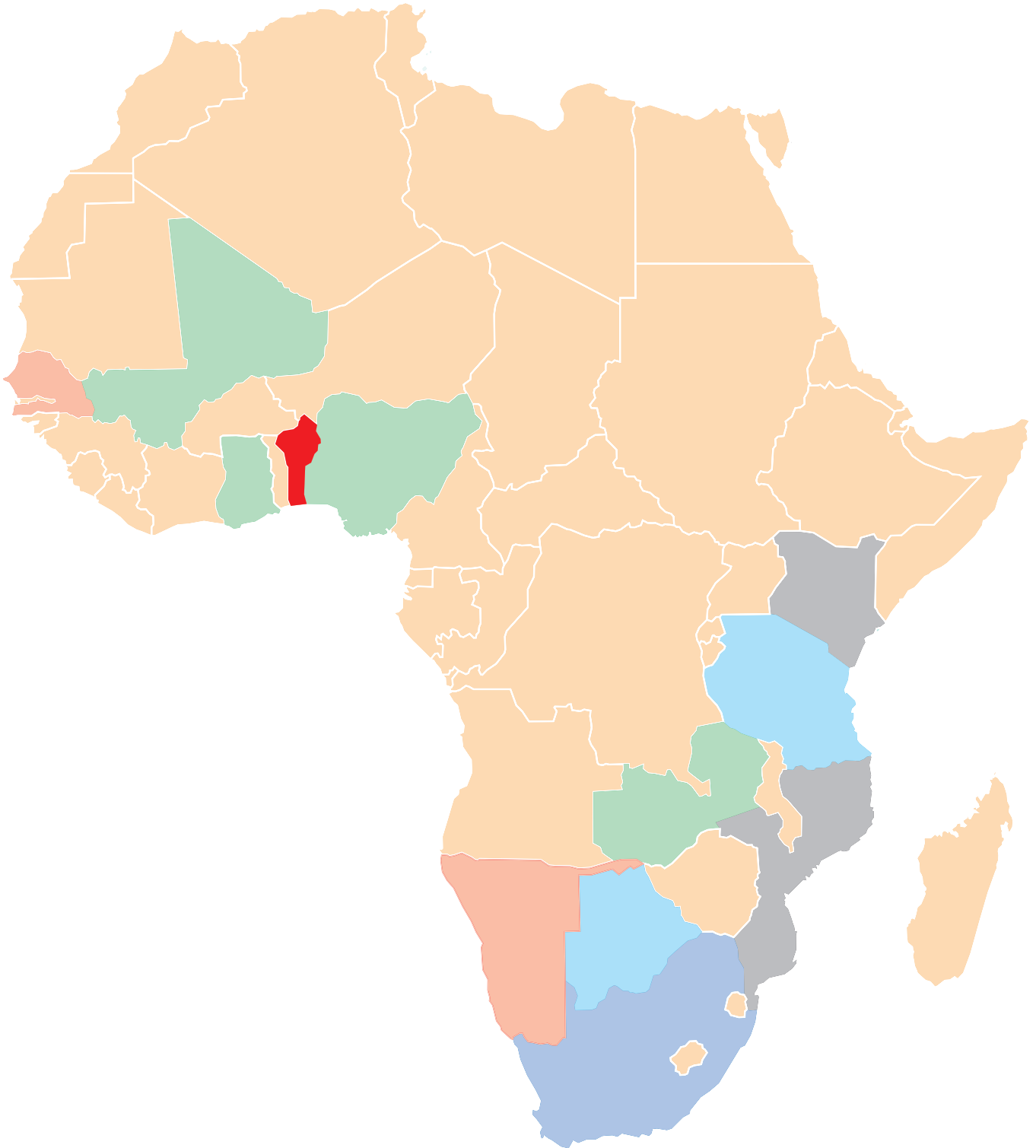
rule of law, reliance on indigenous communities, and recognizing the important role higher education can play in development—show beyond a doubt that there is hope for Africa.

This year's *State of Africa Report* will facilitate innovative thinking and will broaden APARC's agenda as an advocacy hub where resources can be deployed to further galvanize Africa's development.

I guarantee that this 2008 report will not disappoint you.

Sarah E. Moten, Ed.D.
Chief, Education Division
U.S. Agency for International Development
Office of Sustainable Development
Washington, D.C.
January 2008

BENIN



BENIN



**State of the Nation Address by
His Excellency Dr. Boni Yayi,
President of the Republic of Benin,
on the occasion of the Celebration
of Independence Day
Cotonou, Benin
August 1, 2008**



My fellow citizens of Benin:

Tomorrow, Friday, August 1, 2008, united around the powerful symbols of the Republic, which are love of country, national cohesion, fraternity, and justice, we revive the invigorated and exalted remembrance of the accession to international sovereignty of our dear and beautiful country, Benin. All is thanks to, and all comes from, the Eternal God, who teaches us through biblical wisdom. This is why on this blessed day of remembering we must above all render thanks to God for the good deeds with which he continues to bless our country, in particular peace, the most precious good without which all is in vain.

On this commemorative date of the advent of our country into the concert of free nations and of the pact sealed for a community of destiny, we must also be sure to think in particular of our compatriots who are challenged in the flesh or in their soul. To all, I extend, in the name of the Nation, our sentiments of solidarity, comfort, and compassion.

I don't want to forget all of our compatriots living outside of our national territory, who are certainly not among us today, but whom I have the certainty are also gathering together with the same fervor that we are in remembrance of this major event in the history of our young Nation.

My fellow citizens of Benin,

The commemoration of the independence of our country is a moment of legitimate pride for all of us to honor the imperishable memory of our worthy and brave predecessors, who dedicated their lives for the safeguard of our identity and for the full realization of the deep aspirations of the people of Benin for liberty and justice.

In this regard, how could we not celebrate the choice made this year of the city of Parakou, city of the Kobourous, an important and cosmopolitan crossroads city and birthplace of the first president of our young Republic, to host the official manifestation of the national celebration of independence? It is the moment and the place to pay homage to this worthy son of Benin whose memory will forever remain engraved in our minds as the founding father of our Republic.

This choice of Parakou, after Abomey in August of 2007 and Cotonou in 2006, grows also out of the will of the Government to strive for an equilibrated and harmonious development of our country, Benin.

My fellow citizens of Benin,

Here it is now 48 years since our country initiated a formidable adventure, that of becoming the master of its own destiny. Since then, in spite of all of the incidents that have punctuated its history, the people of Benin have always remained faithful to its ideals of peace, unity, and concord.

Today, after 18 years of experience, the democratic process initiated since the historic conference of February 1990, reinforces itself progressively thanks to the joint efforts of all the institutions of the Republic, of all the political parties, of the entire civil society, and of all of the social layers of our society.

It is in order to affirm the foundation of our democracy and to consolidate the state of law that I proceeded to the establishment of the ad hoc commission responsible for the rereading of our fundamental law. The report of this commission is presently the object of a thorough examination by the Government. Their report will be submitted to other authorities, because it will require all of us together to reread the Constitution of our dear country, Benin.

I take it upon myself, once the job has been definitively completed, to submit to a referendum the draft version of the Constitution between now and the first half of 2009.

My fellow citizens of Benin,

The experiences accumulated in the course of these last few years reveal to us that our

democracy is today at a crossroads of paths. In this regard, we need to have access to an instrument of consensus, permitting us to organize our consultations in a timely manner in transparency and credibility. This is why we congratulate the option taken by the honorable deputies in the establishment of the Permanent Computerised Electoral Roll (LEPI).

For this purpose, the year 2008 will be marked by the launching of the task to establish this LEPI by a technical commission placed under the aegis of the Permanent Administrative Secretary of the Autonomous National Electoral Commission (SAP-CENA), with the support of our partners in development, notably the European Union.

It will, therefore, involve proceeding with the adaptation of our fundamental law to the present demands and challenges. Along these lines, let's recommend the integration into the Constitution of the CENA, which will become a more technical and more professional organ. At this important moment when the occasion is offered to me to speak to you, I would like to point out that our economy is today facing the petrol crisis, the energy crisis, and the alimentary crisis. These crises are without precedent and blindly strike all countries, rich or poor. I take into account for their impact the daily difficulties that each household experiences in the face of the high cost of living.

I reiterate here the willingness and the determination of my Government to strive for the implementation of all of the measures destined to ease the suffering of our compatriots, particularly the most impoverished.

This is why, beyond the Emergency Program of support for alimentary security, other measures having an effect in the medium-term have already been undertaken. I have the firm conviction that in the near future the effects of the alimentary crisis will be overcome.

My fellow citizens of Benin,

The construction of an emerging nation could not be realized without the participation of the population at its base. This is why the actions of my Government aiming to support the communes

are being carried out with the creation of a Support Fund for the Development of the Communes (FADEC), endowed with more than five billion CFA francs.

In addition, to concretise the vision in the matter of deconcentration and decentralization, the Government will finalize two essential documents, including the National Policy for Decentralization (PONADEC) and the strategy for the deconcentration of local governance.

My fellow citizens of Benin,

Nor can the development of our Nation be carried out without the full and active participation of our youth. This is why my Government endeavors to offer the best possible living and employment opportunities for them. Thus, the National Fund for the Promotion of the Employment of Young People is from here forward operational and has enabled us, among other things, to finance approximately 300 projects totaling all together more than two billion CFA francs. Along these same lines, seventy-seven employment generating projects to benefit all of the communes of our country are in the process of validation.

As you already know, my Government has made education the priority of priorities. In this framework, in addition to significant recruiting of teachers carried out at the primary, secondary, and superior levels, my Government recently went ahead with the launching of the construction of 6,000 classrooms to accompany our free public education system.

On the social front, my Government has taken important budgetary measures aiming to improve the living conditions of workers. Negotiations are in progress with a view to give satisfaction to their legitimate demands so as to curb the degradation of their purchasing power brought about by the explosion of the prices of widely consumed products worldwide.

My fellow citizens of Benin,

Our Nation can only be constructed in a peaceful climate. That is why I extend my hand to all of the institutions of the Republic so that

each one in the role and the mission that they have adopted may bring its contribution to the enhancement of the democracy and of the economic development of which our country has a great need in order to eradicate poverty and thus propel itself forward on its path as an emerging nation. Our country will also develop itself only in a climate of security. In this situation, we have proceeded, among other efforts, in the elaboration of a national political and security strategy, in the implementation of a plan for the reorganization of the national Police, and in the reinforcement of our security operations through an increased presence of our armed forces across the entire extent of the national territory.

This is the occasion to address heartfelt congratulations to our Army for its loyalty to the republic and for its very active participation in the tasks of socioeconomic development and in peacekeeping operations in several countries of the world.

To all of you, generals, officers, sub-officers, infantry, and retired soldiers, I renew my promise to you of the confidence and the support of the entire Nation.

The building of a country is, from all evidence, a task of long duration. It involves the immense and permanent work that calls out to each one of us on a daily basis. It is only through uniting our strength that we will be able to, with courage and determination, confront and conquer the great challenges of our time.

In this effort, no measure will be too great. All of the citizens of Benin, at whatever level they may find themselves in the institutions of the Republic or in the society, must ask themselves about their real contribution to the task of building our Nation.

This is why I would like to invite you, on the occasion of this celebration of our independence, to meditate on all of the words of our national anthem. This hymn encourages us in the love of our homeland, in union, in peace, in fraternity, and in the hope for and the happiness of Benin.

I solemnly renew to you my personal engagement and that of the entire Government to pursue bold development actions for the benefit

of all. It is in this vein that I solicit your massive adherence to the structural reforms and the important changes in infrastructure that will stimulate better than in the past, in both quantity and quality, the economic growth capable of stemming the endemic poverty of our brave populations.

I seize this occasion of the national celebration to express the profound gratitude of our Nation to all of our development partners. The entire population of Benin is grateful to them.

In the rejoicing and the fervour in remembering, may we resolutely continue our march towards more glorious horizons so that Benin may live in a united and prosperous Africa.

In exercising my constitutional prerogatives, I have decided to offer a pardon to certain categories of detainees who satisfy the necessary conditions. I wish you an excellent national celebration, under the benevolent watch of God who lights our path. I extend the wish to you for a meeting in Lokossa for the 49th Anniversary of our national celebration, and in Porto-Novo, our capital, for the 50th anniversary celebration.

Long live the Republic! And may God bless Benin!

BÉNIN

Message à la Nation de Son

Excellence Dr. Boni Yayi, Président de la République, à l'occasion de la Fête de L'Indépendance du Bénin Cotonou, Benin

1 août 2008

Bénoises, Bénois Mes chers compatriotes,

Demain, vendredi 1er août 2008, unis autour des symboles forts de la République que sont l'amour de la patrie, la cohésion nationale, la fraternité et la justice, nous revivons le souvenir vivifiant et exaltant de l'accession à la souveraineté internationale de notre cher et beau pays le Bénin. Tout est grâce et tout vient de l'Éternel, nous enseigne la sagesse biblique. C'est pourquoi en ce jour béni de souvenir, nous devons par-dessus tout rendre grâce à Dieu pour les bienfaits dont il continue de combler notre pays, en particulier la paix, le bien le plus précieux sans lequel tout est vain.

En cette date commémorative de l'avènement de notre pays dans le concert des nations libres et du pacte scellé pour une communauté de destin, nous devons aussi avoir une pensée toute particulière à l'endroit de tous nos compatriotes éprouvés dans leur chair ou dans leur âme. A tous, j'adresse au nom de la Nation, nos sentiments de solidarité, de réconfort et de compassion.

Je n'oublie pas non plus tous nos compatriotes vivant à l'extérieur du territoire national qui, ne sont certes pas aujourd'hui parmi nous, mais dont j'ai la certitude qu'ils communient aussi avec la même ferveur que nous au souvenir de cet événement majeur de notre jeune nation.

Bénoises, Bénois, Chers compatriotes,

La commémoration de l'indépendance de notre pays est un moment de légitime fierté pour

nous tous pour honorer la mémoire impérissable de nos dignes et valeureux aînés qui ont consacré leur vie à la sauvegarde de notre identité et à la pleine réalisation des aspirations profondes du peuple béninois à la liberté et à la justice.

A cet égard, comment ne pas nous réjouir du choix porté cette année sur la ville de Parakou, Cité des KOBOUROUS, ville carrefour et cosmopolite, ville natale du premier Président de notre jeune République, pour abriter les manifestations officielles de la fête de l'indépendance. C'est le moment et le lieu de rendre hommage à ce digne fils du Bénin dont le souvenir restera à jamais gravé dans nos mémoires comme Père fondateur de notre République.

Ce choix de Parakou après Abomey en août 2007 et Cotonou en 2006 participe aussi de la volonté du Gouvernement d'œuvrer au développement équilibré et harmonieux de notre pays, le Bénin.

Bénoises, Bénois, Mes chers compatriotes,

Voici quarante-huit ans que notre pays a amorcé une formidable aventure, celle de devenir le maître de son destin. Depuis lors, malgré toutes les péripéties qui ont jalonné son histoire, le peuple béninois est toujours demeuré fidèle à ses idéaux de paix, d'unité et de concorde.

Aujourd'hui, après dix-huit ans d'expérience, le processus démocratique amorcé depuis l'historique conférence de février 1990 se renforce progressivement, grâce aux efforts conjugués de toutes les institutions de la république, de tous les partis politiques, de toute la société civile et de toutes les couches sociales.

C'est pour affermir la base de notre démocratie et pour consolider l'Etat de droit que j'ai procédé à la mise en place de la commission ad hoc chargée de la relecture de notre Loi fondamentale. Le rapport de cette commission fait actuellement l'objet d'un examen approfondi par le Gouvernement. Le rapport sera soumis à d'autres instances, car c'est tous ensemble que nous relisons la Constitution de notre cher pays, le Bénin.

Je prends l'engagement, une fois les travaux définitivement terminés de soumettre au

référendum l'avant-projet de la Constitution d'ici le premier semestre 2009.

Bénoises, Bénois, Mes chers compatriotes,

Les expériences accumulées au cours de ces dernières années nous révèlent que notre démocratie est aujourd'hui à la croisée des chemins. A cet égard, il nous faut disposer d'un instrument de consensus permettant d'organiser nos consultations à bonne date dans la transparence et la crédibilité. C'est pourquoi, nous saluons l'option prise par les honorables députés de l'établissement de la LEPI.

A cet effet, l'année 2008 sera marquée par le lancement des travaux d'établissement de cette LEPI par une commission technique placée sous l'égide du SAP-CENA, avec l'appui de nos partenaires au développement, notamment l'Union Européenne.

Il s'agira donc de procéder à l'adaptation de notre Loi Fondamentale aux exigences et aux défis de l'heure. Dans cet ordre d'idées, nous préconisons l'intégration dans la Constitution de la CENA qui deviendra un organe plus technique et plus professionnel. En ce moment important où l'occasion m'est offerte de m'adresser à vous, je voudrais relever que notre économie fait face aujourd'hui à la crise pétrolière, énergétique et alimentaire, de portée mondiale et à une inflation importée. Cette crise est sans précédent et frappe aveuglément tous les pays, riches ou pauvres. Je mesure à leur juste portée les difficultés quotidiennes qu'éprouve chaque ménage, face à la cherté de la vie.

Je réitère ici la volonté et la détermination de mon gouvernement d'œuvrer à la mise en œuvre de toutes les mesures destinées à atténuer les souffrances de nos compatriotes, notamment les plus démunis.

C'est pourquoi, au-delà du Programme d'urgence d'appui à la sécurité alimentaire, d'autres mesures ayant un effet à moyen terme ont été déjà engagées. J'ai la ferme conviction que dans un proche avenir les effets de la crise alimentaire seront surmontés.

Bénoises, Bénois, Mes chers compatriotes,

La construction d'une nation émergente ne

saurait se réaliser sans la participation des populations à la base. C'est pourquoi les actions de mon gouvernement visant à accompagner les communes se poursuivent avec la création du Fonds d'Appui au Développement des Communes (FADEC), doté de plus de cinq milliards de francs CFA.

Par ailleurs, pour concrétiser la vision en matière de déconcentration / décentralisation, le Gouvernement finalise deux documents essentiels, à savoir la Politique Nationale de Décentralisation (PONADEC) et la stratégie de déconcentration de la gouvernance locale.

Bénoises, Bénois, Mes chers compatriotes,

Le développement de notre Nation ne peut également se faire sans une participation pleine et active de notre jeunesse. C'est pourquoi mon gouvernement s'efforce d'offrir les meilleures conditions de vie et d'emploi. Ainsi, le Fonds National de la Promotion et de l'Emploi des Jeunes est désormais opérationnel et a permis entre autres de financer environ trois cents projets pour un montant de plus de deux milliards de francs CFA. Dans le même ordre d'idée, soixante dix-sept projets générateurs d'emplois au profit de toutes les communes de notre pays sont en cours de validation.

Bénoises, Bénois, Mes Chers compatriotes,

Comme vous le savez déjà, mon gouvernement a fait de l'Education, la priorité des priorités. Dans ce cadre, outre les importants recrutements d'enseignants qui ont été effectués dans le Primaire, le Secondaire et le Supérieur, mon gouvernement a procédé récemment au lancement de la construction de six milles salles de classes pour accompagner la gratuité de l'Ecole.

Sur le front social, mon gouvernement a pris d'importantes mesures budgétaires visant à améliorer les conditions de vie des travailleurs. Les négociations sont en cours en vue de donner satisfaction à leurs revendications légitimes afin d'enrayer la dégradation de leur pouvoir d'achat induite par la flambée des prix des produits de grande consommation dans le monde.

Bénoises, Bénois Mes chers compatriotes,

Notre Nation ne se construira que dans un climat de paix. C'est pourquoi, je tends la main à toutes les institutions de la République afin que chacune dans le rôle et la mission qui sont les siens apportent sa contribution à l'approfondissement de la démocratie et du développement économique dont notre pays a grandement besoin pour éradiquer la pauvreté et le propulser ainsi sur le chemin de l'émergence. Notre pays se construira également dans un climat de sécurité. Dans ce cadre, nous avons procédé, entre autres, à l'élaboration de la politique et de la stratégie nationale de sécurité, à la mise en place d'un plan de réorganisation de la Police nationale, au renforcement de notre dispositif sécuritaire à travers une présence plus marquée de nos Forces Armées sur toute l'étendue du territoire national.

C'est l'occasion d'adresser nos vives félicitations à notre Armée pour sa loyauté républicaine et pour sa participation très active aux tâches de développement socio-économique et aux opérations de maintien de la paix dans plusieurs pays dans le monde.

A vous tous, Officiers-Généraux, Officiers, Sous-officiers, Hommes du rang, Anciens Combattants, je vous renouvelle la confiance et le soutien de toute la Nation.

Bénoises, Bénois, Mes chers compatriotes,

La construction d'un pays est de toute évidence une œuvre de longue haleine ; il s'agit d'une tâche immense et permanente qui interpelle au quotidien chacune et chacun de nous. C'est en unissant nos forces que nous pourrons, avec courage et détermination, affronter et vaincre les grands défis de notre temps.

Dans cet effort, nul ne sera de trop. Chaque Bénoise, chaque Bénois, à quelque niveau où il se trouve dans les Institutions de la République ou dans la société, doit s'interroger sur sa réelle contribution à l'œuvre de construction nationale.

C'est pourquoi, je voudrais vous inviter, en cette fête de l'indépendance, à méditer toutes les paroles de notre hymne national. Cet hymne nous invite à l'amour de la patrie, à l'union, à la

paix, à la fraternité, à l'espérance et au bonheur du Bénin.

Je vous renouvelle solennellement mon engagement personnel et celui de tout le Gouvernement à poursuivre des actions hardies de développement au profit de tous. C'est à ce titre que je sollicite votre adhésion massive aux réformes structurelles et aux grandes infrastructures dont la mise en œuvre impulsera mieux que par le passé, en quantité et en qualité, la croissance économique capable d'enrayer la pauvreté endémique de nos braves populations.

Je saisis l'occasion de la fête nationale pour exprimer la profonde gratitude de notre Nation à tous nos partenaires au développement. Tout le peuple béninois leur est reconnaissant.

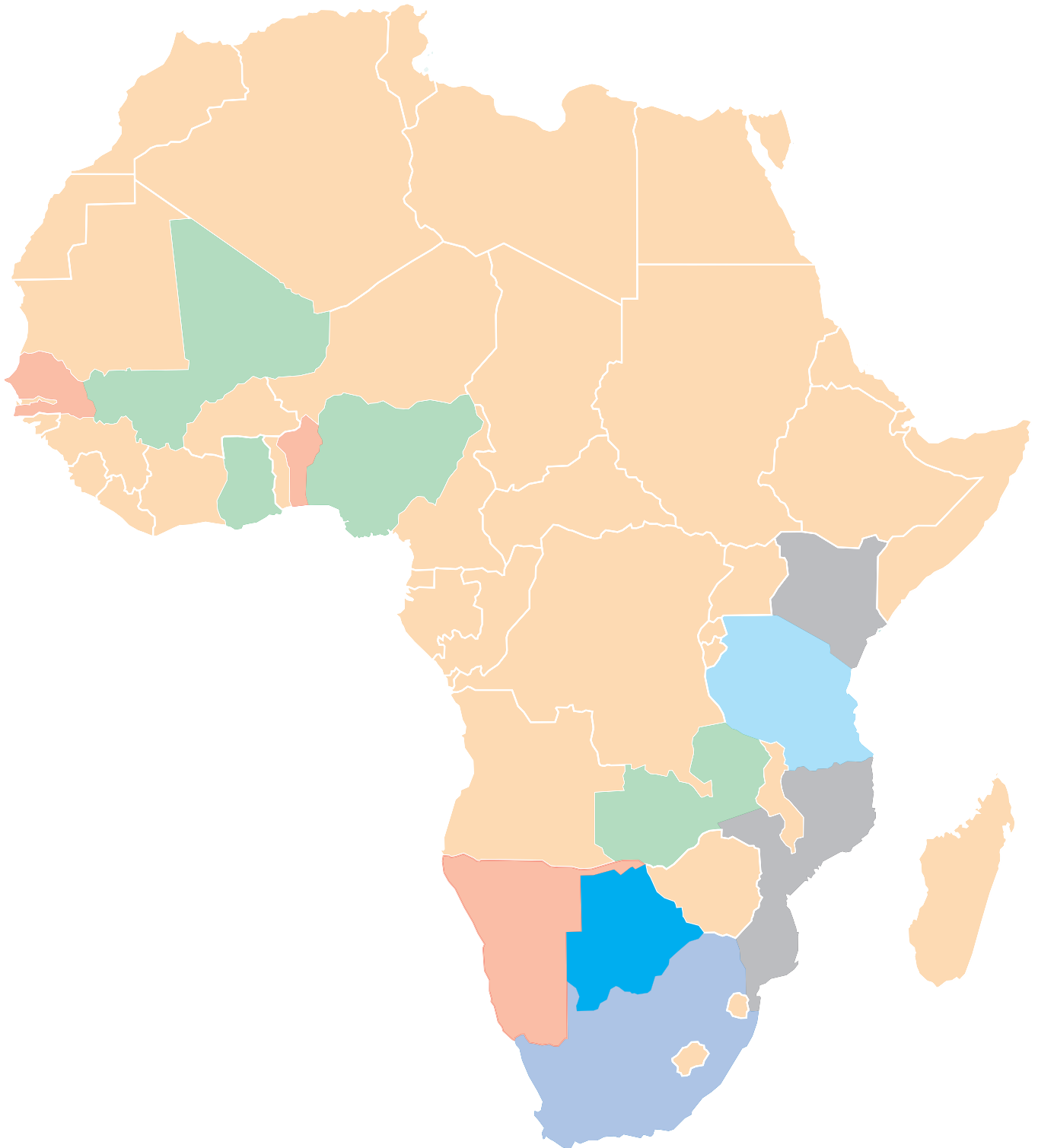
Bénoises, Bénois, Mes chers compatriotes,

Dans l'allégresse et la ferveur du souvenir, continuons résolument notre marche vers des horizons plus radieux pour que vive le Bénin dans une Afrique unie et prospère.

Dans l'exercice de mes prérogatives constitutionnelles, j'ai décidé d'accorder la grâce à certaines catégories de détenus qui en remplissent les conditions. Je vous souhaite une excellente fête nationale, sous le regard bienveillant de Dieu qui éclaire notre chemin et vous donne rendez-vous à Lokossa pour le 49ème anniversaire de notre fête nationale et à Porto-Novo notre capitale pour celui de son cinquantenaire.

Vive la République ! Et que Dieu bénisse le Bénin!

BOTSWANA



BOTSWANA



**State of the Nation Address
by His Excellency Lt. GEN. Seretse
Khama Ian Khama, President of the
Republic of Botswana, at the opening
of the Fifth Session of the Ninth
Parliament—“Empowering the Nation
through Democracy, Development,
Dignity, and Discipline”
Gaborone, Botswana
November 3, 2008**

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to give this Honourable Assembly an assessment of our Nation’s achievements and challenges, in my first State of the Nation Address, which will also be the last before the next general election.

We should, however, recognise that addressing the needs of Batswana cannot be limited to the activities of Government alone. The ability to move forward ultimately rests with all of us. Our national anthem rightly affirms that our land is a gift from God—but our Nation’s progress did not fall from heaven—it is the product of human efforts to achieve common goals. Only by continuing to work together shall we overcome our most daunting challenges, while achieving our highest aspirations.

Over the years, I have had the pleasure of interacting with fellow citizens from different areas and walks of life around the country; and in the process deepening my own appreciation of the fact that, as a society, we are fortunate to share common values, as well as interests. Further, we share the conviction that Government must remain accountable to the common good.

Our democracy is also embedded in a culture of tolerance and mutual respect, in which individual rights go hand in hand with responsibilities and consideration for the dignity of others. These qualities are reflected in our Constitution, which provides us with the framework by which the three arms of Government are not only held accountable to one another but, more importantly, to the public they have been established to serve.

All three arms of Government, as well as other independent bodies, should therefore work together for the Nation's shared benefit. In this way, the goals that unite us will continue to be far greater than any details that may divide us.

Such a democratic commitment, when combined with enhanced discipline, will enable us to achieve the sustained development necessary to ensure that all our citizens live in dignity.

DISCIPLINE AND VALUES

Nations must know their goals if they are to achieve them. We have a vision of where we wish to be. Our guiding principles, economic strategies, and development plans further provide us with a roadmap.

While there are still many obstacles in our way, the biggest challenge we face in driving towards a better future is finding the discipline within ourselves to sacrifice short term interests for sustained development. This means setting and achieving standards of excellence that will enable us to compete with the best in the world. We need to create a culture of achievement with an emphasis on quality delivery by the public and private sectors, as well as individuals.

Government's primary economic responsibility is to nurture an enabling environment for private sector growth that allows for increased domestic, as well as foreign, investment. We remain committed to promoting an open society, with an open economy, in which all who can make a positive contribution to further growth and development are encouraged to do so. In this era of globalisation, local industries can no longer prosper as big fish in small, protected ponds. They should instead seek the ocean of opportunities available in the global market.

No democracy can exist without discipline. Wherever I go throughout our great country, I hear voices lamenting that the timeless values that have long held our Nation together are under threat. That Botho, our shared sense of mutual respect and responsibility, is being replaced with more self-centred, all too often self-destructive, social and political behaviour.

Where we once practised self-reliance (*ipele-geng*), at both the individual and community levels, now too often we tend to rely on others and the state to provide for us.

Sadly, I am certain that anyone of us could cite instances where the common good has been compromised by fallen morals, a dearth of patriotism, and an exaggerated sense of self-centred individualism and entitlement, such as:

- When official documents such as passports and Omang are sold to foreigners;
- When people stand aside in the false belief that it is up to others to fight veld fires;
- When people who should know better look the other way while public property is vandalised and the environment littered and polluted; and
- When women are openly abused or children in school uniforms are corrupted by elders.

Left unchecked, such antisocial trends will undermine what we have so far achieved, as well as be a barrier to our further development. We, therefore, must take necessary action when we find that the discipline upon which our progress has been based is being eroded. It is said that discipline is the bridge between your desired objectives and their achievement.

HIV/AIDS and Substance Abuse

Through the proactive leadership of my immediate predecessor, former President Festus Mogae, we recognised that we could not afford to ignore the scourge of HIV/AIDS in the blind hope that it would somehow leave us in peace. Because we turned away from denial, today there are many among us who would otherwise not be here. We can take comfort in the fact that through vigorous outreach efforts, today over 110,000 people are now on anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs), while we have reduced mother-to-child transmission of the virus from infected females from about forty percent to four percent.

These programmes have come at a great cost—last year we spent over P1.4 billion, of

which almost ninety percent came from our own resources. No amount of money, however, can compensate for the need for greater commitment. Drugs can only do so much. Discipline will do the rest.

There is a recognised link between excessive alcohol use and risky behaviour that contributes to the spread of the virus. We are aware of the role substance abuse plays in treatment default for other illnesses such as TB. Alcohol is also a contributing factor to a wide range of additional maladies: from carnage on the roads to low levels of productivity and injuries at the workplace; from the occurrence of fetal alcohol syndrome and other health complications to violent crime, such as assault, rape, robbery, and murder, as well as spouse and child abuse.

As a society, we can no longer pretend that there is little that can be done to curb such ravages. This is why Government, in line with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and guided by international best practice, has adopted a multi-faceted approach to the problem. Key components include:

- A national policy or strategy on alcohol;
- Public education campaigns on the dangers of underage and excessive alcohol consumption, as well as consumption during pregnancy or while on medication;
- Enhanced law enforcement;
- Reduction in the hours of alcohol being sold; and
- Introduction of a thirty percent levy on alcoholic beverages this month.

Each of these is a reasonable step that, when taken together, will help reduce death and destruction. There are, nonetheless, those who try to dismiss our efforts by saying that alcohol harm is a symptom rather than a problem. Such people ignore the circular nature of cause and effect; for excessive drinking is itself a breeder of poverty, delinquency, and inefficiency, as well as poor mental and physical health.

Justice and Security

Our forefathers knew that the internal harmony (kagisano) of a community was the key to ensuring the dignity of its inhabitants. Today, we also recognise that achieving a safe and secure nation is a prerequisite for a productive and prosperous society that combines opportunity with tranquillity.

Criminals come from all backgrounds, as do their victims. We shall continue to fight crime, including corruption, through better strategies that are being developed for prevention, policing, and prosecution. I am pleased to report that we are already seeing success as a result of these strategies. Government has been enlisting community stakeholders, such as business, civic, and traditional leaders, in these efforts.

In addition, the capacity of law enforcement will be enhanced through the impending merger of local police into the Botswana Police Service, which will be accompanied by the hiring of an additional 2,050 personnel to cover more villages. The Police Air Support Branch should be launched early next year with the arrival of new helicopters. Joint operations between the police and defence force are being intensified to reduce crime.

For both the accused and victims of crime, justice delayed is justice denied. We have, therefore, been implementing reforms in our justice system, such as court records and judicial case management, so as to reduce the backlog of cases in our courts. The handing over of prosecutorial duties from the police service to the Director of Public Prosecutions will enhance the efficiency of both these departments.

In line with our commitment to zero tolerance for corruption, the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime is embarking upon new interventions countrywide, where opportunities for corruption are especially prevalent. These interventions are already bearing fruit.

In the end, the stability of a community cannot be separated from its commitment to upholding public values and morals. This is why I appointed a Task Force on Morals and Social Values made up of prominent religious and traditional leaders.

Their report, which was received this morning, should provide us with proposals for additional interventions.

DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Speaker,

In keeping with our vision, our development goal is to move from being a middle income to high income economy that provides for the dignity of all. While we can be proud of our past achievements, it is more important that we now face our current challenges.

Although there has been a steady reduction in poverty over the years from forty-seven percent in 1994 to our latest figure of thirty percent in 2004, which is projected to fall to twenty-three percent by next year, we are acutely aware of the need for more equitable growth and job creation.

There is a mismatch between our graduates' skill set and workplace demands, which further contributes to the challenge of unemployment.

While we have invested heavily in the health sector, we remain reliant on external specialists.

Agricultural productivity has stagnated, despite past interventions aimed at improving it.

Though we have put in place structures and policies aimed at increasing foreign direct investment, the inflow of outside capital has fallen short of our expectations.

Unless we discover new diamond streams, of similar magnitude to those in Jwaneng and Orapa, the revenues accruing from diamonds for the country will drastically decline in the coming decade. It is, therefore, imperative that we find additional income through economic diversification.

Mr. Speaker,

Our strategy to reach a state of a high income economy in the coming decade stands on two legs. The first is to drive economic diversification efforts through focused "hubs." The second is through the implementation of a range of initiatives.

Government has established six hubs. The minister responsible for each of these hubs reports on its progress to the Cabinet Committee

on Economy and Employment chaired by His Honour the Vice President and also reports to me monthly. Each ministry also has a set of initiatives it is currently implementing since they were launched a few months ago. Let me here emphasise that these initiatives are being carried out in the context of, and are adding impetus to, our normal development planning. I shall now highlight some of the key elements of the strategy.

Minerals, Energy, and Water Resources

It is our intent to make Botswana a major international diamond centre. To help achieve this, a Diamond Hub is being established to increase our benefits from beneficiation initiatives. It will create jobs and contribute to GDP growth by encouraging such downstream processes as cutting and polishing, jewellery manufacturing, and local trade in rough and polished diamonds.

The Secure Transfer Facility at Sir Seretse Khama International Airport is to be transferred to the hub to serve not only export needs of Debswana and the Diamond Trading Centre, but other industry players.

A diamond office will become operational this month as a one stop shop for industry stakeholders. It will monitor diamond supply agreements, while ensuring compliance with the Kimberly Process Certification.

Connection of households to the national electricity grid is fundamental to improving our citizens' quality of life. In this regard, we have been making real progress. Today about half of all households in the country are directly connected, compared to only one in eight a decade ago. In the process, we have electrified an additional 270 villages with another 98 soon to be connected.

There are, however, impediments to realising our goal of bringing electricity to all. Many Botswana cannot afford costly connection fees. The ministry has, therefore, been directed to find ways to standardise electricity connection fees and charges in rural areas. The completion date for this exercise is April 2009.

Energy sufficiency is an urgent priority. Owing to the current problems with load shedding and the need to increase energy throughput for both industrial and home consumption, Government has embarked on a three-pronged strategy to meet our short, medium, and long term needs. Its first aspect is to explore and bring to fruition opportunities to secure our power supply.

The second is the Morupule B Power Station plant expansion, whose first phase will have a projected output of 600 megawatts and is due for completion in 2011. A second phase of expansion will further increase output by another 600 megawatts, which will free us of the need to import electricity.

The third is to encourage and facilitate investment by Independent Power Producers (IPP) in the country, to assist us in meeting immediate energy needs, while generating additional long-term capacity for export. In this context, negotiations are ongoing between the Mmamabula Energy Project sponsors and its key stakeholders, the Botswana Power Corporation and Eskom, as well as the Governments of Botswana and South Africa. Due to rising costs associated with events outside our country, the project sponsors have had to scale down the project, which is now expected to generate a total of 1,200 megawatts. We are also in the process of negotiating with additional partners to reduce the project's risk profile.

I take this opportunity to further urge other interested IPPs to engage Government. Botswana has the resource endowment and central location to potentially supply power to the South African Development Community (SADC) Region. We will also welcome those in the private sector who may be interested in setting up renewable energy projects such as solar energy.

Government recognises that access to clean water is a basic need. One of the major projects to be implemented during the National Development Plan (NDP10) is the North South Carrier II and the building of more dams. The Ntimbale Dam has been completed and the construction of Dikgathong, Thune, and Lotsane Dams are now underway. Other sources of water will also be identified to improve accessibility. Inefficient means of distribution, such as having

several authorities serve the same locality, is also a barrier to water accessibility. The Ministry of Minerals, Energy, and Water Resources is working with local government to restructure and reduce the number of authorities per locality. Implementation will commence in May 2009.

Works and Transport

The Transport Hub is being established to ensure that major infrastructure projects provide optimal benefits to the economy through synergy in the air, road, and rail sectors. The hub's anticipated benefits include increased employment and revenue from tourism and hospitality, as well as transport sectors.

Major projects being contemplated include the Kazungula Bridge, the Dry Port at Walvis Bay, the Trans Kalahari Railway, the Mmamabula-Ellisras, and the Moseitse to Kazungula Rail Links. Feasibility studies for the rail projects are in process, while a lease agreement for the Dry Port is being finalised. Efforts are also underway to attract international air carriers, while the ongoing upgrade and reconstruction of the Francistown, Kasane, Maun, and Sir Seretse Khama International Airports are scheduled for completion by 2010.

To enhance citizen empowerment, a directive has been issued that auctions involving boarded vehicles, along with other stores and equipment from Government and public-funded entities, are now reserved for citizens and one hundred percent citizen-owned companies. Approximately 2,000 such vehicles will be auctioned by the end of this year.

Agriculture

The Agricultural Hub is being established to encourage and support greater commercialisation and sustainable diversification of the sector, as well as improve food security. Among its key projects is the second phase of the National Agricultural Master Plan for Arable Agriculture and Dairy Development (NAMPAADD). During the initial phases of this programme, four production and training farms were established:

one for rain-fed farming, two for horticulture production, and one for dairy farming. These farms are used for training in various aspects of commercial agricultural production, resulting in technology transfer to participating farmers. In addition, yield potentials of various crops under improved management practices have been established.

Another major initiative under consideration is the Zambezi Agro-Commercial Integrated Development Project, whose objective is to develop agricultural production on a large commercial scale in northern Botswana. Progress on this project has been delayed pending finalisation of an agreement to extract water from the Zambezi.

Recently, we have also launched a new programme called the Integrated Support Programme for Arable Agriculture Development (ISPAAD), to provide farmers with assistance in the form of seed, fertiliser, ploughing and planting, water, and cluster fencing. Seed has already been distributed to most areas, while the ministry is in the process of sourcing additional fertiliser, where global shortages have driven up costs. To date over 1,600 privately owned tractors have been registered for the programme to augment the capacity of Government tractors, an additional sixty of which are now on order for use in the coming months. To facilitate tractor use, we have also waived the need to have a special tractor license for those who already have motor vehicle licences.

ISPAAD will develop commercial farming while reducing the need for imported food. I would like to stress that only those farmers who show genuine dedication to their projects will be given continued support.

We are further prepared to lease state land to any investors who are truly committed and capable of putting the land to productive use. Government also intends to acquire and reserve underutilised tribal land for more productive agricultural usage.

Financial institutions have often been reluctant to offer loans to farmers in the absence of an agricultural insurance scheme. To facilitate such loan access, and also minimise the risks caused by

climatic variability and natural disasters, Government is in the process of introducing a Botswana Contributory Agricultural Insurance Scheme. The Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA) Young Farmers Fund, which has been established to encourage the youth to enter commercial farming, has also now taken off. So far, 151 projects have been assisted through the scheme, valued at P58 million.

To further expand agriculture, Government is intensifying rural infrastructure development, namely roads, electricity, water, and telecommunication. Options for livestock water development are being undertaken to assist small herd owners in communal areas throughout the country where water resources are scarce. Work in this respect is already ongoing in the Kgalagadi and Ghanzi Districts.

Mr. Speaker,

We have been making significant progress in fighting foot-and-mouth disease in Ngamiland, but unfortunately our efforts received a setback last month with a new outbreak near Kuke, in the Ghanzi District. The minister will be making a full statement in Parliament about this development.

Health

Mr. Speaker,

The Health Hub is being established to identify projects and programmes that will make Botswana a centre of excellence in the provision of health-care services. Among its primary projects is the outsourcing of the freight and logistics function of the central medical stores. This project should end the current problems being experienced by the institution, where ineffective structures and processes have created opportunities for fraud, while causing drug shortages and wastage of expired drugs that had gone undelivered.

There is no doubt that we have excellent health facilities, but we lack the human capital to optimise their quality of service. It is owing to this that we rely heavily on our neighbour, South Africa, for some of the specialised care we

require. We are, therefore, in the process of outsourcing portions of hospitals. For example, in Molepolole an agreement is being negotiated with the University of Bonn, Germany, to set up a Cardiac Centre of Excellence at the new Scottish-Livingstone Hospital. Such outsourcing to reputable private operators will allow more specialists to establish themselves in our country, thus providing Batswana with services they have hereto had to obtain from outside the country.

Mr. Speaker,

Accessibility of ARVs has been a problem in the past, especially in outlying settlements. Government is now implementing new strategies for distributing ARVs to address the problem. A total of seventy-nine clinics are now offering ARVs on site.

Not many Batswana can afford medical expenses for complex ailments requiring organ transplants and specialised therapies. The Ministry of Health has recently developed a policy to improve affordability and accessibility for such ailments. Implementation is on a selective basis using age, probability of success, and cost of maintenance as criteria. In recognition of their special challenges, medical fees for old age pensioners and the handicapped have been waived.

To bring medical care closer to rural communities, the Ministry of Local Government is upgrading its integrated primary health care services through the recruitment of additional staff and expansion of facilities. To ensure grassroots delivery to rural areas, it has been decided that the medical services provided by doctors and other medical personnel will be organised into 189 clusters around the country, of which just over 100 have already been provided with doctors. This initiative will save people from having to wait a long time or travel long distances to receive quality medical care.

In addition, the Ministry of Health is intensifying the recruitment of doctors to address existing shortages, which are especially acute in our rural health facilities.

Education and Skills Development

Mr. Speaker,

The Education Hub is being established to promote quality education, training, and research in such fields as science and technology, business management, mining, hospitality, and tourism: where we believe that Botswana can compete favourably at the regional and global level, thus creating business and employment opportunities. Like the health sector, the intention is to provide most areas of learning in-country, reducing the need for external placement.

Among the major projects to be undertaken by the Hub is the opening of the Botswana International University of Science and Technology. Phase I construction is scheduled for completion in December 2010 for enrolment in March 2011. Phase II of the project, to be financed through a Public Private Partnership, will start immediately thereafter. Government also intends to sponsor some of our most gifted students to selective world class universities. This will ensure that we have a pool of talent to help us better meet our future challenges.

A holistic Human Resource Development Strategy is being formulated to achieve high income status, which will require an enhanced skill base. Given the dynamic nature of the global economy, there is, moreover, a need for continuous learning on the part of our workforce. On the job training, short term courses, and post graduate education must become the norm. While Government will continue to facilitate lifelong learning, the private sector also should play its part, with the encouragement of Government incentives.

Indiscipline in schools is of great concern. To mitigate vandalism, substance abuse, and other forms of juvenile delinquency, a pastoral system has been introduced in secondary schools. To better ensure discipline among teachers, a Teaching Council is being established and the existing Code of Regulations is being reviewed. I have directed that there be no tolerance for indiscipline from the primary through tertiary levels of education, including at the University of Botswana.

Labour and Home Affairs

For its part, the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs is in the process of starting a National Internship Programme to enhance the skill set and marketability of our graduates who may not be immediately employed upon completion. Registration of the graduates has already started and the programme will commence in January 2009.

To promote prisoner rehabilitation and their self-employment, ex-convicts will be afforded the opportunity to use prison facilities for a limited time for training and raising seed capital. The Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs is in the process of starting a pilot project to this effect. To further promote rehabilitation, I ordered the remission of sentences of certain categories of prisoners. So far, this has resulted in the early release of 1,039 prisoners, which I must stress, is conditional on their continued good behaviour. Should they default, they will be sent back to prison to serve the remainder of their sentence.

In view of the current security risks posed by illegal ownership of Botswana passports by non-citizens, the ministry has been directed to put stringent measures in place to protect this important national document, in line with international expectations as well as domestic concerns. As a result, those who lose their passports, especially on account of lack of proper care, can expect delays of up to a year before they are issued a new one, while cost of such replacements will be up to P1,000. Where unconvincing reasons exist for the loss of a passport, a replacement may be denied.

Steps have also been taken to clamp down on opportunities for corruption in the Departments of Immigration and Labour, fuelled in part by the influx of illegal immigrants. We have started cracking down on those foreigners who engage in any activities that undermine immigration control by removing them from the country. Citizens who illegally assist such people can expect to be prosecuted.

In keeping with our overall commitment to the principle of *therisanyo* (consultation), the ministry has also redoubled its efforts in engaging

labour and employers in matters of mutual interest. Such dialogue should generate concrete proposals on how we can enhance both the quality of life and productivity of our labour force.

I am pleased to report that the participation of women in decision-making at most levels of public and private life continues to advance. Over the past decade, Botswana has been ranked among the global top twenty in terms of the percentage of women occupying leadership positions in both the public and private sectors. Women are further reported to makeup over half of those employed in our country in professional and technical fields, while in senior positions in the public service, female representation stands at just above forty percent.

Today, we can also be proud of the fact that in one of the few areas where we have lagged behind the rest of the world, the recruitment of women into the military, we are finally catching up. Where we have still not yet made sufficient progress is the representation of women in positions of political leadership. Though as of today, at least, we have for the first time a lady as the Leader of this House.

Communication, Science, and Technology

Mr. Speaker,

We live in an era when economic growth around the world is being increasingly driven by knowledge based industries. It is in recognition of this fact that we are establishing an Innovation Hub as a commercial nexus for knowledge creation and innovation. The Hub will cater to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and research and development companies serving the local and international market. It will also serve as a platform for management training and business support to industry clusters and networks that will contribute to improved productivity and employment.

For any society to achieve world-class standards, its professional disciplines must adhere to appropriate norms of conduct based on global benchmarks. In this context, the call for local media practitioners to be responsible and

professionally accountable to an independent Press Council, with sufficient capacity and credibility, ought to be understood as a necessary development for the good of all.

Youth, Sport, and Culture

In line with the Vision 2016 pillar of a united and proud Nation, the Government has taken the initiative to support different codes of sports. In this regard, appearance fees for official national team games and monthly allowances to local athletes in the Premier League, First Division (North and South), and other sport codes have been introduced. We will continue to review the strategies to ensure that we develop competitive athletes in different codes in order to encourage competition and quality.

A programme for inter-constituency football competitions for non-league players within districts, including necessary funding arrangements for games and prizes to be won, has also been introduced and will be sustained. So far these competitions are taking place in 53 out of the 57 constituencies (that is in all constituencies except Nkange, Kgatleng East and West, and Gaborone West North).

The Ministry of Youth, Sport, and Culture, in collaboration with the private sector, has also started implementing projects aimed at identifying non-sport talent. President's Day celebrations are now used to identify talent in various districts and localities in the fields of fine arts, music, dance, theatre, drama, poetry, and comedy, with accompanying incentives to reward the best performers. This dovetails with the Ministry of Communications, Science, and Technology's ongoing exploration of ways to assist upcoming music artists to record their work.

In order to improve coordination of youth activities, each ministry now has a youth officer post. This will ensure that the youth issues are fully addressed by both Government and the private sector. Youth officers, with funding to support empowerment initiatives, will be posted in each constituency. Youth officers have further been directed to meet quarterly with the Ministry of Youth, Sport, and Culture to present new

empowerment opportunities for onward transmission to Cabinet. It is our intent to drive the creation of significant opportunities for youth in all sectors.

To broaden our tourism base and protect our cultural heritage, monuments and heritage sites will be established and operated by communities and other interested stakeholders. So far, twenty have been identified for development during NDP 10. In addition, management plans for various monuments are being drafted.

Trade and Industry

As part of our efforts to strengthen our resilience, we have to be aggressive in pursuing the import substitution initiatives in all ministries to reduce unemployment and grow our private sector. Progress in this regard has been attained in several areas.

Government has been purchasing locally produced goods and services, which include pottery, crafts, and art work. Between April and June, locally purchased goods and services amounted to P240 million. Government has opened up its premises to small scale caterers. I urge Batswana to take advantage of this initiative by producing more quality goods and services, and I urge the private sector and the public as a whole to follow Government's lead. Obviously, our products must be of world-class quality if we are to successfully compete in today's global market.

The Local Enterprise Authority (LEA) is fulfilling its mandate of providing business development services to facilitate the success of small, medium, and micro-enterprises or SMMEs. Since its establishment last year, the value of investment for import substitution projects by LEA has been over P6 million, with additional funding in the pipeline. Some 7,000 customers have approached LEA for assistance, of whom over seventy percent have passed its screening test and are being assisted.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry is also working on mechanisms for major food retailers to accommodate non-Halaal consumers, who are by far the majority of the consumers in the country, by among others, providing non-Halaal

sections and products in their shops. The Attorney General is drafting a statutory instrument to this effect.

The ministry is also fast tracking its assessment of feasibility of establishing free trade zones, to aid in attracting foreign direct investment for employment creation. The ministry is further looking into additional ways of easing impediments to doing business in Botswana.

Finance and Development

There are concerns that the tax system in Botswana is complicated and a disincentive to investors. Thus, we are in the process of reviewing the tax system with the aim of simplifying it. In addition, we will continue to seek double taxation agreements to reduce the cost of doing business in Botswana.

To further support the growth of the agricultural sector, next year farm implements and spares will be exempt from value added tax (VAT).

Achieving our vision of a more prosperous and productive nation will require successful local entrepreneurs, as well as dedicated and skilled workers. The Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA) was established to promote entrepreneurial development and provide finance to local businesses. The CEDA Development Fund has so far approved 177 projects valued at P124 million in the current financial year; bringing the total number of projects financed through the programme to 2,229 at a total value P1.27 billion. These have already created 12,567 new jobs.

Environment, Wildlife, and Tourism

The Ministry of Environment, Wildlife, and Tourism has been proactive in its implementation of the Community Based Natural Resource Management Policy (CBNRM), which Parliament approved last year. Community-based organisations (CBOs) involved in the sustainable management of our natural heritage are now active in some 150 communities, involving more than 135,000 people countrywide. To improve their governance, CBO constitutions are now

being aligned with a model Deed of Trust that was developed in consultation with concerned stakeholders.

The need for community involvement in managing local resources is guiding our ongoing efforts to finalise a management plan for the Central Kgalagadi Game Reserve. Following my June 2008 meeting with community stakeholders, it was agreed that Government would consult further with representatives of affected communities to ensure the Reserve's sustainable future. This process is being carried out on the basis of a continued commitment to provide these communities, like all other citizens, with developments such as education, employment, health, and other socioeconomic amenities that will improve their quality of life. In this respect, there is a common recognition on the part of all internal stakeholders that such developments are not inconsistent with the rich culture of these communities. The notion on the part of some outsiders that any segment of our society wishes to subsist today on the basis of a hunter-gathering lifestyle is, however, an archaic fantasy. The reserve's unique natural heritage is an important national resource, which will be preserved for the benefit of the present and future generations.

Though wildlife continues to be a treasured asset, we are aware of the damage that fauna can cause to some communities. In this respect, consideration will be given to increased compensation for damaged property where farmers meet their own obligations to adequately secure their livestock and crops. More steps are also being undertaken to combat poaching.

A programme to accelerate tree planting is being rolled-out to reduce the impact of soil erosion and also to conserve indigenous tree species. Thirty thousand indigenous trees are being grown for planting. Forty primary schools are being targeted for tree planting, and twenty-two schools have already been identified for the programme. I urge Botswana to augment these efforts.

To promote development, the ministry has also been directed to fast track the implementation of a review of Environmental Impact Assessments.

The ministry is also working to ensure that Botswana maximises the benefits from the 2010

FIFA World Cup. I urge the business community to also position itself to benefit from the event, through opportunities in such areas as tourism, transport, and hospitality services.

Lands and Housing

One of the constraints we are facing in attracting outside investment is the shortage of serviced land. The Ministry of Lands and Housing is, therefore, working on the identification and reservation of bulk land for the Ministry of Trade and Industry (for BEDIA), and the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife, and Tourism, as well as the Ministry of Agriculture.

The Self Help Housing Agency Programme (SHHA) Scheme has been reviewed to improve affordability and encourage home ownership among low income earners. In line with affordability, interest rates have been waived and the repayment period has been increased. To improve the quality of the structures, the loan has been increased from P20,000 to P45,000. In addition, turnkey SHHA loans are capped at P60,000.

Provision of land and housing for the youth is a priority for Government. In this regard, the ministry is considering the possibility of revising the age minimum for land ownership from 21 to 18. We are also in the process of devising strategies for provision of accommodation for young people and public officers, especially in the lower grades.

Government will also provide support for a new Instalment Purchase Scheme to be administered by the Botswana Housing Corporation. This scheme will provide expanded accessible and affordable housing for rent and purchase by citizens, with those without any form of housing being given priority. To promote ownership, a special fund will be set up to facilitate the financing of loans. This will be a big project, for which we are now actively seeking additional finance.

Local Government

Labour intensive public works used to be a short-term job creation programme, but will now

become a permanent programme. Besides providing needed employment, this initiative will ensure cost effective delivery in such areas as destitute housing, road maintenance, and local authority infrastructure. Under the revised Labour Intensive Public Works Programme, P368 million has been voted for this financial year, which will provide work for over 33,000 people per month. Implementation of this programme has already started in most districts.

Given the complexity of today's ailments, Government has decided to upgrade health posts to clinics in line with our goal of ensuring Batswana have access to good quality health service. Nine health posts will be upgraded during this financial year. During NDP 10, many more health posts will be upgraded.

The budget for destitute housing will be scaled up to ensure dignity for the less privileged. As part of this initiative, 635 houses will be constructed over a period of three years. In addition, councils will continue to provide destitute housing through their recurrent budgets. The Ministry of Local Government will engage local builders for construction of such housing. As part of our overall strategy to support small-scale local entrepreneurs, the ministry has been further directed to engage local service providers in rural areas to provide for council projects and programmes.

Cross Cutting Initiatives

Maintenance of assets, anti-corruption, business process reengineering, the environment, filling public sector vacancies, and reaching out for external assistance are cross cutting initiatives, which all ministries are implementing.

We are quite concerned about the rising costs and the poor services that grow out of inadequate maintenance. To address this challenge, we have initiated a process of devolving maintenance responsibilities so that each ministry and department becomes responsible for the upkeep of its facilities. In terms of road maintenance, we shall continue to roll out our Zero Tolerance for Potholes Initiative.

Ministries are now addressing environmental issues within their purview, as this is more effective than relying on an external party, and they are progressing well in this respect.

Public Service

If Government is truly “for the people,” its public service must be efficiently staffed with men and women who appreciate that their vocational existence is premised upon the expectations of their customers, the public. In this way, the public service will have the mindset to act as a facilitator, rather than bottleneck, in our broader efforts to realise sustained economic growth and social development.

We have put in place enhanced public service standards throughout Government, with performance measures that are open to public scrutiny to better meet both domestic expectations and the demands of globalisation. We are also reinforcing our Code of Conduct for public officers.

To ensure delivery and quality control, Government has further embarked upon a course of Business Process Reengineering. Since the inception of this initiative, over 340 bureaucratic procedures have been reengineered and dozens of service standards launched and publicised.

All ministries and departments have also been instructed to ensure that they promptly fill all vacancies. While some progress has been achieved, it is important that these efforts be sustained to avoid backsliding.

As we move forward, we need to intensify our efforts to tackle bureaucratic red-tape, which will reduce opportunities for corruption. The introduction of e-services will be a key instrument to our achieving this result. In this respect, Government is investing in the necessary infrastructure to ensure that Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) become a driver, rather than impediment, to progress.

Accountability

Mr. Speaker,
The success of all of these programmes, projects,

and initiatives will require effective monitoring and evaluation to allow us to track progress and redirect our plans as appropriate. It is owing to this that the Government Implementation Coordination Office (GICO) has been mandated to coordinate all Government projects, programmes, and policies, while leading and driving its monitoring and evaluation efforts.

I wish to reiterate that development requires accountability and commitment. To achieve such discipline, six monthly reviews have been instituted across all branches of Government, by which ministers and permanent secretaries are held accountable and are rated for the performance of their ministries. I also have quarterly briefings with all ministries. I have further warned that failure to perform, at both the political and official level, will have consequences.

I am pleased to report that our efforts to build a society of achievement, based on world-class standards, are showing signs of success. In just the past few weeks, the World Economic Forum in Geneva commended us as this year’s most improved competitor. Likewise, we have improved our overall rank in the World Bank’s recently released “Ease of Doing Business Index,” which cited us as being among the world’s top regulatory reformers. Our scores have also risen in the latest Transparency International Corruption Perception Index, where for the thirteenth year in a row, we were cited as being the least corrupt country in Africa, as well as among the least corrupt countries in the world; and the 2008 RS World Risk Survey, where we are ranked in third place globally as a destination for mineral investment.

Most recently, and of special note, has been the award of this year’s “Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership” to former President Mogae. On behalf of a grateful nation, I congratulate him for this great honour.

Such fresh accolades, along with our steady record as a global leader for political stability and prudent resource management, should not make us complacent. In today’s competitive world, we must always strive to do better, and I intend to accomplish this.

BOTSWANA AND THE WORLD

Mr. Speaker,

While the onus is on us to take responsibility for our future, we also need the support, partnership, and cooperation of the rest of the world. It is thus necessary for us to continue to actively participate in the shaping of transnational issues and developments that affect our country. In an increasingly borderless world, our own prosperity is dependent on the prosperity of our neighbours and others in the global community.

We must, therefore, seek opportunities beyond our borders by marketing our country as a destination for investment and tourism. We must further commit ourselves to strengthening bilateral relationships and improving our contribution to the work of sub-regional, regional, and intercontinental organisations and initiatives. In this respect, we are all proud of the continued international mediation and oversight efforts being played by former President Sir Ketumile Masire.

While we now have diplomatic relations with 130 countries, due to our limited resources, we have only nineteen resident diplomatic missions. It is, therefore, important for us to strengthen our ties with other nations through the effective implementation of bilateral agreements and proactive participation in multilateral institutions.

Although membership in various international organisations comes with financial and other obligations that are often burdensome to small countries such as ours, the price of remaining aloof is higher. There are a host of issues on which we need to play an active role. While we respect the principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of sovereign states, and remain cognisant of the fact that our capacity to influence world events is limited, we shall discharge our international responsibilities in line with our own values, regional protocols, and global consensus, voicing our opinion as and when we feel it is justified to do so.

This is what we have been doing in the context of development in Zimbabwe, where we remain seriously concerned about the failure to

form a Government that is widely accepted by the people of that country. We are of the further view that it is important for all SADC member states to uphold the regional standards they have collectively and voluntarily adopted. We strongly believe that the one viable way forward in Zimbabwe is to have a rerun of the presidential election under full international sponsorship and supervision. That way a repeat of the past runoff presidential election, which was declared by regional and international observers to be neither free nor fair and was characterised by intimidation, violence, and brutality, can be avoided. It should be unacceptable for ruling parties to seek to manipulate election outcomes to extend their stay in power, as this is bad for democracy on our continent.

As a least developed country at independence, we once depended heavily on the support of friendly countries and organisations. We arrived to where we are today in part because of the help we received then. Even though we are now better off, we still need and benefit from generous external assistance. I, therefore, wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank all of the countries who have assisted us over the years. In addition, I further wish to thank the many organisations, companies, and individuals, domestic as well as foreign, who have also generously supported us and who continue to contribute to our development endeavours.

Global Financial Crisis

Mr. Speaker,

The recent international financial crises is a further reminder that we are part and parcel of an interdependent world. So far its impact on our economy has been limited, though this could change. Our own financial sector remains strong and has not as yet been much affected by the credit crunch. Our foreign exchange reserves have also not been compromised and can cushion any immediate impact on our balance of payments. Due to past savings, Government spending can be sustained in the face of any short-term revenue downturn.

The situation, however, remains volatile, with the prospect of declining commodity prices and a general slowdown in transnational investment. The main risk to us is the crisis' potential effect on diamond exports. We will continue to carefully monitor the situation and fine tune strategies to minimise any adverse domestic consequences. In so doing, we will be guided by our longstanding recognition that Government acts as a steward of public resources for the citizenry of tomorrow, as well as today. Thus, we shall not drain our current holdings without regard for the future while ensuring that we minimise any negative impact on the private sector, which depends largely on Government spending for the health of their businesses.

The potential impact of the global financial crisis is also affecting our ongoing preparations of the tenth National Development Plan, and the need, therefore, to carry out the extensive consultations we have been undertaking with various non-government stakeholders in its preparation. I have directed that the plan be tabled in Parliament for discussion during the March-April 2009 Budget Session, at which point we will be in a better position to know our likely revenue earnings more accurately.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Speaker,

In the final analysis, the ultimate goal of all our efforts is to build a nation that provides for the dignity of each and every citizen. We should be open to diverse contributions, while remaining united in our own diversity. While those entrusted with leadership have an obligation to be responsive to the public's concerns, all Batswana should recognise their own role as development partners. This calls for a renewed commitment to self-reliance and unity of purpose, which can be summed up as patriotism. Elsewhere, others celebrate their achievers—men and women who excel in various fields of endeavour. Let us be similarly proud of our own individual and collective accomplishments.

Our political pluralism will once more be on display in the coming year when we go to the polls. Like many of you, I am disappointed that the voter registration process has not achieved its targets. The Independent Electoral Commission is providing additional opportunities for registration. I appeal to those who have so far failed to register to do so. Let me also take this opportunity to state that I have no intention of abandoning our tradition of holding general elections in the month of October.

Finally, as we, individually and collectively as a Nation, face our challenges; let us together seek God's blessings and guidance. For in doing so we set ourselves on a better path in life. Embrace God's teachings and you embrace your fellow country men and women, and we will succeed in ridding ourselves of all that is evil and remain with what is good inside us and between us. I thank you. PULA!

BOTSWANA

Tekodiso le Teblopele mo

Sechabeng Ka

Motlotlegi Tautona Lt GEN. Seretse

Khama Ian Khama, a Bula Phuthe go

ya Botlhano ya Palamenta ya

Borobarbongwe—“Go Nonotsha

Sechaba ka Puso ya Batho ka Batho,

Ditlhabololo, Seriti, Botho le

Boikarabelo”

Gaborona, Botswana

3 November 2008

Ketapele

Motsamaisa dipuisanyo, ke lebogela sebaka se sa go lekodisa ntlo ee tlotlegang e, tshakatsheko ya katlego le tswelelopele, mmogo le dikgwetlho tsa chaba eno, seno e le tekodiso ya sechaba, ya me ya nthā, ebile ele ya bofelo pele ga ditlhopho tsa botlhe tsa ngwaga oo tlang.

Re tshwanetse ra lemoga gore, go itebaganya le letlhoko la Batswana ga se tiro ya puso e le esi. Go kgona ga rona go gatelopele go mo maruding a rona rotlhe. Pina ya rona ya sechaba e rurufatsa gore lefatshe leno la rona ,ke mpho ya Modimo – mme e re gontse jalo, tswelelopele ya rona ga e ya wa gotswa kwa legodimong, ke maduo a go dira ka natla ga rona go bona katlego ya maikaelelo a rona rotlhe. Ke ka go tswelela ka go dira mmogo, re ka kgonang go fenya dikgwetlho tse re lebanyeng natso, ra ba ra atlega mo maikaelelong a keletso tsa rona.

Mo dingwageng tse di fetileng, ke nnile le sebaka sa go kopana le batswana ka go farologana ga bone mo lefatsheng leno ka bophara, ka jalo, ka kgona go lemoga gore, re le sechaba, re lesego ka gonna le moonoo o le mongwe mo go tsa setho ebile re na le dikgatlhego tse di tsamaelanang.

Mme gape, rotlhe re na le tumelo ya gore puso e tshwanetse go ikarabela mo sechabeng ka thomo ee e neilweng.

Puso ya rona ya batho ka batho e thaetswe mo ngwaong ya rona ya neelano, tetlanyo le tlotlano ya susu ilela suswane, ka kitso ya gore ditshwanelo tsa rona ka bongwe ka bongwe di tsamaya le boikarabelo, mme ebile, re elatlhoko go babalela seriti sa ba bangwe. Bokao jo, bo senoga sentle mo Molao –Motheo wa lefatshe leno, o o re neelang selekanyetso se matshego a mararo a puso a ikarabelang ka teng lengwe mo go le lengwe, mme segolo bogolo boikarabelo mo sechabeng se se a direlang. Matshego otlhe a mararo a puso, mmogo le makalana aa ikemetseng ka esi, a tshwanetse go dira mmogo go tlhomamisa go nna teng ga poelo ya sechaba. Ka jalo, maikaelelo a a re tshwaragantseng a tlaa nonofa go feta sepe se se ka lelang gore kgaoganya.

Tlhwaafalo ya mofuta o, e tshwaragantswe le boikgapho jo bo golang, e tlaa re thusa mo katlegong ya tshegetso ya ditlhabololo tse di itshetletseng, tse di leng botlhokwa mo go tshediseng motswana mongwe le mongwe ka seriti.

BOIKGAPHO LE BOTHO

Dichaba di tshwanetse go itse maikaelelo a tsone fa di solofela katlego mo go one. Re na le Tebelopele ya ko re eletsang go ya bo fitlha teng. Maitlamo a rona a tsamaiso, togamaano tsa itsholelo, le ditogamaano tsa dithabololo di nonotsha maikaelelo a mosepele o re batang go o tsamaya.

Le fa gona le dikgoreletsi tse re lebanyeng natso mabapi le maikaelelo a rona, kgwetlho e tona fa pele ga rona jaaka re batla ditsela tsa go batla isago e e botoka, ke go nna re tsepame, re sa tsiediwe ke menate ya nakwana, e bile re tlhwaafalela dithabololo tse di itshetletseng ebile di tswelitse mo lobakeng le le leele. Se se raya go baya seelo le selekanyo sa go atlega mo go direng ka manontlhotlho, mo go ka dirang gore re iteisanye borathana le bape fela mo lefatsheng, ba eleng baitaa-monyo ba baba gaisang. Re tshwanetsa go aga mokgwa wa go gaisana mme re tlhwaafalela go ntsha maduo aa boleng jo bo kwa godimo mo pusong le mo makalaneng aa

ikemetseng ka esi, le mo go rona ka bongwe ka bongwe.

Maitlhommo a magolo a puso mo itsholelong ke go dira dithulaganyo le seemo tse ka tsone makalana aa ikemetseng ka esi a a tlegang mme ga nna le kgolo ya ba beelesti ba mo gae le ba ba tswang kwa mafatsheng a sele. Re tswelletse ka go tlhomamisa kemo-nokeng ya chaba ee mamu, ya itsholelo ee bulegileng, e mo go yone mongwe le mongwe yo o kgonang go nna le seabe sa go godisa itsholelo le dithabololo, a kgothadiwang go ema ka dinao. Mo pakeng eno ya kgwebo ya mafatshefatshe, bagwebi ba mono gae ga ba kake ba gola fa ba ikganeletse mono fela. Ba tshwanetse go phuthologa ba batla papadisanyo kwa mebarakeng ya mafatshefatshe.

Puso ya batho ka batho ga e kake ya gola kwa ntle ga boikgapho. Gongwe le gongwe kwa ke tsenang teng mo lefatsheng leno la rona, ke utlwa bohutsana le tlhobaelo ya gore botho ja rona jo boneng bo re tshwaragantse bo a nyelela. Botho, jone jo eleng tlotlano le boikarabelo jo bo amoganwang, bo a re latlhegela mme go tsena go ikgogona le go iteba ka esi, mme seno se tsale tshenyego ya setso sa rona le tsamaiso ya merero ya sepoloti. Fa re kileng ra bo re ikaegile ka boipelego ka bongwe ka bongwe ja rona le re le morafe, jaanong re ikaegile ka ba bangwe le puso gore tlamela:

- Ka maswabi le matlhabisa dithlong, ke tlhomamisa gore mongwe le mongwe wa rona o ka supa dikai tsa go kaa gore tshiamelo ya botlhe e tlhofofaditswe ke tatlhegelo ya boikarabelo le botho ja setho sa rona, bo pelotshetha le boikgagapeledi ja boja-esi jo bo feteletseng le go ipatela ga oesi; dikai:
- dipasa le bo omang ba rekisediwa batswakwa,
- batho ba emela ko thoko ba re ke ga ba bangwe go tima melelo ya naga,
- batho ba ba nang le temogo baitlhokomolosa seemo fa dithoto tsa sechaba di senngwa, tikologo e leswafadiwa le go kgotlelwa,
- Fa bomme ba kgokgontshiwa kgotsa bana ba sekolo ba bonwa ba itewa-tsebe ke bagolo.

Mekgwa e, fa esa kgalengwe, e tlaa nyenyafatsa tsotlhe tse re di kgoneng go tla go fitha mo nakong eno, mme ebile, e ka nna dikgoreletsi tsa tswelelopele ya ditlhabololo tsa rona. Re tshwanetse go tsaya dikgato tse di lebanyeng fa re lemoga gore boikgapho jo re neng re agetse kgatelopele ya rona mo go jone bo a tlhofofala. A re le sechaba re gakologelweng gore gatwe boikgapho ke jone motshela-kgabo fa gare ga maikaelelo le tirafatso ya one.

HIV/AIDS LE DIRITIBATSI

Ka botlhaga ja boeteledipele ja yo ke sa tswang go mo tlathlhamo, Tautona wa maloba rraetsho festus Mogae, re ne ra lemoga ka bofefo gore ga re kake ra itlhokomolosa segajaja sa HIV/AIDS ka tsholofelo ya gore ka tsela nngwe se tlaa re kakoga. Ka re ne ra seka ra iphatlha ka lefuka re re mogare o ga o yo, tsatsi jeno gona le ba le bantsi ba ba fano ba ba kabong ba seyo magareng ga rona. Dingwe tsa dilo tse di molemo mabapi le thulaganyo tsa go anamisa ditirelo, ke gore gompiano batho ba ba fetang 110,000 ba thusiwa ka diritibatsi, mme ebile re fokoditse kanamo ya mogare gotswa mo go mmangwana go ya ko leseeng gotswa mo go 40% go ya ko go 4%.

Dithulaganyo tse, di tlhwatlhwa-kgolo. Mo ngwageng oo fitileng re dirisitse madi a selekanyo sa didikadike dile sekete le makgolo a mane a didikadike. Masome a a ferang bongwe mo lekgolong, ene e le madi aa tswang mo meamusong ya rona. Mme gona re tshwanetse go itse gore ga gona selekanyo sepe sa madi, se se ka emisetsang tlhwaafalo mo go tshegegetseng ditirelo tsa botlhokwa. Kalafi le diritibatsi di ka dira mo go seng kalo kalo. Boikgapho ke jone konokono ya mo tia.

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, go lemosega tomagano fa gare ga gonwa bojalwa mo go feteletseng le boitsholo jo bo kotsi jo bo rotloetsang kanamo ya mogare wa HIV. Re itse seabe sa diritibatsi tsa tagi mo go lebatseng balwetse go tsa ya kalafi ya malwetse jaaka bo TB ka thwaafalo. Bojalwa bo na le seabe mo matshwenyegong a mantsi jaaka; Dikotsi tsa tsela tsa dikoloi, maduo aa ko tlase mo tirong le dikgolafalo mo tirong;

Bana ba ba tsholwang ka bogole bongwe, ka mma lesea a ne a anwa bojalwa ka nako ya boimana, malwetse a mantshi, melato ya dintwa jaaka, petelelo, titeo ya ka bomo, kgothoso, dipolao, kgokgonthso ya bana le bomme mo malwapeng.

Jaaka chaba, ga re ka ke ra itlhokomolosa mathata a, re re ga go sepe se se ka dirwang go bepisa seemo se. Ke gone ka mo puso e setseng morago kaelo ya Lekalana la Botsogo la Lekgotla la Dichaba le tsamaiso tsa mafatshefatshe tse diatlegileng, re tsereng dikgato tse di farologanyeng go lwantsha mathata a. Dingwe tsa dikgato tse diakaretsa; Tsamaiso ya Tiriso ya Bojalwa; Thutuntsho ya sechaba ka bodiphatsa ja gonwa bojalwa ga bana ba ba botlana, le gonwa bojalwa mo go feteletseng, gonwa bojalwa ke baimana kgotsa motho a le mo kalafing nngwe; Kgagamatsa ya molao; Phokotso ya dinako tsa thekiso ya majalwa le; Tshimolodiso ya lekgetho la 30%.

Nngwe le nngwe ya dikgato tse e mo selekanyetsong, mme fa di patangwa, di ka thusa go bepisa le go fokotsa dintsho le tshenyoy dithoto. Le fa gontse jalo, go na le ba ba tlhobosang maiteko a rona ba re ditlamorago tsa bojalwa ke sekao fela gase o ne mathata. Batho ba ba lebala gore tse tsotlhe di tshwaragane, gonwa mo go feteletseng go tsala lehuma, boganana ja bana, maduo aa ko tlase mo botshelong, tlhaelo ya botsogo jo bo feletseng, le koafalo ya tlhologanyo le mmele wa motho.

BOATLHODI LE TSHIRELETSEGO

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, bathei ba lefatshe le ba ne ba lemoga gore thitibalo ya sechaba le kagisano ke konokono ya seriti sa morafe. Tsatsi jeno re lemoga gape gore, yone thitibalo ke letshego la go dira ka natla le katlego.

Dirukutlhi ke tsa mefuta yothe hela jaaaka ba-tswa-sethabelo ba tsone. Re tlaa tswelala ka twantsho borukuthi, re akaretsa tshenyetso sechaba ka go dirisa maano aa tokafaditsweng a itebagantse le thitibalo go tlhotlhomisa le go sekisa. Ke itumelela go bega gore re setse re bona maduo a dikgato tse disha tse. Puso e ntse e

laletsa batsaa karolo ba bangwe jaaka bagwebi, baeteledipele ba makgotla a boithaopo le magosi go tsenya letsogo mo maitekong a.

Fa godimo ga moo, go tlaa nonotshwa tirafatso ya molao jaaka go tlaa bo go tshwaragannwa sepodise sa morafe le sa puso, le khiro ya mooketsa ya bodiredi ja sepodise ka batho bale 2050 go akaretsa metse e mentsi. Lekalana la sepodise la difofane tsa tlhoo-tomo le tlaa simolodiswa ngwaga oo tlang o simologa. Ditiro tse di tshwaraganetsweng ke sepodise le sesole di tlaa nonotshwa go fokotsa le go lwantsha borukuthi.

Mo mmelaeweng le mongongoregi mo tshetshong ya melato, tiego ya go seka di tshetsho ke tatlhegelo ya tshiamelo ditshwanelo. Ka jalo, retse re simolotse diphetogo mo lephateng la boatlhodi go leka go fedisa madiadia. Khuduso ya bosekisi go tswa mo sepodiseng go ya kwa Lephatheng la Bosekisi la Bosechaba e tlaa nonotsha go dira ka matsetseleko ga maphata oo mabedi.

Jaaka ele maikaelelo a rona go lwantsha le go bifela tshenyetso sechaba, ba Lekalana la Twantsho Tshenyetso Sechaba le Gogopela Itsholelo, ba tsaya dikgato tse disha lefatshe ka bophara go kgoreletsa ditsela tsa tshenyetso sechaba kwa e lemosegang thata teng. Dikgato tse di setse di supa katlego.

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, kwa bofelong, thitibalo ya morafe ga e kake ya kgaogannwa le tlhwaafalo ya go tshegetsa botho le setho ja rona. Ke gone ka moo ke neng ka tlhoma Lekoko La Botho le Setho, le le neng le agilwe ka baruti ba dikereke le magosi. Pego ya bone e tlaa re fa megopolo ya ditsela tse re ka tsayang kgato ka tsone.

DITLHABOLOLO

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, ka tshegetso ya Tebelopele ya rona, maikaelelo a ditlhabololo tsa rona ke go tlhatloga gotswa mo gonneng lefatshe la itsholelo ee fa gare go nna ee kwa godimo, e bile re tlhokomela botlhe. Le fa golebanye go ikgantsha ka katlego ya nako ee fitileng, go botlhokwa go itebaganya le dikgwetlho tsa gompiano, dikai;

- Le fa go nnile le phokotsego ya selekanyo sa lehuma mo dingwageng tsemi fetileng, go tswa mo go 47% ka 1994 go nna 30% ka 2004, mme ebile go solofelwa phokotsego go nna 23% mo ngwageng oo tlang, re lemoga botlhokwa ja gore gonne le kgolo ya itsholelo le go tlhama ditiro tse disha le mebereko.
- Gona le pharologanyo mo dikitsong tsa dialogane tsa rona le se diphatlha tsa pereko di se tlhokang, seno se oketsa mathata a letlhoko la ditiro.
- Lefa re dirile di peeletso tsemi kwagodimo mo go tsa botsogo, re santse re ikaegile ka bomaitsaanape ba mafatshe a sele.
- Poelo ya temo-thuo ga e fatlhoge ka selekanyo se se eletsegang ntswa go sa bolo go abiwa dithuso tsemi neng di itebagantse le go e tlhabolola.
- Lefa re dirile di tsamaiso le makalana a go oketsa le go ngoka ba beeletsi ba mafatshefatshe, dipeeletso tse ga di lekane tsholofelo ya maiteko a rona.

Fa ese re ka bona metlobo e mesha ya diteemane tsa selekanyo sa meepo ya Jwaneng le Orapa, dipeolo tsa thekiso ya diteemane tsa lefatshe leno di tlaa wela tlase mongwageng tsemi tlang. Go a patelesega go batla metswedi e mengwe ya phutho ya madi ka go tswakanya itsholelo.

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, maikaelelo a rona a gonna lefatshe le le kwa godimo ka itsholelo go ikaegile ka ntlha tse pedi. Sa ntlha ke go tlhwaafalela go tswakanya itsholelo ka go rulaganya mo go faphegileng “boremelelo ja ditirelo”. Sa bobedi ke ka go dirafatsa di thulaganyo tsemi farologanyeng tsa itsholelo le matshelo a sechaba.

Puso e tlhomile makalana a le marataro a boremelelo ja ditirelo. Tona yo o okametseng lekalana lengwe le lengwe o begela Komiti ya Khudutamaga ya Puso ee itebagantseng le Itsholelo le Mebereko e e okametsweng ke Motlotlegi Mothusa Tautona e le modulasetilo wa yone, mme ba mmegela kgwedi le kgwedi. Lephata lengwe le lengwe le setse morago ditiro

tse disha tse ba disimolotseng mo kgwedding tse difa moragonyana. Ditiro tse di dirwa ele seabe se se tlang maikaelelo a rona a dithulaganyo tsa ditlhabolola. Jaanong ke tlaa tlotlomatsa dintlha dingwe tse di botlhokwa tsa maikaelelo a thulaganyo e.

DITSWAMMUNG, KGOTETSO LE METSI

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, ke maikaelelo a rona go dira lefatshe la Botswana boremelelo ja mafatshemafatshe ja kgwebo ya diteemane. Go thusa go dirafatsa se, re tlhoma boremelelo ja kgwebo ya diteemane ka maikaelelo a go godisa poelo ya go anamisa taleletso ya kepo le thekiso ya diteemane. Se se tlaa re direla meberoko le go godisa itsholelo ka go tlaa simolodisa madirelo a petlo le go rethehatsa diteemane, go dira dithoto tsa mekgabo le kgwebisano mono gae ka teemane ee sa rethefadiwang le ee rethefaditsweng.

Letlole la Tshireletse go le le ko lebaleng la di fofane la Sir Seretse Khama le tlaa fudusediwa kwa boremelelong ja diteemane gore le tle le dirisiwe ke botlhe ba ba nang le seabe eseng fela ke ba Debswana le ba Diamond Trading Centre.

Ofisi ya diteemane e e akararetsang botlhe batsaa karolo e tlaa bulwa mo kgwedding eno. Ofisi e e tlaa ela tlhoko tirafatso ya ditumalano tsa kanamiso ya diteemane, le go rurufatsa gore tumalano ya tsamaiso ya Kimberly Process Certification e a dirafadiwa.

Go gokela motlakase mo malwapeng go botlhokwa ka go tokafatsa boleng ja matshelo a sechaba. Mo tirong e tema e a bonala. Mo nakong eno, sephatlo sa malwapa se gokeletswe motlakase fa re tshwantshanya le ngwaga tsemi lesome tsemi fetileng. Ka nako eo, ene e le lelwapa le le ngwe mo go a ferabobedi. Go tla go fitlha fano, re goketse motlakase mo metseng ele 270, mme re saletswe ke go gokela ele 98 mo bo gaufing.

Le fa gontse jalo, gona le di kgoreletsi tsemi itsang kgokelelo ya botlhe motlakase. Bontsi ja Botswana ga ba kgone tlhwalhwa tsemi kwa godimo tsa kgokelo ya motlakase. Lephata le le lebanyeng le kopilwe go sekaseka seemo se, go itebagantswe le baagi ba metse ya magae.

Tshekatsheko e e tlaa wela ka kgwedi ya APRIL 2009.

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, golekana ke tsa kgotetso go botlhokwa fela thata mme ebile go batla go potlakelwa ka bofebo. Ka mabaka a tlhalelo ya motlakase le botlhokwa ja go oketsa selekanyo sa tiriso ya motlakase mo madirelong le mo malwapeng, puso e tsere kgato e ntlha tharo, go itebaganya le seemo sa nakwana, le sa tekanyetso ee fa gare le kgato ya sennela ruri ya go fedisa letlhoko la rona. Kgato ya ntlha ke tshekatsheko le tirafatso ya tshiamelo ya go dibela selekanyo sa letlhoko la rona la motlakase.

Kgato ya bobedi ke ya go katolosa phetlho ya motlakase ya Morupule Power Station ka selekanyo sa 600 mega watts mme re solofetse go digela tiro eo ka ngwaga wa 2011. Katoloso ya bobedi ya phetlho ya motlakase ko Morupule le yone e tlaa ntsha selekanyo sa 600 mega watts, se se tlaa emisa theko ya rona ya motlakase ko mafatsheng a sele.

Kgato ya boraro ke ya go ngoka le go thusa babeeletsi ba ba nang le bokgoni ja go tlhoma madirelo aa ikemetseng ka esi a phetlho ya motlakase mono, go re thusa go fetlha motlakase oo re lekanyeng fa re santse re ithulaganya gore mo nakong ya isago, re kgone go rekisa motlakase ko mafatsheng a mangwe. Mo seemong se, ke gone ka moo dipuisanyo ditsweletseng fa gare ga Mmamabula Energy Project le bana le seabe ba bangwe jaaka Botswana Power Corporation le ba Eskom, mmogo le mebuso ya Botswana le South Africa. Ka mabaka a kgolo ya ditlhwatlhwa le ditiragalo tse dingwe go tswa kwantle ga Botswana, re ne ra patelesega go fokotsa selekanyo sa tiro e, e jaanong go solofelwang gore jaanong etlaa ntsha motlakase wa selekanyo sa 1200 mega watts. Mme re tswelletse ka dipuisanyo le ba bangwe go re thusa go fokotsa selekanyo sa ditshenyegelo mo go yone.

Ke dirisa nako e go laletsa bape fela ba ka kgatlhegelang go tlhoma madirelo a phetlho ya motlakase aa ikemetseng ka esi go buisanya le puso. Lefatshe la Botswana le na le ditshegofatso tsa meamusu le gore gape le mo bogare ja kgaolo ya SADC mo le ka kgonang go ka phatlalatsa thekiso mo kgaolong yotlhe ya SADC. Re tlaa

amogela le bao ba eleng bagwebi ba kgotetso ee nchafadiwang jaaka ya marang a letsatsi.

Puso e lemoga gore go nwa metsi aa phepa ke tshwanelo ee lebanyeng. Nngwe ya ditiro tse dikgolo go dirwa mo thulanyong ya ditogamaano tsa bolesome ke kgokelo ya dipompo tsa metsi tsa NorthSouth Carrier II, le go aga matamo a mangwe a masha. Letamo la Ntimbale le fedile, mme kago ya matamo a Dikgatlhong, Thune le Lotsane jaanong e mo tseleng. Mefuta e mengwe ya metsi e tlaa latedisiwa go oketsa tshiamelo ya go bona metsi. Mekgwa ee sa kgotsofatseng ya kabo ya metsi jaaka gonna le makalana a mantsi aa direlang motse o le mongwe fela , ke nngwe ya dikgoreletsi mo go abeng metsi ka selekanyo. Lephata la Ditswa-mmung, Kgotetso le Metsi mmogo le ba Dikgaolo ba tla sekaseka le go elatlhoko go fokotsa dipalo tsa makalana aa sielang batho metsi mo lefelong lele lengwefela. Kabakanyo e e taa dirafadiwa ka 2009.

DITIRO LE DIPALAMO

Boremelelo ja tsa Mesepele bo baakanyediwa go tlhlongwa ka maikaelelo a go tlhomamisa gore ditiro tsotlhe tsa go tlhabolola ditlamelo di lere poelo ee tlaa nonotshang itsholelo ka go tshwaraganya tirelo tsa mesepele ya difofane, dipalamo mo ditseleng le tiriso ya terena. Re solofetse poelo ya lekalana le ka kgolo ya mebereko le madi a bojanala le tsa kamogelo baeng, mmogo le tsa dipalamo.

Ditiro tse dingwe tse di akanyeditsweng ke borogo ja Kazungula, lefelo la dithoto go tswa mo lewatleng kwa Namibia, seporo sese ralalang kgalagadi go ya Namibia, seporo sa terena go tswa mo Mmamabula go ya Ellisras le Mosetse go ya Kazungula. Ditshekatsheko tsa ditiro tsa diporo di tswelletse fa tumalano ya lefelo la dothoto go tswa mo lewatleng ele gaufi le go wediwa. Maiteko a tswelletse a go ngokela difofane tsa mesepele ya mafatshefatshe mono, le dipaakanyo tsa go tlhabolola mabala a difofane a Francistown, Kasane, Maun le sir Seretse Khama di tswelletse, mme re solofela gore tiro di tlaa bo di weditswe ka ngwaga wa 2010-11.

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, go nonotsha maikaelelo a rona a go neela beeng gae dithata, taelo e dule ya gore dikoloi tsa puso tse di kgologolo le dithoto tse di ngwe tse di farologanyeng tsa puso le makalana aa kafatlase ga puso tse di rekisiwang ka palabalo jaanong di rekisediwa batswana fela le dikompone tsa batswana fela. Fa ngwaga ono o fela, go taa bo go rekisitswe dikoloi di ka tshwara dikete tse pedi (2000).

TEMO-THUO

Go tlhlongwa ga lekalana la Boremelelo ja Temo-thuo go itebagantse le kgothatso le go thusa kgolo ya temo-thuo ya kgwebo le go tshegetsa go tswakanya lekala le, le go tlhomamisa tekanyo ya dijo. Nngwe ya ditiro tse di botlhokwa ke tema ya bobedi ya National Agricultural Master Plan for Arable Agriculture and Dairy Development (NAMPAADD). Ko tshimologong ya thulaganyo e, gone ga tlhlongwa dipolase tsa tekeletso le thutontsho dile nne, e nngwe e le ya temo ya komelelo, tse pedi e le tsa temo ya merogo fa e nngwe e le ya kgomo tsa mashi. Dipolase tse di dirisediwa thutontsho tse di farologanyeng tsa kgwebo ya temo-thuo le go abela balemi-barui boitsaanape ja boranyane ja temo-thuo. Go a bonala gore go tlaa nna le dipolase mo maitekong a.

Nngwe ya megopolo e e sekasekwang ke Zambezi Agro Commercial Integrated Development Project, e maikaelelo a yone e leng go tlhoma kgwebo e tona ya temo kwa kgaolong ya bokone ja lefatshe leno. Tswelolepele ya tiro e nyahadiwa ke therisanyo le mafatshe a mangwe ka selekanyo sa metse aa tlaa geletswang mo nokeng ya Zambezi.

Mo malatsing a sa tswang go feta, re simolositse thulaganyo e ncha ee bidiwang Integrated Support Programme for Arable Agriculture Development (ISPAAD). Maikaelelo a yone ke go thusa balemi ka dipeo, menontshane, digogi kgotsa golemelwa le go jwalelwa, metsi a a nowang kwa masimo le go teratela masimo aa atamalaneng a le mothoteng e le nngwefela. Di-peo di setse di isitswe kwa dikgaolong tse difarologanyeng. Lephata la Temo-thuo le santse

le senka menontshane ka jaanong tlhalelo ya yone lefatshe bophara e dirile gore tlhwatlhwa di ye kwa godimo. Gompiano go kwadisitswe diterekere tsa beng di feta 1600 go thusa tsa puso mo thulaganyong e. Puso e mo thulaganyong ya go reka di le 60. Go tokafatsa tiriso ya diterekere, re letleletse gore ba ba nang le ditlankana tsa go kgweetsa dikoloi ba kgweetse terekere.

ISPAAD e tla tlhabolola kgwebo ya temo ka go dira jalo re fokotsa go ikaega fela ka theko ya dijo kwa mafatsheng a sele. Ke batla go tlhagisa gore, ke balemi ba ba tlhwaafetseng fela ba ba tlaa tswelelang ka go thusiwa ke puso.

Mme gape re ikemiseditse go hirisetse mmeleletsi kana mogwebi ope fela lefatshe la puso fa a supa tlhwafalo le boineelo ja go dirisa lefatshe leo kgwebo e e nonneng. Puso e ikaeletse go tsa le go beeletsa lefatshe la morafe le le sadiriswieng ka botlalo go le dirisetse temo-thuo ee busetsang.

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, makgotla a kadimo ya madi ba ntse ba le maoto a tshupa go adima balemi-barui madi fa go sena tshireletso ya ditatlhegelo tsa kadimo ya madi.ka maikaelelo a go thusa go tlhlofatsa dikadimo tsa madi le go fokotsa diphatsa tsa ditla-morago tse di bakwang ke phetogo ya seemo sa lewapi le dibetso tsa tlholego, Puso e mo thulaganyong ya go simolodisa tsamaiso ya tshireletso ya dikadimo tsa madi ee bidiwang BotswanaContributory Agricultural Scheme e mo go yone balemi barui le bone ba tlaa ntshang seabe. Thulaganyo ya banana ya CEDA Young Farmers Fund ee neng e thusa banana go tsena mo kgwebong ya temo-thuo le yone e setse e eme ka dinao. Dikopo dile 151 di setse di thusitswe ka madi aa kanang ka didikadike dile 58 tsa dipula.

Ka maikaelelo a go godisa temo-thuo, Puso e thwaafaleitse go tlhabolola ditlamelo tsa dikgaolo jaaka ditsela, motlakase, metsi le ditlhaeletsanyo. Tshakatshekelo ya metsi go thusa barui ba ba botlana ba ba mo lefatsheng la morafe ko metse a tlhlang teng e tswelletse. Tiro tsa mofuta o e setse e tswelletse kwa Kgalagadi le Ghanzi.

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, re ntse re atlega mo go lwantsheng bolwetse ja tlhako le molomo kwa kgaolong ya Ngami, mme ka maswabi, katlego ya

rona e nnye le poela morago ka go tshagoga mo go sha ga bolwetse kwa Kuke mo kgaolong ya Ghanzi mo kgwedeng e e fitileng.

BOTSOGO

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, Boremelelo ja tsa Botsogo bo rulaganyediwa ka go sekaseka ditiro le dithulaganyo tse di ka dirang gore lefatshe la Botswana e nne sekgantshwane sa ditirelo tsa botsogo mo kgaolong ya borwa ja afrika. Nngwe ya ditiro tse di taa fefogelwang ke ya go ithola thulaganyo ya go rwala le phatthalatso ya melemo le pabalesego ya lekalana la theko le kabo ya melomo (Cental Medical Stores). Phetogo e go solofelwa gore e taa fedisa mathata a a leng teng mo lekalaneng le, ko ditsamaiso tse dibokowa di dirileng gore go nne motlhofo go thukutha puso, mo go neng ga baka tshaelo ya melemo le tshenyego ya melemo ee neng e sa isiwa kwa dikokelong.

Ga go belatse gore re na le maokelo a seemo se se kwa godimo, mme re tshaela bodiredi go ka aba ditirelo tse di tsamaelanang le dikokeo sa rona. Ke gone ka moo re ikaegileng ka baagisanyo ebong lefatshe la Africa Borwa go tlamela batho ba rona ba ba thokang kalafi ee faphegileng. Re mo thulanyong ya go hirisa bontha bongwe ja dipatela dingwe tsa rona go dirisiwa ke dingaka tse di ikemetseng ka esi. Sekai, ba University ya Bonn kwa Jeremane ba mo dipuisanyong le puso gore ba letlelelwe go tlhoma lekalana la malwetse a pelo mo sepateleng se sesha sa Scottish Livingstone kwa Molepolole. Tirisanyo le badiri ba ba tumileng e e ntseng jaana e tlaa re atametsa ditirelo mono gae, ka jalo batswana ba bone ka segautshwane ditirelo tse ba neng ba ntse ba dijaka kwa mafatsheng a sele.

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, kabo ya diritibatsi tsa di ARV ekile ya bo e na le mathata monakong ee fitileng, bogolo jang kwa metseng ee kgakala. Puso jaanong e simolositse thulaganyo entsha ya go aba diritibatsi tsa ARV go tla mathata a maloba. Dikokelwana dile 79 jaanong di simolotse go aba di ARV.

Batswana ba ba ntsi ga ba kgone kalafi tsa loaro la dikarolo tsa mmele le kalafi tse dingwe

tse di faphegileng. Lephata la Botsogo le kwala tsamaiso ee tlaa salwang morago go itebagantswe le dithwatlhwa le tshiamelo ya thuso malebang le makoa aa ntseng jalo. Mo bo jaanong, thuso mabapi le mathata a, e fiwa batho go lebeletswe mabaka a a farologaneng, jaaka bagodi, katlego ya kalafi, le tlhwatlhwa ya booki morago ga kalafi kgotsa loaro. E ntse e le bontlha bongwe jwa dithuso, bana le bogole le bagodi ga ba sa tlhola ba lopiwa tuelo ko dikokelong.

Go atametsa ditlamelo tsa botsogo gaufi le metse ya magae, ba Lephata la Dikgaolo ba rulaganya bosha tsamaiso ya botsogo gotswa kwa moding ka go tshabolola dikokelo tsa bone, khiri ya badiredi ba bangwe le katoloso ya madirelo. Go thomamisa gore ditirelo di fitlha kwa go botlhe mo metseng ya magae, ditirelo tsa dingaka le tsa kalafi di rulagantswe ka marakana a le 189 lefatshe bophara, a le 100 a setse a abetswe dingaka. Tsamaiso e e tlaa fokotsa nako e telele ya go leta go bona ngaka kgotsa go tsamaya mesepele e meelele go lata tsa botsogo.

Lephata la botsogo le tlhwaafatse khiri ya dingaka go fokotsa tshaelo ee teng segolo jang mo dikokelong tse di kwa dikgaolong.

THUTO LE THABOLOLO DIKITSO

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, Boremelelo ja Thuto bo a tlhonga go nonotsha boleng ja thuto, thutontsho le ikatiso ya dikitso, dipatlisiso mo go tsa Boranyane le boitsaanape ja bonokopila, Tsamaiso ya Kgwebo, Meepo, Bojanala le Kamogelo Baeng, bogolo jang fa re dumelang gore re kaiteisanya borathana sentle le mafatshe a mangwe mo kgaolong le lefhatse ka kakaretso. Ka jalo re atolosa kgwebo le papadisanyo le go dira mebereko. Fela jaaka tsa botsogo, maikaelelo ke go aba thuto mono gae, gore re fokotse ditshenyegelo tsa go isa baithuti kwa mafatsheng a sele.

Mo ditirong tse di kgolo tse di taa dirwang, nngwe ya tsone ke pulo ya Botswana International University of Science and Technology. Legato la ntlha la go agwa ga yone go tlaa wela ka Sedimonthole ka 2010, mme se tlaa amogela bana ka kgwedi ta Mopitlwe ka 2011. Mme legato la

bobedi la kago ya sekolo le tla simololwa morago ga foo, le tshwaraganetswe ke ke puso le bagwebi ba ba ikemetseng ka esi. Puso e ikaelela go duelela bana ba ba botlhale thata go ya dithutong kwa dikolong tse di tumileng thata. Se se tla tlhomamisa gore re nna le selekanyo sa batlhalefi ba ba ka re thusang mo dikgwethlong tsa isago.

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, thulaganyo ya magoboka ya go tlabolola le go baakanyetsa bodiredi jo lefatshe leno bo le tlhokang (Human resource Development Strateby) e a dirwa, ka gore, go nna lefatshe le le tlhabologileng go tlaa tlhoka bodiredi jo bo nonofileng bo kgona, bo na le dikitso tse di tlhokafalang. Jaaka itsholelo ya mafatshefatshe a fetoga ka bofefo, go tlhokafala thata go tswelala ka go tlabolola dikitso tsa bodiredi. Gorutela batho mo tirong, thutuntsho ya nakwana le dithuto tse di kgolwane e tshwanetse go nna seo-modiro go nonotsha bodiredi. Fa Puso e tswelala ka go tlhagolela thuto ya botshelo jotlhe, makalana a a ikemetseng ka esi le one a tshwanetse go dira seabe sa one jaaka Puso e supa maiteko a yone.

Boitaolo le botlhokatshebe ja bana ba dikolo gabo jese diwelang. Go hemela tshenyo ya dithoto tsa dikolo, tiro ya ditagi le diritibatsi, le mekgwa e mengwe ya boganana, thulaganyo ya bogakolodi e setse e simolotswe mo dikolong tse di kgolwane. Go tlhomamisa boikapho ja baruta bana, go tlaa tlhongwa Khansela ya boruta bana (Teaching Council) mme melawana ya bokaedi le yone e a sekasekwa ka maikaelelo a go e tlabolola. Ke laetse ba Lephata la Thuto gore, boitaolo bope ja boganana gope fela mo dikolong, go similola ka tse di potlana go fitlha ko go bo mmadikolo – bo kgalengwe go sa oshaoshiwe.

PEREKO LE SELEGAE

Lephata la Pereko le Tsa Pereko le Tsa Selegae ba mo thulaganyong ya go simolodisa tsamaiso ya go tshwarelela dialogane mo ditirong go ba fa nonofo ya dikitso tse ba di amuleng kwa dikolong, ele go tlhokotsa tshiamelo ya go hirwa mo tirong tsa sennela ruri. Kwadiso ya bone e setse e tswelotse, mme ba tlaa simolola ka Hirikgong 2009.

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, go nonotsha maiteko a go busetsa magolegwa mo tseleng e e siameng, ba ba golotsweng mo kgolegolong ba tlaa letlelelwa ka nakwana go dirisa ditlamelo tsa kgolegelo go ithutuntsha le go itirela matsana a ba ka itshimololelang kgwebo ka one. Lephata La Pereko le gaufi le go simolola tekeletso ya se. Go leka go tokafatsa ikago, ke ne ka rebola gore go gololwe bangwe pele gaba fetsa dikatlaholo tsa bone. Mme go golotswe ba le1039. Ke tshwanetse ke gatelele gore, ba ba golotsweng ba golotswe ka tsholofelo ya gore bat la iphapa. Fa ba ka retelwa ke boitshwara, ba tlaa busediwa mo kgolegolong.

Ka mabaka a bodiphatsa ja dipasa tsa mosepele tse di mo matsogong a batho ba eseng Batswana, lephata le laetse go gagamatsa tshireletso go tsamaelana le melawana ya mafatshefatshe le tlhobaelo ya rona mono. Ka jalo, ba ba tlaa latlhegelwang ke dipasa tsa bone, bogolo jang di latlhega ka botlhaswa, ba solofele tiego ya lebaka la ngwaga pele gaba fiwa e nngwe, mme tlhatlhwa ya go emisetsa e e latlhegileng e ka goroga kwa go P1,000.00) sekete sa dipula. Fa mabaka a tatlhego a sa utlwale, kemisetso ya pasa e kanna ya seka ya rebolwa.

Dikgato di tserwe go fedisa ditsela tsa tshenyetso setshaba mo makalaneng a tsa Mesepele le Pereko, bogolo jang e tlhotlhelediwa ke batswakwa ba ba tsenyeng e se ka fa molaong. Re tswelotse ka go tshwara batswakwa ba ba dirang ditiro tsa go tla tsamaiso ya rona ya tsa mesepele, ka go ba busetsa kwa ba tswang gone. Batswana ba ba thusang batho ba ese ka fa molaong ba solofele go sekisiwa go sena kutlwelobotlhoko.

Re ntse re setse tlhwaafalo ya rona ya therisanyo, Lephata le okeditse maiteko a lone a go buisanya le bahiri le badiri go aga mowa wa neelano mo go tse diba tshwaraganyang. Therisanyo e e tshwanetse go nonotsha megopolo e e ka tlang boleng ja botshelo le go ntsha maduo a a nametsang a badiri.

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, ke itumelela go bega kgolo ya seabe sa bo Mme mo maemong aa kwa godimo mo pusong le mo madirelong a a ikemetseng ka esi. Mo dingwageng tse di lesome tse di fitileng, Botswana o ne a le mo maemong a Masome a mabedi mo lefatsheng lotlhe fa go

lekangwa dipalo tsa bomme ba ba mo maemong a boeteledipele mo pusong le mo madirelong. Dipalo tsa bomme di bolelwa di feta sephatlo sa ba ba thapilweng mo ditirong tsa barutegi ba dikitso le tsa boitsaanape. Mo bodireleng puso, bomme palo tsa bone di feta Masome a mane mo lekgolong.

Gompeino re ka ipelafatsa ka gore, fa re neng re ntse re setse kwa morago teng, e leng mo go thapeng bomme mo sesoleng, jaanong re gorogile teng. Kwa re iseng re kgone teng ke boemedi ja bomme mo boeteledipeleng ja sepolotiki.

DITLHAELETSANO, BORANYANE LE BOITSAANAPE

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, re tshela mo pakeng e kgolo ya itsholelo ya mafatshe e ikaegileng ka dikgwebo tse di godiswang ke dikitso. Ke gone ka moo re tlhomang lefelo la Boremelelo ja Dikitso tsa boranyane e le pinagare ya go itlhokoletsa go itlhabololela kitso go fetola le go itirela tsa boranyane le boitsaanape. Lekalana la Boremelelo ja Dikitso le tla a itebaganya le boranyane, go thusa madirelo a ditlhaeletsanyo, boitsaanape, le dipatlisiso. E tla nna lefelo la thutontsho ya botsamisi le thuso ya dikgwebo le tirisanyo mmogo go lomaganya bagwebi go nonotsha thokafatso ya maduo mo tirong le tlhomo ya mebereko.

Tshaba epe fela gore e nne mo maemong a mafatshefatshe, ditirelo tsa barutegi ba yone di tshwanetse go sala morago mekgwa le tsamaiso tse di lebanyeng, tse di tsamaelanang le selekanyetso sa mafatshefatshe. Ka jalo tsholofelo ya gore babegadikgang ba nne le boikarabelo, le go ikarabela mo lekgotleng la bobega dikgang le le ikemetseng, le na le boikarabelo le botsamaiso jo bo nonofileng, go tshwanetse ga tlhalogangwa gore ke se se siametseng botlhe.

BANANA, METSHAMEKO LE NGWAO

E le go tsamaelana le Tebelopele ya 2016, ya go nna tshaba e e tshwaraganyeng, ee ithatang, Puso e tsere dikgato tsa go thuso mefuta e e farologanyeng ya metshameko. Ka jalo, tuelo ya

go tsenelela metshameko ya ditlhopho sa setshaba, madi a itshetso a kgwedi le kgwedi a batshamiki ba ba yang dikgaisanyong tsa Premier, First Division (bokone le Dikgaisanyo tsa dikgaolo tsa kgwele ya dinao ya ditlhopho tse diseng mo kgaisanong tsa Premier le First Division le thulagfanyo ya go rotloetsa bafenyi ka madi le dietsele di simolotse. Mme dikgaisanyo tse ditla tswelela. Go tla go fitha gompiono, dikgaisanyo tse ditsweletse mo dikgaolong dile 53 mo go tse 57 (mo dikgaolong tsotlhe fa e se Nkange, Kgatleng East le West, le Gaborone West North).

Ba Lephata la Banana, Metshameko le Ngwao, ba tshwaraganye le bagwebi, ba simololodisitse thulaganyo ya go batla talente e e seng ya metshameko. Tiro tseo di akaretsa Popstars Botswana, le My African Dream. Mekete ya tsatsi la ga Tautona jaanong le dirisiwa go tlhopho ba ba nang le ditalente mo dikgaolong ka go farologana go itebagantswe le botaki, moopelo, mmimo, metshameko, maboko le metlae, tsotlhe tse go na le lemmonyana le le neelwang ba dirafatsi ba ba gaisitseng. Seno se tsamaelana le maikaelelo a ba Lephata La Ditlhaelatsanyo, Boranyane le Boitsaanape a go senka ditsela tsa go thusa baopedi go gatisa dipina tsa bone.

Ka maikaelelo a tlhabololo tomaganyo ya di thulaganyo tsa banana, Lephata lengwe le lengwe le laetwse go nna le modiri wa tsa banana. Se se tlaa tlhomamisa gore dikgang tsa banana di elwa tlhoko ke puso le makalana a e seng a puso. Badiri ba banana jannong ba tlaa ajwa ka dikgaolo tsa bo palamante gore mananeo a banana a tle a tswe tema ka dithuso tse puso e tlaa di abang. Badiri ba banana ba tlaa kopana le ba Lephata la Banana, Metshameko le Ngwao gane mo ngwageng go rerisanya ka megopolo le go e rola ko khuduthamageng ya Puso. Ke maikaelelo a rona go rulaganyetsa banana metswedi mo mehameng yotlhe ya botshelo.

Mo go katoloseng bojanala le go somarela boswa ja ngwao le setso sa rona, di hikantswe le mathibelelo a ditso tsa rona, di tlaa tlhokomelwa dibo di tsamaisiwa ke makgotla a metse le bana-le-seabe ba bangwe. Mathibelelo a le Masome mabedi (20) a setse a tlhophilwe go tlhabololwa mo ditogamaanong tsa bo lesome (NDP10). Mo

godimo ga moo, melawana ya tsamaiso le pabalelo ya dihikantswe e simolotswe go kwalwa sesha.

KGWEBO LE PAPADI

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, ele bontlha bongwe ja go ikemela ka dinao, re tshwanetse go nna pelokgale mo go saleng morago ditsela tsa go fokotsa go ikaega ka dithoto tse di tswang ko mafatsheng a sele. Ke seabe sa lephata lengwe le lengwe go fokotsa lethoko la ditiro le go godisa makalana a eseng a puso. Tswelolepele e a bonala mo dintlheng dingwe tsa maiteko a.

Puso e ntse e reka dithoto le ditirelo tse di tshwanang le dilwana tsa letsopa, mekgabisa le dilwana tsa botaki. Go simolola ka kgwedi ya Moranang go fitlha ko go Seetebosigo, dithoto le ditirelo tse direkilweng ke puso ke didikadike dile makgolo a mabedi le masome a mane. (P240million). Puso e letleletse bagwebi ba ba botlana go rekisetsa mo diofising tsa puso kgotsa gaufi le tsone. Ke gakolola Batswana gore ba dirise tshiamelo e go dira ditirelo le dithoto tsa boleng jo bo amogelesegang, mme ke ikuela mo makaleneng a eseng a puso le Batswana ka kakaretso go etsa puso mo go tse ke di buileng. Le fa gontse jalo, dithoto tsa rona di tshwanetse go nna tsa boleng jo bo gaisang fa re solofela go ka tswa ka sengwe mo kgwebong ya mafatshefatshe.

Ba lekalana la Local Enterprise Authority (LEA) ba diragatsa thomo ya bone ya bogakolodi bogolo ba remeletse mo katlegong ya kgwebo tse potlana, tse di fa gare le tse di fatlhogang. Go simolola mo ngwageng o o fetileng fa ba sena go tlhlongwa, selekanyo sa madi a a kanang ka di dikadike tse thataro tsa dipula (P6million) a ne a dirisitswe ele a ditiro tse di fokotsang go ikaega ga rona ka dithoto le ditirelo tsa mafatshe a mangwe, Madi a mangwe a mooketsa goatolosa tiro e a setse a a kanyediwa. Batho ba ba tshwarang dikete tse supa ba setse ba tsenye ka kgoro tsa LEA go kopa thuso, mme ba le masome a supa ba pasitse tshhekatsheko ya go ka bona thuso.

Lephata la kgwebo le madirelo le tshwaraganye le bagwebi ba ba tona go bona gore bareki ba ba sa kgalhegeleng dijo tsa Halaal bone ba ka thuswa jang, ba e leng bontsi jo bo tona ja

bareki mo Botswana. Kakanyo ke gore bontlha bongwe mo madirelong le mabenkele go bewe dijo tse eseng tsa Halaal. Mma Melao Mogolo o baakanya melawana e e tlaa rebolang thulaganyo eo.

Lephata le fefosa tshhekatsheko ya gore a go tlhlongwa ga mafelo a kgwebo e e faphegileng a ka atlega, e le maikaelelo a go ngoka ba beeletsi ba mafatshe a sele go tla go direla Batswana mebereko. Lephata le tswelotse ka go sekaseka tsela tse dingwe tsa go tlhofofatsa go dira kgwebo mono.

MADI LE DITOGAMAANO

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, go na le matshwenyego a gore tsamaiso ya rona ya makgetho e matswakabele, ka jalo e kgoba ba beeletsi le bagwebi marapo. Re mo thulaganyong ya go sekaseka tsamaiso e ya lekgetho ka maikaelelo a go e tlhofofatsa. Gape, re tlaa tswelela ka go batla ditumalano le mafatshe a mangwe tsa go fedisa go kgethisa bagwebi gabedi gore go fokotse tlhwatlhwa ya go gweba mo Botswana.

Go leka go thusa mhama wa temo-thuo, didirisiwa tsa temo le ditshipi tsa dipaakanyo ga dina go kgethiswa le kgetho la dithoto la VAT.

Katlego ya Tebelopele ya go nna tšhaba e e atlegang, e e itirelang, go batla bagwebi ba ba tlhaga ba mono gae, ebile go tlhoka badiri ba ba boineelo bana le dikitso tse di lebanyeng. CEDA e tlhometswe go tlabolola bagwebi le go adima bagwebi ba mono madi. Letlole la CEDA le thusitse baikopedi bale le kgolo, Masome a supa le bosupa, mme dikopo tse di abetswe madi a selekanyo sa didikadike dile lekgolo, masome a mabedi le bone tsa dipula (P124 million) mo ngwageng ono wa madi, se se lere palo ya dikgwebo tsotlhe tse di abetsweng madi fa CEDA e sale a simololwa ko go dikete tse pedi, makgolo a mabedi masome a mabedi le boforerabongwe (P2229) madi otlhe a a adimilweng bagwebi ke, didikadike dile sekete le metso ele masome a mabedi le bo supa a dipula (P1,27 billion) mme go hirilwe batho ba le dikete tse lesome le bobedi, makgolo a matlhano le masome a maratara le bo supa (P12,567)

TIKOLOGO, DIPHOLOGOLO LE BOJANALA

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, Lephata la Tikologo, Diphologolo le Bojanala ba eme ka dinao go diragatsa thulaganyo ya pabalelo ya ditsatholego e e ikaegileng ka seabe sa merafe (Community Based Natural Resources Management Policy), ele tsamaiso e Palamente e e rebotseng mo ngwageng o o fetileng. Makgotla a metse a a tseletseng tshomarelo le tlhokomelo ya matlotlo a Tlholego a a kwadisitsweng, a dira mo metseng ele lekgolo le masome a matlhano (150), a akaretsa batho ba le dikete dile lekgolo masome a mararo le botlhano lefatshe ka bophara. (135,000) Go tokafatsa tsamaiso ya makgotla a metse, metheo ya one ya tsamaiso jaanong e tshwantshiwa le motheo wa botsamise o setshwantsho sa one se neng sa dumalanwa ke ba-na-le-seabe ba ba lebanyeng.

Botlhokwa ja gore baagi ba metse le banni ba mafelo ka makgotla a bone ba nne le seabe mo tshomarelong ya meamuso ya loago, ke jone bo tshageditseng maiteko a go feleletsa mokwalo wa tiriso ya Central Kgalagadi Game Reserve. Go latedisa Phuthago ya me le boemedi ja baagi ba koo le bana-le-seabe, go ne ga dumalanwa go tswelala ka therisanyo le baemedi ba kgaolwana tse di amegang go tlhomamisa gore CKGR e na le bokamoso jo bo itshetletseng. Thulaganyo e e tswelala jalo ka kitso le temogo ya gore jaaka Batswana ba bangwe, ba tshwanelwa ke go tokafaletswa ditlamelo tsa botshelo jaaka thuto, ditiro, botsogo le tse dingwe tsa itsholelo le matshelo a batho go atisa matshelo a bone. Ka jalo, go a lemosega mo go botlhe, gore maiteko a a puso, ga a farologane le setso sa ngwao ya bone e e humileng tsa matshelo a bone. Mogopolo wa bangwe ba ba ka kwantle ga lefatshe leno o o reng bangwe Batswana ba eletsa go tshela botshelo jwa go selasela, ke mogopolo wa ditoro fela. Ditsatholego le mantlentele a lefelo la CKGR ke dikhumo tsa lefatshe leno lotlhe, mme di tlaa sirelediwa gore le dikokomane di di fitlhele.

Le ntswa diphologolo ele khumo ya botlhokwa, re lemoga tshenyho e di ka e dirang mo merafeng e di mo go yone. Kelotlhoko e tlaa

dirwa go oketsa selekanyo sa phimolo-dikeledi fa di sentse dithoto tsa balemi-barui fa ele gore balemi-barui bane ba dirile mo go tlhokafalang go sireletsa leruo kgotsa dijalo tsa bone. Go tlaa tsewa dikgato tse di gagametseng go lwantsha bogodu ja diphologo.

Thulaganyo ya go fefosa jwalo ya ditlhare e simolotswe, e le go lwantsha kgothego ya lefatshe le go somarela ditlhare tse di tholegang mono. Ditlhare dile dikete tse di masome mararo (30,000) tsa mono di a godisiwa di baakanyediwa go ya go lengwa. Dikolo tse di potlana dile masome a mane di tlaa abelwa ditlhare tse, dile masome mabedi le bobedi di setse di bonwe go abelwa pele. Ke ikuela mo setshabeng ka kakaretso go tsenya letsogo go godisa seabe se.

Go rotloetsa ditlhabolo, Lephata le le kopilwe go fefosa tshkatsheko ya tsamaiso ya go ela tlhoko ditlamorago tsa tiro epe fela mo tikologong (Environmental Impact Assessment) gore e seka ya nna sekgoreletsi mo go dirweng ga ditlhabololo.

Lephata le le tshwere thulaganyo ya go bona gore Botswana le ene o tlaa bona pelo e e nametsang mo pakeng ya metshemeko ya kgwele ya dinao ya

FIFA ya lefatshe ya ngwaga wa 2010. Ke gwetlha bagwebi gore ba eme ka dinao ba ipaakanyetse tiro e kgolo e, jaaka mo mehameng ya bojanala, dipalamo tsa mesepele le kamogelo baeng.

DITSHA LE MATLO

Sengwe sa dikgoreletsi tse re lebanyeng natso mo go ngokeng bagwebi le ba beeletsi ba mafatshe a sele ke tlhalelo ya lefatshe le le nang le ditlamelo. Lephata la Ditsha le Matlo le rulaganya go tshwaa lefatshe le go le bolokela Lephata la Kgwebo le Madirelo go le tshageletsa ba BEDIA, le ba Lephata la Tikologo, Diphologolo le Bojanala ga mmogo le ba Lephata la Temo Thuo.

Tsamaiso ya SHHA e tlhabolotswe go tokafatsa taolesego ya ditlhwatlhwa le go thusa ba ba kobo dikhutshwane ba kamogelo kana dituelo tsa bone di leng kwa tlase go ka nna le bonno. Go tsamaelana le taolo ya ditlhwatlhwa tsa madi a kadimo, merokotso ya madi a kadimo e phimotswe le lebaka la go duela madi a dikadimo

le okeditswe go tswa mo go P20,000.00 go ya kwa go P45,000.00. Mme gape kago ya mogotswana ikage le bonno ja mathibelelo, madi a kadimo a beilwe fa go P60,000.00.

Go abela banana lefatshe le matlo ke nngwe ya tse Puso e di elang tlhoko thata ele tsa bothokwa. Ka jalo, Lephata le sekaseka go ka fokotsa dingwaga tsa go abelwa lefatshe go tswa mo dingwageng tse di masome a mabedi le motso go nna lesome le bofera bobedi. Remo thulaganyong ya go tswa ka maano a go thusa banana ka boroko le badirela puso ba dituelo tse di kwa tlase.

Puso e tla ema nokeng thulaganyo e ntsha ya theko ya matlo e e tlaa tsamaisiwang ke ba Botswana Housing Corporation. Thulaganyo e e tlaa katolosa tshiamelo ya go reka kgotsa go hirisa ga matlo mo go itebagantseng le Batswana fela ba ba tlaa thusiwang pele e tlaa nna ba ba senang sepe sa bonno gotlhelele. Go nonotsha theko ya matlo, Puso e tlaa rulaganya tlhomo ya letlole la madi a kadimo go itebaganya le tsamaiso e. E e tlaa nna tiro e tona e re setseng re e kopela madi.

DIKGAOLO

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, thulaganyo ya ditiro tsa seka namolo leuba, e kile ya bo ele ya go dira mebereko ya nakwana, mme jaanong ke thulaganyo ya sennela ruri. Kwa ntle ga gore e tlaa dira mebereko , e tlaa fefosa go dirwa ga ditirelo ka nako, jaaka kago ya matlo a batlhoki, paakanyo ya ditsela le ditlamelo tsa dikgaolo. Mo tsamaisong e e, sekasikilweleng e, madi a didikadike dile makgolo a mararo le masome a maratara le metso e e ferang bobedi (P368 million) a abetswe ditiro tse, mme batho ba le dikete dile masome a mararo le boraro (33,000) ka kgwedi ba tla oba letsogo. Thulaganyo e setse e simolotse mo dikgaolong dile dintsi.

Fa go etswe tlhoko gore malwetse a gompieno a matswakabele jang, Puso e tseere tshwetso ya go katolosa dikokelwana go di dira dikokelwana tse dikgolwane (Clinics) e le go thomamisa gore Batswana ba bona kalafi e e botoka. Mo ngwageng ono wa madi, dikokelwana difera bongwe di tlaa tlhabololwa le go godisiwa. Mo

lenaneong la bo lesome la ditlhabolo (NDP 10) dikokelwana tse dingwe di le dintsi di tlaa katolosiwa.

92 Kabo ya madi a a abelwang go aga matlo a batlhoki a tlaa okediwa go fa ba ba seng lesego sereti. E le bontlha bongwe jwa tsamaiso e, matlo a le makgolo maratara le masome a mararo le bothano (635) a tlaa agwa mo lebakeng la ngwaga tse tharo. Gape, di Khansele di tlaa tswela ka go agela batlhoki matlo ka madi a bone a ditlhabolo a ba a abelwang ngwaga le ngwaga. Lephata la Dikgaolo le tlaa thapa baagi ba mo metseng go aga matlo ao. Jaaka bontlha bongwe ja maano a go thusa bagwebi ba ba botlana, Lephata le laetswe go dirisa bagwebi ba ditirelo ba ba mo metseng go dira ditiro tsa di Khansele.

DIKAKANYETSO TSE DI AKARETSANG

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, tlhokomelo ya dithoto tsa Puso, twantsho tshenyetso setshaba, phetogo tsa mekgwa ya ditsamaiso go dintshafatsa, tikologo, go tlatsa di phatlha tsa pereko tse di senang ope mo bodireleng Puso, le go batla dithuso ko ntle, ke tse di akaretsang, tse maphata otlhe a Puso a di dirang.

Re tshwenngwa ke tlhatlogo ya ditlhwathwa le ditirelo tsa boleng jo bo ko tlase mo go tsalwang ke gore ga gona tlhokomelo mo dithotong tsa Puso. Go itebaganya le mathata a, re roletse boikarabelo ko maphateng gore bangwe le bangwe ba itlhokomelele madirelo a bone. Ka ditsela, re tlaa tlhwaafalela maitlamo a rona a go ila mahuti le go onala ga ditsela, gore a seka aba a bonwa gope.

Maphata a simolotse go itebaganya le tsa tikologo ka fa go ba amang ka teng, mme go supafala fa seo se bereka sentle go gaisa go ikaega ka makalana a a kwa ntle. Maduo a teng a nametsa.

BODIRELA PUSO

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, fa ele gore goromente yo tota ke “wa batho” bodirela puso botshwanetse go bo bo thapile bomme le borre ba ba direlang setshaba ka tlhwaafalo le maatlametlo, ba itse

gore pereko ya bone e ikaegile ka ditsholofelo tse setšhaba di nang naso. Ka jalo, bodirela Puso bo ne bo tlaa fetola mekgwa ya jone, ba dira ele bakaedi le bathusi, eseng gonna dikgoreletsi mo maitekong a rona a go godisa itsholelo le go tlhabolola matshelelo a batho.

Re tlhomile ditsamaiso tse di tlhabolotsweng tsa bodirela Puso mo maphateng otlhe a Puso. Go na le dikale tsa selekanyetso sa ditirelo tsa rona, tse setšhaba se gololesegileng go disekaseka gore a di kgotsafatsa rona mono le gore a di tsamaelana le seemo sa mafatshefatshe. Re nonotsha melawana ya boitsholo jwa badirela Puso.

Go tlhomamisa gore tiro e a dirwa le go laola boleng jwa ditirelo, Puso e mo kगतong ya go latedisa thulaganyo ya tsalo sešha ya ditsamaiso. Fa go sale go simolodisiwa leano le, tsamaiso di le makgolo mararo le Masome a mane (340) di rulagantswe sešha, le tshimolodiso ya ditekanyetso le go dianamisa.

Maphata otlhe le makalana one a laetswe go tlhomamisa go thiba diphatlha tsotlhe tse di leng teng. Le fa go na le kगतelopele, go botlhokwa go tshegetsatshe seemo se ka nako yotlhe go hema poela morago.

Jaaka re gatela pele, re tshwanetse go tiisa dikgato tsa rona tsa go lwantsha tsamaiso tsa madiadia, tse di tlaa thusang go kgoreletsa tshenyetso setšhaba go ka runya. Tshimolodiso ya ditirelo tsa tlhaeletsanyo ka boranyane ja dikhomputara e tlaa nna botlhokwa mo maitekong a a Puso. Ka jalo e dirisa ditshenyegelotse tse di ko go dimo mo go direng ditlamelo le di dirisiwa go tlhomamisa gore boranyane ja dikitso tsa mafoko le tlhaeletsanyo (ICT) e nna yone mokgweetsi wa tswelopele eseng sekgoreletsi.

BOIKARABELO

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, katlego ya ditogamaano tse tsotlhe e kanna yone fa fela go na le keletlhoko le tshekatsheko ka nako yotlhe, gore re bone go sale gale phapogo mo go se se ikaeletsweng. Kelotlhoko e tlaa re kgonisa go busetsa dilo mo tseleng. Ke gone ka moo lekalana la Puso le le itebagantseng le go gokaganya ditiro tsa Puso (Government Implementation Coordinating Office) le neetsweng boikarabelo.

Ke batla go boela mafoko a gore, ditlhabololo di batla boikarabelo le boineelo. Go latedisa boikarabelo jo, go simolotswa ditshekatsheko tsa maphata otlhe a Puso kgwedi tse thataro dingwe le dingwe. Matona le Bakwaledi ba maphata ba rwele boikarabelo jwa tsotlhe tse di mo maphateng a bone, mme ba neelwa matshwao a ka fa ba dirang ka teng. Ke nna le tekodiso ya maphata otlhe kgwedi tse tharo dingwe le dingwe. Ke tlhagisitse botlhe gore, go reteletswa ke go dira ka fa go solofetsweng ka teng, e le boeteledipele ja sepolotiki kgotsa ja bodirela Puso, go tla nna le ditlamorago.

Ke itumelela gore maiteko a rona a go aga tšhaba e e kgonang, re ikala ka ditekanyetso tsa boleng ja mafatshefatshe bo so supa fa tema e segega. Mo dibekeng tse di seng kae tse di fitileng, ba World Economic Forum kwa Geneva, bane ba re akgola ka re itikile thata go tokafatsa ditsamiso tsa rona. Re tokafaditse gape mo selekanyong sa ba Banka ya mafatshefatshe jaaka pego ya bone e e duleng bosheng ya “bo motlhofo ja go gweba”, e e re supang re le bagwe ba ba kwa godimo mo lefatsheng fa go lebilwe diphetogo tsa di paakanyo tsa melao le ditsamaiso. Matshwao a rona a tlhatlogetse fa godimo jaaka a supiwa ke ba lekgotla la twantsho tshenyetso setšhaba la lefatshe (Transparency International Corruption Perception Index), gore mo dingwageng di tlhomaganye di le lesome le boraro, Botswana o ntse a kaiwa e le lefatshe le le tshenyetso setšhaba eleng kwa tlase mo Africa yotlhe. Mme le mo mafatsheng otlhe ka kakaretso, re lejwa re le bangwe ba ba maemo a a kwa godimo. Di patlisiso tsa ngwaga ono tsa 2008 World Risk Survey di re supa re le ba boraro lefatshe lotlhe jaaka lefelo la peeletso ya di tswa mmung.

Mo malatsing a a satswang go feta, sengwe sa botlhokwa se se faphegileng e nnile tlota le seetsele sa ngwaga ono sa “Ibrahim Prize for Achievement for African Leadership” e e abetsweng Tautona wa maloba Rre Festus Mogae. Mo boemong jwa Botswana ba ba kgotsafetseng, ke mo akgolela tlota e e kanakana e.

Dikakgolo tse di šha tse, ga mmogo le bosupi jo bo papametseng ja gore re baitaa monyo mo thitibalong ya sepolotiki le tsamaiso e e

ikanyegang ya tiriso ya meamuso, ga di a tshwanela go re dira gore re itebale. Mo metlheng eno ya kgaisano ya lefatshe, re tshwanetse go tlhwaafala go dira botoka, mme ke ikaletse go dira fela jalo.

BOTSWANA LE MAFATSHE A MANGWE

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, le fa ele gore go mo go rona go tsaya, boikarabelo ja rona, re tlhoka dithuso, le bapati, le go dirisanya le mafatshe a mangwe. Ka jalo, go botlhokwa gore re nne le seabe mo go betleng ditharabololo tsa dikgang tsa mafatshefatshe le ditharabololo tse di re amang. Jaaka meelwane ya mafatshe e sa tlhole e raya sepe, katlego ya rona e ikaegile ka katlego ya baagisanye le ba bangwe lefatshe ka bophara.

Re tshwanetse go leba dikgwebo ko ntle ga meelwane ya rona, go bapatsa Botswana e le lone bogorogelo ja dipeeletso le bojanala. Re tshwanetse go nonotsha botsalano ja rona le ba bangwe le go oketsa seabe sa rona mo kgaolong ya SADC, Africa le makgotla a mangwe a boditshabatshaba. Mo go se, re itumela thata ka seabe saga Tautona wa pele Rraetsho Sir Ketumile Masire jaaka a tswelletse ka go agisanya ba ba senang ledula le thokgamo.

Le fa rena le botsalano le mafatshe a le lekgolo le Masome a mararo (130), ka tlhalelo ya ditsompelo le meamuso e e sa lekaneng, rona re nale le di ofisi tsa boemedi di le lesome le bofera bongwe (19) fela. Go botlhokwa go nonotsha botsalano jwa rona le mafatshe a mangwe, ka go dirafatsa ditumalano tsa rona tse di tshwaraganetsweng le mafatshe ao, le go nna matlhagatlhaga mo go tseneng ditiro tsa makgotla a a kopanetsweng.

Le fa boloko jwa makgotla a mantsi a mafatshefatshe bole turu ebile go na le ditshenyegelo tse dingwe, tse di nnang bokete mo mafatsheg a mannye jaaka rona, ditlamorago tsa go ikogogona di bokete fela thata. Go na le dilo di le dintsi tse re ka nnang le seabe mo go tsone. Ntswa tota re sa itshunye nko mo dikganye tsa mafatshe a mangwe, ebile re lemoga gore go kgona ga rona ga go tlhotlheletse di phetogo tsa

lefatshe go le go tona, re tla nna le seabe sa boikarabelo ja rona ka fa re dumelang ka teng, re diragatsa tumalano tsa rona tsa kgaolo le meono ya mafatshefatshe, re bua re sa lobe maikutlo a rona fa re dumela gore go lebanye go tsholetsa lentswe.

Se, ke se re ntseng re se dira ka dikgang tsa Zimbabwe, mme e bile re sa ntse re tshwenyegile ka go palelwa ke go tlhoma Puso e ntšha e e tlaa amogelwang ke botlhe ba le fatshe leo. Re akanyanya gore go botlhokwa gore mafatshe otlhe a SADC a sale morago di tsamaiso tse di dumalanweng mme ebile mebuso edumetse kwa ntle ga patiko. Re dumela gore nngwe ya ditsela tse di ka didimatsang modumo ko Zimbabwe ke go tlhoma lebelo la ditlhopho tsa poeletso tsa bo Tautona di etswe tlhoko ke balebeledi ba mafatshefatshe. Ka tsela e e ntseng jalo, ga go kake ga nna le madubedube a ditlhopho tsa maloba, tse balebeledi ba kgaolo le ba mafatshe a sele bareng di ne di sa gololesega le tsamaiso e sa lolama, batlhophi ba ne ba tshosiwa, ba itewa. Ga go a siama gore phathi tse di busang di kgotlele tsamaiso ya ditlhopho gore batle ba kgone go ikokeletsa go nna mo pusong ka seo se sa siamela Puso ya batho ka batho mo Africa. Ke matlhabisa ditlhong gore lekgotla le le lwetseng kgololesego ya Zimbabwe go tswa mo pusong ya kgethololo ya batho ka letso le mmala ya bo ele lone jaanong e bogisang batho.

Ka re ne re le lefatshe le le humanegileng fa re tsaya Boipuso, re kile rabo re ikaegile dithuso tsa mafatshe a a botsalano le makgotla a a pelotlhomogi. Re fitlhile fano ka kemo nokeng ya dithuso tse ba di re fileng. Le ntswa gompiono re le botokanyana, re santse re tlhoka dithuso le go bona poelo ya dithuso go tswa ka kwa ntle. Ke eletsa go leboga mafatshe otlhe a a rethusitseng mo dingwageng tse difitileng. Gape ke eletsa go leboga makgotla a mantsi, dikompone le batho ka bongwe ka bongwe, ba mono gae le ba mafatshe a sele ba le bone ba re thusitseng thata, mme ba sa ntse ba tswelletse ka seabe sa bone mo ditlhabolong tsa maiteko a rona.

KETSAETSEGO YA MEBARAKENG YA MADI

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, ketsaetsego ya mebaraka ya mafatshefatshe ya madi e re gakolola gore re bontlha bongwe ja lefatshe le le tshwaraganyeng mo kgwebong.

Mo bo gompionong ditlamorago tsa teng ga di maswe thata mo itsholelong ya rona, le fa gongwe go ka tloga ga fetoga. Mebaraka ya rona ya madi e santse e itshwareletse mme ga e a angwa ke ketsaetsego ya mebaraka ya madi. Madi a rona a mafatshe a sele a makata dimeche le one a santse a ka kgona go re tshegets a fa go tlhokafala go thiba diphatlha tse di ka nnang teng. Ka gore mo nakong e e fitileng Puso e ne ya ipeela madi, tiriso ya madi e ka ikemela kgatlhanong le kwelo tlase ya nakwana ga madi a sa tsene mo letloleng ka bokete jo boneng bo solofetswe.

Seemo le fa gontse jalo se sa ntse se sa iketla. Go lebega go ka nna le kwelotlase ya dilwana, le go wela tlase ga kgwebo mo mafatsheng otlhe ka kakaretso. Bo diphatsa jo bo ka nnang teng e le di tlamorago, e ka nna jo bo amang thekiso ya di teemane ko mafatsheng a sele. Re tlaa tswelela ka go baa seemo leitho, le go phepafatsa maano a rona a go hemela ditlamorago tse di ka nnang bokete. Mo go direng jalo, re tlaa ikanya tsamaiso ya rona e e tswang kgakala ya go itse gore Puso ke motlhokomedi yo o tshegeditseng meamuso mo boemong jwa Batswana le dikokomane tsa ka moso. Ka jalo, ga rena go kgaritlha gotlhe re itlhokomolosa ka moso, re ntse re etse tlhoko gore makala a a ikemetseng ka esi ga a lebalwe, ka a ikaegile thata ka theko ya Puso e e nonotshang dipoelo tsa bagwebi.

Ditlamorago tsa ketsaetsego ya mebaraka ya madi di ama dipaakanyo tsa rona tsa NDP 10, ka jalo go botlhokwa go nna le ditherisanyo tse di tseneletseng le makgotla a eseng a Puso a go neng go ntse rerwa nao mo paakanyong ya ditogamaano. Ke laetse gore togamaano e ya bolesome e rolelwe Palamente mo ngwageng oo tlang ka gwedi ya Mopitlwe/Moranang ka nako ya kabo ya madi ka nako eo. Re tlaa bo re kgonne go ela seemo tlhoko mme re ka kgona go lepa madi a a tlaa phuthwang ke letlole.

TSHWETSO

Motsamaisa Dipuisanyo, kwa bofelong, maikaelelo magolo a rona ke go aga tšhaba e e tlaa direlang Motswana mongwe le mongwe seriti se se tshwanetseng. Re tlaa amogela dikgakolo le megopolo e e farologanyeng, mme re ema re tshwaraganye mo pharologanyong tsa rona. Le fa ba ba neetsweng boikarabelo ja boeteledipele ba na le tshwanelo ya go tsibogela matshwenyego a setšhaba, Batswana botlhe ba tshwanetse go lemoga seabe sa bone jaaka bana-le-seabe mo ditlhabolong. Se se lopa go ineela ga rona bosha mo matshegong a boipelego le popagano ya maikaelelo, e re ka reng ke boikobo. Kwa mafatsheng a mangwe, batho ba teng ba ipelela dinatla tsa bone – borre le bomme ba ba gaisang mo ditirong tse di farologanyeng. A re ipelafatseng, re ikgantsheng ka go kgona ga rona ka bongwe ka bongwe ja rona le katlego ya rona rotlhe.

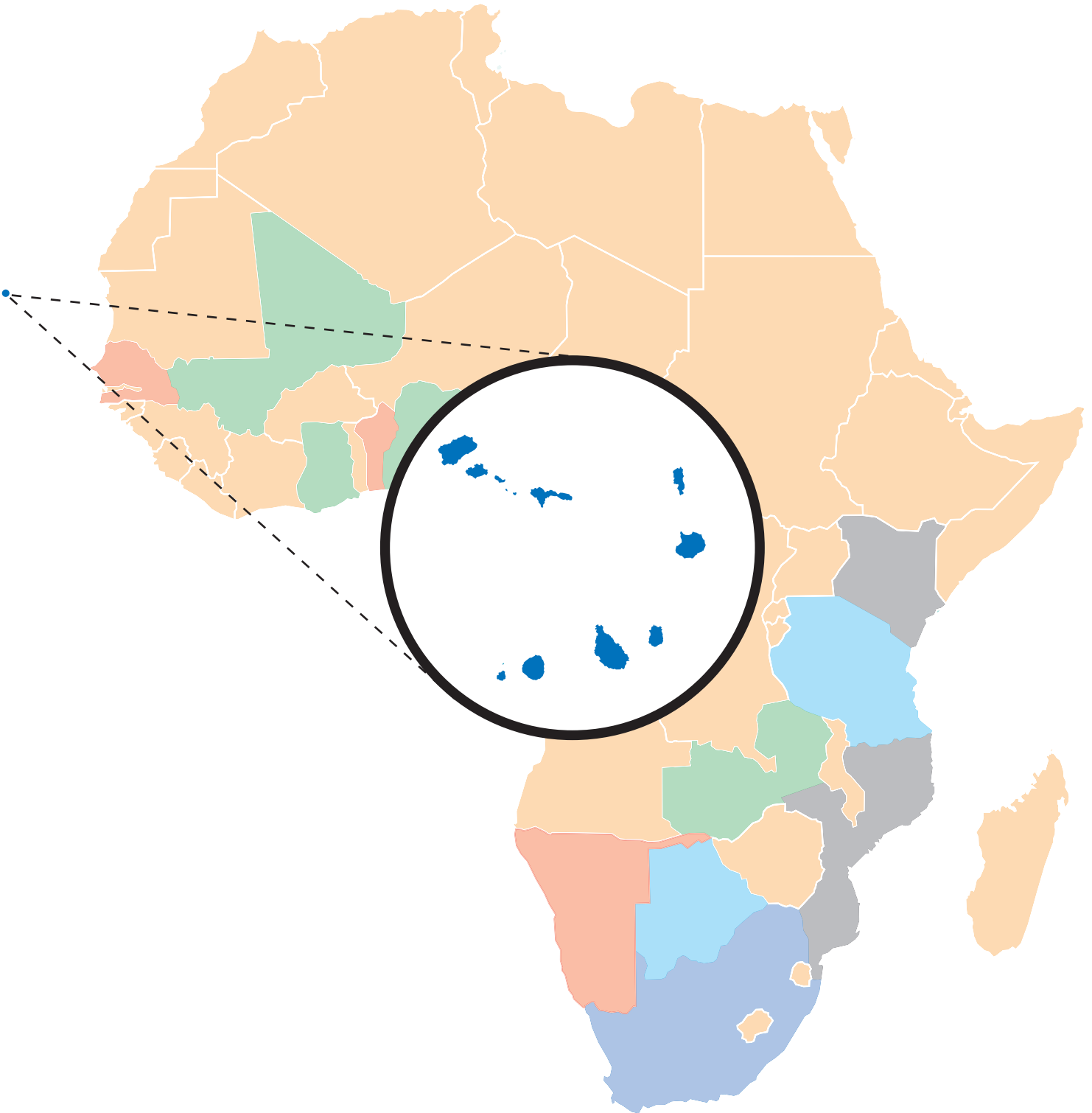
Sepolotiki sa rona se se farologanyeng se tlaa bo se bonwa ke botlhe mo ngwageng oo latelang jaaka re ya ko ditlhophong. Jaaka bontsi ja lona, ke swabile nko go feta molomo ka gore ikwadisetso ditlhopho ga e ya fitlha ko dipalong tse di neng di solofetswe. Ba lekgotla le leikemetseng ka esi la ditlhopho (IEC) le file setšhaba nako gape ya go ikwadisa. Ke ikuela mo go ba ba tshaetseng go ikwadisa go tsaya kgato go ikwadisa gompiono. Mma ke tsee nako go tlhomamisetsa sechaba gore ga kena maikaelelo a go latlha tlwaelo ya rona ya go tshwara ditlhopho tsa setšhaba tsa botlhe ka kgwedi ya Phalane.

Sa bofelo, jaaka re lebagana le dikgwetlho tsa lefatshe leno, a ka bongwe ka bongwe le bo mmogo ja rona, re lope tshegofatsho le kaelo ya Modimo, ka go dira jalo, re tsamay e mo tseleng e e botoka ya botshelo. Amogela thuto tsa one mme ka go dira jalo o amogele mogaeno, mme mmogo re tlaa atlega mo go apoleng sehihi sa bosula mme re sale ka se se molemo mo go rona le fa gare ga rona.

Ke a leboga.

PULA PULA

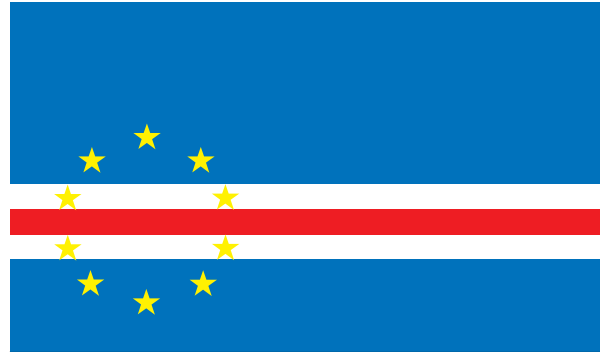
CAPE VERDE



CAPE VERDE



**Speech by His Excellency
Pedro Verona Rodrigues Pires,
President of the Republic of
Cape Verde
Praia, Cape Verde
June 23, 2008**



Your Honor the President of the National Assembly, Ladies and Gentleman Members of Parliament:

I have been following the evolution of the current international socioeconomic and financial situation with great concern. It is with the same sentiment that I foresee how its development will progress. We are under risk and uncertainty. We are, in fact, facing a global crisis.

The current international crisis has multiple consequences: financial and monetary crisis; energy crisis; food crisis; and ecological crisis. I look at the repercussions of this predicament on each country's economy or region of the globe with great preoccupation. I also worry about the negative effect it will have on the different aspects of national life, especially the economic and social portion.

In reality, we are observing the insolvency or important financial losses in major banks, with a major decline of profit levels and an increase of risk factors. We are witnessing the decrease of growth levels in the developed countries' economies, accompanied by signs that may lead us to financial stagnation.

We are also witnessing the resurfacing of inflation, with a strong impact on the larger emerging economies. We also recognize the chaotic reaction of certain segments of European society, with correlated damage to their respective economies. We have also followed several uprisings in different countries, protesting against the increase in the cost of living that poses serious threats to their sociopolitical stability. In the same way, we watch the first signs of a potential hunger crisis affecting the poorest people in African and Asian countries. This scenario demands a realistic and thorough analysis.

Your Honor the President of the National Assembly, Ladies and Gentlemen Deputies:

In regards to how this can affect our country, it is my understanding that we cannot be indifferent to what has happened or might happen in the near future, both externally and internally. We are called to be alert and prepared. More than anything, in this current situation, it is essential to develop the ability to predict and anticipate.

I believe that governing of the country is now more complex; and therefore, increasingly demanding, as we face the degradation of the international conjuncture, expressed in the escalation of oil prices and also the sudden and continuous mounting of basic food prices. The negative and penalizing repercussions on the national economy and our daily lives are evident, undermining our purchasing power and quality of life.

The core causes of this crisis are external to us. The way it is going to be handled does not depend simply on our will. We have no power over it.

Stronger countries have also been powerless. This is not a fatalistic view. It is the crystal clear reality of an insular economy, small and under construction. However, we must continue to develop persevering efforts to minimize its malignant effects and find viable solutions to minimize our losses and create alternatives to overcome the crisis; while at the same time give way to new perspectives towards the economic and social development of our country. But, it is also true that we have no definitive answers. Whatever they are, they depend largely on the actions of other more powerful and richer international player's, whether they are governments or multi-lateral institutions.

Concerning domestic affairs, the solutions that will help us overcome the needs and constraints of the current conjuncture will depend, in part, on the Cape Verdean society's level of awareness of the nature and proportion of the international crisis and its ramifications. It is crucial to understand that fighting and overcoming the different elements of this crisis are tasks that go beyond the governmental and public sphere of action. They call for responsible cooperation from citizens, political parties, and national social

actors. Our national interests should be our top priority, as well as safeguarding the strengths that have enabled our economy to grow until now. Strengths like political credibility and stability, economic competitiveness, and the ability to attract investment have enabled Cape Verde to be considered trustworthy by investors and international partners.

Cape Verde's tremendous fragility and its young economy is highly sensitive to external shocks and demands political expertise, clarity, and prudence. Unlike other countries, our economy does not possess a solid material and technological basis or even large mineral reserves to support it. Our economy does not have the ability to sustain high and permanent levels of distress or excessive social tension. In the same way, the current state of affairs is not compliant with simplistic and unrealistic demands that are impossible to meet. It requires realism and good sense. We all will (some more than others) have to endure our share of the costs in order to succeed and surmount the current unfavorable situation.

We are going to overcome this crisis. No one questions that. However, what worries me, personally, are the social costs entailed by the solutions. Most certainly, the heavier burden will fall on the economies of poorer non-oil producing countries. In frail economies, like our own, good sense recommends that we, all of us, face these hard times ahead with a sense of national responsibility. The Cape Verdean economy is still extremely vulnerable to external shocks; that is why intensifying the internal political and social dialogue is desirable. In the same way, we should work on achieving agreements that will allow us to overcome current tribulations without endangering what we have already conquered: political stability, social cohesion, and the country's governance ability. All of the above are precious strengths we cannot afford to lose.

I foresee that it is critical to face what lies ahead of us with serenity. We should look at this crisis as another national challenge that we will face collectively and from which, whatever results may come, we will all also benefit. Only acting as such will we be able to preserve our country's investment magnet effect and its economic

competitiveness. If we lose these two competitive advantages, which we now own, it would be very difficult to recuperate them in a short-term period; and our economy would be severely affected.

In matters of national range and reach—particularly in the current critical state of affairs—one cannot afford to have a narrow, simplistic, or corporative vision; nor over-protectively defend only one social group's interests. An approach that looks at the country as a collective is imperative; one that looks at the various challenges we face, the options we offer, the resources we have available, the agreements we should honor, and the strengths we should preserve. Only then would we be building a way out that would benefit all Cape Verdeans and all groups of interest.

I believe this moment to be one that is incompatible with either improvised solutions or solutions that favor particular groups or individual interests. We are at a crossroads, and our margin of error is small. Such circumstances plead to our lucidity, reasonableness, moderation, and good judgment. I am confident that, with our maturity, we will choose on behalf of the collective good. As we also know, we cannot afford to make mistakes.

Let's understand each other! I do not mean to say that everything has changed hastily and for the worse. This would actually go against everything I have been saying. I am highlighting the existing or emerging risks that might come out of a new international state of affairs. I merely want to say that while all economic opportunities are still well within our Nation's reach, there is a scenario of international crisis that will negatively impact all national economies, and this should not be ignored. New conditions and constraints have risen and we have to consider them, as well as balance and manage the economic progress of our country.

Afar from the impact of high oil prices and the increase of first necessity food goods, it is crucial that we pay attention to the problems both European and American real estate markets are beginning to face and the impending repercussions on the same type of investment in our country.

Also, bearing in mind that tourism is the main engine of our Nation's economic growth, we should not ignore the repercussions that the rise

of fuel prices will have on airfare transportation costs and, consequently, on the industry of tourism. The bottom line is that we have to be aware of the opportunities within these two sectors, and find the best way to look after them.

Your Honor the President of the National Assembly, Ladies and Gentlemen Members of Parliament:

Before, the situation was less complex. We did not have, in reality, an actual economy to preserve. On the contrary, today we have an emerging economy and correspondent growth engines that we need to defend and consolidate. We have an outlook of the future that we need to steer, secure, and progress, so that we can guarantee what is fundamental—the country's governance ability. We cannot take the chance of losing what we have conquered, with hard labor and dedication, in the course of three decades.

In effect, there are several constraints that cannot be minimized. There is the need to maintain the macroeconomic balances, particularly public finance. Public finance would struggle to support the cost of eventual subventions, either from fuel or from basic food products. It is imperative to find ways to lessen the penalizing impacts that might hit feasible (especially the more vulnerable social layers) and at the same time find fiscal measures—that can preserve the growth of the economy. One solid solution that can guarantee a long-lasting economic growth is to boost more foreign investment and more jobs, accompanied by the expansion and consolidation of the country's business sector; whose functioning conditions we should also be cautious about.

This is one crucial moment of our national life where together, as a whole, we need to find ways to uphold the fundamental interests of our Nation.

There are permanent social and political dialogues along with cooperative, patriotic, and strategic agreements that will help us prevail over present or imminent difficulties.

From the current, complex, and challenging situation, I felt the need to share with you, lawful representatives of the Nation, these reflections and concerns.

CABO VERDE

Discurso Por Sua Exelência

Pedro Verona Rodrigues Pires,

Presidente da República de

Cabo Verde

Praia, Cabo Verde

23 de Junho de 2008

Senhor Presidente da Assembleia Nacional,
Senhoras e Senhores Deputados:

É com inquietação que venho observando a evolução da actual situação socioeconómica e financeira internacional. É de igual forma que antevjo as perspectivas do seu próximo desenvolvimento. Pairam riscos e muitas incertezas. Está-se, com efeito, perante uma crise global.

A actual crise internacional tem uma quántupla abrangência: crise financeira e monetária, crise energética, crise alimentar, crise económica e crise ecológica. Encaro com preocupação as suas repercussões nas economias de cada país ou região do globo. De igual modo, preocupame o seu impacto negativo nas diversas esferas da vida nacional, particularmente, na esfera económica e social.

Com efeito, constatamos falências ou importantes perdas financeiras em grandes bancos, com elevada redução dos níveis de lucro e o aumentados factores de risco. Presenciamos a redução dos índices de crescimento nas economias dos países ricos, acompanhada de manifestação de sinais que poderão conduzir à estagnação económica. Registamos o regresso da inflação, com forte impacto nas grandes economias emergentes. Verificamos reacções caóticas de determinados segmentos das sociedades europeias, acarretando importantes danos às respectivas economias. Assistimos várias revoltas contra a vida cara, acarretando riscos de desestabilização sociopolítica de diversos países.

De igual modo, assistimos prenúncios de fome para amplas camadas mais pobres dos países asiáticos e africanos. É esta situação que requer uma análise realista e amadurecida.

Senhor Presidente da Assembleia Nacional,
Senhoras e Senhores Deputados:

Quanto ao nosso país, entendo que não podemos ser indiferentes ao que vem acontecendo ou poderá acontecer, quer no plano externo, quer no plano interno. Somos chamados a estar atentos e prevenidos. Para além do mais, na actual conjuntura, é essencial desenvolver certa capacidade de previsão e de antecipação.

Estou em crer que a governação do país virou mais complexa, logo, mais exigente, diante da visível degradação da conjuntura internacional, traduzida em escalada de preços do petróleo e em subidas bruscas e contínuas dos preços dos bens alimentares básicos. Estão visíveis as suas repercussões negativas e penalizantes na economia nacional e no dia-a-dia das pessoas, corroendo o seu poder de compra e o seu nível de vida.

As causas essenciais são externas. A sua gestão não depende da nossa simples vontade. Sobre elas, não temos domínio. Países mais fortes que o nosso também não conseguem fazê-lo. Não se trata de uma postura fatalista. É a cristalina realidade de uma economia insular, pequena e em construção. Porém, não se pode deixar de desenvolver esforços aturados e perseverantes para atenuar os seus efeitos perniciosos; para encontrar saídas viáveis e capazes de minorar os seus prejuízos e de abrir vias para a sua superação e abertura de novas perspectivas de desenvolvimento económico e social para o nosso país. Mas também, é verdade que as soluções definitivas ultrapassam-nos. Dependem, em grande medida, da acção de diversos outros actores internacionais, mais poderosos e mais ricos, sejam governos, sejam instituições multilaterais.

No plano interno, as soluções e a superação dos constrangimentos e carências da conjuntura actual dependem em certa medida do entendimento, da apropriação pela sociedade cabo-verdiana da verdadeira natureza e dimensão da crise internacional e das suas ramificações.

Outrossim, urge interiorizar que o combate aos factores da crise e a sua superação são tarefas que ultrapassam as esferas governativas e públicas e reclamam atitudes cooperativas e responsáveis dos cidadãos, das forças políticas e dos actores sociais nacionais, colocando em primeiro plano os interesses nacionais e a salvaguarda dos requisitos que têm assegurado, até agora, o crescimento da nossa economia. Estes requisitos são a estabilidade e credibilidade política, a competitividade económica, a atractividade para os investimentos e a confiança de que Cabo Verde transmite e goza, junto de investidores e dos seus parceiros internacionais.

As enormes fragilidades de Cabo Verde e da sua jovem economia, altamente sensível a choques externos, reclamam pela inteligência política, lucidez e prudência. A nossa economia não é equiparável às economias que dispõem de bases materiais e tecnológicas já consolidadas ou com economias apoiadas em enormes riquezas mineiras. Não reúne condições para “absorver” conflitualidades permanentes ou tensões sociais excessivas. De igual modo, a situação actual rejeita facilismos e reivindicações irrealistas e impossíveis de se satisfazer. Pede realismo e bom senso. Uns mais do que outros, mas todos, vamos ter que suportar uma quota-parte dos custos para vencer e ultrapassar a actual conjuntura desfavorável.

Vai-se sair da crise. Disto, ninguém tem dúvidas. Porém, pessoalmente, o que me preocupa são os custos sociais das soluções a encontrar. Certamente, a carga maior recairá sobre as economias dos países mais pobres e «não-produtores» do petróleo. Em economias frágeis, como a nossa, o bom senso recomenda que haja uma responsabilização geral e nacional, de todos, para enfrentar e vencer os tempos difíceis que temos pela frente. Com efeito, a economia cabo-verdiana continua extremamente vulnerável a choques externos. Por isso, é recomendável a intensificação do diálogo político e social, interno, e a procura de entendimentos que permitam superar as dificuldades actuais, mas, sem pôr em causa os equilíbrios já conseguidos, a coesão social e a estabilidade política, assim

como, a governabilidade do país, trunfos preciosos que não se pode deitar fora.

Estimo que é essencial encarar tudo isto com serenidade, considerando como mais um desafio nacional, uma tarefa de todos nós, cujos resultados reverter-se-ão também em benefício de todos. Só assim, podemos preservar a atractividade do nosso país e a sua competitividade económica. Se perdermos estas duas vantagens competitivas, de que agora dispomos, dificilmente as poderemos recuperar a curto prazo. A nossa economia será altamente penalizada.

Em questões de alcance e abrangência nacional, particularmente, na actual conjuntura crítica, não se pode ter uma visão estreita, simplista, corporativa ou de assunção de defesa exacerbada dos interesses de apenas um grupo social. Impõe-se uma abordagem que tenha, em devida conta, o país no seu conjunto: os vários desafios com que se confronta, as possibilidades que oferece, os recursos de que dispõe, os compromissos que deve respeitar e os requisitos que tem que acautelar. Só assim, estaríamos a construir uma saída capaz de favorecer todos os cabo-verdianos e todos os grupos de interesse.

Acredito que este é daqueles momentos em que não é possível uma solução improvisada, individualista ou em favor de um único grupo de pessoas ou de interesses. Encontramo-nos numa encruzilhada em que as nossas margens de manobra são estreitas. Tais circunstâncias apelam à lucidez, ao discernimento, à moderação e ao bom senso. Estou certo de que, pela nossa maturidade, optaremos por que ganhemos todos. Pois, sabemos que não se pode correr o risco de errar.

Entendamo-nos! Não pretendo dizer que tudo mudou para pior e num ápice. Seria até contraditório com o que venho afirmando. Estou alertando para os riscos existentes ou emergentes de uma nova conjuntura internacional. Quero tão só dizer que, embora se mantenham, ao nosso alcance, todas as oportunidades económicas que o país oferece, há uma conjuntura internacional de crise, com impacto negativo em toda a economia nacional, facto este que não pode nem deve ser ignorado. Pois, emergiram novas condicionantes e outros constrangimentos a se ter em devida

conta no equacionamento e gestão do nosso processo de desenvolvimento económico.

Para além dos impactos do petróleo caro e da escalada de preços dos bens alimentares de primeira necessidade, é preciso ter em vista as dificuldades que começa a enfrentar o sector imobiliário europeu e americano e as suas eventuais repercussões nos investimentos no mesmo sector, no nosso próprio país. Igualmente, sendo o turismo o motor principal do crescimento da economia nacional não é de se ignorar as possíveis repercussões dos aumentos do preço do querosene nos custos dos transportes aéreos e, destes, na indústria turística. Enfim, são as oportunidades que oferecem os dois sectores que é preciso encontrar a melhor forma de as acautelar.

Senhor Presidente da Assembleia Nacional,
Senhoras e Senhores Deputados:

Antes a situação era menos complexa. Não tínhamos, verdadeiramente, uma economia a preservar. Hoje, ao contrário, temos uma economia emergente, cujos motores de crescimento é preciso defender e consolidar. Temos uma perspectiva de futuro que é preciso pilotar, assegurar e prosseguir, em que é fundamental garantir a governabilidade do país. Não podemos correr o risco de ver a se perder o que foi conseguido, ao longo de três décadas, com muito labor e empenho.

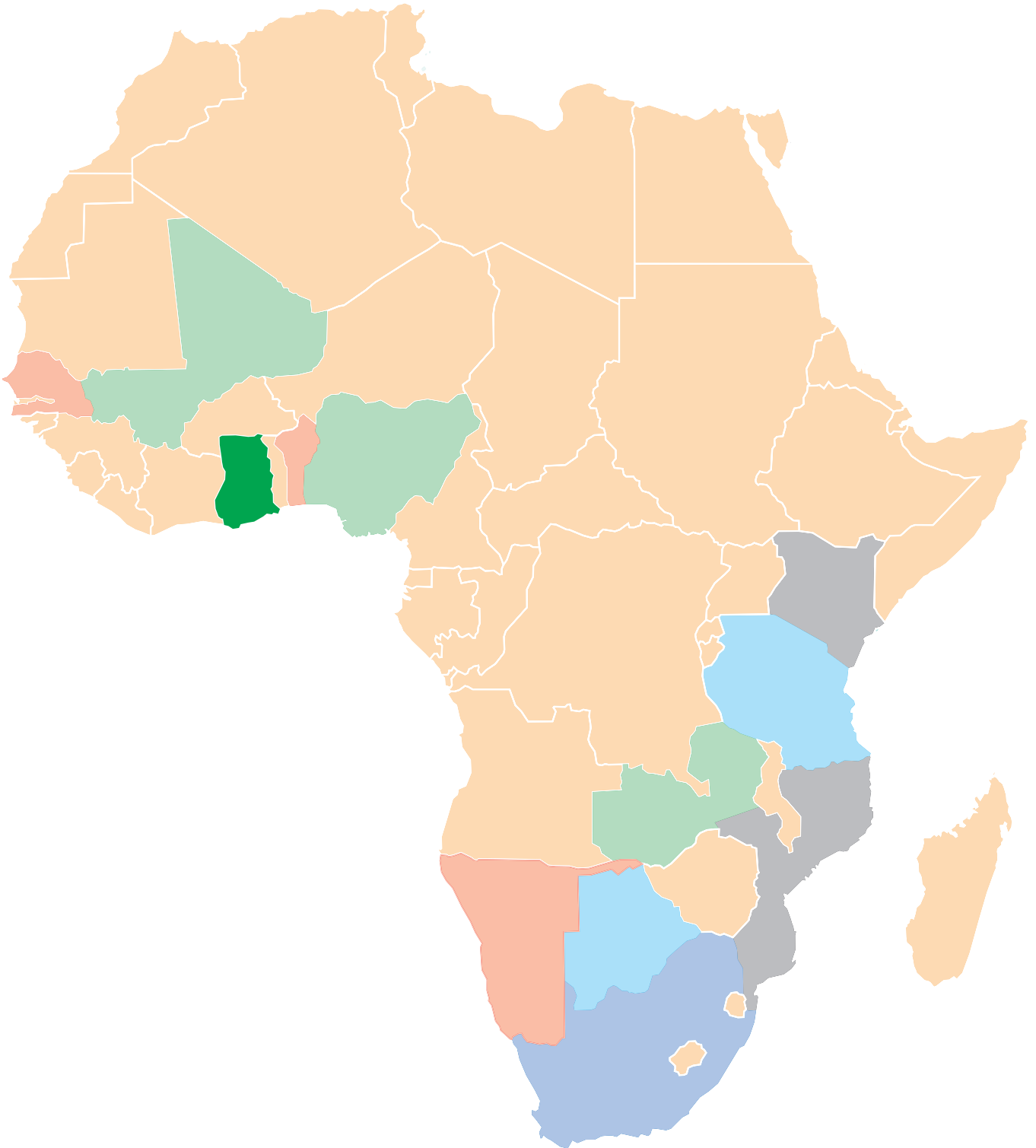
Com efeito, há constrangimentos diversos que não podem ser minimizados. É preciso manter os equilíbrios macroeconómicos e, particularmente, das contas públicas. As finanças públicas teriam dificuldades em suportar os custos de eventuais subvenções, quer dos combustíveis, quer dos produtos alimentares básicos. Impõe-se, de toda forma, acertar vias para atenuar os impactos penalizantes, particularmente, sobre as camadas sociais mais vulneráveis, e encontrar medidas fiscais, evidentemente, exequíveis, para salvaguardar o crescimento da economia. Mas, uma saída sólida reside, fundamentalmente, no crescimento económico duradouro, em mais investimentos externos e mais empregos, acompanhados do desenvolvimento e da

consolidação do empresariado nacional, cujas condições de materialização devem ser acauteladas.

Este é um dos momentos cruciais da vida nacional em que é preciso encontrar, em conjunto, formas e vias para salvaguardar os interesses fundamentais da nossa Nação. Exige diálogo social e político permanentes e entendimentos cooperativos, patrióticos e estratégicos para vencer as dificuldades existentes ou que se prenunciam.

Da presente situação, complexa e exigente, senti a urgente necessidade de partilhar convosco, legítimos representantes da Nação, destas reflexões e preocupações.

GHANA



GHANA



**State of the Nation Address by His
Excellency John Agyekum Kufour,
President of the Republic of Ghana,
at Parliament
Accra, Ghana
February 14, 2008**



INTRODUCTION

Mr. Speaker, for the eighth and final time, I have come before this August House, in accordance with the Constitution of the Fourth Republic, to give the Honourable Members an account of the State of the Nation.

Today is National Chocolate Day. It is also Valentine's Day, the day of love. Mr. Speaker, I should assure you that I did not choose the day for my address. Should I call it a manifestation of the love between the Executive and the Legislature? On my part, I will say fate brought me here because I want to leave this House with an effusion of love for both sides of the divide. So, in that spirit of love, let me wish each of you a Happy Valentine's Day. Consult with the leadership of the House to ensure adequate supply of the food of love—our own chocolate.

Mr. Speaker, when I was preparing this address, my attention was drawn to some speculations on the comparative performances between this Government and previous regimes. Such speculations, Mr. Speaker, are futile. To me, it is useless to pretend to be the inventor of the wheel. Rather, the mark of the successful leader is what to do with the wheel that one finds. My account will, therefore, be restricted to the State of the Nation as I found it on my assumption of office and how it has influenced the decisions and policies that I have enunciated in my bid to better the Nation. So, what I say today should not be thought of as an attempt at belittling what others did. Rather, it should be appreciated as a report of my Government's performance over the past seven to eight years in office to improve the

conditions of our people. My abiding principle has always been to leave a place better than I found it.

Mr. Speaker, on balance, Ghana has been doing progressively well under my watch and enjoys tremendous goodwill—both from within and from the international community—as a result of the performance of the Government over the past seven years.

Since the commencement of the Golden Jubilee celebrations last year, the pulse of the Nation has become very vibrant and the people's outlook positive and upbeat. Increasingly, Ghanaians are displaying a strong yearning to be the best or with the best in Africa, as was clearly manifested during the just-ended 2008 Africa Cup of Nations soccer tournament. Ghana did not lift the trophy as we had all wished, but the country should be proud of winning the bronze and, above all, for hosting an exciting and successful soccer fiesta adjudged by many of the continent's football officials and enthusiasts to be the best so far in the history of the tournament.

Mr. Speaker, the House will be happy to learn that new International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) rankings were released just yesterday, with Ghana ranked first in Africa and 14th in the world. This is the first time ever that Ghana has been ranked this high in the FIFA listings.

Let me, therefore, use this occasion to congratulate the Black Stars and their technical team for doing their best and for being good sportsmen, as well as the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) for their contribution. I should also acknowledge the unalloyed support that Ghanaians gave to the Stars and the patriotism they displayed so passionately in the country.

Of course, I am not forgetting Government's initiatives in bidding for the tournament and also the investment in the beautiful stadiums of which we are all so proud. But, even as we pat ourselves on the back, let us not forget that maintaining structures and expanding the facilities to all regional capitals should be the responsibility of present and future governments and society.

THE MACROECONOMY

Mr. Speaker, with the budget already presented and all the details of national policy clearly articulated, I propose only to give an overview of the period since 2001, and what remains to be done. Let me begin with a focus on the macroeconomy, which has been one of the major preoccupations of the Government since it assumed office.

Mr. Speaker, you will recall that in 2001, the Nation was forced by difficult circumstances to make the most pragmatic, but by no means popular, choice of adopting the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative. The undeniable truth was that the country was broke. It could not sustain the servicing of its debts.

The economy was also entrapped by incredibly high levels of inflation of over forty percent and interest rates of over fifty percent. The Cedi was in a dangerous free fall while the Tema Oil Refinery (TOR) was smarting under crushing debts that had caused it to be blacklisted and refused supplies by its regular suppliers.

Mr. Speaker, the progress recorded in the past seven years has proved beyond doubt that the decision “to go HIPC” was a masterstroke. Ghana is now solvent and the economy is strong and resilient. The greatest litmus tests of this are:

- The successful and spectacular issuance of a Eurobond on the London Stock Exchange to raise \$750 million for infrastructural development. This bond was over-subscribed by over \$3 billion, and this was Ghana's first attempt ever on the market.
- The ability to withstand the heavy shocks of the price of crude oil, which has been skyrocketing since last year, from \$50 to \$100 per barrel.
- The prompt rallying to the aid of the numerous victims of the unprecedented flooding in the Northern Region and parts of the Western Region last year.
- The dramatic redenomination of the Cedi without incident. You will all remember that the old Cedi exchanged 10,000 to one

U.S. dollar. With this exercise now, the Cedi exchanges confidently for one dollar and some cents.

- The influx of many reputable banks and the commencement of International Financial Services (offshore banking) in the country, in collaboration with Barclays Bank.
- The World Bank's rating of Ghana as the most attractive place to do business in the emerging markets.

Mr. Speaker, these achievements are the results of well-implemented policies and adherence to fiscal and monetary disciplines which are now the hallmark of the economy.

Further evidence of the consistent progress is that the GDP, even in the face of many difficulties, has moved beyond 6.5 percent currently and is expected to pass the eight percent mark within the next three years.

With this trend, the country should be able to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of reducing poverty by half ahead of schedule. A socially sensitive development framework is already in place.

Mr. Speaker, we must build on this to promote widely shared growth that will come to reflect in the pockets of the people generally.

Oil Discovery

But, Mr. Speaker, the biggest blessing of the Jubilee Year is the discovery of oil in commercial quantities estimated to be over three billion barrels, while prospecting continues. Proceeds from the find should impact the economy within the next two to three years.

In the meantime, I have set up a Ministerial Committee to work towards the development of appropriate policies and measures, especially a regulatory framework that will make the sector profitable for the entire society. With proper management of the find, the country should be free from the inadequate liquidity that has been a major constraint to the effective discharge of development programmes. Additionally, the country's dependency on external donor support

would be reduced, thereby strengthening the self-confidence of the Nation and people.

Mr. Speaker, you will recall that in this very House, Government announced a programme of five priorities, namely, the following;

- Vigorous infrastructural development;
- Modernized agriculture centered on rural development;
- Enhanced social services delivery, with special emphasis on education and health;
- Good governance; and
- Private sector development.

For the past seven years, Government has worked hard to achieve these priorities.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Education

Mr. Speaker, human resource development should be the natural starting point for the knowledge-based society to which this Nation aspires in order to mainstream itself into globalization.

Mr. Speaker, on assumption of office, I found the country's education system in a parlous condition. From 2001, using resources from the HIPC Fund, Budget Allocation, and the Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund), Government launched a programme to rehabilitate broken down educational institutions from basic through secondary to tertiary level. Other initiatives that have been implemented include the Capitation Grant, the School Feeding Programme, and improved students' loan schemes, all of which have contributed to increased intake of pupils and students.

Mr. Speaker, on account of Ghana's School Feeding Programme, I was invited to address the Council of the World Food Programme in Rome just about a week ago. Together with a group of pupils from Ghana, I told the Ghana story. So, Mr. Speaker, Ghana's School Feeding Programme has become a model for other developing nations around the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen, these policies that I have mentioned have all been captured within the

new Educational Reform Programme, which started on schedule last September with some novel features. The implementation of the Constitutional provision of Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) has been launched with this programme, so that from the age of four to sixteen, all Ghanaian children must stay in school at the expense of the state. For those who do not continue to senior high school, opportunity will be given for one year to participate in a state sponsored apprenticeship programme to acquire an employable skill.

At the senior high school, four main streams will run: academics, agriculture, technical, and vocational. Special emphasis will be given to science, mathematics, and technology, including Information and Communication Technology (ICT). But, running through all levels will be ICT training without which one cannot be said to be fully literate these days.

Mr. Speaker, since the First Republic, various educational programmes have recognized the need for Science and Technology but have not sown the seed for inculcating the essential disciplines in our people. What this Government seeks to do at all levels is to acculturate science in them, so that by the time they leave school, their mindset and outlook will reflect an appreciation of science and technology as a way of life.

Mr. Speaker, as part of the reform, all thirty-eight Teacher Training Colleges are being upgraded into diploma awarding institutions, across the curricula of learning, from science through arts and ICT. Further, fifteen of them have been designated science colleges to be steeped even deeper in these subjects, to provide specialist education for science, mathematics, and technology teachers. Technical and vocational studies are also being highlighted in the reform. Government policy is to build vocational and technical institutes in every district, so the youth will learn to use not only their minds, but their hands as well.

A Distance Education Programme has been created for the upgrading of teachers beyond the diploma level. Improved conditions of service are part of the incentives to motivate teachers to deliver quality service. This Government is fully

committed to the concept of quality teaching as the guarantee for molding our youth into being high achievers, with a technical and scientific mindset. In addition to refurbishing the universities and Teacher Training Colleges, Government policy is to attract and retain young, qualified faculty through scholarships, better remuneration and conditions of service, sabbaticals, and other incentives.

Mr. Speaker, happily for our Nation, the burden that used to rest solely on the state for provision of tertiary education is being lessened by rapidly increasing private tertiary institutions, some of which are proving very competitive in terms of quality of programme delivery and student enrollment.

I must commend the founders of these institutions, as well as the National Accreditation Board, for their part in the process. My appeal is that the curricula of these private institutions should expand beyond religion, business, and social sciences into mathematics, science, and technology inline with Government's new educational policy.

Health

Mr. Speaker, integral to human resource development and the achievement of the UN's Millennium Development Goals is a robust health delivery programme. For this reason, Government has seen to the rehabilitation of the regional hospitals and district health posts, capacity building within the sector, and improvement in the conditions of service of health workers.

Currently, the main driving force of health delivery is captured in the adage "prevention is better than cure." Accordingly, the focus is on disease prevention and promotion of healthy lifestyles that include healthy eating, both at home and in schools; physical exercise; use of potable water; and environmental cleanliness.

Water

Mr. Speaker, to provide safe water for good health, Government policy has involved the

provision of boreholes and hand-dug wells, as well as major rehabilitation works on the urban water supply systems. These are ongoing in all the regions. They include the Accra-Weija-Kpong loop (which is under construction and will be completed within this year to bring great relief); the Kwanyaku Water Supply Expansion Project; the Cape-Coast Water Supply Expansion Project (to draw water from Sekyere Heman); the Tamale Water Expansion Project; the Kumasi Water Supply Project; and the Koforidua Water Supply Project. Plans for Sunyani are almost completed. This is expected to radically tackle the waterborne diseases plaguing many parts of the country.

The National Health Insurance Scheme

Mr. Speaker, the National Health Insurance Scheme is a major contribution of this Government to provide quality and affordable healthcare. At the moment over nine million individuals, representing forty-eight percent of the population, are full members of the scheme. At this rate, it is envisaged that in the next five years, all Ghanaians should be covered. A special feature is that in three years all children below the age of eighteen will become automatic members of the scheme, not through their parents as it is now.

HIV/AIDS

Mr. Speaker, the relentless fight against the spread of HIV/AIDS resulted in a modest reduction from 2.6 percent prevalence level in 2006 to 2.2 percent in 2007. The voluntary counseling and testing services which are operating in 138 districts should make help more readily available to people living with the disease. They should also help to contain the spread of the disease. At the moment, forty-eight anti-retroviral sites are operational in the country.

Mr. Speaker, there are other ongoing programmes to minimize the incidence and impact of malaria and guinea worm infestation on the society. With improvement in water delivery, it is expected that incidence of guinea worm infestation will be reduced.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Speaker, a vigorous infrastructural development is being pursued to open up the whole country to facilitate the movement of persons, goods, and services while promoting socio-cultural interaction.

Roads

Mr. Speaker, the roads sector in particular is witnessing an incredible level of development that is unprecedented in the history of this country. Every region and district boasts of completed and ongoing roads of all grades, especially those linking farm gates to market centres.

Mr. Speaker, the difference is that specifications of the major trunk and arterial roads are much improved, with an expected time span of twenty years.

The strategic importance of cocoa is acknowledged through the Cocoa Roads Improvement Project (CRIP). This year, \$100 million has been released for a programme to tar or surface-dress some selected roads in six selected cocoa growing regions.

Mr. Speaker, all the arterial roads from Accra to the neighbouring countries of Togo, Cote d'Ivoire, and Burkina Faso have undergone reconstruction. Work is ongoing in various metropolises, municipalities, and district capitals to reduce traffic congestion, improve public transportation, and support economic activities. Accra is a typical example of these (Nkrumah Circle), Ofankor, Tetteh Quarshie (Aburi), and Malam (Kasoa). This trend is evident all over the country.

Mr. Speaker, since 2001:

- over 1,000 km of feeder roads have been surfaced nationwide;
- about 4,800 km have undergone rehabilitation;
- 10,000 km have undergone spot improvement;
- 2,300 km have been re-graveled;
- 84 bridges have been built; and
- 500 km of roadside drains have been constructed for all cities.

Mr. Speaker, sadly, the accident rate on these improved roads, even though in decline, is still unacceptable. I charge the Driver Vehicle Licensing Authority, the Road Safety Commission, and the Motor Traffic Unit to redouble their efforts to ensure that the quality of driving on our roads improves.

Railways

Mr. Speaker, after years of neglect, the railway sector is at long last receiving attention. In the course of the year, rehabilitation of the network will commence in partnership with the private sector. Ninety million dollars of the proceeds from the Eurobond are being used as leverage with a consortium. The plan for this network, which has not seen rehabilitation for the better part of the last century, is to extend the network all the way to the northern part of the country. This is expected to generate thousands of jobs across the country and also revive some of the old railway towns.

Let me use this opportunity to appeal to the squatters along the railway line to make arrangements to relocate before construction commences.

Ports

Mr. Speaker, both the Tema and Takoradi Ports are undergoing various forms of rehabilitation for modernization and expansion. Partly due to this, the volume of freight with the sister landlocked countries in the Sahel region has increased immensely. Government's intention is to make the country's seaports the preferred entreport in the ECOWAS sub-region.

Aviation

Mr. Speaker, thanks to the just-ended soccer tournament, three regional airports in Takoradi, Tamale, and Kumasi have been upgraded to enable them to cope with bigger aircrafts and flights around the clock. Customs and immigration services are also available to support international flights. During 2008, Tamale and Kumasi received eight and ten direct international flights

respectively, while Takoradi received fourteen through Kotoka International Airport in Accra.

Telecommunication

Mr. Speaker, Government is endeavouring to make information and communication technology available to large sections of the society. The National Communications Backbone Infrastructure network is being pursued vigorously to provide open access broadband connectivity. Through this, all Senior High Schools are being connected to the system to facilitate distance education programmes. Again, all sectors of our society including commerce, health, and Government will access information speedily for decision-making.

Government is also promoting a competitive telecommunications market to ensure fair-play among the operators and higher quality and more affordable service delivery to the people. The importance of this is spreading information all over and introducing uniformity of standards and values.

ENERGY

Mr. Speaker, the energy sector has proved a challenge throughout the life of this administration because of the very high cost of crude oil and the occasional drying up of the Volta. Last year, after the energy crisis that led to a countrywide load-shedding exercise, Government announced short, medium, and long-term energy policies to solve the problem once and for all. The new policy involves a mix of thermal and hydro energy for electricity generation. With the success of the short-term measures, the load-shedding exercise was discontinued. Implementation of the medium-term policy is in progress, while the Bui Hydro Electric Project, a long-term measure, has started, and completion is expected in 2012. Mr. Speaker, smaller dams are to be constructed on the Ankobra, Tano, and Pra Rivers, and negotiations are ongoing with the contractors on the Bui project towards that end. I am confident that successful implementation of the policy will provide the country's energy requirement for industrialization.

The West Africa Gas Pipeline

Mr. Speaker, one of the legacies of this Government is the West Africa Gas pipeline, which is now completed. The first free-flow of nitrogen has been done. This Project is expected to impact positively on energy generation in the country since gas is a relatively cheaper source of energy than crude oil.

PRIVATE SECTOR

Mr. Speaker, on assumption of office, I declared the ushering in of the Golden Age of Business: hence the critical focus on the private sector, which inherently generates more employment than the public sector. Various laws and measures have been put in place to facilitate the sector's growth, including capacity building programmes, provision of Government guarantees, as well as different forms of credit like the Venture Capital Fund, Microcredit, and Small Loan Scheme.

Mr. Speaker, the Private Sector is doing very well. I must acknowledge the substantial investment that is now making its way into the economy, particularly from mining, services industry, commerce, tourism, and hotel development. The financial sector, perhaps the most vibrant, continues to do well, with an influx of many new banks, both local and foreign. In a month, I should be launching the Central Bank's E-ZWICH system, which is modernizing the financial system towards greater efficiency and security. Also, Mr. Speaker, the vigorous and almost miraculous developments in real estate that have become a feature country-wide are mostly private sector initiatives. Government has stepped in with a housing scheme to help workers. The project is ongoing in Accra, Kumasi, Koforidua, Tamale, and Wa. I highly commend the private real estate developers for staying resolved in the face of high input costs. Mr. Speaker, there is the need to build greater entrepreneurial spirit to take advantage of the existing opportunities within the system. At the moment, a number of world class companies are vying to partner with the country to invest locally in the bauxite industry for both upstream and downstream processing.

Agriculture

Mr. Speaker, agriculture forms the biggest part of the private sector and employs the largest population in the rural area. It is also the obvious sector to lead industrialization. Government has sought to modernize the sector through mechanization and irrigation to change the rural economy, create more wealth, and help attain the Millennium Development Goals. So far, more than 3,000 tractors have been sold to farmers at highly subsidized rates. Small scale irrigation projects are also being promoted, especially in the northern parts of the country. Despite this, much remains to be done to transform the sector, mainly because of outlook and also financial constraints. However, through various interventions including the supply of improved planting materials, extension services, and microcredits to farmers, significant results have been recorded. Food has been available around the year at affordable prices.

Commercial Farmers

Mr. Speaker, the agricultural sector is attracting some large scale commercial farmers like Golden Exotics Company Limited, which is the local subsidiary of the internationally renowned French company "Compagnie Fruitiere," and Blue Skies. These in turn are attracting a number of satellite farms.

Cocoa

The cocoa sector in particular registered the highest ever production level of over 740,000 tonnes during the 2005-2006 crop year. The target is to attain one million tons in the next couple of years.

Currently, Government's policy is towards value-addition and is therefore welcoming both local and foreign investors into the sector. At the moment, over thirty percent of cocoa beans are processed locally by world class companies such as Barry Callebaut and Cargyll. Our own cocoa processing company is also doing very well.

Millennium Challenge Account

Mr. Speaker, under the Millennium Challenge Account, Ghana is the highest recipient in the amount of \$547 million. It may prove to be the long-awaited opportunity to transform and modernize the rural economy through mechanization.

Under the programme, farmers in twenty-three districts in five regions of the country are being assisted to undertake commercial agriculture, mainly in the cultivation of horticultural produce. The project is to serve as a model to other farmers and to promote best practices from farms to the ports for export. Many ancillary jobs are expected to be created not only in the participating districts, but also throughout the country.

National Youth Employment Programme

Mr. Speaker, unemployment has bedeviled the Nation's economic efforts. The search for economic growth is to expand opportunities for employment generation and job creation for the youth. Projections are that with the improving GDP, the employment opportunities will expand. Mr. Speaker, in 2007, a total of 200,000 jobs were created. This was a major improvement over the 120,000 created in 2006.

Mr. Speaker, the stagnation in the economy caused a huge backlog of unemployment, which the recovery of the economy is gradually resolving. In the formal sector, there is steady growth in employment generation. Some youth take up jobs in the informal sector, which go unrecorded because of lack of appropriate data. Mr. Speaker, on this score, I am happy to say that the National Identification Programme is about to take off. The equipment is in; the offices are almost ready; training of personnel is about to start. By the end of this year, all residents 16 years and above will have photo identification cards. By the middle of next year, both Ghanaians and legally resident foreigners will have their photo identification cards.

Mr. Speaker, the Youth Employment Programme is one key strategic intervention to engage the otherwise unemployed youth to

prepare for more permanent job positions. Since the inauguration of the programme, in October 2006, it has provided placements for over 108,000 young people. Given the transient nature of the placement and its funding arrangement, the programme tends to suffer delayed payment of wages.

I have directed the Ministers for Finance, Manpower, Youth, and Employment to ensure that funding for this programme is streamlined and sustained to ensure regular and timely payment of allowances.

I am happy to note that the programme has attracted the attention of sister African countries, the international development community, as well as Ghana's private sector, which is proving to be a reliable partner in supporting the youth.

PUBLIC SECTOR

Mr. Speaker, in the past, the public sector tended to stand aloof from the private sector. Government is reforming to be very professional and very supportive of the private sector. The new concept for development is public/private partnership. Government has initiated the establishment of the citizens' charter on all institutions to enhance responsiveness to the private sector and to lock into place the partnership between the two. The first phase of the charter involves the land and revenue sectors.

Public Sector Pay Reform

Mr. Speaker, as part of the reform, Government is developing a comprehensive objective job evaluation as the basis for establishing equity in public sector wage administration.

Fair Wages and Salaries Commission

In the same way, the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission has been constituted to ensure that public sector pay is administered with equity, fairness, and transparency so as to minimize labour disputes over pay administration.

NATIONAL LABOUR COMMISSION

In the face of the growth in the economy, the National Labour Commission should be even more up and coming in settling labour and industrial disputes using negotiation, mediation, and arbitration against confrontation.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend Government's main social partners—organized labour and employers—for displaying good faith in our relationship over the past seven years.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

Mr. Speaker, Ghana prides herself as a beacon of good governance. But, as self assessment is ever so suspect, we should be happy with the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), which provides external monitoring. Ghana was first to sign up to the APRM.

APRM

When any country has been reviewed, the APRM requires periodic reports to focus on action plans to remedy defects brought to light by the review. Accordingly, the latest report made to the Eighth Summit of the APR Forum on January 30, 2008, at Addis Ababa, highlighted action plans for better governance, including the following:

- Stemming conflict arising from land disputes;
- Strengthening the oversight role of Parliament;
- Establishing trade desks in MDAs and capacity building for analyzing multilateral trade issues; and
- Strengthening of tax administration.

The report was well received by the APR Forum.

Mr. Speaker, we remain persuaded that the Africa Peer Review Mechanism provides us with a mirror to undertake a reality check on good governance and on our collective well-being. Implementation of the action plans reported to APR Forum has already commenced.

Law and Order

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to report that the fight against corruption, which is an affront to good governance, has found a new ally in Parliament. Last year saw the public hearings of the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament for the first time. Some of the revelations were mind-boggling. I congratulate Parliament on the excellent job done. The Committee's proactive stance demonstrates appreciation that concerns about corruption are more helpful when they go beyond mere complaints. The Attorney-General's Department has set up an Anti-Corruption Unit to study the recommendations and to prosecute cases that need to be prosecuted.

Law Enforcement

Mr. Speaker, law and order also require enforcers in the right numbers proportional to the population. In 2001, the Police Service stood at 15,983. It has since gained an additional 10,132 members. But, compared to the UN ratio of police to citizens at 1:500, Ghana currently reports a ratio of 1:994. While beefing up the numbers is receiving attention, resources lately provided to the police include vehicles, communication equipments, ammunition, and uniforms.

Mr. Speaker, in the past, communities could form volunteer units for community protection. It is an idea worth revisiting. This, however, is no recommendation for instant justice, which must be condemned in no uncertain terms.

Gender

Mr. Speaker, Ghana is making great strides towards a more inclusive society. Last year, Government appointed the first female Chief Justice in the Nation's history. We should be proud that the male stranglehold on the headship of the Judiciary has at long last been broken. In all units of public service, both genders are represented at the top. There is representation also in all branches of the security services. Both Parliament and the Executive also have their

share of gender mix, though balance is yet to be achieved.

Mr. Speaker, it is for paying prompt attention to such underrepresentation that the Ministry of Women and Children has been established. The Ministry is doing a good job already.

Foreign Relations

Mr. Speaker, if I may now turn briefly to foreign relations, respect for our country shows in the number of international conferences attracted here in recent times. In the next few days, we expect to host the President of the United States, Mr. George Bush.

Mr. Speaker, Ghana was in the Chair in July last year when the African Union (AU) engaged in the Great Debate on Africa's future. Subject to details still being worked out, the consensus was for a Continental African Union Government in the foreseeable future. Sadly, there are still conflicts and tensions that do not make anybody happy. But, no effort is being spared by the AU to provide remedies.

Relations with our immediate neighbours were never better. It is a matter of national pride that in the last seven years, Ghana was elected twice as chair of the sub-regional body of ECOWAS.

Late last year, when the European Union and Africa engaged each other to devise strategies for mutual survival in the global market, Ghana, as chair of AU, was co-chair with Portugal as chair of the EU.

Mr. Speaker, I have been personally privileged to travel extensively representing Ghana, ECOWAS, or the AU as chair. It has been a good experience for me, and I dare say it has earned good public relations around the globe for the country, for which we should all be proud.

Parliament

Mr. Speaker, the Legislature plays no small part in the drive for good governance. How well equipped the House is for its critical role must be of concern to all of us. It is, indeed, a shame that

our members of Parliament (MPs) do not have adequate office room or staff to assist their work. I recall that in my very first Sessional Address, I made a promise that the House would be provided adequate resources for its work.

Mr. Speaker, I was aware at the time of a loan facility of \$25 million waiting to be utilized. It was only later that I learnt that the loan had been diverted to an apparently more urgent purpose by those who secured it. But, I am happy to report that fresh resources are in hand for the refurbishment of Job 600 for use by MPs. The Speaker is aware of what the Executive is doing for the Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, in the future, the House might consider preparing a comprehensive budget of its needs for funding in the same way as the Judiciary does. In offering this advice to the House, I am tempted to say it is because "I care for you." The reason should be obvious, because I was twice elected to the House. Indeed, Parliament is where I cut my political teeth some forty years ago.

National Heritage

Mr. Speaker, it is an open secret that as President of the Nation that attained independence 50 years ago, ahead of the pack in Black Africa, I commute to work from my own self-built home. Of course, my home is not going to be available to the next President. On the other hand, the Castle, a former slave post, is so unsuitable for residence that it should surprise no one that none of our Prime Ministers and Presidents of the past chose to live there full time. So, where will my successor live, if he has no suitable accommodation of his own?

Mr. Speaker, Flagstaff House is being rebuilt to accommodate the next President in dignity. Additionally, Peduase, Akomsombo, and Akuse, which were built in the First Republic as Presidential retreats, have all been refurbished. Not for the vanity of the Presidency, these are national assets that deserve better than the neglect to which they have been consigned in the past.

Mr. Speaker, not from the budget and certainly

not at the expense of anyone's pet project, the money for Flagstaff House has been sourced from soft loans repayable over a twenty-five year period, with a five year moratorium. Good things do not come better than that. Parliament should be proud that at long last there is going to be an official residence for the President of our Republic.

Similarly, Mr. Speaker, in the wake of the Africa Cup of Nations 2008, Ghana now has four state of the art stadiums in four regions. It should be possible over time for each region to have one of its own. Human resource development is better for such facilities, which can also be exploited to economic advantage. We must make use of them while enjoying ourselves. The point is, Mr. Speaker, that we do not have to solve all personal problems before we give ourselves the occasional treat.

Election 2008

Finally, Mr. Speaker, under the Constitution of the Fourth Republic, it is to be noted that no office, appointive or elective, may be encumbered forever by any one person. Ever so often, as regulated by law, holders of elective office, as President or Member of Parliament, must seek fresh mandate by submitting to election.

Mr. Speaker, in canvassing for any elective office, political parties have the machinery for marketing their favorite candidates for a choice to be made by the electorate. But, it is becoming increasingly evident that some prefer the marketing strategy of presenting their opponents in the worst possible light. I dare say they might do better if they focused more on what they would do different, if they received the people's mandate. Still, within the limits of the law, political parties may run their campaign in any manner that they choose.

Mr. Speaker, the electoral arrangements currently in place have been put to test four times already since 1992, with outcomes that have been endorsed as reflecting the true wishes of the people. Each election has thrown light on areas that need attention. Thus, we have progressed from opaque to transparent ballot boxes and from

Voter ID Cards with no pictures to ones that have pictures. Polling agents have acquired experience from each round of elections, and with training they could get better still. Ongoing work on National ID Cards has so progressed that their issuance should be possible this year.

Mr. Speaker, the independent Electoral Commissioner appointed since 1993 remains at post. Staff at the Commission include some who have also been at post since 1993. The Commission has received international commendation over the years for its neutrality and professionalism. Indeed, it is much sought after in other countries to provide technical assistance. The Commission can perform better still, with constructive criticism.

Above all, Mr. Speaker, there is the Judiciary, another independent entity, whose intervention can be petitioned by anyone who feels aggrieved. When there is so much going for our electoral process, there is no reason to contemplate extra measures for resolving imaginary scenarios in the coming elections. Far from being at war, we are only going into elections and not for the first time, Mr. Speaker.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Speaker, in coming to the end of this address, I should remind the House that there is still a long list of unfinished business. But, I do not want to begin a culture where a long catalogue of things yet to be done becomes the basis for an extended term.

In the period since 2001, Government has focused on providing the platform for accelerated growth. I believe that this has been largely achieved through macroeconomic stability. The next phase of development should take us into industrialization, with attendant employment opportunities and value addition to our raw materials, especially agricultural produce.

Acquisition of Volta Aluminium Company (VALCO) is also going to be especially critical to the industrialization phase of our development. World class prospective investors give us hope that an integrated bauxite/alumina to aluminum

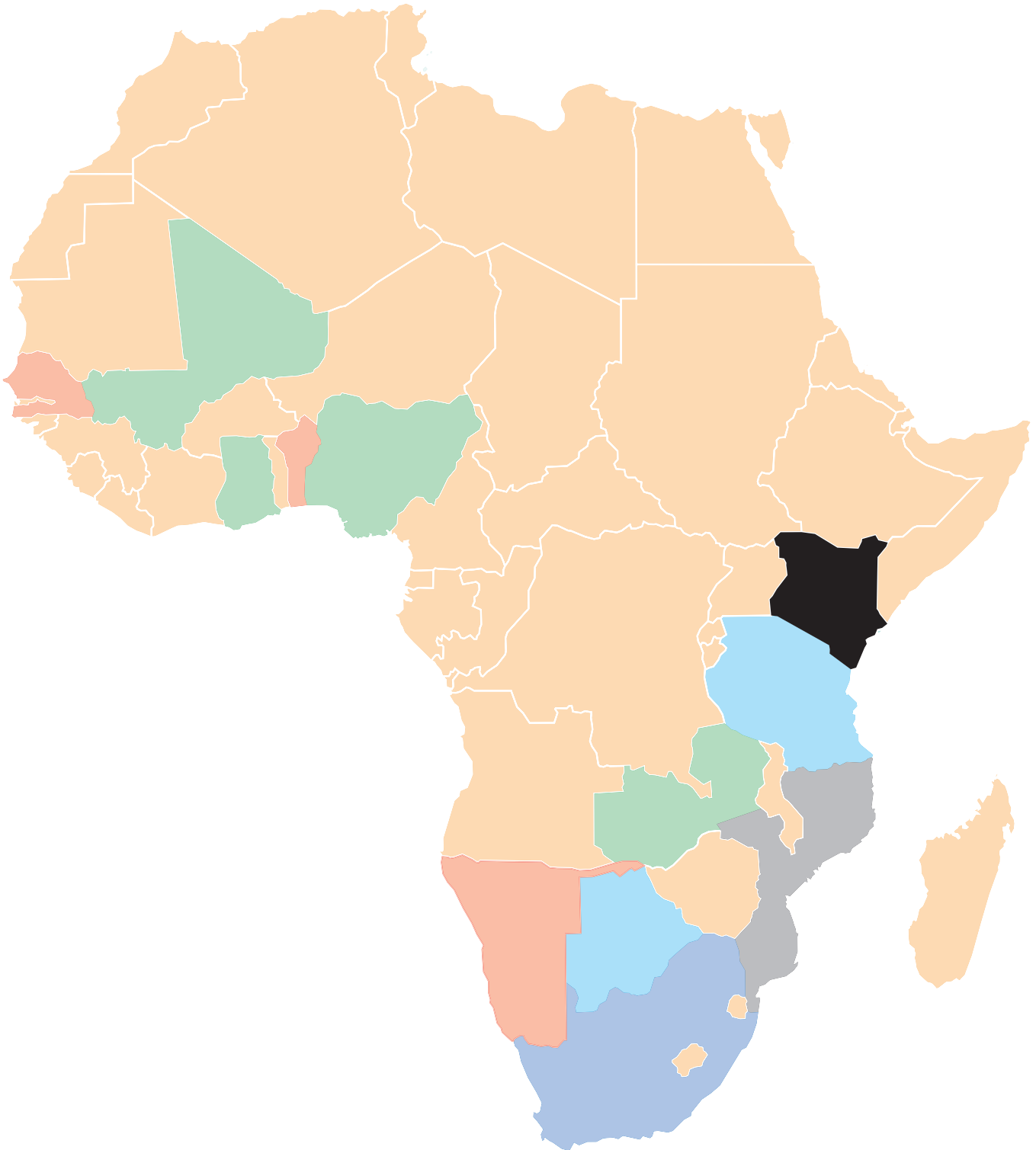
industry is possible, after all. This was the dream that inspired Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the Nation's first President, to source money to build the Akosombo Dam. That dream is within reach, Mr. Speaker.

Through this August House, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all our compatriots for the opportunity given me to serve as the country's President for two terms. I want to especially thank my favourite political party, the New Patriotic Party, on whose ticket I stood and whose vision has been the source of my inspiration. I have no doubt that the party's motto, "Development in Freedom," remains relevant. I dare say that because they know a good thing when they see it, the people of this great Nation will return the NPP to power.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you and the House for receiving me.

May God Bless you.

KENYA



KENYA



**Speech by His Excellency
Mwai Kibaki, President of the
Republic of Kenya, during the 2008
Jamhuri Day Celebrations, Nyayo
National Stadium
Nairobi, Kenya
December 12, 2008**



Fellow Kenyans,

It gives me great pleasure to join all of you on this occasion of celebrating Jamhuri Day. This day marks an important milestone in the history of our country. It was on this day 45 years ago that we assumed our independence as a nation and took charge of our destiny as a sovereign people. As we celebrate this memorable day therefore, I salute all Kenyans wherever they are observing this occasion. I also convey our appreciation to all our friends and well-wishers who have joined us in commemorating this historic day.

We are marking this year's Jamhuri Day at a time when our country, and indeed, the world as a whole, is facing serious challenges arising from the global financial instability and high prices of food and fuel. These challenges have their origin well beyond our borders, but they have serious implications on our own economy and the well-being of our people. For instance, it is now projected that the economic growth rate of seven percent we anticipated is likely to slow down to about 4.5 percent. Moreover, the worldwide impact of the rising food and fuel prices is estimated to have increased the number of people living below the poverty line by more than one hundred million.

The challenges facing the global economy underscore the need for us to carefully manage available resources in order to safeguard the investments we have made, especially in infrastructure and human development. More importantly, the crisis underlines the need to ensure that our people, especially the poor and vulnerable, are protected through well-targeted policies.

Towards this end, we are addressing the current food shortage, as well as the high prices of

basic foods as a matter of priority. We are also putting in place measures to increase food production and ensure sustained national food security. For instance, the Government recently announced interventions aimed at streamlining the distribution of maize in the country, which includes duty free importation of maize and the use of the strategic grain reserves to stabilize food prices.

Accordingly, and following consultations with maize millers on the necessary modalities, the Government has agreed to release 700,000 bags of maize directly to the millers. In addition, we are importing a further five million bags of maize through the National Cereals and Produce Board. These measures are intended to ensure that the commodity is not only readily available, but also affordable. I want to appeal to members of the business community to be mindful of the welfare of wananchi. The Government has a duty to protect the right of Kenyans to meet their food requirements without hindrance. We will, therefore, not tolerate unfair business practices and will take stern action against unscrupulous businessmen who seek to manipulate the food supply chain in order to maximize their profits.

In addition to addressing the food supply challenges facing us, my Government is also taking measures to tackle the high cost of energy. We are determined to ensure that Kenyans pay fair prices for fuel and other petroleum products. In this connection, my Government, through the Energy Regulatory Commission, will continuously engage stakeholders in the sector with a view towards implementing limited regulation of oil prices so that the local fuel prices reflect international movement in oil prices.

With regard to the cost of electricity, my Government responded to the distress of manufacturers and households by reducing value added tax (VAT) on electrical energy and some types of diesel and residual fuel oils from sixteen percent to twelve percent. Nevertheless, considering the adverse impact of high energy prices on the cost of living, as well as the overall performance of the economy, my Government is focusing on increasing the proportion of electricity generated from hydro and geothermal sources, and improving

the distribution of petroleum products. Towards this end, KenGen, together with local and international independent power producers, are implementing several power generation projects that will add over 200 megawatts to the national power supply by the end of the year 2009.

Similarly, major projects are underway to enhance the capacity of the Kenya Pipeline, which is a cheaper mode of transporting petroleum products. In addition, my Government recently commissioned a contractor to determine coal quantities and quality in Kitui and Mwingi Districts, while continuing with oil and gas exploration in various parts of the country. We remain hopeful that these efforts will yield positive results.

Fellow Kenyans,

In spite of the challenges that we have faced, I am glad to note that our economy has continued to perform reasonably well. Indeed, while key sectors such as transportation, tourism, manufacturing, export, and the stock exchange have been affected, the economy has remained largely resilient and we expect to register an economic growth rate of about 4.5 percent this year.

I want to applaud all of you fellow Kenyans for your patience, resilience, and patriotism that have enabled us to manage difficult situations. Moreover, the Grand Coalition Government is working well, and I have no doubt that our unity of purpose is producing tangible benefits for all the people of Kenya. My appeal to fellow Kenyans, on this occasion of the anniversary of our independence, is that we should all uphold the principles of patriotism, peace, and love that the founders of our great country applied at the birth of our Nation in dealing with various challenges.

As a young and developing country, we will continue to face numerous challenges. We must be prepared to tackle them boldly, while ensuring the ultimate good of our country and all our people. Indeed, this is the spirit with which the Grand Coalition Government is facing the challenges arising from the post-election crisis.

For instance, following Parliament's adoption of the report by the Independent Electoral Review Commission, the Government has initiated

ed a consultative process to put in place the necessary legal framework for implementation of comprehensive reform of our electoral system. Accordingly, I want to appeal to members of Parliament to be critical, but open-minded, as they engage with each other on the proposed 2008 Constitution of Kenya (Amendment) Bill 2008. Let us always focus on the greater interest of our country so that we can facilitate the reform process that will create a transparent, effective, and accountable electoral system.

Regarding the Commission of Inquiry on Post-Election Violence, the Government constituted a cabinet committee to develop an action plan for implementing the recommendations made by the Commission. It is my conviction that the implementation of the Kriegler and Waki Reports will go a long way towards laying a firm foundation for a stable and cohesive society.

Fellow Kenyans,

As we seek to create a cohesive and stable country, we must not lose sight of the urgent need to expand economic opportunities and uplift the living standards of our people. In this regard, and in addition to other ongoing economic strategies, my Government is in the process of creating special economic zones in all provinces of our country. These will enable Information and Communications Technology (ICT) related service industries and business parks to become one of the key providers of employment, especially for the youth.

My Government is also giving priority to the implementation of several proposed large infrastructure developments. We are in the process of building the first super-highway along the Nairobi-Thika Road. We have also begun construction of Kisumu Airport to meet international standards, while work on the remaining parts of the Northern Corridor from Nakuru to Eldoret and onwards to Malaba is continuing. Furthermore, construction work of a modern tarmac road from Isiolo to Moyale is underway.

I am also happy to inform you, fellow Kenyans, that in my travels outside the country, I have presented strong investment proposals that have

been well received. Some of the projects we are giving priority to in these initiatives include construction of a free port at Dongo Kundu in Mombasa and a new port at Lamu, together with supporting infrastructure such as a road and railway connecting the port to Southern Sudan, and a network of resort cities.

Indeed, these projects are part of a broader strategy for the transformation of our country into a modern and dynamic economy providing opportunities for all Kenyans, and which we have elaborated in the VISION 2030. In addition, VISION 2030 outlines the Government's support to the ICT sector. The completion of both the East African Sub-Marine System and the National Fibre-Optic Infrastructure projects next year is expected to greatly improve the business environment, especially in the electronic commerce market segment. This ICT network will link us with the entire world so that with our educational and computer skills, we can become a major player in the outsourcing sector.

I am encouraged to note that already, some small companies are coming up, particularly in computer assembly, software production, and in information and communication services, because of the good policy and business environment we are creating. I urge Kenyans, and especially the youth, to venture into the ICT sector, which is one of the key drivers of economic growth across the world now and in the foreseeable future. Indeed, while the economies of the 20th century were driven by a network of railway lines, the economies of the 21st century will be driven by strong networks in communications and technology.

Fellow Kenyans,

In agriculture, which is the largest sector of our economy, this year we have purchased more than 100,000 tonnes of fertilizer, which will reduce prices paid by farmers by one third. We are also putting in place programmes to provide smallholders with affordable certified seeds so that we are able to produce enough food. In addition, my Government is focusing on irrigation as a priority in order to reduce our reliance on rain-fed agriculture. We will also continue to

implement reforms aimed at transforming agriculture into a commercial activity.

Accordingly, I urge relevant Government agencies, farmers, as well as the business community, to work aggressively towards establishing a profitable agricultural value-adding sector in Kenya. This is the most effective way of ensuring that our farmers are appropriately rewarded for their efforts, and millions of young people are employed productively in the processing facilities.

Fellow Kenyans,

As we seek to achieve higher economic growth rates, my Government has not lost sight of the need to pay close attention to vulnerable members of our society. In this connection, the creation of employment opportunities for our unemployed youth remains one of the critical priorities of my Government. We recognize that providing young people with vocational and technical skills is the key to addressing the challenge of unemployment. My Government is, therefore, investing heavily in the rehabilitation of Youth Polytechnics where our youth can acquire vocational and technical skills. With effect from January 2009, the Government will provide tuition subsidies totaling 465 million shillings to 500 registered Youth Polytechnics. These grants will enable the Youth Polytechnics to purchase training equipment and materials and introduce the new and modern curriculum that has been developed.

In addition to equipping the youth with vocational and technical skills, my Government established the National Youth Fund two years ago to enable young people access to cheaper loans for investment. In the short space of two years, the Youth Enterprise Fund has loaned about 1.7 billion shillings to 51,000 youth-owned enterprises and over 7,000 youth groups. I am glad to note that so far, the Youth Fund has created over 200,000 new jobs. I am also happy to note that the private sector has come on board to support this fund. Through a new initiative that I launched this week, a number of our local banks will make available an additional 2.5 billion shillings to the youth. I am committed to contin-

uing to build this fund so that it can benefit many more young people. On their part, I urge the youth to work hard and maintain high standards of discipline.

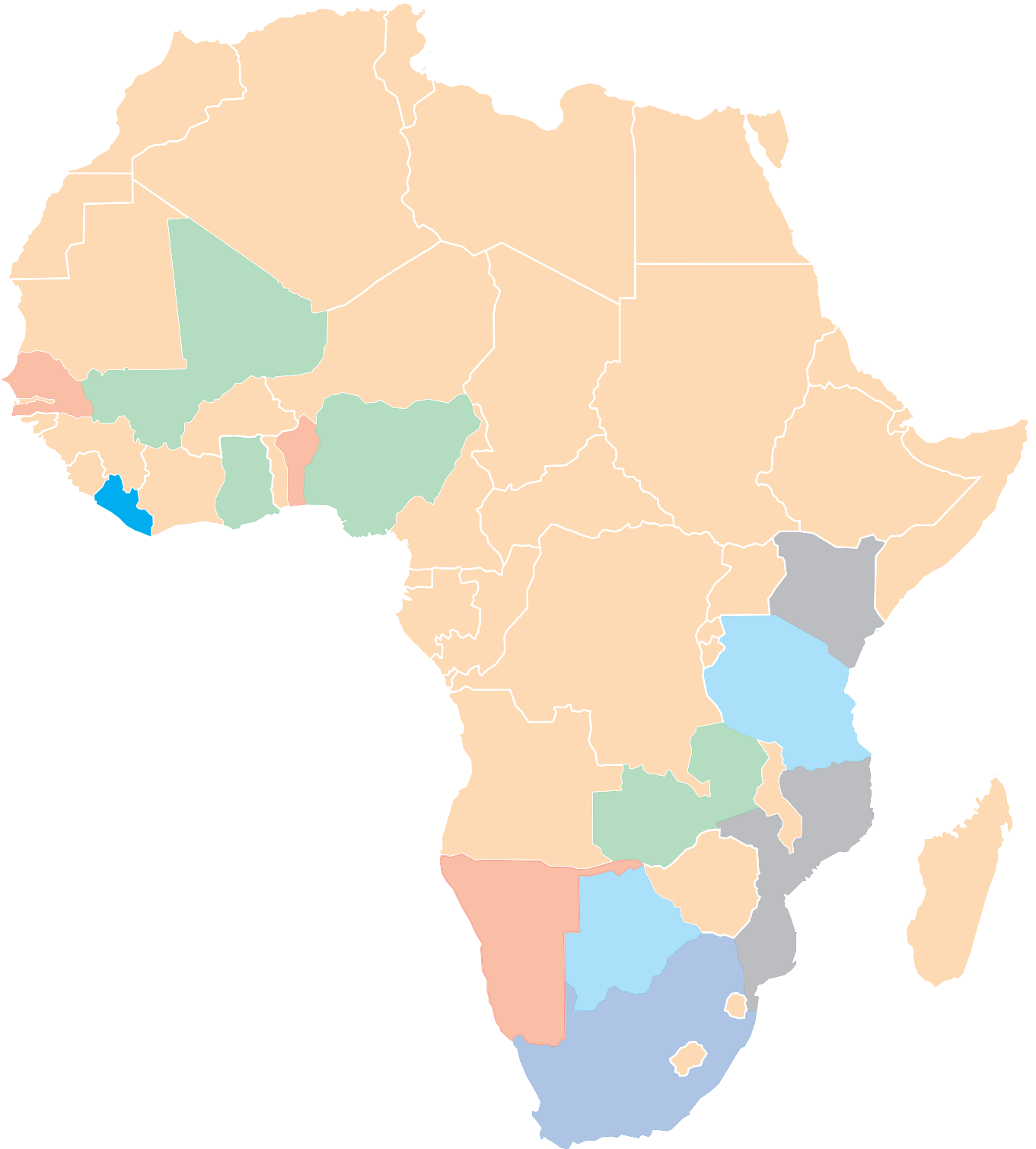
With regard to women empowerment, I am encouraged to note that the Women Enterprise Fund that we introduced last year is now operational. So far, out of 1.3 billion shillings set aside since the inception of the fund, a total of 400 million shillings have been disbursed through microfinance institutions and divisional fund committees to 1,920 women groups and 9,300 individuals. My Government remains committed to gender equality and the protection of women's rights. To achieve this goal, my Government has put in place a national framework to monitor and document affirmative action in government planning, budgeting, and legislation.

In conclusion, fellow Kenyans, I wish to assure you all that the Grand Coalition Government is committed to delivering a new constitutional dispensation in the country. The National Assembly has already passed the Constitution of Kenya Review Bill. I have now assented to the Bill, and I expect that the process of developing a new Constitution can begin without delay. I urge leaders and Kenyans in general to rise above partisan interests so that we can reach consensus on a Constitution that will serve present and future generations well.

With these remarks, I wish you all happy Jamhuri Day celebrations, a blessed Christmas, and a happy and prosperous new year.

ASANTENI NA MUNGU AWABARIKI

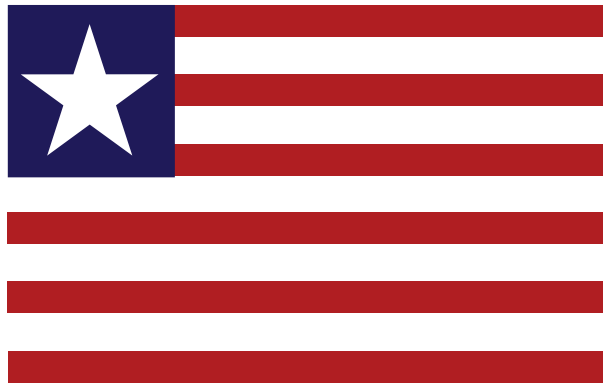
LIBERIA



LIBERIA



**Annual Message by Her Excellency
Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of
the Republic of Liberia, to the
Third Session of the Fifty-Second
National Legislature
Monrovia, Liberia
January 28, 2008**



Mr. Vice President;
Mr. Speaker, Mr. President Pro Tempore;
Honorable Members of the Legislature;
Mr. Chief Justice, Associate Justices of the
Supreme Court and Members of the Judiciary;
Members of the Cabinet and other Government
Officials;
Mr. Doyen, Excellencies, and Members of the
Diplomatic Corps;
Her Excellency the Special Representative of the
Secretary General of the United Nations in
Liberia;
Officers and Staff of the United Nations Mission
in Liberia;
The Chief-Of-Staff, Men and Women of the
Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL);
Former Government Officials;
Traditional Leaders, Chiefs, and Elders;
Political and Business Leaders;
Labour and Trade Unions;
Youth and Student Organizations;
Civil Society Organizations; Members of the
Press;
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;
Fellow Liberians:

INTRODUCTION

In obedience to the Constitution of our Republic, I have the honour for the third time to report to you on the affairs of our Nation. First, in homage to the Almighty God by whose supreme will we are guided, I ask that you join me in observing a moment of silence. We do so also to the memory of the cherished Liberian leaders and other citizens who have passed to the great beyond.

Honourable Members of the Legislature;
distinguished ladies and gentlemen;
fellow Liberians:

We said last year that we could not bring quick fixes to the monumental problems that we inherited, and we did not promise that we would. We expected, therefore, that during the year 2007, our tasks would be difficult and our challenges demanding. Nevertheless, we can now say to you with confidence that Liberia's recovery is fully underway. The economy is expanding with growth accelerating to over nine percent last year. Roads and buildings are being rebuilt; hospitals, clinics, and schools are reopening; and agriculture production is on the rebound. The Government is introducing a broad set of policies to foster peace, accelerate reconstruction and development, and build strong systems of governance. There is still a long way to go, but there can be no doubt that Liberia has launched its recovery and is poised for rapid, inclusive, and sustainable development in the years to come.

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Honorable Legislators,
We are grateful to your honourable body for the passage of several pieces of legislation and instruments of ratification during the past year. Notably among these are the Telecommunications Act, the Census Act, the Governance Commission Act, and the amendment of Section 1508 of Chapter 16 of the Labor Practices Law, which aims at ameliorating disputes between employees and employers.

We also thank you for the ratification of the Oil Production Sharing Contracts between the Oranto and Broadway companies of Nigeria and the United Kingdom, respectively. Our administration issued only two executive orders during the period under review: Executive Order #8 to extend the mandate of the National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration, and Rehabilitation; and Executive Order #10, which revised Executive Order #9 to extend the suspension of the protective tariff on cement.

Mr. Speaker,
Mr. President Pro Tempore:

We applaud the leadership that you brought to this legislative effort and I want to acknowledge the special diligence of the Vice President, Honorable Joseph N. Boakai, as President of the Senate. He has been a competent assistant, taking from my shoulders onto his own responsibilities for investment promotion, international representation, and resolution of institutional disputes.

Mr. Vice President,

I thank you for your loyalty and exceptional support.

Honourable Legislators,

We solicit your continued support and consideration of those draft legislation still pending before you, some of which have important implications for the final resolution of our debt problem, for the achievement of our goals of national renewal, and for the safety of our people. These include the Anti Corruption Commission Act, the Code of Conduct Act, the Acts Amending the Investment Incentive and Revenue Codes, and the Act to Amend the Penal Law. Also pending before your Honorable Body are the Acts to Amend the Comium Concession and the Act Establishing the Veterans Bureau, as well as Acts to limit the ability to transfer between budget lines and to merge the Bureau of the Budget into the Ministry of Finance.

For this Third Session of the Fifty-Second National Legislature, we will be submitting for your enactment several proposed legislation intended to consolidate the progress and meet the challenges under our four pillars of nation building. These will include: the revised National Defense Act; the Security Sector Reform Act; the Act to Amend Certain Sections of the Act Establishing the Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR); and an Act to Create and Establish the Liberia Airport Authority.

And, although it has emerged that our Petroleum Law does not require the ratification of Production Sharing Contracts, in as much as

we had submitted the first two for your approval, we will now also ask you to consider and ratify the oil production sharing contracts between our National Oil Company and other exploration companies including Repsol of Spain, Woodside of Australia, and Regal of the United Kingdom.

Additionally, we expect to submit for your ratification amendments to the Firestone, Liberia Agriculture Company, and other agriculture concessions agreements and concession agreements for the iron ore deposits in the Western Cluster and the Bong Mines operation. In this respect, Honourable Legislators, I am pleased to report that after a vigorous and professional exercise involving the work of seven Government entities, the Delta Mining Consolidated Ltd. of South Africa has won the bid for the Western Cluster with an indicated potential investment of \$1.6 billion. The process now moves to the next stage of validation that will undertake due diligence of all the major bidders to determine their capacity to make the stated investment in full and on time. The Inter-Ministerial Group has now started the process of bid evaluation for Bong Mines. In addition to this new development, we are pleased to note that during the past year, Arcelor Mittal increased its investment from \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion.

Mr. Speaker and Honourable Legislators,

Let me now report on the State of the Nation, the progress that we have made, and the challenges that we face under the four pillars of our development framework.

PEACE AND SECURITY

Under the peace and security pillar, within the context of our Security Sector Reform, 1,100 men and women have completed the basic training to become the first core elements of our target of 2,000 persons for the new Armed Forces of Liberia. We have nominated to the Honourable Senate sixteen persons to be commissioned as 2nd Lieutenants, the first group of officers for the army. We believe, Honourable Legislators, that you will be proud of these gallant men and

women when they are presented to us on February 11, Armed Forces Day.

The training of the army will continue for the remaining 900, and officer training will continue with key support from the United States supplemented in specific areas by support from our sisterly Republics of Nigeria, Ghana, and Benin. Additionally, today 200 of our soldiers are in training at the Nigeria Command Army Staff College.

In this connection, I would like to pay particular tribute to our sister state Nigeria, which has provided the leadership for our army until our own new men and women are prepared. We commend General Luka Yusuf, who served as the first Army Chief of Staff and who has returned home to take up the position of Chief of Army Staff; and we commend equally his successor, General Suraj Abdurrahman.

Honourable Legislators,

The peace keeping force of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), with a current strength of 14,700, continues to carry the prime responsibility for the protection of our people and the integrity of our geographic borders. The draw down plan for the force has been formulated, consistent with the readiness of our own forces with allowance for flexibility to meet any changes in our national situation.

Under the Security Sector Reform, UNMIL provides support for the restructuring and training of the national police force. To date, ninety-eight percent of the 3,500 police officers have completed training at the police academy and are gradually deployed in each of the fifteen counties. Seven of the twenty-two commissioned officers are female. However, in order to ensure that the new democracy is sustained and that the Nation is privileged with men and women of integrity in the system, the vetting process is continuing, and those found not to be fit for the task or who show disrespect for the law and for the citizenry will continue to be weeded out of the system.

Honourable Legislators,

As you will note in the draft Security Sector

Act, we propose to establish a rapid reaction force of 500 whose purpose and function may not be fully understood by all. This force, equal to the gendarmes in the Francophone system, or the SWAT team in the United States system, is not like the sub-judicial force of previous years. It will be part of the national police force, subject to the authority of the police and justice leadership and to oversight responsibility by the Police Civilian Board that will also be established by the act. We will continue to build a police force that is responsible to citizen's needs, that acts with high professional standards and ethical conduct, and regains the confidence of our people.

Also to be trained are 200 officers of the National Security Agency and 2,000 officers of the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization (BIN) agencies, which form important elements of the security sector architecture that is proposed by the act.

During the period under review, the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization admitted 238,105 aliens into the country, while 119 were refused admission for various reasons. Of the total number of aliens admitted, 62,383 were Nigerian nationals, followed by the United States at 14,782, and Chinese nationals at 13,895.

Three people submitted an application for naturalization as Liberian citizens, and 1,711 aliens applied for and were transferred from visitor to resident status. The issue of dual citizenship, wherein some Liberians hold foreign passports while at the same time claiming Liberian citizenship, continues to pose problems for the Bureau. There is a need to find a solution to this problem, which represents a potential issue as relates to Liberians in the Diaspora.

Honourable Legislators,

We are also concerned that during the year, a total of eighty-four fires were recorded affecting 1,571 persons and eighteen casualties, including in many instances very young children. Most of the fires were the result of the use of candles and other electricity substitutes. Although partners have been kind to donate a few fire trucks, I will ask your support through the budgetary process to respond more adequately to this need.

During the period, the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) arrested 179 drug offenders representing an increase of forty-four percent over the same period last year. Many of those arrested were foreigners, raising concern that there is a need for greater patrol by the immigration and customs, and by the Liberian National Police. The DEA also destroyed huge quantities of marijuana, cocaine, and heroin. Out of the 179 suspects forwarded to the magisterial courts during the period, only nine were convicted and sentenced to between three and nine months, a clear indication that we need a more effective response to this growing menace that threatens the future well-being of our children.

Honorable Speaker,

The increase in reported rape cases, armed robbery, murder, and other grave offenses has necessitated the establishment of a special prosecuting unit dedicated exclusively to gender violence and the establishment of a Special Mobile Prosecuting Team with the ability to be deployed in any part of the country. The effect of this unit is expected to be felt soon within the entire Nation.

Finally, there is the Special Security Service that we propose to rename the Executive Protection Service, thereby sending a clear signal as to their limited role and a clear departure from the reputation and malpractices of the past. We will ask for understanding and indulgence of all as the size of the force is scaled down, consistent with its intended purpose, while the police take over some of the services that the Executive Protection Service now provide.

Honourable Legislators,

We are conscious of the fact that the security of our people goes beyond the protection from physical violence. We know that we must continue to find effective responses to those things that endanger their basic survival – long periods in custody; inadequate correction facilities; death and property destruction from fires, land, and property rights; theft, rape, and other forms of gender-based violence; ethnic tensions; reintegration of ex-gunmen and ex-combatants; repatriation and reintegration of refugees; and drug abuse.

ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

Mr. Speaker,

Mr. President Pro-Tempore:

The overarching objective of our economic revitalization program is to build an open, strong, competitive economy with strong international trade linkages and significant foreign investment. The first element of our strategy for achieving these objectives over the next few years is to restore production in our traditional natural resource activities, rebuild infrastructure, and set the stage for economic diversification by adding value to our primary products.

Experts have said that every successful growth effort in agriculture is four times more effective in reducing poverty than any similar effort elsewhere. Thus, during the year, a strengthened Agriculture Ministry provided stimuli to small-holder production by distributing rice seeds and tools to some 3,000 farmers and established seed multiplication sites, by renovating fish hatcheries, and by training hundreds of farmers and youth in integrated farming production. It may be recalled that satisfying results of this effort were displayed in November at the Agriculture Fair in Tubmanburg. The reactivation of the Central Agriculture Research Institute (CARI) at Suakoko and the establishment of an Agriculture Research Center will provide the testing and introduction of improved varieties of our basic staples. The ongoing collection of data on agriculture and related conditions will enhance the completion of our agriculture policy framework and the National Food Security and Nutrition Strategy and Action Plan.

In the Agriculture Concessions Sector, we are pleased to report the conclusion of renegotiations of the Firestone Plantations Concession Agreement, which includes aggregate investment on the order of \$130 million in replanting and the establishment of a rubber wood processing plant. This model agreement subjects Firestone, for the first time in its eighty-two year history of operation, to the payment of taxes of general application; to a five year plan of providing better living conditions for workers and employees; and to limited

land holdings. This framework will guide renegotiations of Concession Agreements for the Liberian Agriculture Company (LAC) in Grand Bassa, the Cavalla Rubber Plantation in Maryland, the Guthrie Rubber Plantation in Bomi and Capemount counties, and the Cocopa Rubber Plantation in Nimba, all of which are in various stages of reactivation. The Firestone model will also serve as a framework for the negotiation of agreements for the reactivation of Oil Palm operations, such as the Equatorial Biofuels/LIBINCO in Grand Bassa, the Butaw plantation in Sinoe, and the Decoris plantation in Maryland.

We are also pleased to note that a Liberian owned plantation, Morris American Rubber, is now poised to become the first operation to add significant value to their natural rubber production through a \$2.5 million industrial plant that has been established with the support of our own bank, the Liberian Bank for Development and Investment (LBDI).

To ensure that our rubber industry is revived to benefit from projected long term favorable world market prices, we must quickly implement the tax that will establish the Rubber Development Fund to support loans and credits through the banking system to small- and medium-sized Liberian owned plantations.

Although still small in its contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), production of coffee and cocoa are on the rebound and are expected to increase significantly over the medium term. Other non-traditional crops are being explored with the particular objective of identifying products that can be exported to the United States under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), for which Liberia is now eligible.

In the mining sector, the world's largest steel company, ArcelorMittal, has started the reactivation of operations at Mount Nimba in Yekepa and in Buchanan. Similarly, operations at the Western Cluster deposits, comprised of the old National Iron Ore Company and the Liberian Mining Company in Bomi and the Bea Mountains in Gbarpolu, are expected to start this year. The same can be said for activities at Bong Mines once the ongoing bidding process has concluded.

We will continue to explore the potential for investment in other mining activities such as the Wologisi deposit in Lofa County; and we intend to convert from Exploration to Mineral Development Agreement several of the exploratory operations in gold, diamond, and other minerals undertaken by some twenty-six entities throughout the country.

We are also pleased to report that following the lifting of UN sanctions on diamond exports last year, Liberia gained full membership into the Kimberly Process Certification Scheme. In response, we exported diamonds with an assessed value of \$1.8 million while export of gold was valued at \$4.6 million.

Honourable Legislators,

Forestry operations will commence in March of this year under the new Forestry Law made operational last year. Approximately 275,000 hectares are targeted for production this year and 500,000 hectares next year. These operations will aim at Liberian participation and concentration in those areas that are readily accessible. Over a three year period, we expect to exploit a target of 2.9 million hectares of forest for commercial and community activity with 1.2 million hectares allocated for conservation and tourism. The chain of custody process to be managed by the reputable Société Generale de Surveillance (SGS) will ensure that unlike the past, resources from this sector are carefully monitored, fully accounted for, sourced from legal origin, and used solely for national development.

In the area of commerce, total trade climbed to more than three times its post-conflict average with a value of over \$676 million. Exports, essentially rubber, increased significantly during the past year, but were far outpaced by imports reflecting a general expansion in the economy and increased purchasing power for consumer goods. Increases in the price of strategic commodities such as rice and cement continue to pose a challenge. The Ministry of Commerce can quantify those causes that relate to higher world market prices and freight costs and to illegal movement across borders to fetch higher

prices in our neighboring countries. For example, world prices of rice and grain are at all-time highs, so consumers all around the world are feeling the pinch. More difficult to pin down, however, are the increased costs relating to profiteering, and to the poor condition, inefficiencies, and corruption at the port and other ministries and agencies involved in the processing and monitoring of trade transactions.

We have thus appointed a five person committee, headed by Dr. Togbah Nah Tipoteh and comprised of tenured economists including Mr. Paul Jeffy, Ms. Amelia Ward, and Mr. Emmanuel Gardiner, to examine the causes of these increases and make recommendations to Government on the corrective measures to be taken. In the meanwhile and until their report is made, I propose to suspend for the remainder of the fiscal year the \$2 tax on a bag of rice. This will be done on an interim basis by executive order for immediate effect until you have had time to consider the overall tax reform proposal that is being finalized for submission to you.

This suspension relates to a decrease of \$3.6 million in revenues and will thus have to be included as an offsetting expenditure in the Supplemental Budget that will be submitted to you.

We are pleased to note that business registration grew by twenty-nine percent, of which thirteen percent were non-Liberians. The public-private partnership initiative, promoted by the National Investment Commission (NIC) and the facilities established at local commercial banks, will strengthen our effort to support Liberian entities and entrepreneurship.

Honourable Legislators,

In maintaining the rule of law and the application of international labor standards to regulate decent work and the guarantee of fundamental rights, the Ministry of Labour constituted the National Minimum Wage Board in keeping with Section 501 of the Labour Practices Law of Liberia; initiated the amendment of Section 1508 of the Liberian Labour Law, which brings relief to ordinary workers; established the National

Child Labor Commission; and established a National Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force.

The long standing leadership dispute within the Firestone Agriculture Workers' Union of Liberia (FAWUL) was addressed by the holding of free and fair elections, the first to be conducted in a transparent manner with massive participation of workers. The Supreme Court ruling in the contested election has brought a certain amount of tranquility to the plantation.

During the year, the Ministry's Liberia Emergency Employment Program (LEEP) and Liberia Employment Action Program (LEAP) continued to address the employment needs of thousands of unemployed youth, creating a total of 71,349 short-term emergency jobs around the country. A total of 1,944 individuals were trained in various vocations, of which 497 gained sustainable employment.

Honourable Legislators,

The year 2007 witnessed a significant increase in the number of investors seeking investment initiatives through the National Investment Commission. This translated into aggregate investment of \$97 million, including \$30 million in support of Liberian businesses from the noted African American Robert Johnson and \$1.5 million from the African Development Foundation. The Buchanan Renewable Energies project, with support from a Canadian investment fund, is well on the way with an investment of \$10 million in the processing of old rubber trees for export and as a potential energy source at home. Over 2,000 jobs are expected to result from these National Investment Commission initiatives.

We are now exploring with private investors from the People's Republic of China the building of an Economic Free Zone in Buchanan, as Liberia has been selected as one of the three African countries for this activity. If materialized, the economy of Liberia will experience a significant boost in terms of industry, exports, and employment.

Honourable Legislators,

Over the years we created twenty public corporations or state owned enterprises to cover a

range of services to the public. Several of these entities have become moribund over time and others have become a liability to Government. Our policy objective in this regard is to dissolve those entities that are no longer operational or relevant, and we ask your cooperation in repealing the concerned statutes when submitted to you. Other entities of operational significance and/or potential competitiveness will be supported in their effort to add value to their assets until such time that they can be privatized either in part or whole through equity infusion, management contracts, or use of the Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) model.

Notable among the viable entities are the Liberia Petroleum Refining Company (LPRC). Perhaps based on a misunderstanding of the complex issues involved, LPRC has received a lot of criticism over its operations, but let us be mindful that we inherited an LPRC with a cash reserve of only \$50,000. In two years, this corporation has paid off \$2 million in debt, disbursed \$1.5 million to 400 redundant employees, made dividend payments of \$500,000 to Government, and presently has a cash reserve of over \$7 million that will be used to finance long overdue repairs to its facilities. The same potential exists for the National Port Authority, which is still struggling with a bloated staff and widespread financial malpractices.

Relatedly, we are pleased to report major improvement in the performance of the National Social Security and Welfare Corporation, which recorded 2,660 new entrants reflecting an increase to 65,883 in the total number of people covered. Contributions collected totaled approximately \$8.8 million from which benefits of \$1.1 million were paid to some 3,211 insured people and their dependents. We expect in the near future to transfer the management of the Government pension program to NASSCORP.

Mr. Speaker,

We know that a vibrant financial sector is essential to economic growth and social progress. Hence, we are pleased to report that our key financial institution, the Central Bank of Liberia, is now in a healthy, if still undercapitalized

position, and is leading the Government's financial sector reform strategy with a focus on promoting competition and efficiency in the system to allow more effective support of the private sector. The Capital Adequacy Ratio of the banking system improved from twelve percent in 2006 to twenty-three percent last year. Commercial banking activities also expanded with an increase of thirty-four percent to \$158 million in total bank deposits. This provided the basis for a thirty-five percent expansion of credit to the private sector, a significant proportion of which was directed to small- and medium-sized entities. Banking licenses were granted to two new entities that will join the existing five commercial banks that have established thirteen branches in four counties—Margibi, Bong, Nimba, and Grand Bassa. The Central Bank, with technical support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), has strengthened its surveillance of the commercial banks and its 118 licensed foreign exchange bureaus. Effort is now underway to commence the study of the insurance sector, which comprises twenty companies—many of which lack the capital and the capacity to provide such services.

Although this provides limited means to use instruments that affect growth and exchange rates, Liberia in the past year and for the next few years will continue the dual currency regime of the U.S. and Liberian dollars.

Mr. Speaker and Mr. President Pro Tempore,

Long overdue debts to the World Bank were cleared through an exceptional grant of \$421 million in early December of last year. The African Development Bank also cleared Liberia's debts of \$250 million on December 18, 2007. In other words, more than \$670 million in debt has been wiped off the books. This is the first time in twenty years that Liberia has been in good standing with these two venerable institutions.

Additionally, in November of 2007, the IMF Board agreed on a financing arrangement that ultimately will allow the IMF to fully forgive Liberia's debts of \$920 million. In the coming weeks, this arrangement will be finalized and thereby return Liberia to good standing at the

IMF. At that time, Liberia will reach its decision point under the Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) Program, after which we will not be required to make most of the debt service payments falling due to major creditors. We will then work with bilateral and commercial creditors for a substantial write-down of remaining debts. This debt relief road is long and difficult, as full and irrevocable debt forgiveness from the IMF and other creditors will not occur until mid-to-late 2009 at the earliest. In the meantime, this will allow us to keep our debt service payments to the bare minimum. We should all be proud of the success to date under a process that will restore Liberia's creditworthiness after two decades of debt accumulation and creditor sanctions.

Honourable Legislators, our revenue target for the calendar year, January 1 through December 31, 2007, was \$152.5 million. Actual collection for the eleven months covering January 1 through November 30, 2007, was \$163.3 million, exceeding annual projection by 7.08 percent. When annualized, revenue is expected to amount to approximately \$178 million, which represents \$25.6 million or 16.81 percent over performance vis-à-vis projections. This includes revenues of approximately \$13.5 million from our maritime program compared with \$12.9 million in 2006.

Expenditure for the period January 1 through December 31, 2007, totaled \$166.92 million or 2.3 percent below projections, reflecting continuing challenges of operational planning and procurement stemming from severe capacity constraints. Nonetheless, expenditure for the 2007 calendar year was about \$65 million above the total in the previous year. The excess revenue could form the basis of a supplemental budget that would be submitted for your consideration and approval.

GOVERNANCE AND THE RULE OF LAW

Mr. Speaker;
Mr. President Pro-Tempore;
Honourable Legislators:

The Government's overall goal with respect to the rule of law is to build strong and effective institutions that support democratic governance, justice, and human security.

Although some improvements can be noted, we must admit that we have fallen far short in the achievement of our goals under this pillar. Public sector reform, which aims to improve the effectiveness and performance of the public service, is still hampered by major capacity gaps and low compensation levels. Special programs supported by external partners and special allowances for strategic positions have tried to address this problem in an ad hoc manner. The ongoing civil service restructuring plan and strategy, which is to go into effect in the next fiscal year, aims to build a merit-based, professional system of recruitment, compensation, performance, and retirement. We wish to base our civil service upon a depoliticized system and match the size of the Government with our resource capacity.

Toward this end, during the year the Civil Service Agency (CSA) and the Ministry of Finance continued to eliminate ghost names from the payroll, bringing to 12,300 the number of names purged and implying savings of nearly \$4 million. This has also reduced the Civil Service active duty workforce from 43,000 to 33,000. The introduction of a biometric identification system to be installed in the next fiscal year will substantially improve the security and reliability of our Human Resource Management Information System, which will eliminate the ghosts. The agency also initiated a Rural Civil Service Outreach Program designed to bring civil services to those deployed in the rural areas.

In building a system of national integrity, we have also fallen far short of our stated goals. Implementation of the Public Procurement Concession Act and the GEMAP Program have helped to strengthen our effort, but the General Auditing Commission continues to be bogged down by public squabbles. We are pleased to note that in the most recent edition of the World Bank Institutes' Worldwide Governance Indicators, Liberia scored the second largest improvement in the 2006 index of control of

corruption. Yet, we do not fool ourselves, for we know, despite this improvement, that corruption is alive and well.

Thus, our efforts will continue to implement the Anti-Corruption Policy and Strategy that has been adopted, and we will ensure accountability of the resources generated in our mining and forestry sector through the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) that we have joined. We are pleased to note in this regard that the multi-stakeholders group of the EITI, which includes four members of civil society, is established and working well.

We ask you, Honourable Legislators, to assist us by passing the act providing for a Code of Conduct by public officials and the Anti-Corruption Commission Act. We are also preparing a draft act to amend certain provisions of the applicable penal law to establish as criminal offenses all acts of corruption and to enact a Freedom of Information Law and Whistleblower Statute. At the same time, a stronger program of sensitization and public awareness on the ill effects of corruption will need to be undertaken.

Honourable Legislators,

Our commitment to transparency and accountability is demonstrated by several official documents published and made public throughout the past year. In addition, the Minister of Information, Cultural Affairs, and Tourism kept an open line of communication with the media and the public. The first draft of an Information and Communications Technology Policy has been formulated following the first ever ICT Conference in Liberia in April last year. Moreover, the Executive Mansion launched its website in May and has received over 5.7 million hits.

Yet, we know that we still have difficulties communicating to the public the progress and prospects of our development agenda. The twenty-four hour broadcasting service launched by the Liberian Broadcasting System will help with the establishment of an FM service in all fifteen counties.

On the other hand, respect for our cultural heritage grows as we continue to promote the

values of our cultural troops and seek to encourage the talents of our young citizens through programs such as the “Star is Born.” Although the number of facilities that serve tourists continues to grow, now registered at 150 accommodations, 75 restaurants, and 15 beaches, our vast tourist potential, which rests outside of Montserrado County, remains untapped due to the poor state of our infrastructure.

Honourable Legislators,

We are pleased to note that the National Election Commission was active during the course of the year, successfully completing bi-elections in Nimba, Grand Bassa, and Gbarpolu Counties and implying aggregate budgetary allocation of \$850,000. The Commission is also playing a role in the mapping exercise to resolve boundary issues and establish a realistic number of administrative sub-divisions for election purposes.

Honourable Legislators, if we are to achieve our objectives in the areas of governance and the rule of law, other measures will need to be taken. The judiciary is improving but will need to undertake stronger measures to serve as a fair and impartial arbiter of disputes and as a protector or guarantor of the fundamental rights of the people. Our prosecution system, our court and correction systems, and our compensation and benefits system to ensure independence and enhance integrity will require more effective response; even as we await action on the part of the Governance Commission to provide the recommendations that will provide the framework for the drafting of legislations to establish a Law Reform and Land Reform Commission. Additional measures to be undertaken on enforcement will include a decentralization of the national governance system, a strengthening of civil society participation in governance, and continuing efforts to address gender inequities.

In this regard, I wish to report that in efforts to improve women empowerment, the Ministry of Gender launched a program under which 2,500 women received training opportunities in six centers. Representatives of six women’s organizations received training in leadership and home

economics, and thirty benefited from training in agro-processing and microenterprise management.

A special unit at the Ministry of Gender was established to address the increasing incidence of gender based violence. Honourable Legislators, we must all be alarmed by the incidences of rape, which continue at an alarming rate to involve children of young age. Ongoing investigations by the Ministry of Justice in recent cases seem clear in the findings that these young women suffered and died from sexual assault. We must prosecute all such criminals without mercy. We must name and shame them. We must help parents to expose them. We ask the Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL) to work with us in this regard.

Honourable Legislators,

It is perhaps time to revisit the proposal for action or legislation that will increase women’s representation throughout Government, recognizing that the current fourteen percent is far below the thirty percent required by the UN resolution to which we are a signatory. I will work with the women’s caucus of your Honourable Body toward the achievement of this goal.

Mr. Speaker and Honourable Legislators,

Some forty-five percent of our population falls below the age of fifteen, meaning that we must adopt policies and measures that will respond to the challenges of our youthful Nation, many of whom are still scarred by the wounds of conflict. A National Youth Policy, which was formulated essentially by the youth organizations themselves, will go into effect this year. Our sports program, which covers a large number of youth, is now being revived with completion of the Samuel Kanyon Doe Complex and continuation of the County Sports Meet, which is ongoing. With support from one of our private partners, some six playgrounds are under construction in four counties—Maryland, Grand Gedeh, Bong, and Nimba. On the disappointing side is the performance of our national team, the Lone Star, which has failed to justify the budgetary support provided as an initial impetus for improvement in performance.

In contrast, our own Liberian Amputee Football team, established only last year, was the only African team to reach the World Cup Amputee Football Championship and to win the award of best goalkeeper of the tournament. We applaud our amputee stars as this is a clear indication of some measure of success under our National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration (NCDDRR) Program. In respect of this program, we are pleased to note that the last and final phase to cater to a case load of 8,789 former fighters has begun with support from the Government of Norway. This will bring to some 112,000 the number of ex-combatants so served.

Honourable Legislators,

As we move our country out of a period of more than twenty-five years of conflict and upheaval into one of peace, stability, and reconstruction, it is perhaps timely that we begin to think about possible changes in our Constitution so as to bring it more in line with modern practices of governance.

Our original Constitution of 1847 and the revised Constitution of 1986 have undergone several changes, and through these changes major political and social milestones have been achieved. But, there is still room for improvement and the need for revisions, especially so since the last constitutional changes of 1986 may have been influenced by an anxiety and haste to return the country to civilian rule.

Among some of the possible issues for consideration are land reform, the election of superintendents, mayors, and other county officials, as well as the tenure of the Offices of the President and Vice President and the members of the national legislature.

It is important, however, that we do not approach the reform of this sacred instrument on an ad hoc basis or to achieve short term political goals. Rather, the Governance Commission should take a detailed and comprehensive look at all the provisions and, in consultation with a wide cross section of our people, undertake the process that will lead to recommendations to be submitted

to your Honourable Body for consideration and onward submission to the people of Liberia through a constitutional referendum. It is my hope that all this can be accomplished over the next two years, at the most.

REHABILITATION, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND DELIVERING BASIC SERVICES

Mr. Speaker and Honourable Legislators, Upon our assumption of these high offices in January 2006, the infrastructure inherited was in a state of total disrepair. Roads, electricity, water and sanitation systems, schools, and health care facilities were almost all destroyed or in need of repairs. Our capital city lacked electricity and pipe borne water for some fourteen years. Of the total road network of 6,162 miles, only 456 miles notionally paved, the 1,500 miles of feeder roads were largely back to bush, and public works equipment capacity had reduced from 270 to 35 pieces of equipment. It has taken some time to mobilize the resources for these high capital cost rehabilitations, but we are now firmly on the path to do so.

During the past year, we finalized contracts or agreements that will repair major roads throughout the country. With support from the World Bank, work has started on the loop from the Freeport through Tubman Boulevard to ELWA junction, from the Freeport through Somalia Drive to ELWA junction, and from the ELWA junction through Robertsfield to Buchanan. Several streets in Monrovia will be repaired, as will the road from the Freeport to the St. Paul River Bridge. The Jallah Town Road, representing a learning experience for our own engineers and workers, will be corrected and finalized. Ongoing work on the Zorzor-Voinjama-Foya axis will continue with work on the Gbarnga-Zorzor starting soon. Work on the Gbarnga-Ganta-Tappita-Zwedru and the Zwedru-Fishtown are also starting and on the Fishtown-Barclayville as well. With exceptional support from the African Development Bank, this year we look forward to starting on the Plebo-Harper segments, and

support from ArcelorMittal will commence paving of the Ganta Yekepa Road this dry season.

The reconstruction of the Tubmanburg-Bopolu Road is largely completed, and the design of the Bopolu Belle Yalla Road is underway. Work on the Todee Road is about to start with the Medina-Robertsport Road under design.

We also have under reconstruction some 25.5 miles of community roads in the greater Monrovia area and 923 miles of farm to market and rural roads under construction throughout the country by our regional public works engineering teams with the support of the engineering battalions of the UN Peacekeeping Force.

When the ongoing design of the fallen Vai Town Bridge is concluded in March, work will start on construction of a new bridge. We will ask for your support through legislation or otherwise to clear all the waterfront properties of the Mesurado River, thereby preventing this river from becoming an open sewer within the city.

Honourable Legislators, in the past year we increased the generation of electricity to a total of 4.6 megawatts, provided through support of our partners from the European Union, the United States, and the Libyan Government. This has enabled us to provide supply to an increased number of users in the Congotown and Paynesville areas. By the end of April, we should add another seven megawatts to supply the majority of users in central Monrovia and in Sinkor. Various alternative sources of power are under study including the ongoing feasibility study of the Mt. Coffee Hydroelectrical Plant that will significantly enhance our power generating capacity. At the same time, we have joined the West African Power Pool System, which in two years will provide electricity to eighteen of our rural communities along the Cote d'Ivoire border.

Although the details have yet to be disclosed, we are excited about the potential of power provided through the biomass of our old rubber trees, and we welcome one of our foundation partners who arrive in the country today to promote this potential.

Honourable Legislators, during the year, water supply to the Greater Monrovia area tripled to three million gallons daily with access to safe delivery water increased from seventeen percent to twenty-five percent of the population. Access to adequate sanitation facilities also increased from seven percent to fifteen percent of the population.

With support from the World Bank, we expect over a two year period to achieve total rehabilitation of the White Plains facilities and the distribution and sewage system to bring full service to people in Monrovia and its environs. There are also plans to extend the water system to Robertsport, Voinjama, Greenville, Buchanan, Kakata, and Zwedru, with other cities to follow. Relatedly, hundreds of boreholes and wells, 1,000 of which were constructed in the last year, provide clean drinking water to communities in the fifteen counties and in Monrovia and its environs as well.

Mr. Speaker,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

As we are all aware, education is the foundation of development, as no nation can achieve the desired socioeconomic progress in the absence of a vibrant, productive education and training system. You will, therefore, understand the high priority of education in our current challenge of national reconstruction, recovery, and renewal.

The challenges to Liberian education are enormous. There are insufficient numbers of schools to accommodate the Nation's growing school-age population. The quality of available instructional programs is not the best for the training of our Nation's youths and future leaders. The majority of our qualified teachers have no professional background, and the salaries and incentives offered bring little attraction for recruitment and retention of teachers in the profession. It goes without saying that our current commanding priority is to expand access to educational opportunities so that no child is deprived of the right to education. We must also improve the quality and relevance of instructional programs so that learning experiences appropriately address the needs of the society and the individual

learners. To achieve this goal, we must adequately train our teachers and offer salaries and incentives that will enhance motivation and retention for the good of the profession.

We must also address the malpractices and acts of irregularities that tend to undermine the integrity and credibility of our national system. Thus, during the year in review, we were forced to cancel and re-run the West African Examination Council (WAEC) exams. In addition, based upon a survey by the National Commission on Higher Education, we have started the process that will lead to closure of many of the thirty substandard universities that lack the required minimum capacity to operate as tertiary institutions.

We know that there is no quick fix in addressing our education challenges. Nevertheless, I am pleased to report that significant progress has been made. During the year in review, a total of thirty primary schools were renovated and made operational while forty-three new schools were constructed nationwide.

The Free and Compulsory Primary Education Policy that we implemented is making the desired impact. As you know, under this policy we abolished all fees in the public primary schools and committed Government to pay the fees for the West African Examinations for all sixth graders in these primary schools. As a result, enrollment in public primary schools increased from 597,316 in the 2005-2006 academic year to 1,087,257 in 2007-2008, representing an impressive eighty-two percent increase nationwide.

With support of USAID and in collaboration with other development partners, a major initiative, the Liberia Teacher Training Program (LTTP), was launched. New competencies and standards for Liberian teachers have been developed; and the three Rural Teachers Training Institutions at Kakata in Margibi, Zorzor in Lofa, and Webbo in River Gee Counties are currently undergoing major rehabilitation with plans to begin regular teacher training activities as of September this year.

It is important to note also that despite the current budgetary constraints, Government continues to provide scholarship assistance to needy students. During the year in review, a total of

1,930 students benefited from scholarships costing a little over \$284,000 to study at local secondary and higher educational institutions. Eleven students completed their respective courses of study and returned to the country, while 150 are pursuing studies in various countries, including Morocco, China, Egypt, Russia, and the United States.

In recognition of the important contribution of private institutions towards meeting the educational needs of our country, we reactivated the granting of subsidies to private institutions for a total of \$500,000. We also applaud the support given to our educational system by several of our partnership churches, including the Episcopal, United Methodist, Baptist, and African Methodist. The reopening of the American International School provides an additional facility for young Liberians and non-Liberians as well, and the expected return of the Peace Corps in a few months will enhance our teacher training effort.

Although the size and focus have yet to be decided, the inclusion of Liberia in U.S. President Bush's Five African Nation Special Education Initiative will provide a major boost to our education system improvement.

Several private initiatives have supplemented our efforts. The Liberia Education Trust, which aims to renovate or build fifty schools, train 500 teachers, and provide 5,000 scholarships to girls, has mobilized close to \$2 million that has provided 1,300 scholarships to girls and supported literacy training for 1,200 of our market women in seven counties. A total of eighteen of the fifty targeted schools have been built or are under construction in Montserrado, Bong, Grand Gedeh, River Gee, Maryland, Grand Kru, Rivercess, Nimba, and Margibi Counties, using the exceptional methodology of the World Bank supported Liberian Agency for Community Empowerment (LACE).

The U.S. based Children's Defense Fund will provide fifty scholarships to young women over a three year period for graduate studies in U.S. universities. In similar vein, we have been successful in placing fifteen students in graduate programs through scholarships provided by universities. In addition, the Liberia Renaissance

Education Complex (LREC), now under construction on the Robertsfield Highway, will provide quality training for several boarding students, and the Rafiki Project on the Monrovia-Schiefflin-Marshall Road supported by the Episcopal Church will support many orphans to become well educated youth ready to enter professional work or training.

In recognition of the important role of education, we have provided a significantly higher level of support to the University of Liberia. The subsidy of approximately \$2.3 million approved by you represents fifty-six percent of the University's balanced budget of approximately \$3.7 million, which enables the institution to serve the needs of 15,616 undergraduates in six colleges and 673 students in three graduate and three professional schools. About twenty-five percent of the University's total enrollment is females. A standing faculty of 347, including eighteen volunteers from the UN system, represents a faculty student ratio of 1 to 44.

The University is now arrears free on account of the \$380,000 in grants that paid faculty salary arrears for 2001-2003. We also provided \$350,000 to procure six new buses to facilitate the transportation of commuting students and facilities between the main Fendall campus. Through the budget of the Ministry of State, we repaired a building and restored water and electricity to the Dogliotti College of Medicine. During the year, the University concluded agreement with the United States Government for rental of the Greystone property that has provided \$2.3 million for an Endowment Fund, which is managed by trustees in the United States. Perhaps of more consequence to the quality of instruction is the restoration of facilities at the Fendall campus; work on dormitories and teachers' housing are now underway through a commitment of some \$20 million equivalent by the Chinese Government. Additional support from the United States will be directed at the renovation of a few of the campus' academic buildings.

We must now make progress on a review and revision of the University Charter to bring it more in line with the structures and systems of universities on our continent. The same applies

to other institutions of higher learning that we plan to establish in other counties, the first of which is reactivation of the WVS Tubman Technical College in Maryland County.

Mr. Speaker and Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

As our country's health sector transits from emergency to development, our comprehensive National Health Policy and Strategic Plan aims at increasing the provision of the basic package of health services from the current forty percent to at least seventy percent of the population by the year 2010. In pursuit of this goal over the past year, some seventy-nine percent of pregnant women received antenatal care, 400,000 were treated with the malaria drug ACT, eighty-one percent of our children were immunized against polio, and 300,000 treated for TB. If we are to continue to make progress, some 550 health facilities will be required, as compared with the current 354 functional facilities, including the twenty-five renovated during the course of last year.

We are also pleased to report that the fifteen county hospitals are now functioning. Supported by our friends at the Swiss Development Cooperation, the newly renovated Telewoyan Hospital in Voinjama is set for dedication in March. In addition, an aggressive training program has resulted in the training of seven out of fifteen health teams and seventy-five social workers in child protection, family reunification techniques, and gender-based violence management, who will be assigned to health centers throughout the country.

The establishment of the National AIDS Commission, which I chair, will broaden our response to this global epidemic that today affects some five percent of the population, of which one percent or 1,245 persons have been treated at nineteen facilities.

Today, we have 122 doctors serving throughout the country, of which fifty-one are Liberians, against a need of 842. This implies just one doctor for every 28,000 Liberians, a major improvement in the past two years but a sharp decline since the 1980s. We also have 668 nurses serving our population against a need exceeding 4,000.

Honourable Legislators, I am pleased to report that the Nation's number one referral hospital, the John F. Kennedy Memorial Center, is now on a rebound under the leadership of able Liberians who responded to our call to return home and join their colleagues in improving the health care of our citizens.

The hospital admitted some 5,400 people, an increase of eighty-eight percent over the previous year. Outpatients served were approximately 18,000, representing a fifty-one percent increase. A large number of official and private partners are supporting the JFK Memorial, including the Japanese and Chinese Governments, the World Bank, the Ann Gloag Foundation, the Clinton Foundation, and a resident medical team from the Chinese Government. Visiting medical teams from at least five U.S. universities supplement the sacrificial service rendered by our own doctors and nurses. The Tubman National Institute for Medical Arts (TNIMA) is also on the rebound with scholarship support from our Government and facilities renovation support from the U.S. Government. Several other initiatives such as the Mercy Ships provide invaluable service to our population.

We are also pleased to report that perhaps for the first time in decades, a Liberian patient, Police Officer Nathaniel Lackey, who was seriously burned in 2005, was brought home from Ghana; still in serious condition, he is now steadily on the mend through plastic surgery done by our own Liberian, the Hospital's Chief Medical Officer. This is just one example of the talents of our people and the potential of our capacity and commitment.

Let me also add that today there are at least twenty-five partners, official and private, willing to work with the Ministry of Health and the JFK Hospital due to the commitment and efficiency of our national health team.

Honourable Legislators,

With support from the International Postal Union and diligent leadership, the restoration of postal services is notable. During the year, the ministry rehabilitated and operationalized fifteen

post offices in eight counties and restored a wide range of postal services in Monrovia. In the telecommunications sector, four major cellular phone companies provide competitive service that has resulted in significant cost decrease to the population. The establishment of the regulatory body, the Liberia Telecommunication Authority, has led to more benefits to Government from the sector, although this remains still far below international standards. Efforts are well advanced to operationalize the Liberia Telecommunications Corporation after agreement with the creditors on use of the modern equipment that has been lying idle for over four years.

Public transport remains a major challenge to the Government as bad roads and high fuel cost have constrained the expected private sector response. At the end of last year, the Government introduced a limited bus service through the Monrovia Transit Authority, and we expect to improve upon this during the year.

Our air transport system, with improvements at Roberts International Airport, is gaining momentum as we now have eight airlines serving international and regional routes. Approximately 93,567 passengers passed through the facilities, representing an increase of 2.5 percent over the previous year. Cargo registered at two million tons, representing an increase of over twelve percent from the previous year. Only five of the forty-three small domestic airfields have been partially repaired and are currently serviced only with UNMIL flights.

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) as the regulatory body became operational during the year. The CAA was successful in returning to Liberia the Flight Information Region (FIR), which was moved to Guinea during the years of conflict. The CAA has also been successful in signing an Open Skies Agreement with the United States and bilateral agreements with Belgium and Morocco.

As with everything else, the Government inherited public buildings that were damaged or in a serious state of despair. Although with support of our partners, in particular the United

States, we started the renovation of key buildings such as your own Capitol Building and the Temple of Justice; limited resources have led us to give low priority to others including the Executive Mansion. We are pleased, however, to have made the decision to close down and fence what was a deplorable Palm Grove Cemetery and to start the construction and renovation of markets throughout the country. We commend the World Bank and the African Women Development Fund (AWDF) for support of these initiatives. There is need to address this matter more effectively during the course of this year and to intensify efforts to reduce the shabbiness and filth in our capital city by promoting projects such as the Broad Street Beautification, which was undertaken last year by the Ministry of State.

Honourable Legislators, we are equally pleased to report that some thirty years after this program started, we conveyed property title deeds to 212 senior citizens and other occupants in the three housing estates—Stephen Tolbert in Gardnerville, E. Jonathan Goodridge in Barnesville, and New Georgia. Plans are under way to complete the same process for the Matadi Estates and to establish a land bank in the capital city of each county, which will provide the basis for the construction of houses and housing estates for our low and medium income citizens.

Mr. Speaker and Mr. President Pro-Tempore,

Our Nation is blessed with strong partners from all over the world. In our own region and continent, sisterly states and regional institutions have stood by us in international advocacy and in providing facilities for training and logistical support. Nigeria, Ghana, and ECOWAS are notable in this regard.

Our multilateral partners, especially the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the African Development Bank, have been the prime movers in relief of our staggering aggregate \$4.5 billion external debt. The European Union is an equally strong partner, but they have been unable to move from commitment to program formulation and disbursement. This is undermining the achievement targets

which we have set, particularly in the power sector. On the bilateral side, our key partner is the United States, joined by China, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Japan, and Switzerland. In addition to support for the UNMIL Peacekeeping Force by several of these partners, and with recognition to continuing shifting allocations, we can say that our country has benefited in the past two years with financial commitments on the order of an aggregate \$500 million equivalent. These commitments cover a wide range of sectors, with principal contributing partners being the United States, the World Bank, The European Union, China, and the wider UN system as a whole, but as earlier noted, they do not include the UNMIL peacekeeping operations that have in the recent past averaged almost \$700 million per year. More details of this will be reported to you subsequently.

Similarly, we continue to enjoy the confidence of non-official partners, which includes the Soros Foundation, the Open Society Initiative, the Clinton Foundation, the McCall MacBain Foundation, the Novo Foundation, the Right to Play, the Cashin Family Foundation, Humanity United, the Brenthurst Foundation, the Nike Foundation, Spread the Net, and the hundreds of individuals and organizations that support our national development endeavor. The Liberia Emergency Capacity Development Fund, the Scott Family Fellowship, and the Senior Executive Service provide important support for the enhancement of our national capacity. In addition, several Liberians and non-Liberians contribute books, medical and school supplies, toys, clothing, and other items. The progress throughout the country that results from this support is not recognized by many of our citizens who reside in Monrovia. We invite them to make visits to the counties to see the tremendous improvement that is taking place to the satisfaction of the majority of our citizens.

Honourable Members of the Legislature,

During the period under review, Liberia maintained very cordial, strong, and harmonious

relations with countries with which it has diplomatic relations and with all sub-regional, regional, and international organizations of which it is a member.

The United Nation's Family, under the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG), supported us in a wide range of our national endeavors, including the Security Sector Reform. As we welcome the new SRSG, Ambassador Ellen Loj, I wish to express thanks to Mr. Alan Doss, who served as Special Representative of the Secretary General for close to four years until his departure for another assignment in December of last year. There was no greater partner or person committed to Liberia than Mr. Doss.

There are currently seventeen diplomatic missions present in Monrovia, twenty-one Honorary Consulate Generals, and two Consulate Generals. Currently, Liberia maintains the same twenty-one diplomatic missions and two Consular Posts abroad.

During the year under review, we concluded plans to close three missions, recalled several nonperforming officers, and cancelled all Honorary Consulate appointments except those in special status such as our Maritime Program. We are now close to a resolution on the matter relating to our national passport and expect to cancel existing passports to be replaced by new passports that meet international standards. This should bring to an end the fraudulent production and sale of our passports in several foreign countries. In this regard, we wish to applaud the exceptional service and performance by the acting director and her assistants at the Bureau of Passports. She has won the hearts and praise of Liberian residents and those visiting home.

Honourable Legislators,

We have, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, initiated legal steps to reclaim properties that the Government lost in the years of civil strife due to malfeasance or lack of attention to accrued indebtedness on the part of the officials concerned. At the same time, we are actively engaged in efforts to properly assess and rationalize our properties abroad.

Mr. Speaker and Honourable Legislators,

Owing to Liberia's newly enhanced and very positive image abroad and its new stature as a responsible member of the comity of nations, five Heads of State and Government officials, as well as other important foreign dignitaries, visited Liberia during the period under review.

These included the President of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Hu Jintao; the then President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, President Olusegun Obasanjo; the President of the Republic of Benin, His Excellency Boni Yayi; President Ernest Bai Koroma of the sister Republic of Sierra Leone; and the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Angela Merkel. During these visits, joint communiqués were signed between Liberia and the respective countries, reiterating their commitment to strengthen bilateral relations and foster greater economic cooperation.

Other foreign high level personalities who visited Liberia were American Philanthropist George Soros and Queen Noor of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, American Entrepreneur Robert Johnson, and a ten person U.S. Congressional Delegation headed by Congresswoman Nita Lowey.

In response to invitations, I visited thirteen countries, six of which I participated in regional meetings, and the other seven were in response to invitations that gave me the opportunity to represent our country and to continue to present our vision for national renewal and to mobilize support for our development agenda. These included visits to our sisterly African countries of Guinea, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Burkina Faso. It also included visits to France, Germany, Belgium, Italy, Sweden, Israel, and Spain. I was also privileged for a third time to visit with United States President George W. Bush and Mrs. Bush and to be honored in October with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award of the United States. I am equally proud to have been honored with the Civil Rights Museum Award and the National Democratic Institute Harriman Award. Honorable Legislators, I thank the several of you

who joined me and helped to make these visits successful.

In our subregion, I continue to serve as the current Chair of the Mano River Union that we are still trying to reactivate by a reorganization of the Secretariat based in Freetown.

Honourable Legislators, during the period under review, over twenty-six former Government officials and permanent citizens were called home from this terrestrial to the celestial. Eminent among them were Hon. Angie Brooks Randolph, former Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Liberia and former President of the United Nations General Assembly; Hon. J. Rudolph Grimes, former Secretary of State; Hon. Gabriel Baccus Mathews, former Minister of Foreign Affairs; and the Right Rev. Dr. Augustine B. Marwih, former President of the Independent Churches of Africa.

Others included Cllr. Timothy Z. Swope, former Associate Justice, Ad-Hoc Supreme Court of Liberia; Hon. George Varney Freeman, former Director-General, Foreign Service Institute/Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Hon. Alfred John Gbarmie Sahn, Sr., former Member/Interim Legislative Assembly; Hon. Alfred Boima Curtis, Sr., former Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives; Hon. Rudolph Emmett Sherman, former Member of the Transitional Legislative Assembly, Hon. Charles Horatio Williams, Sr., former Senator; Hon. Tiahkwee Weah Johnson, former Ambassador to the Arab Republic of Egypt; and Hon. Flasher G. Chideryou, former Member of the House of Representatives.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Speaker;
Mr. President Pro-Tempore;
Honourable Members of the Legislature:
We are ever mindful that despite the progress recorded, our challenges are still enormous. We are equally aware that no matter what we achieve in growth and development, there will always be the tendency to judge the performance of Government by the current price of a bag of rice and the availability of jobs in the capital city.

We are also subject to short memory regarding the inherited level of institutional and moral decay.

Yet, acknowledging the time it takes, we must continue to meet the challenges of change. There is the challenge of national capacity, a clear indication of the loss of skills and commitment over the many years of institutional decline. This affects the implementation of our programs and the expansion of employment, even when financial resources are available. This challenge must be met through a combination of educational and training programs, a reordering of our civil service to a merit-based system, and continued progress in repatriating our talent that lie in the Diaspora.

There is the challenge of settlement of salary arrears to civil servants, retired police and security personnel, former legislators, and foreign service personnel, which accumulated over the past decade or more and is the source of continuing discontent that sometimes results in demonstrations and strike action.

The amount of public servants arrears inherited by this Government totaled about \$13.12 million, of which \$9.21 million has been paid. In the last year alone a total of \$5.24 million was paid. We have also started to settle the estimated \$32.1 million owed to our foreign missions and \$9.8 million owed to international organizations.

On the other hand, we are pleased to report that this Government is current in its salary obligations, except for those cases of disputes in payroll entitlement. We can also report improvements in our payments in the rural areas with the placement of paymasters in all fifteen counties. We know that more needs to be done to find a solution for civil servants in those areas unreachable by roads.

Honourable Legislators,

Consistent with our pledge of transparency and believing the evidence to be sufficiently strong to obtain convictions, we had no choice but to submit to the judicial process those people reported to have initiated plans to destabilize the nation. Yet, we are mindful of one of the key goals of our administration—the reconciliation of our people.

There is the challenge of reconciliation, one which we hope we will address through the ongoing process of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in a manner that is objective and neutral, that is honest and honourable, and that helps to unite rather than divide us in this process of contrition and forgiveness.

Today, we take that call one step further in announcing that the Government will no longer pursue the case against former Speaker George Koukou by filing in the court a *Nolle Prosequi* to enable him to be released from prison.

We now call upon Mr. Koukou to accept this pardon in the spirit in which it is given to pursue his future endeavors in a peaceful manner, refraining from unlawful and illegal acts. We call upon the people of the communities and of the County of Mr. Koukou to see this decision as a response to the many pleas submitted to me on his behalf. As other cases are more complex in evidence and at a more advanced stage in the courts, we will allow the judicial process to run its course.

There is the challenge of corruption, pervasive not only in Government but throughout the society. Corruption remains a serious concern for this Government. We had declared in our first pronouncement that it was our number one enemy. Our determination remains undaunted and our resolve unshaken. From the lowly to the highest functionaries of our society, if you indulge in corrupt acts, characterized as criminal under our statute, we will not hesitate to proffer charges against you for recovery of the public funds diverted and seek punishment for the commission of the offenses committed. While we cherish the need for reconciliation and unity, we are not prepared and should not allow this to deter us or provide an excuse for the financial impunity that existed in our society.

We admit that our justice system has not moved as speedily as anticipated, but this will not diminish or deter our determination and commitment to combating this cancer. We will still seek to revise the complicated procedural rules of the justice system so that these matters can be disposed of more expeditiously. We are improvising

our prosecution to be even more effective and will endeavor to do the same with our courts so that the disposition of cases will no longer be prolonged. We will strengthen the investigative process so that these cases and others will be more speedily investigated and submitted to court for disposition.

To date, seven persons stand indicted before our criminal court, the offenses committed by them being among the most prominent of financial impunity in our society. These cases are awaiting trial by our criminal court of competent jurisdiction, which will commence in its February term on the second Monday in February. We are determined to have these matters disposed of in that term of court, even as we are preparing to bring more indictments forward of both past and current officials of Government and those who are identified as having aided them in their deeds in violation of the public trust. We must emphasize that whether you are Liberians or foreigners, whether you are a receiver or giver of illegal gains, we will pursue the matters with the same vigor and resolve. Honourable Legislators, we therefore ask that you give the administration the teeth to deal with this evil by passing the relevant legislation that you have before you.

Mr. Vice President;
Mr. Speaker;
Mr. President Pro Tempore;
Honourable Legislators;
Compatriots:

The new Liberia that we desire aims to do away with divisions, marginalization, and exclusion of the past, replacing them with inclusiveness, equitable opportunities, and empowerment for all Liberians. We know that we cannot simply recreate the economic and political structures of the past. We know that we must respond to the deep wounds of the civil war while taking strong steps to establish the foundation for sustained stability and peace in the future. To do so, we must create much greater economic and political opportunities for all Liberians, not just for a small elite class. We must ensure that the benefits from growth and the provision of basic health

and education services are spread much more equitably throughout the population, particularly for women, youth, and people with disabilities.

Achieving these goals requires building new systems of Government, based on accountability, transparency, and the rule of law. There are three key pieces: strengthening the executive branch's core capabilities, building the capacity of the Judiciary and Legislature and enhancing their oversight role, and progressively decentralizing Government functions across the countries.

These goals are ambitious. They may not be fully accomplished in the three-year time frame of our development agenda. But we are determined to make significant progress and build on the strong start of the present. Doing so will require strong commitment of all Government actors, their partners, the private sector, and civil society organizations. Most importantly, it will require the continued efforts of the Liberian people, including those in the Diaspora.

Honourable Legislators, we have tried and we remain true to our commitment to be agents and instruments of change. This is not an easy road for there is enormous resistance to change and more intense resistance from those who have operated in a *laissez faire* environment for a long period of time. However, we will not take the easy way of going back to business as usual, which would lead to a reversal of the gains that we have made. We will subdue the catharsis inherent in change, in the processes of reordering and renewal. We will bear the cross and stay the course for that is the only way to depart from the past system of exclusion, marginalization, and economic criminalization.

Liberia's future lies not in the hands of our partners but primarily in the hands of the Liberian people and their Government. It is for us to make our destiny one of choice and not chance. It is for us to put the ugly past behind us through honesty in what we say and do, diligence in our endeavors, discipline, and hard work in our actions. I thank the thousands of Liberians who continue to work with us, who have the shared vision of a brighter tomorrow. I reach out to the political opposition, to Liberians in the

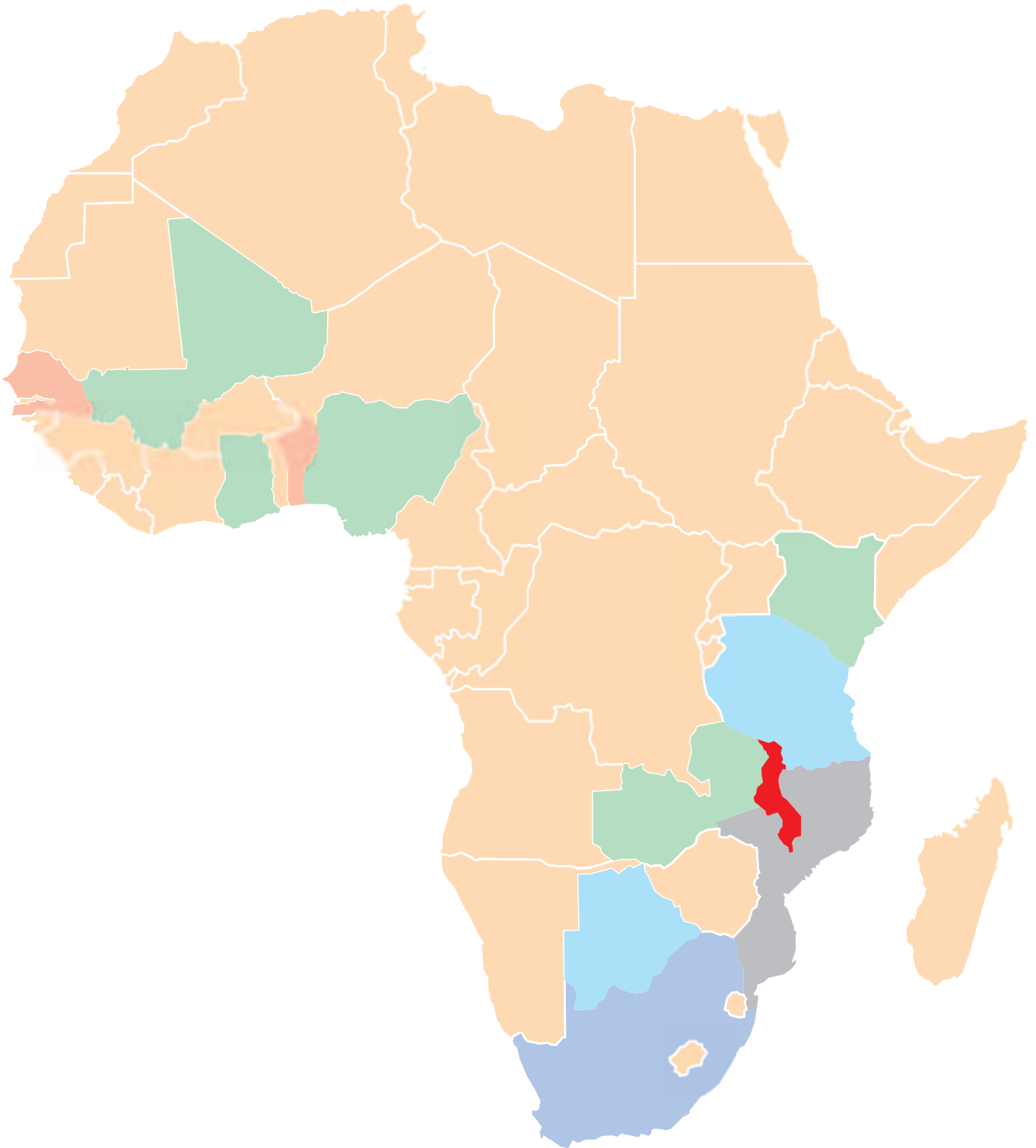
Diaspora, to the media, to every Liberian, in the spirit of forgiveness, pledging that I will do more in the spirit of reconciliation and national unity.

Please join me in rebuilding our institutions, in renewing our Nation, in making us proud to be Liberians.

Please join me also in preparing to welcome to our country in three weeks and for the first time in twenty years, a United States President, Mr. and Mrs. George Bush.

I thank you!

MALAWI



MALAWI



**Speech by His Excellency
Dr. Bingu Wa Mutharika,
President of the Republic of Malawi,
at the Sixty-third Session of the
United Nations General Assembly—
“The Global Food Crisis: A Collective
Challenge to the United Nations”
New York, USA
September 24, 2008**



Mr. President;
Secretary General; and Excellencies:
I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. Miguel d’Escoto Brockmann, on your election as President of the Sixty-Third Session of the General Assembly.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate your predecessor, Dr. Sergjan Kerim, for the wise leadership provided to the General Assembly during the past year.

I wish to start by stressing that the global food crisis is a collective challenge to the United Nations. Throughout the world, more people are unable to find enough food. There are increased cases of food riots. These, in turn, lead to political instability.

The food crisis has resulted from the failure of all nations to increase and sustain the production of staple food crops such as wheat, rice, maize, millet, potatoes, lentils, fish, meat, and poultry.

As leaders in the United Nations, we were aware of the signs leading towards global food shortage, widespread famines, and malnutrition. But, we decided to ignore them.

We, the world leaders, failed to acknowledge that the food crisis poses a new threat to the stability of the social framework and economic prosperity of all nations, especially the small nations.

Mr. President:

I submit to this August Assembly that the global food crisis is beginning to erode, and even negate the gains in national and global economic growth and trade that were manifested in many developed and developing countries. If these negative trends are not addressed effectively,

there will be growing conflicts within some nations and among nations as the scramble for food to feed the people intensifies.

Several factors have contributed to the global food crisis, but I will mention only a few.

Firstly, during the past two decades, food production in many countries has been affected by persistent severe climate changes such as cyclones, hurricanes, typhoons, floods, droughts, rising sea levels, and desertification. Yet, these climate changes do reduce productivity in agriculture and food security.

The high dependence on rain-fed agriculture, especially in developing Sub-Saharan countries, has also placed such nations at the mercy of the vagaries of nature.

It is a matter of great concern that global responses to these problems have been in the form of world conferences, seminars, and workshops on climate change. But not much has come out by way of concrete global action.

Secondly, agriculture and food production have been given low priority by international development institutions in their allocation of resources and investment funds. This has been compounded by low national budgetary allocation in many countries, especially in Africa.

Recent diversion of food crops towards the production of biofuels has also reduced the stock of food and created food insecurity in some countries. This is further aggravated by the preference by commercial farmers to grow cash crops, thereby creating deficits in food production.

Thirdly, there is general concern in Africa that multilateral and bilateral institutions continue to oppose subsidies to agriculture and food production, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, South East Asia, and Latin America. This has been so despite overwhelming evidence that smallholder farmers continue to find enormous difficulties to access agricultural inputs such as fertilizers, improved seeds, insecticides, and herbicides. These institutions also know that these farmers are unable to produce enough food to feed themselves without subsidies.

A matter of global concern is that food production in many developing countries has been

adversely affected by environmental destruction and degradation of agricultural lands caused by serious pollution through deliberate dumping of toxic waste and hazardous materials in rivers, lakes, seas, and other water sources—largely by industries from the North. This has deprived many farmers of land to produce more food.

This dumping has spoiled coastal lands, destroyed tourism, and has brought about misery to the inhabitants who can neither depend on agriculture nor fish in their waters in order to earn a living.

Mr. President:

The aforementioned problems pose a serious challenge to global food security. World leaders in the United Nations can no longer detach themselves from these serious issues. We should be part of the solution.

Firstly, the Malawi Government sees the attainment of global food security as a collective challenge. This must be premised on the ability to produce sufficient food and to move such food from surplus areas to food-deficit areas around the globe.

In order to alleviate the global food crisis, Malawi proposes that a compact should be reached such that countries that can produce sufficient food surpluses should be empowered to share with others in the world, through a fair international trading system. This would ensure that the entire humanity has enough food.

Secondly, Malawi proposes that the United Nations should urge industrialized countries to make significant increases in resource allocation into agriculture, especially for food production. Special attention should be given to improve infrastructure, machinery, equipment, and capacity building for farmers, especially smallholder farmers.

The private sector in industrialized countries should be persuaded to increase investment in food production, paying special attention to: the application of science and technology to agriculture; research on climate changes; and measures to protect food producing nations from the vagaries of the climate.

Thirdly, Malawi believes that the global food crisis could be mitigated if the United Nations, the World Bank, and other multilateral and bilateral donor agencies would seriously consider granting subsidies for agriculture and food production as an integral part of their global development policy and aid packages to developing countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa.

It would also be useful if the international community could acknowledge Africa's potential and the capacity to contribute significantly to the solution to the global food shortage. To that end, the United Nations should fully support the "Alliance for an African Green Revolution" chaired by the former Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan.

More specifically, Malawi appeals to the G8 countries to support us to create a "green belt" around our lakes and along our rivers to irrigate land up to twenty kilometres from the shores. The Malawi Government plans to grow a lot of rice, wheat, maize, millet, cassava, potatoes, beans, and lentils for the local and international markets.

Mr. President;

Secretary General; and Excellencies:

I wish to conclude by stating that Malawi is convinced that in order to achieve global food security, the United Nations must persuade the rich industrialized countries to share research, science, and technology in food production and processing with the poor countries. Furthermore, the industrialized countries should consider funding food research programmes and subsidizing agriculture in developing countries as part of the attainment of global food security.

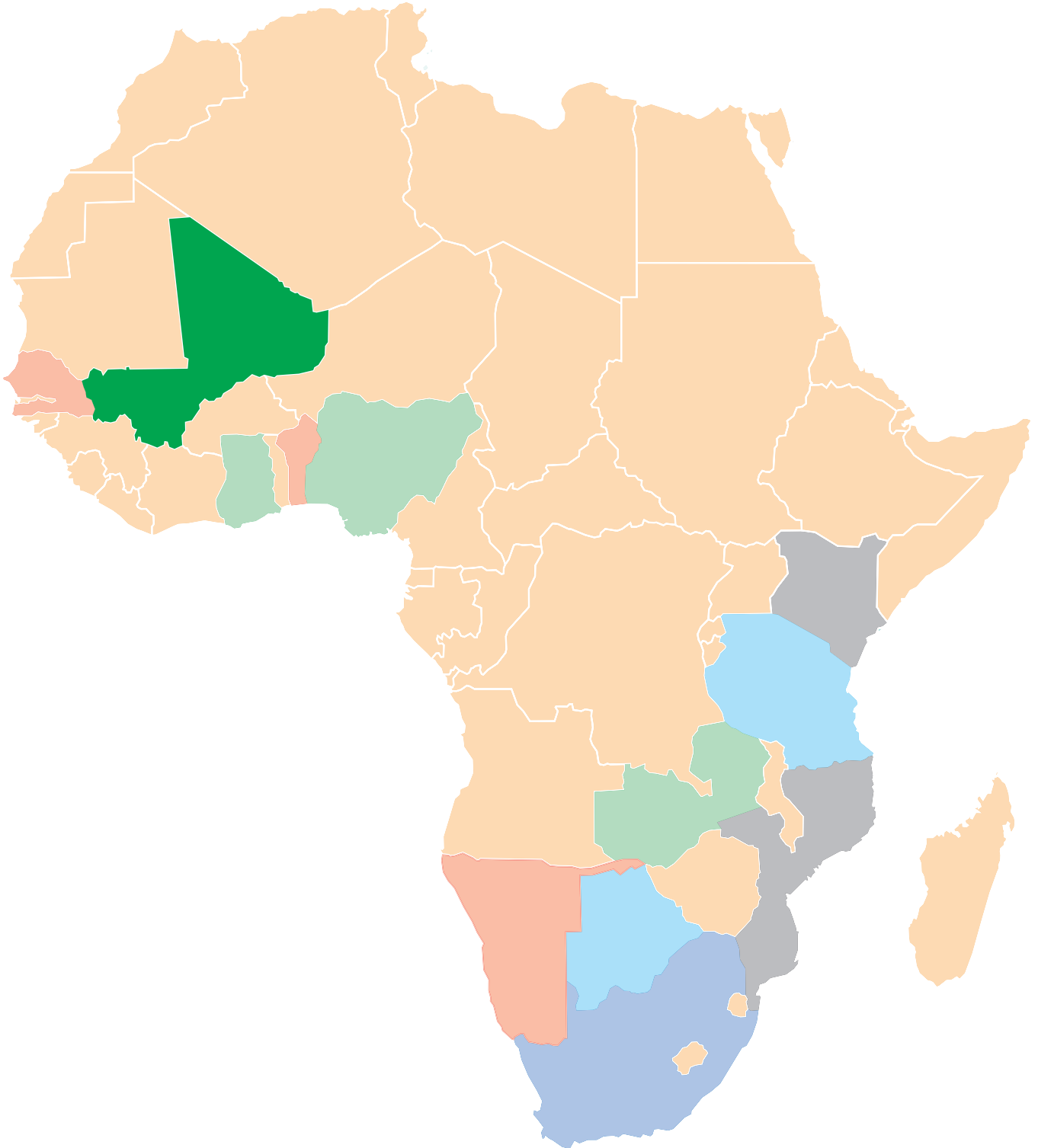
The global food crisis is not beyond the capacity of the community of nations to resolve. The global policy towards a hunger-free world must be taken here in the United Nations General Assembly.

All nations—big or small, rich or poor—must work together to eliminate the global food shortages, famines, hunger, and malnutrition.

Together we can do it.

I thank you.

MALI



MALI



**Speech to the Nation by His
Excellency Amadou Toumani Touré,
President of the Republic of Mali, on
the occasion of the 48th anniversary
of its independence
Bamako, Mali
September 22, 2008**



My fellow citizens;
African brothers;
Guests of Mali:

We are celebrating the 48th anniversary of the independence of Mali on this day, September 22, 2008. It is a privileged moment of communion, solidarity, and renewed engagement in the face of our common destiny, which invites us also to the task of remembrance and recognition.

We recognise those who, by their courage and their elevated sense of duty and dignity, prepared the path to this memorable day. May all of these heroes and martyrs receive the homage they deserve commensurate with the dimension of their sacrifices. In paying homage to all of these pioneers, we are not forgetting all of those who, today, continue to bring their stone to build a united, prosperous, and respected Mali.

My fellow citizens,

I have been able to measure, again this year, the depth of your patriotic commitment as citizens in the management of the multifaceted crises that our country—as also in other countries—has faced in recent years.

I have had to, on other occasions, insist on the remarkable efforts by the State and the bold measures taken by the Government to soften the impact of the difficulties on our populations.

Today, I would like above all to render homage to each Malian for the serenity and the courage displayed in the face of our ordeals.

I congratulate the sense of responsibility of the syndicates, the precious support of the affiliated presidential parties, the constructive criticism of the opposition, and the engagement of the private sector and the civil society.

We have proven, once again, that whenever essential elements are at stake—that is political stability and national cohesion—our population knows how to confront the situation with a common passion.

We will continue to better face the difficulties of a more and more complex world if we have a shared vision of the challenges and the solutions.

The principal challenge is our capacity for adaptability to the numerous transformations that then oblige us to rethink our strategies and the actions that are within our means.

This is the direction of the reforms that have been undertaken and whose common objectives are to significantly improve our knowledge and to anticipate the problems.

One of the most symbolic is, undoubtedly, the one that will result from the work of the Committee of Experts presided over by the Minister Daba Diawara and charged with reflecting on the consolidation of democracy in Mali.

For more than 15 years, a pluralist democracy is indeed a reality in our country. Democratic principles and values have been brought into general use and increasingly govern the actions of our public powers.

However, the practice of democracy has also presented its own shortfalls, which constitute subjects of preoccupation not only for our fellow citizens, but also for the players in our political life.

This is why I assigned the responsibility to the Daba Diawara Committee to carry out their reflections on important questions relating to, among others:

- the weakness in the rate of participation in elections;
- the voting procedure and the method for registration on electoral lists;
- the function of institutions; and
- the status of the leader of the opposition and the impact of financing political parties.

In the coming days, I will receive the conclusions of the Committee of Experts.

This is also the place to recall that our country decided, in complete liberty, to submit to the

African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), after signing an agreement protocol in June 2007.

I am convinced that this process, which aims to favor the adoption of policies, norms, and practices leading to political stability, economic growth with enduring development, and the acceleration of sub-regional and continental integration, will allow us to improve our governance.

My fellow citizens,

The emergence of an administration that is concerned about its own output and attentive to the preoccupations of the citizen remains, likewise, at the heart of the reforms that are in progress.

The Government is engaged in actions aimed to improve the quality of public services, justify public expenses, develop attractive work opportunities, and provide the impetus for a change of mentality on the part of agents of the State. Each ministerial department is equipped with a mission map that will be the object of regular evaluations.

In the same sense, organizational audits will be carried out of the ministerial departments for a better conformity between the system of organization and the missions of the public services.

The modernization of the administration contributes to its performance. Therefore, the utilization, at all levels, of the New Information Technologies and Communication (NTIC) is reinforced, to better guarantee transparency and an efficient circulation of information within the various services.

In addition, the forthcoming realization of the Administrative Census dealing with the civil state will allow every Malian to have at his or her disposal an identification card; and in the name of democracy and governance, the State will have at its disposal a secured database necessary for the establishment of an electronic file and a trustworthy index of administrative documents.

In the realm of human resource training, the new National School of Administration and the Training Center of the Territorial Collectivities, as well as the creation of the Distance Learning Training Center, will contribute to the services of the State and the collectivities of the qualified human resources necessary to effectively implement our public policies.

My fellow citizens,

Good governance and the struggle against corruption are the barometers indicating the state of health of any democratic system.

In this regard, the institution of the Economic Poles, the General Office of Verification, as well as the reinforcement of the capacity of other control structures, have enabled us to register significant results.

The will to consistently promote the transparent management of public resources has now been translated into the reform of the Code of Public Tender Offers with important innovations. An authority for the regulation of the posting of public tender officers, comprised of representatives from the private sector, the civil society, and the administration, has been created.

It has the power to rule on all appeals. The tenderers, on their side, will have access to information on the tendering of offers. The creation of the Regional Offices for Public Tender Offers will contribute by reducing the number of procedures and speeding up the treatment of dossiers. The adoption of annual plans for the posting of Public Tender Offers from the ministerial departments will allow a better preparation on the part of the tenderers.

An effective campaign against corruption has undergone not only a reinforcement of its means and techniques, but also and especially, a collective consciousness raising of the problem, and a new commitment to reinstitute healthy practices in the management of public funds, as well as a citizenry steeped in their moral and ethical duties.

This is the direction taken by the recent Estates General on Corruption, who are going to enable the entire Malian Nation to search for, through a broad consultation, a global understanding of the phenomenon in view of defining a plan for an adequate campaign against this curse.

My fellow citizens,

Economic reforms are indispensable and critical to the success of all of the others. The strategy for accelerated growth proceeds from this vision.

Agriculture is one of the essential constituents. I am pleased with the progressive implementation of the Law of Agricultural Orientation through the following:

- The Rice Initiative that is meant to be a voluntary response to the frenetic rise in the prices of cereal grain products on world markets;
- The creation of the National Fund for Agricultural Development and the Fund for Risks and Calamities;
- The effective establishment of the Land Commissions;
- The program for the development of the low lands in the framework of short-distance irrigation; and
- The installation of the Superior Council of Agriculture, which has already held its first session.

Reflection is now in process for the elaboration of a schema for the commercialization of cereal grain production, particularly rice, and of a schema for the provision of input.

I could not go any further without mentioning the present agricultural campaign with its promising harvests. These positive perspectives comfort us in our choice of making agriculture the lever for our growth and development. The participation and the engagement of the set of actors from the rural world are to be congratulated.

The cleaning up of the portfolio of the State and increasing the competitiveness of our economy remain our major objectives.

This is the moment to congratulate the laudable deed of assigning shares of the State to the capital of the International Bank of Mali, and to congratulate the Government, as well as all of the national actors that have contributed to the success of the operation.

In addition, the improvement of the framework for doing business and the rereading of the Monetary Code are at the heart of a policy aiming to attract increased investment.

My fellow citizens,

Our people, throughout their history, have won many victories and overcome numerous tests, thanks to moral virtues, and the spiritual and cultural values that they succeeded in preserving. It seems important to me to insist on one of the values that is the strength of our nation: Solidarity.

Obligatory Health Insurance and the Fund for Medical Assistance are one form of expressing this solidarity, to guarantee a broader health umbrella for our citizens. Obligatory Health Insurance is going to protect military and civil servants, deputies, the salaried, the pensioners, as well as those having the right to these categories, including their ascendants. The Medical Assistance Fund will assure the granting of benefits to destitute people. The beneficiaries are not subjected to obligatory contributions because the fund aims to reduce the disparities between citizens with regard to access to health care. The resources come from contributions from the State and from the territorial collectivities.

My fellow citizens,

We must maintain the same impetus of solidarity around the question of employment for our youth. This is why I have committed my Government to the creation of the Youth Employment Tax by the allocation of two percent of the flat across-the-board contribution to projects and programs in favor of activities for our youth.

This new lever will reinforce job creation. We must continue to reflect in order to find innovative solutions to the problem of the unemployment of our youth.

In this realm, initiatives like the March toward Agricultural Employment and the Office for Employment and Professional Training open encouraging prospects for the insertion of thousands of young people into productive work, particularly in the agricultural, artisanry, and services sectors.

The celebration of our national holiday takes place a week before the return to schools and universities for the 2008-2009 academic year. I send to the pupils and students, the teaching

corps, and all the personnel of the education sector, my wishes for a peaceful school year.

The results from the different national examinations for the past year have been very encouraging. We must do even better this year in order to reaffirm the process of progressive reform of our schools. The Forum on Education will be an appropriate moment to design the contours of the renewal of the education system in our country.

I take this opportunity to thank the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and its Director General for the financing of the university library.

My fellow citizens,

The Independence Celebration is always a moment of coming together for the Malians who are outside of the country, as well as a moment for them to reconnect with their country.

I reaffirm my commitment to pursue, permanently, better conditions for their involvement in the socioeconomic development of Mali.

The diffusion of programs from the Office de Radiodiffusion-Télévision du Mali (ORTM), via KU band, will make it possible for our communities established abroad to be connected to the rhythm of our country.

Beyond Africa, Europe, and the Gulf, I am happy to announce to our fellow citizens living in the United States, Canada, and Latin America that they will receive national television broadcasting in their homes before the end of this year.

On September 22, 2010, we will celebrate the Fiftieth anniversary of our accession to independence. This celebration must be an exceptional occasion for the mobilization and involvement of the population; a commission of organisation has been created for that purpose.

Beyond its festive dimension, this rendezvous for the Fiftieth anniversary of our country will be the occasion to reaffirm our commitment, and further advance it, through firm and sure steps on the road to prosperity and shared progress.

In expressing to every Malian my faith in the future, I wish for all of you a joyous celebration.

Long live Mali in a united and peaceful Africa!
I thank you for your attention!

MALI

Discours A La Nation de Son Excellence Monsieur Amasou Tomani Touré, Président de la République, à l' occasion de 48ème anniversaire de l'indépendance du Mali Bamako, Mali 22 Septembre 2008

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Mes chers compatriotes;
Frères africains;
Hôtes du Mali:

Nous célébrons ce 22 septembre 2008, le 48ème anniversaire de l'indépendance du Mali. Il s'agit d'un moment privilégié de communion, de solidarité et d'engagement renouvelé, face à notre destin commun, qui nous convie aussi à un devoir de mémoire et de reconnaissance.

Reconnaissance envers tous ceux qui, par leur courage, leur sens élevé du devoir et de la dignité, ont préparé la voie à cette mémorable journée.

Que soit rendu à tous ces héros, à ces martyrs, un hommage mérité à la dimension de leurs sacrifices.

En rendant hommage à tous ces pionniers, nous n'oublions pas toutes celles et tous ceux qui, aujourd'hui, continuent d'apporter leur pierre à l'édification d'un Mali uni, prospère et respecté.

Mes chers compatriotes,

J'ai pu mesurer, encore cette année, la portée de votre engagement patriotique et citoyen dans la gestion des crises multiformes que notre pays, à l'image d'autres, affronte depuis plusieurs années

J'ai eu, en d'autres occasions, à insister sur les efforts remarquables de l'Etat et les mesures hardies prises par le Gouvernement pour atténuer l'impact des difficultés sur nos populations.

Aujourd'hui, je voudrais surtout rendre hommage à chaque malienne, à chaque malien pour la sérénité et le courage affichés face aux épreuves.

Je salue le sens de responsabilité des organisations syndicales, l'appui précieux des

partis de la Mouvance présidentielle, les critiques constructives de l'Opposition et l'engagement du Secteur Prive et de la Société Civile.

Nous avons fait la preuve, encore une fois, que lorsque l'essentiel est en cause, à savoir la stabilité politique et la cohésion nationale, notre peuple sait faire front dans un élan unitaire.

Nous continuerons à mieux faire face aux difficultés d'un monde de plus en plus complexe si nous avons une vision partagée des défis et des solutions.

Le principal défi, c'est notre capacité d'adaptation aux nombreuses mutations et qui nous font obligation de repenser nos stratégies et nos moyens d'actions.

C'est le sens des reformes engagées et dont l'objectif commun est d'améliorer significativement nos acquis et d'anticiper les problèmes.

L'une des plus emblématiques est, sans doute, celle qui résultera des travaux du Comité d'Experts présidé par le Ministre Daba DIAWARA et chargé de la réflexion sur la consolidation de la démocratie au Mali.

Depuis plus d'une quinzaine d'années, la démocratie pluraliste est en effet une réalité dans notre pays. Les principes et valeurs démocratiques se vulgarisent et régissent davantage l'action des pouvoirs publics.

Cependant, la pratique de la démocratie a également présenté des insuffisances, qui constituent des sujets de préoccupation aussi bien pour nos concitoyens que pour les acteurs de la vie politique.

C'est pourquoi j'ai chargé le Comité Daba Diawara de mener une réflexion sur des questions importantes se rapportant, entre autres:

- à la faiblesse du taux de participation aux élections;
- au mode de scrutin et d'inscription sur les listes électorales;
- au fonctionnement des Institutions;
- et au statut du leader de l'opposition et l'impact du financement des partis politiques.

Je recevrai, dans les prochains jours, les conclusions du Comité d'Experts.

C'est aussi le lieu de rappeler que notre pays a décidé, et toute liberté, de se soumettre au Mécanisme Africain d'Evaluation par les Pairs, après la signature d'un protocole d'accord en juin 2007.

Je suis convaincu que ce processus qui vise à favoriser l'adoption de politiques, normes et pratiques conduisant à la stabilité politique, à la croissance économique au développement durable et à l'accélération de l'intégration sous-régionale et continentale, nous permettra d'améliorer notre gouvernance.

Mes chers compatriotes,

L'émergence d'une administration soucieuse de son propre rendement et attentive aux préoccupations du citoyen demeure également au cœur des réformes en cours.

Le Gouvernement est engagé dans des actions visant à améliorer la qualité des services publics, rationaliser la dépense publique, valoriser le travail, et impulser le changement de mentalité des agents de l'Etat. Chaque département ministériel est doté d'une feuille de route qui fera l'objet d'évaluations régulières.

Dans le même sens, seront poursuivis les audits organisationnels des départements ministériels pour une meilleure adéquation entre le système d'organisation et les missions des services publics.

La modernisation de l'Administration contribue à ses performances. Ainsi, se renforce l'utilisation à tous les niveaux des Nouvelles Technologies de l'Information et de la communication (NTIC), pour mieux garantir la transparence et une circulation efficace de l'information au sein des services.

Par ailleurs, la réalisation prochaine du Recensement Administratif à Vocation d'Etat Civil permettra à chaque citoyen malien de disposer d'un identifiant, et au titre de la démocratie et de la gouvernance, l'Etat disposera d'une base de données sécurisées nécessaires à l'établissement d'un fichier électoral et de documents administratifs fiables.

Au plan de la formation des ressources humaines, l'ouverture de la nouvelle Ecole Nationale d'Administration et du Centre de Formation des Collectivités Territoriales, ainsi

que la création du Centre de Formation à Distance, contribueront à donner aux services de l'Etat et des collectivités des ressources humaines qualifiées, pour mettre en œuvre efficacement les politiques publiques.

Mes chers compatriotes,

La bonne gouvernance et la lutte contre la corruption, sont des baromètres de la santé de tout système démocratique.

A cet égard, l'institution des Pôles Economiques, de Bureau du Vérificateur General, ainsi que le renforcement des capacités des autres structures de contrôle, ont permis d'enregistrer des résultats notables.

La volonté de promouvoir une gestion toujours plus transparente des ressources publiques s'est traduite par la réforme du Code des Marchés Publics avec des innovations importantes.

Une Autorité de Régulation des passations des marchés publics, composée des représentants de Secteur privé, de la Société Civile et de l'Administration, a été créée.

Elle a compétence pour statuer sur tous les recours. Les soumissionnaires, de leur côté, auront accès aux informations sur les adjudications de marches.

La création des Directions Régionales des Marchés Publics contribuera à l'allègement des procédures et à la célérité dans le traitement des dossiers.

L'adoption de plans annuels de passation de marchés publics des Départements ministériels permettra une meilleure préparation des soumissionnaires.

Une lutte efficace contre la corruption passe non seulement par un renforcement des moyens et des techniques, mais aussi et surtout, par une prise de conscience collective du fléau et un engagement pour réinstaurer des pratiques saines de gestion des deniers publics, ainsi qu'une citoyenneté pétrie de morale et d'éthique.

Tel est le sens des Etats Généraux sur la Corruption qui vont permettre à la Nation malienne de rechercher, à travers une large consultation, une compréhension globale du phénomène en vue de définir un plan de lutte adéquat contre le fléau.

Mes chers compatriotes,

Les réformes économiques sont, à la fois, indispensables et déterminantes au succès de toutes les autres. La stratégie de croissance accélérée procède de cette vision.

L'agriculture en est un volet essentiel. Je me réjouis de la mise en œuvre progressive de la Loi d'Orientation Agricole à travers:

- L'Initiative Riz qui se veut une réponse volontariste à la hausse effrénée des prix des produits céréaliers sur le marché mondial;
- La création du Fonds National de Développement Agricole, du Fonds sur les Risques et les Calamités;
- La mise en place effective des Commissions Foncières;
- La Programme d'aménagement des Bas Fonds dans le cadre de l'irrigation de proximité;
- L'installation du Conseil Supérieur de l'Agriculture qui a déjà tenu sa Première Session.

Des réflexions sont en cours pour l'élaboration d'un schéma de commercialisation des productions céréalières, notamment le riz, et d'un schéma d'approvisionnement en intrants.

Je ne saurai passer sous silence la campagne agricole en cours, avec des récoltes prometteuses.

Ces bonnes perspectives nous confortent dans notre choix de faire de l'agriculture le levier de notre croissance et de notre développement.

L'adhésion et l'engagement de l'ensemble des acteurs de monde rural sont à saluer.

Mes chers compatriotes,

L'assainissement du portefeuille de l'État et le renforcement de la compétitivité de notre économie restent des objectifs majeurs.

C'est le lieu de saluer la bonne conduite de la cession des parts de l'État dans le capital de la Banque Internationale pour le Mali, et de féliciter la Gouvernement, ainsi que toutes les compétences nationales qui ont contribué au succès de l'opération.

Par ailleurs, l'amélioration du cadre des affaires et la relecture du Code Monier sont au

cœur d'une politique visant à attirer davantage l'investissement.

Mes chers compatriotes,

Notre peuple, tout au long de son histoire, a remporté bien de victoires et surmonté de nombreuses épreuves, grâce aux vertus morales, aux valeurs spirituelles et culturelles qu'il a su préserver.

Il me paraît important d'insister sur une de ses valeurs qui font la force de notre Nation: la Solidarité.

L'Assurance Maladie Obligatoire et le Fonds d'Assistance Médicale sont une forme d'expression de cette solidarité, pour garantir une couverture sanitaire plus large à nos compatriotes.

L'Assurance Maladie Obligatoire va concerner les fonctionnaires civils et militaires, les députés, les salariés, les pensionnés ainsi que les ayants droit de ces catégories, y compris les ascendants.

Le Fonds d'Assistance Médicale assurera la prise en charge des personnes indigentes.

Les bénéficiaires ne sont pas assujettis à contribution, car le fonds vise à réduire les disparités entre les citoyens dans l'accès aux soins de santé.

Ses ressources proviennent des contributions de l'État et des collectivités territoriales.

Mes chers compatriotes,

Nous devons entretenir le même élan de solidarité autour de la question de l'emploi des jeunes. C'est pourquoi j'ai engagé le Gouvernement à créer la Taxe Emploi Jeune par l'affectation de 2% de la contribution forfaitaire aux Projets et Programmes en faveur de l'activité des Jeunes.

Ce nouveau levier renforcera les créations d'emplois. Nous devons continuer à réfléchir pour trouver des réponses innovantes au chômage des jeunes.

Dans ce sens, des initiatives comme la « Marche vers l'Emploi Agricole » et la « Bourse de l'Emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle », ouvrent des perspectives encourageantes d'insertion de milliers de jeunes dans la production, en particulier dans les secteurs de l'Agriculture, de l'Artisanat et des Services.

Mes chers compatriotes,

La célébration de la Fête Nationale intervient à une semaine de la rentrée scolaire et universitaire 2008-2009.

J'adresse aux élèves, aux étudiants, au corps enseignant et à tous les personnes du secteur de l'éducation des vœux d'une année scolaire apaisée.

Les résultats aux différents examens ont été très encourageants pour l'année écoulée, nous devons faire mieux, cette année, pour confirmer le processus de redressement progressif de notre école.

Le Forum sur l'Education sera un moment privilégié pour dessiner les contours du renouveau de l'éducation dans notre pays.

Je saisis l'occasion pour remercier l'UNESCO et son Directeur Général du Financement de la Bibliothèque Universitaire.

Mes chers compatriotes,

Le Fête de l'Indépendance est toujours un moment de retrouvailles pour les maliennes et les maliens de l'extérieur ainsi que de communion avec le pays.

Je réaffirme mon engagement à rechercher, en permanence, les meilleures conditions de leur implication dans le développement socio-économique du Mali.

La diffusion des programmes de l'ORTM, en bande KU, permet à nos communautés établies à l'étranger de vivre au rythme de notre pays.

Après l'Afrique, l'Europe et le Golfe, je suis heureux d'annoncer à nos compatriotes vivant aux Etats-Unis, au Canada et en Amérique Latine qu'ils recevront la télévisions nationale à domicile, avant la fin de cette année.

Mes chers compatriotes;

Frères africains;

Hôtes du Mali:

Le 22 Septembre 2010, nous célébrerons le 50eme anniversaire de notre accession a l'indépendance. Cette fête doit être une occasion de mobilisation populaire exceptionnelle; une Commission d'Organisation a été créée à cet effet.

Par delà sa dimension festive, ce rendez-vous du cinquantenaire de notre pays, sera l'occasion

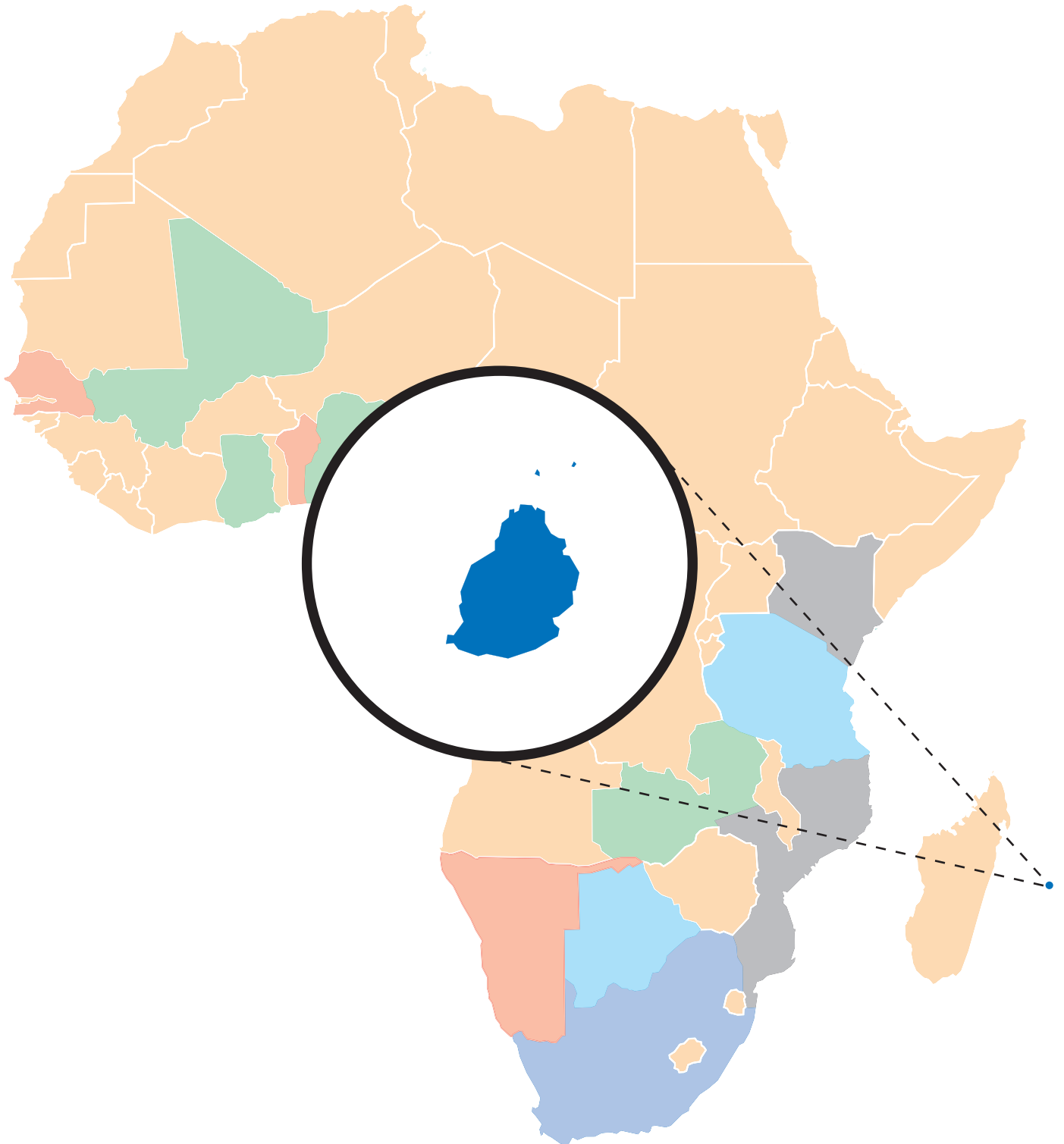
de réaffirmer notre volonté, a le faire progresser, a pas fermes et surs, sur le chemin de la prospérité et du progrès partage.

En exprimant à chaque malienne et a chaque malien, ma foi en l'avenir, je souhaite a toutes et tous, une bonne fête.

Vive le Mali dans une Afrique unie et en paix!

Je vous remercie de votre attention !

MAURITIUS



MAURITIUS



**His Excellency Nacinchandra
Ramgoolam, Prime Minister of the
Republic of Mauritius**
August 22, 2008



Forty years ago, on March 12, 1968, when Mauritius became independent, it was an agricultural mono-crop economy with a small manufacturing base and a per capita income of \$200. Unemployment was high and rising. The population was expanding at a rate of around three percent. Mauritius was in the cohort of countries that were completely off the accepted norms on almost all development indicators.

With a strategy mix of import substitution and export-oriented industrialization, Mauritius has successfully diversified its economic base and emerged from the low income group. It has reduced its reliance on sugar for growth, created employment, and earned foreign currency by building new economic sectors including textile and garment, tourism, financial services, and information and communication technology. Per capita income has thus continuously improved and is forecasted to reach \$7,000 this year.

When I assumed office three years ago, my Government decided to reform the economy and to undertake a new phase of development, centered on greater openness to the world and global competitiveness. Our first Budget, for the 2006-2007 financial year, introduced bold and fundamental reform to:

- secure a competitive business environment;
- open up the economy further to the world;
- consolidate the economic structure and step up the perennial endeavor to diversify and build new sectors;
- strengthen macroeconomic fundamentals (in particular, consolidating public finances and re-engineering our tax policy);

- ensure more flexibility and fluidity on the labour market; and
- empower workers, entrepreneurs, and our citizens in general to succeed in the face of global competition.

These reforms are yielding positive results; the economic growth path has picked up, and unemployment is on the decline for the first time in more than a decade. We intend to pursue these reforms with the aim of attaining growth of eight percent or higher to create full employment, secure sustainable development, and eradicate poverty. The next phase of development will require massive investment in physical infrastructure with a new focus on human resources, a reengineering of the public sector, and further regional integration. We want to ensure economic growth and social development.

These objectives will have to be achieved while paying close attention to the preservation of the environment to ensure sustainable development. Our strategy is to develop an attractive, modern, inclusive, green, and open Mauritius. These are strategic objectives that underlay the 2008-2009 Budget.

We also want to build an inclusive Mauritius by integrating the families who are at the margins of development, eradicating absolute poverty, ensuring pre-primary education to all children, and further broadening the palette of opportunities and addressing the food security issue.

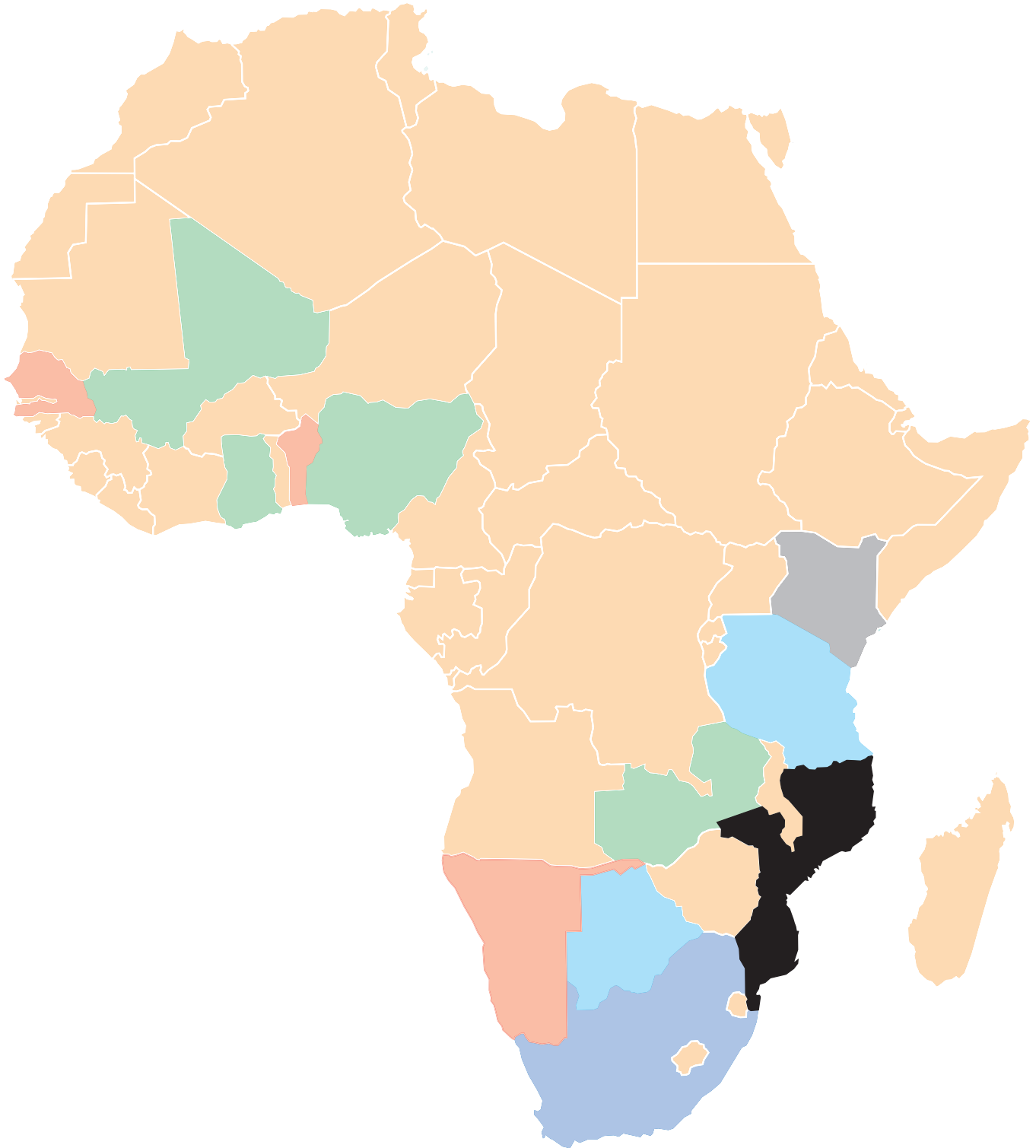
We are building a green future for Mauritius through the implementation of a “Maurice – Ile Durable” project and shifting, to the extent possible, to local renewable sources of energy, away from imported fossil fuel.

With our present strategic orientation, we are completely reengineering our economy so that as our country closes its fifth decade as a nation, it will have a per capita income in excess of \$10,000. Mauritius should then be enjoying an enlarged economic space and a greater gamut of opportunities. With an administrative city of international standard and a new commercial town developed with Chinese investment,

Mauritius will firmly establish itself as an essential stepping stone to Africa.

Our vision of a modern Mauritius is ambitious and it is within our reach.

MOZAMBIQUE



MOZAMBIQUE



**State of the Nation Address by His Excellency Armando Emílio Guebuza, President of the Republic of Mozambique—“Regional Development: A Priority for the Mozambican Nation”
Maputo, Mozambique
December 24, 2008**



Your Excellency Mister President of the Assembly of the Republic;
Your Excellency Madam Prime Minister;
Esteemed President of the Supreme Court;
Esteemed President of the Administrative Court;
Esteemed President of the Constitutional Council;
Most Honorable Attorney General of the Republic;
Members of the Council of Ministers;
Vice Ministers;
Distinguished Members of the Diplomatic Corps;
Deputies of the Assembly of the Republic;
Directors and Members of Political Parties;
Directors and Members of Organizations of Civil Society;
Distinguished Guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a privilege to address this Grand Assembly of the People, in accordance with the terms of line B of Article 159 of the Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique, in order to present the report on the general State of the Nation to our wonderful people through you, their representatives.

From this podium, we congratulate all of the Mozambican People, from Rovuma to Maputo and from the East to Zumbo, for the resolute manner in which they have participated in the various programs in the fight against poverty and for the development of our beloved country.

We particularly congratulate the citizens of the forty-three independent territories for their active participation in the process of strengthening our already vibrant multiparty democracy. Through their attendance at the ballot boxes, their civic pride, and their respect for our institutions and law and order, they have demonstrated an exemplary attitude that inspires pride in the

entire Nation. Once again we have shown, to ourselves and to the world, the reasons why we are an example of a culture of peace, stability, national unity, inclusion, multiparty democracy, and development.

We also congratulate our national football team, the Mambas, for having qualified for the final stage of the selection for the African National Championship in Angola, and for the World Football Championship in South Africa. Our national team is among the twenty top finalists in Africa, which raises our self-esteem and our pride in being sons of this beautiful country of Mozambique. With their success, the Mambas have justified the reasons for the construction, by our Government, of the National Football Stadium in Zimpeto.

Our beloved country will also represent Africa in the World Basketball Championships. This honor and glory was brought to us by two teams that were champions in the finals this year. The first is that of the Polytechnic University, which earned in Kampala the right to represent Africa in the world championship of the institutions of higher education, to take place next year in Belgrade, Serbia. The second team is the women's basketball team of the Grupo Desportivo, which won the African Championship in Nairobi, thus earning the right to represent our continent in the World Championships in Samara, Russia. Both teams earned these titles for the second time in a row, making all of us proud.

We offer special congratulations to you, the deputies, true representatives of the people, for your level of legislative production throughout this year. It is, for us, another demonstration of your dedication in contributing to the development and strengthening of our state.

Esteemed Deputies,

As we say in Còbuè, dear compatriots, Mozambique is a Nation of Heroes in its length and breadth. Throughout this year, we developed and carried out programs which consecrated and exalted some of these exceptional sons of Mozambique.

On the occasion of the seventy-fifth birthday of President Samora Moisés Machel, we traveled

to Chilembene in order to celebrate, with due symbolism, the life of this tireless fighter for a sovereign, united, and developed Mozambique. As a demonstration of the esteem and admiration of the Mozambican people for this charismatic leader and proud nationalist, who proclaimed our national independence and became our first Head of State, our Government decided to confer on his birthplace, Chilembene, the status of a Cultural Heritage Site. May this son of Mozambique inspire the heroism of our citizens and contribute to the cultivation of the values of integrity and love of country.

We also paid homage to the outstanding youths of the 25th of September, killed forty years ago in the struggle for national liberation. The starting point of these ceremonies was the homage to Filipe Samuel Magaia in 2006, and this year we remembered the life and work of Tomás Nduda, John Issa, Mateus Sansão Muthemba, José Macamo, and two days ago, Paulo Samuel Kankhomba.

To our Golden Girl, Maria de Lurdes Mutola, we dedicated a special homage in recognition of her achievements during the two decades of her athletic career. An icon of athletics throughout the world, during her brilliant career she caused our national flag to be unfurled at the most important competitions on the planet and affirmed her place as the indisputable star of the 800 meter race. In recognition of these extraordinary and immeasurable achievements, we awarded her the honorary title of Heroine of the People of the Republic of Mozambique. With this honor, we hope that her example and success will serve as a model of inspiration for our national athletes and other compatriots.

Once again, we emphasize that from all of the corners of our beautiful country emerge the outstanding sons of Mozambique, as a result of their persistence and their selfless efforts. This is, truly, a Nation of Heroes.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Last year, in this Grand Assembly, we paid homage to the victims of the tragedy that occurred on the 22nd of March 2007, with the explosions at the armory in Malhazine.

Following this tragedy, we provided social support to the individuals and families who were victims of these explosions, offering funeral services, medical care, and medicine, as well as compensation for the deaths and pensions for the survivors and the injured.

We continue to provide due social support and services to the victims whose clinical state still requires special care in our hospitals. Three hundred and fourteen homes were built and 11,062 rebuilt, and we are nearing the completion of this process.

The transfer of armaments to a safe location far from the large population centers was carried out promptly, and we decided to take the same measures in the areas where there are more of these military infrastructures.

We are developing plans to convert the spaces that were occupied by these depots into green areas that will provide fresh air to the cities.

During the months of May and June of this year, we observed with great concern the occurrence of demonstrations of xenophobia in South Africa. These sad events, which mainly affected citizens of the countries of the South African Development Community (SADC) residing in South Africa, resulted in the loss of human life, as well as the forced repatriation of more than 40,000 Mozambicans. It was a challenge to the efforts of the people of Southern Africa to maintain a peaceful, safe, and profitable coexistence within the process of regional integration, under the aegis of the SADC, which is already well under way.

From the moment this crisis began, our Government deployed its resources to respond to it and to provide the necessary humanitarian assistance and transport to our compatriots who wanted, voluntarily, to return to their beloved country, where we had also made arrangements for their reception and transport to their places of origin.

We wish to show our appreciation and pride for the spontaneous demonstrations of solidarity, by Mozambicans for Mozambicans, on behalf of those affected. We also appreciate the support that was given by the SADC and the rest of the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a demonstration of the negative impact of climate change, various regions of our country were afflicted by different natural disasters. We saw floods in the Zambeze, Búzi, and Save valleys and the Jókwe cyclone in Nampula; disasters that affected more than 300,000 of our countrymen and caused the destruction of homes and farmland, as well as social and economic infrastructures.

At the same time, there was drought in the districts of Vilanculo, Massinga, Funhalouro, Inhassoro, Homoíne, Inharrime, and Pande in Inhambane Province; Guijá, Chigubo, Massingir, and Mabalane in Gaza Province; and Moamba, Matutuíne, and Namaacha in Maputo Province. This disaster affected more than 100,000 people, particularly in terms of their food supply and nutritional security.

While drought continues to affect areas in the south of Mozambique, heavy rains afflict Cabo Delgado, Niassa, Nampula, Tete, and Zambézia.

The Zambeze River has already reached alert levels, and we have appealed to the population living in this river valley to take preventive measures, returning to their homes in the resettlement areas on high ground and following the instructions of the authorities.

We are still seeing uncontrolled fires of large proportions in Sofala and Manica Provinces, which have resulted in human and material losses. The Government continues to monitor the centers of uncontrolled fires in the country using digital mapping technology, which demonstrates that this phenomenon continues to be a huge challenge for all of the Mozambican Nation.

Faced with these natural disasters and other misfortunes, the Government has acted in a timely fashion, using internal resources for rescue and evacuation operations. The Government also took responsibility for guiding the subsequent actions to alleviate these situations and for coordinating the assistance provided by civil society, the private sector, and our partners in development.

It has been demonstrated to our people that climate changes will continue to cause extreme weather phenomena, and these will become more frequent, resulting in droughts, floods, cyclones,

and even seismic activity. For this reason, structural programs are being implemented, which aim to transform these disasters and our vulnerability to their effects into opportunities for our development. In addition to the activities for education in the prevention and management of disasters, we are expanding the national network of seismic monitoring stations, which is necessary for the control of these activities and the identification of areas of risk, including the construction of four new stations in Mueda, Mocuba, Massingir, and Tete.

As well as the structural measures, we have seen:

- The creation, with the participation of the affected populations, of housing on high ground, with houses made of fired brick, ample windows and doors, and spacious rooms. These settlements will each have within them schools, health clinics, and other necessary infrastructure for a better life for our people;
- The implementation of regulations under the Land Use Law, which also contributed to these development efforts. In effect, this instrument is intended to guide the harmonious development of the country by means of the plans for land use, planning of the cities and towns, and the improvement of the informal settlements; and
- The establishment of Multiple Use Resource Centers in the districts of Chigubo, Massangene, and Mabote should be seen as part of the same effort. These are places that, by developing activities which promote self-esteem, can transform the victims of drought into agents of their own development. In this way, these communities identify the challenges that the drought presents and the solutions they have to adopt in order to overcome these challenges. The solutions that have been adopted include methods for storing water and agricultural techniques for the preservation and drying of cabbage, tomatoes, manioc leaves, and other vegetables. In addition, there is the production of liquors and sweets from exotic fruits.

Only a heroic people like ours are capable of these achievements!

Esteemed Deputies,

The reforms in progress in the public sector aim to improve the provision of services to the citizens. We expect to see constant improvement in the capacity for action, effectiveness, and efficiency of the local agencies, with a focus on the District. As a consequence, we want our public works to be strengthened so that they promote and validate their function of providing services to the public and cultivating good Government.

In this area, among the results we have achieved, the following stand out:

- The approval of 147 personnel teams, including those of the 128 districts of our country, and the deployment of nearly a thousand middle and high level technicians in the Districts;
- The approval of the Wage Policy, which will contribute to the retention, mobility, and attraction of teams for our State Agencies, with particular emphasis on the districts;
- The review of the function and requirements of the work of the Permanent Central Agency, whose staffing will be competitive, so as to strengthen the principles of meritocracy that we maintain for our public employees;
- The beginning of operations of the National System for the Management of State Documents and Archives, which will contribute to the preservation of the institutional memory of our state agencies;
- The expansion of services offered in the Individual Service Centers, through the transference, in all of the provincial capitals, of more capacities for licensing to these institutions; and
- The establishment of twenty Multimedia Community Centers in district seats and administrative posts, which will popularize information and communication technologies.

We continue our commitment to the promotion of the rights of the officials and agents of the state. Toward this goal we have awarded more than 42,000 promotions and advancements since 2007; we have been employing stricter guidelines in the assignment of responsibilities to the leadership and officials so that in their public function they will be driven by integrity, ethical values, and a sense of duty. Thus, we have initiated 2,415 processes that have resulted in 813 expulsions and dismissals from the state agencies.

This grand assembly approved, unanimously and by acclamation, the Law of the General Statute for Officers and Agents of the State. This instrument, in addition to the great innovations intended to improve labor relations in the state agencies, establishes a platform for the unionization of the public service.

We enthusiastically congratulate all of the officials and agents of the state for this achievement.

These reforms have earned praise within our country as their impact is visible on the lives of the citizens. These reforms have also been recognized outside our borders. As a result, we were awarded the African Prize for Public Service and have received requests to share our experience and results with other nations.

Esteemed Deputies,

The reforms in progress have as another objective to provide support for the Nation's businesses in order to help them become stronger, more dynamic, and more competitive. For the purpose of simplifying procedures and improving services in our public institutions, we introduced services that are accessible by electronic connection. This innovation brought great momentum to the reform of the public sector and has reduced the wait time for obtaining services on the part of our citizens.

We have adopted still more reform measures favoring business activities within the country. These include the following:

- The strategy for improving the business environment and its respective implementation matrix;

- The Decree for Simplified Licensing;
- The strategy for the textile and confectionary sectors;
- The strategy for the promotion of small- and medium-sized businesses;
- The revision of the codes applicable to the value added tax (VAT), as well as the personal income tax and business income tax;
- The reduction of the maximum customs duty to twenty percent for member countries of the SADC;
- The approval of the Law of the Fiscal Courts;
- The creation of the commercial sections in the Judicial Courts in the provinces of Nampula, Sofala, and in the City of Maputo; and
- The introduction of the Program for the Mozambican Innovator.

The expansion of energy to more areas of our beautiful Mozambique has also contributed to the dynamization of economic activity, from small businesses to medium-sized and large firms. At the same time, electrification has also stimulated social activity by permitting the introduction of evening classes, refrigeration of vaccines and other medicines, regular pumping of water and the realization of cultural activities, as well as the creation of conditions for the use of television, computers, and access to the internet.

The alternative we intend to adopt for the Cahora Bassa area is the use of a group of generators and systems of solar panels, and this is still in progress.

This year Massingir, Morrumbene, Massinga, Cherigoma, Marromeu, Guro, Changara, Moma, Chiúre, Montepuez, and Mágoè will shout with the rest of the Nation: "Cahora Bassa is Ours."

Esteemed Deputies,

Tourism has shown itself to be one of the industries that have seen an increase in the level of domestic and foreign investment, resulting in the creation of more jobs and making a substantial contribution to the economy.

Some of the most visible results of our actions relate to the establishment of tourist infrastruc-

tures on the coasts of our beautiful islands and in the interior in the parks and conservation areas.

We have already seen:

- The arrival of nearly 771,000 tourists to our country and an increase in our lodging capacity by more than 17,000 beds;
- We have seen the collection of receipts on the order of \$163 million, which corresponds to a growth rate of seventeen percent; as well as
- The creation of more than 37,000 new jobs, fifty percent of which are occupied by women.

In order to take advantage of the opportunities that will be brought to us by the World Cup of Football in 2010, the Government approved a strategy that plans to develop various infrastructures in different areas of our Mozambique.

On the 24th of this past May, this country of heroes celebrated the admission of our Pemba Bay, the largest bay in Africa, to the Club of the Most Beautiful Bays in the World. Today, Pemba, along with the rest of this Pearl of the East, inscribes its name more prominently on the routes of global tourism.

Gorongosa National Park has also begun to take its place as a source of attraction for tourists. The investments underway will create the conditions for this park and other national parks to gain a comparative advantage for our country in this area; that is, a destination with beautiful beaches and islands on the coast, and fauna and flora in the interior.

We have been developing programs with the goal of ensuring that our communities will derive greater benefits from the arrival of tourists and tourist activity in this pearl of the east. Employment, the exhibition of arts and culture, and the sale of handcrafts and typical foods are some examples. For this reason, the direct participation of our compatriots in projects to develop tourism should continue to grow.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The access to justice and the law, an important

premise in the guarantee of the fundamental rights and liberties of each citizen, merits a great deal of attention in the provision of legal services, especially those which, by their nature, directly impact the lives of the citizens. This has been possible thanks to the structural reforms relating to the judicial structure and simplification of procedures, improvements to performance, and enlargement of the network of institutions of justice to the district level.

The Institute for Judicial Protection and Assistance, as a guarantee of the provision of legal assistance to the citizens, was revitalized so as to continue improving access to its services for our people. As a result of the extension of the legal assistance network, delegations were established in all of the provinces of the country, guaranteeing coverage to fifty-seven districts.

At the same time, within the extension of the legal network, financial resources were mobilized and allocated in order to ensure investment in infrastructures, which permitted an increase in the services offered.

Of particular note is the construction of five district court buildings and their respective residences for the magistrates, which will soon be inaugurated in fulfillment of the plan for the development of the legal network adopted by the State Vision for Justice, a project that was launched in September of 2006.

In terms of judicial pluralism in the resolution of conflicts in the country, we have created a mechanism for articulation between the Judicial System and community courts, as guaranteed by the Law of Judicial Organization. Within this context, more than 1,600 community courts were revitalized, which will allow for greater efficiency in the resolution of conflicts in the communities.

As for the prison system, we were able to reduce the percentage of those detained while awaiting trial from fifty-three percent in 2005, to forty-two percent in 2006, and thirty-nine percent in 2007, which reflects a better coordination of activities in the work of our institutions of justice.

Still in this context, throughout the last few years, legislative reforms have been carried out for the purpose of unifying the prison system and

with the goal of standardizing its management at the same time as initiating practical actions, in the area of staffing and training, in order to guarantee the humanization of the prisons themselves, as well as the rehabilitation and reintroduction to society of the prisoners.

In terms of legislative production, we would like to point out the great impact that the whole of the legislation approved this year by this grand assembly will have on our society. Among these, the Law of Human Trafficking, the Law for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Children, and the Law for the Judicial Treatment of Minors stand out as examples.

We celebrate in many ways the passage of sixty years since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As we have emphasized at different times, this Declaration crystallizes and universalizes basic rights, such as the right to proper food, a life of dignity, healthcare, and the opportunity for education as extending to all of humanity. That is to say, the right to not be poor is a universal right. It is a right that is inalienable to us as a people and as a Nation.

Within the domain of the fight against corruption, actions are being taken to further our progress, as we have reinforced the institutional capacity of the system for the administration of justice. A result of this was the adoption of measures that are now underway for improving the efficiency of processes and guaranteeing the legality of the outcomes.

The fight against criminality constitutes one of the pillars of our Government, as we intend to provide an environment of order and security for persons and property. Our actions on this front are centered on the training and development of human resources.

Thus, more agents of law and order were trained in the Practical Police School of the Republic of Mozambique in Matalana and in the Academy of Police Sciences in Michafutene. Given the importance we attribute to continuing education for officers already on the job, we are continuing with the training of police officials by means of an Executive Program.

The teams trained in these courses will later participate in various types of activities, within

the framework of the reinforcement of our capacity to fulfill our promise to continuously improve the security of persons and property. They will also have the job of continuing to resolve the weaknesses that, unfortunately, are still found within our police institutions, particularly in the respect for regulations by the agents of law and order and in the safety of the police squads and units.

As we have affirmed on previous occasions and we reaffirm here, the maintenance of public order, safety, and peace should continue to be participatory, involving all and each of us, in our homes, in public places, and at our places of work.

We congratulate the positive performance of the Councils for Community Policing, which were installed across the country. Through their activities, they have consolidated the connection between the police and our people and have strengthened the capacity of the police to maintain order and public safety.

We reaffirm our promise to fight corruption and crime and those who offer empty promises of offering alternative mechanisms for the accumulation of wealth.

Esteemed Deputies,

Throughout this year, we have continued to build various infrastructures. Thus, we rebuilt several sections of roads whose return to service will facilitate the circulation of people and property. At the same time, the bridges at Luambala, Guijá, Moamba, Lugela, and over the Meluli River were completed, and their role in the stimulation of economic and social activities is recognized by all.

From Beira all the way to Moatize, 370 km of the Sena Line have been rebuilt. Today, train service for passengers and freight includes the districts of Dondo, Muanza, Cheringoma, and Marromeu, to the delight of our compatriots who, benefiting from these services, praised the efforts of their Government in improving their living conditions and were reassured that poverty is coming to an end in Mozambique.

Access to clean water constitutes one of the fundamental rights of our people. The projects we have completed have permitted us to increase the rate of coverage of the rural water supply

from 48.5 percent to the nearly fifty percent that we expect to reach by the end of this year. At the same time, our rate of coverage in urban areas increased from forty-two percent in 2007 to nearly fifty percent in 2008.

We have also made progress in the area of sanitation. In 2007, the rate of coverage was forty-seven percent for urban sanitation and thirty-nine percent for rural sanitation. By the third trimester of 2008, the rate of coverage was at nearly fifty percent for urban sanitation and forty percent for rural sanitation. It is estimated that by the end of 2008, the rate of coverage for urban sanitation will be fifty-one percent and for rural sanitation it will be forty-one percent.

In spite of this growth, there are still areas where there are severe shortages of drinking water. One of these areas is the Mueda Plain in Cabo Delgado.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Research activities in the area of hydrocarbons increased greatly as a result of the introduction of important legislative reforms. We announced a program of sustainable exploration of our resources and its inclusion in our program for the fight against poverty. This positioning informs the decision of our Government to increase transparency in the exploration of this natural wealth and use of the financial resources deriving from it.

In this way, we reiterate our promise to apply relevant legislation for the analysis and approval of the concession contracts, as well as for the rationalization of the fiscal incentives for investment projects in mining and petroleum exploration.

In the same way, we have already initiated the process that will culminate in our commitment to the Transparency Initiative for Extractive Industry. This process involves the creation of a coordination committee and the elaboration of a program to work toward the implementation of the initiative.

Our decision to adopt the Transparency Initiative for Extractive Industry has already been communicated to the International Secretariat of this organization in Oslo, Norway.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On initiating our mandate, we selected integrated rural development as one of our most important challenges. Since then, we have pledged ourselves to the rapid establishment of basic social and economic infrastructures in the district through a program of decentralization.

In this way, the district takes a predominant role in the planning of social and economic development on a local level.

The granting of seven million meticaís to each district brought a new social and economic reality to the local and central authorities, as well as the local communities—that is, a reality that contributed to the shift of rural development paradigms and created changes in the attitudes of all. In truth, prioritizing the projects to be financed from among the many that are presented in a way that is logical and transparent to all is a new exercise, not only for those who must decide, but also for those who will reap the benefits of these decisions. The debates that were generated within the Consultative Council in the process of reaching a consensus on the projects to be financed have transformed this agency into a school for sustainable development, a development that aims to be endogenous and that relies on the active participation of the communities themselves.

Given the importance of this foundation to the development of the District, we will continue to perfect the mechanisms of its management so as to increase its impact on the realization of the goals for which it was conceived.

The district will also come to rely on funds designated for the construction, repair, and maintenance of public infrastructures. It still relies on funding for the maintenance of roads.

A word of appreciation must go to the community authorities. They have performed an important role in the promotion and validation of our traditions and system of values, as well as the maintenance of peace and social harmony. We also recognize their role in the mobilization and organization of the population to participate in programs for the fight against poverty, on a local level, and to collaborate with the local administrative authorities. They are true leaders of our communities and interpreters of the messages of our decentralized and participatory Government.

We also congratulate our young people for the work they have done in the districts. The Declaration of Cheringoma, which came out of the second meeting of more than 500 young people from different corners of our beautiful Mozambique, reaffirmed their promise.

Continuing with our focus on the district level, the expansion of the State Financial Administration System (SISTAFE) in the first thirty-one districts of our beautiful Mozambique, as a complement to what has already been done in all of the provinces, constituted an important business opportunity that our bank, fortunately, has begun to explore in the districts.

Thus, the professors, nurses, public officials, and economic agents who offer their services and provide benefits to the state will be able to be paid directly through the banking system.

This decision, together with that to invest more resources in the districts, including the seven million, contributed to the viability of the Banking Policy that was launched in January of 2007. This is a policy designed to encourage the banks to open locations in the provinces and districts, a policy that also led the Bank of Mozambique to open branches in more provinces of our country, thus permitting better management of the process of financial intervention. Today, forty-four districts are covered by the network of branches of commercial banks, and the number of offices in operation throughout the country increased to 344.

The district continues to change, dear compatriots. It will change thanks to this multiplicity of interventions. Our fellow citizens in the districts may continue to have needs, but they have more dignity and they feel more involved in their own development. This is an achievement of the district itself that we should all celebrate.

Esteemed Deputies,

Our Government adopted and is about to implement the National Program for the Production of Food for the years 2008-2011, which consists of the accelerated implementation of the strategy for the Green Revolution in all of its objectives. The goal of this program is the progressive elimination of the nutritional deficit

and the country's dependence on imports for essential items such as rice, wheat, potatoes, cooking oils, poultry, and fish products. It is also the goal of the program to guarantee excess production for export.

While the level of production of corn and manioc is good, we are intensifying our efforts to reach ever increasing levels of production and productivity. We plan to increase our food reserves and, in the case of manioc, popularize its use as one of the ingredients for making bread.

Meanwhile, we continue, among other programs, with:

- Accelerated training and deployment of agricultural technicians;
- The use of draft animals; and
- The use of organic fertilizers.

In the search for partners for the Program for Food Production, we hosted on our native soil the twenty-ninth General Assembly of the International Science Council and the Annual Assembly of the Consulting Group for Agricultural Research.

It was an unparalleled moment for Mozambican scientists, in terms of establishing contacts, sharing experiences with specialists in various fields, and creating partnerships for the realization of joint projects in various areas of knowledge, with particular focus on the development of the Subsystem for Agrarian Research, one of the pillars of our Green Revolution project.

Implementing more agricultural campaigns each year is our greatest challenge, while making use of the existing water resources of our country. We refer, for example, to the irrigation systems at Ingúri and Chipembe in Cabo Delgado Province; Chicamba Real in Manica Province; Chokwé in Gaza Province; the banks of the Massingir in Gaza Province; and the Corumana in Maputo Province.

Esteemed Deputies,

As for our policies of Government, we again emphasize the open and inclusive presidency. As part of its implementation, we visited forty-two districts and sixteen administrative posts between

April 22nd and October 3rd. At these locations, we had the opportunity to interact with our wonderful people, precisely on the front in which they are engaged, that is, the front lines of the fight against poverty. We wanted to make contact on the ground once again with the challenges that they face, the solutions that they adopt, and the advice that they have for our Government.

In the realization of this program with all of its sensibilities, we had the privilege of observing how the feelings of self-esteem, national identity, and the validation of our patrimony and increasing reliance on its diverse existing resources have crystallized in the heart of our people. We can also testify to the enthusiasm, the engagement, and the commitment of our people to productive activities for the purpose of improving their living conditions.

We inaugurated socioeconomic establishments such as health clinics, schools, systems for supplying water, electrical sub-stations, bridges, dams, and communications infrastructures.

During our travels throughout the country, we proudly observed, among other things:

- An increase in agricultural production;
- Improvements to the living conditions of the population, which translated into the construction of homes using fired brick. They are spacious homes, with large rooms, ample windows and doors, and zinc plate roofs; and
- We also observed an increase in the number of associations to promote various economic activities, such as farming and cattle-raising, tailoring, tin-smithing, pottery, ceramics, and small-scale fishing.

Finally, we were able to see how our strategy for education and environmental communication and its respective action plan is being implemented in the districts. For example, the program of one student, one fruit tree per year is a part of this strategy. In the same way, the community forest project simply aims to provide firewood closer to the communities, while also promoting education on environmental issues.

Some of the lessons we learned along these travels includes the following:

- The administrator should continue to develop his leadership skills on a daily basis in order to assist his teams and the population in taking advantage of local resources and transforming their problems into challenges;
- Decentralization is a priority for all of the Mozambican Nation, as it is a necessary part of enabling the districts to take their place as centers of our development;
- The struggle against obstacles to our development such as bureaucratism, a laissez-faire spirit, and corruption and crime, as well as the endemic illnesses such as malaria and HIV/AIDS, should continue to form the focus of our governing agenda at the district as well as the national level.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have been proud to see significant advances in the improvement of the health conditions of our people and the growth in the number of health clinics. This growth is accompanied by an increase in the levels of scientific and practical knowledge on the part of the health professionals who staff these health clinics.

The Presidential initiatives on HIV/AIDS and on the Health of Women and Children have been replicated at the local level, generating discussion and raising awareness that each of us can do more to prevent AIDS and to reduce mortality levels among mothers and children.

In the past two years, we have seen an improvement in the control of malaria. In 2007 and 2008—and for the first time in the past twenty years—there has been a significant reduction in the number of cases of illness and death caused by malaria.

As we had the opportunity to inform this great assembly on the 13th of December of 2007, the results given on the 1st of December of this year indicate that there has been a reduction in the rate of infection with AIDS in Mozambique from 16.2 percent to sixteen percent. These are encouraging results, but still they are fairly

modest results, considering our efforts in the prevention of this pandemic. For this reason, the Government made the decision to create a study group on the prevention of infection with HIV, with the mission of systematically identifying the epidemiological and sociological factors that continue to drive the epidemic.

As we reported on the 1st of December of this year, the conclusion of this working group was that we should distinguish two types of factors that influence the spread of this illness. On one hand, there is the existence of sexual relations with multiple partners and without or with little access to protection with condoms. On the other, there is the influence of factors of an economic, cultural, and social nature.

Guided by the conclusions of this group, we launched the Strategy to Accelerate the Prevention of Infection with HIV on the 1st of December, a plan that was approved on the 25th of November by the Council of Ministers.

As for the fight against HIV, we continue to provide treatment to the infected and have extended these services to all of the 128 districts of our country. When we addressed you, the deputies, on the 13th of December of 2007, we had nearly 88,000 patients on anti-retroviral treatment. On the 31st of October of 2008, we had nearly 121,000 patients and our projection is for 127,000 by the 31st of December of this year. Thanks to the expansion of this service, AIDS is no longer seen by the infected as an inevitable death sentence, rather it can be compared to chronic illnesses such as arterial hypertension and diabetes.

The secret that allows our compatriots to treat this illness as a chronic condition is its early detection. For this reason, we encourage increased testing, whether voluntary or routine.

We are also proceeding with actions to mitigate its impact, providing nutritional support, clothing, school supplies, domestic utensils and hygiene products to our compatriots who are living with HIV/AIDS. We have also supported the creation of conditions so that our own compatriots will be able to engage in activities to provide income for their self-sufficiency.

The National Campaign for a Healthy Environment and the Promotion of Hygiene will run from March 1st to December 31st of this year. It is a campaign to enlist the participation of individual citizens, as well as public and private institutions. In addition to contributing to a change in attitudes, this campaign intends to make improvements, particularly in terms of the treatment and management of solid waste. In the meantime, we are well aware that there is much to do in the area of cleaning the environment and promoting hygiene. For this reason we must all—the Government, the private sector, unions, religious organizations and the rest of civil society—assume that this campaign is only a starting point for priority actions in the next few years.

It is in the public domain that outbreaks of cholera are associated with the conditions of hygiene and the cleanliness of the environment. At the present time, this illness affects the Cuamba district in Niassa Province; the City of Nampula; the districts of Alto Molócuè, Gurué, and Gilé in Zambézia Province; the City of Tete and the district of Changara, in Tete Province; the districts of Guro and Mussorize, in Manica Province; the district of Inharrime in Inhambane Province; the Machava Sede, Tsalala, Matola A, Matola H, T3, and Patrice Lumumba sections; and the districts of Manhiça and Moamba in Maputo Province, as well as some sections of the City of Maputo.

It is with great pride that we can announce that we now have many more healthcare teams in Mozambique that perform highly specialized surgical interventions and operate high precision equipment, which was acquired by our Government and installed in the major hospital units in the country: namely in Nampula, Beira, and Maputo. This was also the year in which the first open heart surgeries were performed by the National Health Service and the first Hemodialysis Unit began operation. Thanks to these advances, fewer Mozambicans will have to leave their country in search of treatment.

On the 29th of January of 2006, we addressed the Nation and the world to report that in all of our provinces there are cases of leprosy and that

it was in Cabo-Delgado, Niassa, Nampula, Zambézia, Manica, and Sofala where this illness was still, unfortunately, a public health problem. We urged all of Mozambican society to participate in changing this situation by the end of 2008. Today, esteemed deputies, we can inform the Nation and the world that the year 2008 will be recorded in the history of health in Mozambique as the YEAR THAT LEPROSY WAS ELIMINATED. Leprosy has ceased to be a public health problem in our country. This is progress in Mozambique. These are the Mozambicans who will build a better future for themselves.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Education is an indispensable means for the affirmation and integration of the individual in social and economic life. It is also a basic instrument that can enable the country to confront the challenges of development.

The instructor is the key piece in the training of teams, which is why the Government continues to pay particular attention to the education and training activities of this group of professionals. Thus, we have in the country twenty-three training institutions, of which six were created from local initiatives in Pemba, Alto Molócue, Morrumbala, Chibata-Chimoio, Vilanculo, and Inhamissa.

Our achievements in the education sector are complemented by the partnerships we sought and established with the private sector and other organizations of civil society. In this way, we were able to establish the Dom Bosco Institute in the City of Maputo, and the Institute for Education and Technology of Changanane, in Maputo province, as well as to begin construction of the Professional School of Mabote, in Inhambane province, and the Professional Institute located in Beluluane, Maputo province.

The reform of professional education has gained momentum with the conception and elaboration of a set of instruments for their operationalization. These important instruments of reform will require a full and continuous discussion with the instructors and with the productive sector, as well as with the students themselves.

We continue to expand higher education, with the goal of reaching all of the national territory. Thus, Unilúrio, based in the city of Nampula, created the faculty of engineering and natural sciences in the city of Pemba this year, and their next step will be the creation of the faculty of agricultural science in Unango, Niassa, in 2009. Conditions have also been met for the opening of Unizambeze, based in the City of Beira, in 2009.

With this new university, the country will have a total of twenty-six institutions of higher education, of which thirteen will be public and the others private. Even more important is the fact that these institutions of higher education will reach a growing number of districts, either through their physical location or through extension and research programs. This activity is complemented by the growing and enthusiastic movement of students to the districts.

This is another way of validating our national independence. This is another way of demonstrating to ourselves that it was worthwhile to fight to become the masters of our own destinies.

It is not only the Mozambicans who applaud the results of the development of human resources in Mozambique. Recently, we were the recipients of the prize of the Afro-American Institute in New York, in recognition of this great work in the training of personnel.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The affirmation and validation of our national identity continue to be our priorities.

Thus, from the 11th to the 18th of July, Xai-Xai will host the Fifth National Festival of Culture, an event which involves artists from all parts of our beautiful Mozambique, who will bring to the capital of Gaza their song, dance, cooking, and various cultural and artistic products.

The Festival was a high point in the exaltation of our cultural diversity and national unity, and the reaffirmation of the fact that together we will continue to build our beloved country, finding inspiration in our heroic and glorious past.

While the emotions of the Festival at Xai-Xai are still echoing, the Mozambican Nation will turn its attentions to Quissico where, on the 30th

of August, we will have a national celebration of the proclamation by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) that named the Timbila as a Masterpiece of the Intangible Heritage of Humanity. This instrument will then join this prestigious gallery of works of world heritage under the protection of UNESCO, alongside our Nyau dancers, whose ceremony of national proclamation took place in Ulóngue, Tete Province, on the 20th of April of 2007.

This event contributed to the reinforcement of our self-esteem, and pride in our artistic and cultural creation. It served to highlight the fact that this Pearl of the East has a valuable contribution to make to the rest of humanity.

Throughout this year, in all the length and breadth of our native soil there were festivals of various descriptions, including music and cooking, which were organized by public and private institutions at the local and national level.

Some of these events are regular and have a multidisciplinary character, attracting citizens from different parts of Mozambique and the world. These festivals have an incomparable value for the promotion of mutual understanding among Mozambicans, the promotion of the values of country and national unity, and the projection of the good name of this country of heroes.

Reflecting on our rich cultural diversity and taking into account the work of our people for their guests, as well as flattering references to this Pearl of the East, particularly in the area of tourism, our Government created the Mozambique Brand, whose concept is a "Fascinating Destination." The Mozambique Brand is the fruit of national introspection and of the image that the world has of Mozambique and its wonderful people.

On the 11th of April of this year, we celebrated, dear compatriots, thirty years of the National Journalists' Union. At this time, we congratulated ourselves on the qualitative growth of the professionals of social communication, which was highlighted by the increase and diversification of the national and international press awards they earned. We also congratulated ourselves on the

qualitative growth of both the agencies and the number of professionals of social communication, as well as on the greater diversification of the property of the national agencies for social communication. Above all, we celebrated the expansion of our agencies of social communication to the districts and the greater frequency of articles on the achievements of these administrative units of the national territory.

Still on the topic of social communication, we would like to remind this grand assembly that our capital city was the central stage of the celebrations of the World Freedom of the Press Day. This ceremony was attended by the General Director of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization.

The realization of this world event on our native soil highlights, also to ourselves, that in Mozambique, freedom of the press and freedom of expression are strong values, as demonstrated by the quantitative and qualitative growth of the agencies of social communication.

Throughout this year, Esteemed Deputies, we continued with our actions for the promotion of gender equality, the economic empowerment of women, the protection of women's rights, and the fight against domestic violence.

We believe that women should be continuously engaged in the implementation of our national agenda in the Fight Against Poverty as a part of their emancipation.

We continue with the implementation of assistance programs for children, the disabled, and the elderly when they are in situations of vulnerability, providing them with the means necessary for a life with dignity.

Thus, nearly 180,000 children in difficult situations throughout the country received assistance, whether within the communities, in public and private elementary schools, or even in shelters. Nearly one hundred homes for children in difficult situations were built as well.

In the entire country, more than 2,000 of our compatriots of advanced age received social assistance in Centers for Support of the Aged and in open community centers.

In the area of basic social protection, we proceeded with the implementation of specific programs for assistance and social development to directly benefit the disabled with or without the ability to work. Several programs were implemented for this purpose, including those for the generation of income.

In the area of social cooperation, the decentralization of tripartite social dialogue at the level of the provincial capitals resulted in the installation of the Forums for Consultation and Social Cooperation. We encourage the consolidation of these forums at the level of the provincial capitals as a means to create spaces where dialogue can facilitate the resolution of daily problems.

The introduction of extrajudicial mechanisms for the resolution of employment issues at the level of the provincial capitals by means of the creation of the respective commissions is intended to provide the citizen with a faster alternative for the resolution of conflicts that arise from working relationships at the level of our businesses.

We were able to substantially reduce the waiting periods for the payment of funeral subsidies, pensions, and other benefits due to the beneficiaries. We also increased the minimum pension, which contributed to an increase in the income of pensioners on the order of thirty percent. Still in the area of improving the services offered, it is notable that in 2008 the payment of pensions in some areas of the country has begun to be paid through the banking institutions.

Esteemed Deputies,

The global fuel crisis has had a direct consequence on the emergence of the cereals crisis. These crises have had repercussions in the increase of the cost of living on a global scale, which consequently has been felt in our country.

These crises demanded an additional allocation of the Government's reserves to currency and, combined with the natural disasters and the climate changes, had a disastrous impact on the human and socioeconomic dimension of the country.

The sectors which were most affected by the crisis are agriculture, transportation, the manufacturing industry, and the production of electricity.

The Government found ways to address this crisis. One of the clearest examples was the temporary accommodation within the fiscal framework of the transportation subsidy, as well as the resources made available to support the victims of the disasters.

In spite of these crises and their effects and those of the emergency programs we had to create, we anticipate an increase of 6.5 percent in the Gross National Product.

We congratulate all of our people, the principal creators of this result.

Esteemed Deputies,

Our external actions consisted not only in the reinforcement of friendships, solidarity, and cooperation with other countries, peoples, and international organizations, but also in the consolidation of the positive image that the country enjoys on the international level.

It also consisted in the mobilization of material and financial resources for the implementation of various projects and programs in the area of the fight against poverty, as well as the attraction of external investments to the country.

We made visits to Chile, Cuba, Denmark, Finland, and the Netherlands. On our native soil, we hosted high foreign dignitaries, among them Heads of State and Government of brother countries and friends, including the following:

- His Excellency Nong Duc Manh, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam;
- His Excellency Cavaco Silva, President of the Republic of Portugal;
- His Excellency Lula da Silva, President of the Federal Republic of Brazil; and
- His Excellency Jakaya Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania.

In these meetings with the Heads of State and Government whom we visited or who visited us, our mutual promise to strengthen and diversify bilateral cooperation was reaffirmed.

Still in the area of the reinforcement of our international partnerships, we participated in various international forums, including:

- The Twenty-Eighth Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Community for the Development of Southern Africa, the SADC;
- The Fifth and the Sixth Assemblies of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union;
- The Fourth International Conference in Tokyo on the Development of Africa, the TICAD;
- The Seventh Summit of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries;
- The Sixty-Third General Assembly of the United Nations;
- The First Global Forum of Leaders on HIV/AIDS, and Tuberculosis, of the United Nations;
- The Eleventh Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of the Islamic Conference; and
- The Eighth Conference of the Leon Sullivan Foundation.

In these events we made our contribution to the engagement of the international community in the maintenance of the peace, stability, and development of our peoples and countries.

We congratulate the realization in Maputo, of:

- the Forty-Third Meeting of the African Development Bank Group;
- the main ceremonies of the World Freedom of the Press Day;
- the International Conference on Women;
- the Twenty-Ninth General Assembly of the International Council on Science;
- the Annual Assembly of the Consulting Group on Agricultural Research;
- the Fifth Conference on Life in the Countryside; and
- the Ninth Conference of the Churches in All of Africa.

Mozambique is proud to be the birthplace of the final declarations and resolutions of these international meetings. The participants in these events will testify that this Pearl of the East is

famous for the warm hospitality of its people and that our visitors always want to return here. Above all, the participants in these events had direct contact with our reality and shared their experiences with our teams. Conditions were created for our compatriots to create forms and mechanisms to follow through with the promises made with the other participants.

For the privileged position that the African continent and the Southern Region of Africa occupy in our external politics, we give special attention to the political processes that are underway. It was in this context that we joined the Electoral Monitoring Missions of the SADC in Angola, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe.

Mozambique has been making its contribution, in the context of the SADC and of our agency for cooperation in the areas of defense and security, of which it is vice-president, with the goal of a positive outcome in the negotiation process in Zimbabwe, mediated by the Former President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki.

As a member of the African Union, we have been contributing to the maintenance of peace and stability in Darfur, in Somalia, in the dispute between Chad and the Sudan, as well as in the border conflicts between Djibouti and Eritrea.

This year we will commemorate the Day of the SADC in a special way, with the formal launch of the Free Trade Zone, an event which represents a historic step toward the materialization of Regional Economic Integration.

With the establishment of the Free Trade Zone, opportunities will open for increases in commercial trade and greater generation of income, which will contribute to the improvement of the well-being of our people.

Esteemed Deputies,

A look back at the year 2008 brings us to conclude that, in spite of the inevitable constraints which bind us and the adverse global economic situation:

- National Unity, Peace, and Stability, as well as multiparty democracy are strengthened every day;

- The performance of our public institutions produced positive results in social and economic terms;
- The district continues to change and take its place as the central focus of our fight against poverty;
- The prestige of Mozambique in the community of nations continues to grow; and
- The friendships and cooperative relationships with our partners for development brought positive results for the implementation of our National Agenda for the Fight Against Poverty.

This allows us to categorically and unequivocally affirm, Esteemed Deputies, that 2001 was crowned with successes, and that, as a consequence of these positive results, the STATE OF THE NATION IS GOOD.

Esteemed Deputies,

We renew our commitment to continue implementing our Social and Economic Program, the key mechanism for the realization of our National Agenda for the Fight Against Poverty.

At this point, dear compatriots, we would like to express our sense of satisfaction in addressing the Mozambican Nation just a few hours from our Family Day and Christmas. We wish, from this podium, and through the Deputies, to wish all of our people a Happy Family Day and our Christian brothers a Merry Christmas. Throughout this holiday season may we maintain our civic duty, brotherhood, and an atmosphere of order and tranquility and respect for our institutions.

To you, our Esteemed Deputies, we offer wishes for a happy return to your electoral districts and the family environment. We also offer our hopes for a year 2009 that will be full of prosperity.

Thank you very much for your attention.

MOÇAMBIQUE

Comunicação de Sua Excelência

Armando Emílio Guebuza,

Presidente da República sobre a

Situação Geral da Nação

Maputo, Mozambique

24 Dezembro de 2008

Sua Excelência Senhor Presidente da Assembleia da República;

Excelentíssima Senhora Primeira – Ministra;

Venerando Presidente do Tribunal Supremo;

Venerando Presidente do Tribunal

Administrativo;

Venerando Presidente do Conselho

Constitucional;

Digníssimo Procurador-Geral da República;

Senhores Membros do Conselho de Ministros;

Senhores Vice Ministros;

Ilustres Membros do Corpo Diplomático;

Senhores Deputados da Assembleia da República;

Senhores Dirigentes e Membros de Partidos

Políticos;

Senhores Dirigentes e Membros de Organizações da Sociedade Civil;

Distintos Convidados;

Minhas Senhoras, Meus Senhores:

É para nós um privilégio, dirigirmo-nos a esta Magna Casa do Povo para, em cumprimento do disposto pela alínea b) do artigo 159 da Constituição da República de Moçambique, apresentarmos a Informação Sobre a Situação Geral da Nação ao nosso Maravilhoso Povo através de Vós, Senhores Deputados.

Deste pódio, saudamos todo o Povo Moçambicano, do Rovuma ao Maputo e do Índico ao Zumbo, pela forma resoluta como se tem empenhado nas diferentes acções da Luta contra a Pobreza e pelo desenvolvimento da nossa Pátria Amada.

Saudamos, de forma particular, os munícipes dos 43 territórios autárquicos, pela sua activa participação no processo de aprofundamento da nossa já vibrante democracia multipartidária. A sua afluência às urnas, o seu civismo e o seu respeito pelas instituições e pela Lei e Ordem, são atitudes exemplares que a todos nós nos orgulham, como Nação. Uma vez mais, demos, a nós próprios e ao mundo, as razões porque somos exemplo de Cultura de Paz, de estabilidade, de Unidade Nacional, de inclusão, de democracia multipartidária e de desenvolvimento.

Saudamos igualmente a Selecção Nacional de Futebol, os *Mambas*, por se ter qualificado para a última fase do apuramento para o Campeonato Africano das Nações, em Angola, e para o Campeonato do Mundo de Futebol, na África do Sul. A equipa de todos nós está entre as 20 melhores selecções de África o que eleva a nossa auto-estima e o orgulho de sermos filhos deste belo Moçambique. Com este sucesso, os *Mambas* justificam as razões por detrás da construção, pelo nosso Governo, do Estádio Nacional de Futebol no Zimpeto.

A nossa Pátria Amada será representante de África em campeonatos mundiais de clubes de basquetebol. Esta honra e glória foram-nos trazidas por duas equipas que nas edições deste ano se sagraram campeãs. A primeira é a da Universidade Politécnica, que conquistou, em Kampala, este direito de representar África no campeonato mundial das instituições do ensino superior, a ter lugar, próximo ano em Belgrado, na Sérvia. A segunda equipa é a dos femininos de basquetebol do Grupo Desportivo ao sagrar-se campeã africana, em Nairobi, ganhando assim o direito de representar o nosso Continente nos mundiais de Samara, na Rússia. Ambas equipas conquistam estes títulos pela segunda vez consecutiva, constituindo orgulho para todos nós.

Endereçamos uma saudação especial a Vós, Senhores Deputados, legítimos representantes do Povo, pelo nível de produção legislativa ao longo deste ano. Esta é, para nós, mais uma demonstração do vosso empenho em contribuir no desenvolvimento e fortalecimento do nosso Estado de Direito.

Senhores Deputados,

Como dissemos em Cóbue, na sua extensão e largura, Moçambique é, caros compatriotas, Pátria de Heróis. Ao longo deste ano, concebemos e realizámos programas de consagração e de exaltação de alguns desses melhores filhos de Moçambique.

Por ocasião do septuagésimo quinto aniversário natalício do Presidente Samora Moisés Machel, deslocámo-nos a Chilembene para, com o devido simbolismo, exaltarmos a vida e obra deste lutador incansável por um Moçambique soberano, unido, e desenvolvido. Interpretando a estima e admiração que o Povo Moçambicano nutre por este carismático líder e irreticente nacionalista, proclamador da nossa Independência Nacional e nosso primeiro Chefe de Estado, o nosso Governo decidiu atribuir à sua terra natal, Chilembene, o estatuto de Património Cultural. Que este torrão de Moçambique faça brotar noutros moçambicanos a sua heroicidade e contribua para cultivar os valores de integridade e de amor à Pátria.

Homenageámos, igualmente, destacados jovens do 25 de Setembro, tombados há 40 anos em plena luta de libertação Nacional. Estas cerimónias tiveram como ponto de partida a homenagem a Filipe Samuel Magaia, em 2006, e este ano, recordámos a vida e obra de Tomás Nduda, John Issa, Mateus Sansão Muthemba, José Macamo e, há dois dias, Paulo Samuel Kankhomba.

À nossa *Menina de Ouro*, Maria de Lurdes Mutola, dedicamos uma especial homenagem em reconhecimento dos seus feitos durante duas décadas de carreira desportiva. Ícone do atletismo mundial, durante a sua brilhante carreira, ela fez desfraldar a nossa bandeira nacional multicolor nos mastros mais representativos das altas provas do planeta e afirmou-se como a incontestável Estrela dos 800 metros. Em reconhecimento destes extraordinários e incomensuráveis feitos, atribuímos-lhes o Título Honorífico de Heróina do Trabalho da República de Moçambique. Com esta distinção, pretendemos que o seu exemplo e conquistas sirvam de modelo e inspiração para os desportistas nacionais e outros compatriotas.

Mais uma vez, sublinhamos que de todos os cantos deste nosso belo Moçambique emergem

os melhores filhos de Moçambique, em resultado da sua persistência e do trabalho abnegado. Esta é, na verdade, uma Pátria de Heróis.

Minhas Senhoras, Meus Senhores,

No ano passado, nesta Magna Casa, prestámos homenagem às vítimas da tragédia ocorrida a 22 de Março de 2007, com as explosões do Paiol de Malhazine.

Na sequência dessa tragédia, desencadeámos o apoio social às pessoas e famílias vítimas dessas explosões, com a realização de cerimónias fúnebres, assistência médica e medicamentosa, atribuição de subsídios por morte e de pensões de sobrevivência e de invalidez.

Continuamos a prestar o devido apoio social e acompanhamento das vítimas cujo estado clínico requer ainda cuidados especiais das nossas unidades hospitalares. Foram construídas 314 casas e reconstruídas 11.062, estando próxima a conclusão deste processo.

A transferência do paiol para local seguro e distante das zonas de aglomerados populacionais, foi levada a cabo em tempo útil, e decidimos que idênticas acções fossem replicadas nas províncias onde existem estas infra-estruturas militares.

Serão desencadeadas acções para que no espaço que era ocupado pelos paióis passe a funcionar o pulmão verde da cidade.

Nos meses de Maio e Junho deste ano, registámos, com muita consternação, a ocorrência de manifestações de xenofobia na África do Sul. Estes tristes acontecimentos, que atingiram maioritariamente cidadãos dos países da SADC, residentes na África do Sul, saldaram-se em perdas de vidas humanas, tendo igualmente forçado mais de 40.000 moçambicanos a retornar ao País.

Foi um desafio ao empenho dos povos da África Austral por uma convivência pacífica, sã e profícua, no quadro do já avançado processo de Integração Regional, sob a égide da SADC.

Desde o momento em que eclodiu esta crise, o nosso Governo desdobrou a sua máquina para acompanhá-la e para prestar a devida assistência humanitária e transporte aos compatriotas que queriam, voluntariamente, regressar à sua Pátria Amada, onde também tinham sido criadas

condições logísticas para a sua recepção e transporte para as suas zonas de origem.

Queremos manifestar o nosso apreço e orgulho pelas manifestações espontâneas de solidariedade, de moçambicano para moçambicano, para com os afectados. Saudamos ainda os apoios que nos chegaram da SADC e do resto do mundo.

Minhas Senhoras, Meus Senhores,

A sublinhar o impacto negativo das mudanças climáticas, várias regiões do nosso País foram fustigadas por diferentes calamidades naturais. Registámos cheias nos vale do Zambeze, Búzi e Save e o ciclone Jókwe em Nampula, calamidades que afectaram mais de trezentos mil compatriotas nossos e provocaram a destruição de casas, machambas bem como infra-estruturas sociais e económicas.

Registámos, igualmente, seca nos distritos de Vilanculo, Massinga, Funhalouro, Inhassoro, Homoíne, Inharrime e Pande, na Província de Inhambane, Guijá, Chigubo, Massingir e Mabalane, na Província de Gaza e, Moamba, Matutuíne e Namaacha, na Província do Maputo. Esta calamidade afectou mais de 100.000 pessoas, particularmente em termos de segurança alimentar e nutricional.

Enquanto a seca continua a afectar regiões do sul de Moçambique, chuvas fustigam Cabo Delgado, Niassa, Nampula, Tete e Zambézia.

O Rio Zambeze já atingiu níveis de alerta, pelo que apelamos à população que se encontra no vale deste rio para tomar as medidas preventivas regressando para as suas casas nos bairros de reassentamento nas zonas altas e acatar as instruções das autoridades.

Registámos ainda queimadas descontroladas de grandes proporções nas províncias de Sofala e Manica que se saldaram em vítimas humanas e materiais. A monitoria contínua dos focos de queimadas descontroladas no País, feita pelo Governo, com base na informação cartográfica digitalizada, demonstra que este fenómeno continua um grande desafio para toda a Nação Mocambicana.

Perante as calamidades naturais e outros infortúnios, o Governo agiu, de forma atempada,

usando os recursos internos para as operações de resgate e de evacuação. Coube também ao Governo a responsabilidade de orientar as acções subsequentes de mitigação e de coordenação das intervenções da sociedade civil, do sector privado e dos nossos parceiros de desenvolvimento.

Temos estado a demonstrar ao nosso Povo que as mudanças climáticas continuarão a induzir fenómenos hidrometeorológicos extremos, mais frequentes ainda, que resultarão em secas, cheias, ciclones e mesmo abalos sísmicos. Por isso, estão em implementação programas estruturantes que visam transformar as calamidades e a nossa vulnerabilidade ao seu efeito em oportunidades para o nosso desenvolvimento. Para além das actividades de formação em prevenção e gestão de calamidades, expandimos a rede nacional das estações sismográficas necessárias para o controlo das respectivas actividades e a delimitação de zonas de risco, destacando a construção de quatro novas estações sismográficas em Mueda, Mocuba, Massingir e Tete.

No mesmo quadro das medidas estruturantes, podemos destacar:

- O nascimento, com a participação dos próprios afectados, de bairros em zonas altas, com casas feitas de tijolo queimado, janelas e portas amplas e quartos espaçosos. São bairros desenhados para terem, dentro de si, a escola, a unidade sanitária e outras infra-estruturas necessárias para uma vida melhor do nosso Povo;
- A implementação do Regulamento da Lei de Ordenamento Territorial também contribui para estas acções de desenvolvimento. Com efeito, este instrumento visa orientar o desenvolvimento harmonioso do País, a partir dos Planos de uso de Terra e de Ordenamento das cidades e vilas e o melhoramento dos assentamentos informais; e
- O estabelecimento de Centros de Recursos de Uso Múltiplo nos distritos de Chigubo, Massangena e Mabote deve ser visto no mesmo prisma. Trata-se de locais que, desenvolvendo actividades que induzem a

auto-estima, transformam as vítimas da seca em protagonista do seu próprio desenvolvimento. Assim, estas comunidades identificam os desafios que a seca lhes traz e as soluções que têm que adoptar para superar esses desafios. Das soluções adoptadas podemos destacar as técnicas de armazenamento de água, as tecnologias de agricultura de conservação e a secagem da couve, do tomate, das folhas de mandioca e de outras leguminosas. Podemos destacar ainda a produção de licores e doces, a partir de frutos exóticos.

Só um Povo heróico como o nosso é capazes destas realizações!

Senhores Deputados,

As reformas em curso no Sector Público visam melhorar a prestação de serviços ao cidadão. Pretendemos ver cada vez mais fortalecida a capacidade de acção, a eficácia e a eficiência dos órgãos locais, com enfoque no Distrito. Por conseguinte, queremos que a nossa Função Pública esteja cada vez mais fortalecida e que promova e valorize a sua função de prestar serviço ao público e de cultivar a Boa Governação.

Neste domínio, de entre os resultados que alcançámos, destacamos:

- A aprovação de 147 Quadros de Pessoal, incluindo os dos 128 Distritos do nosso País, e a afectação de cerca de mil técnicos médios e superiores pelos Distritos;
- A aprovação da Política Salarial que vai contribuir para a retenção, mobilidade e atracção de quadros para o nosso Aparelho de Estado, com particular destaque para o Distrito;
- A revisão da função e requisitos do Cargo do Secretário Permanente Central, cujo preenchimento passa a ser por concurso, vem fortalecer os princípios de meritocracia que defendemos para a nossa função pública;
- A entrada em funcionamento do Sistema Nacional de Gestão de Documentos e Arquivos do Estado, que está a contribuir para a preservação da memória institucional no nosso Aparelho de Estado;

- O alargamento dos serviços prestados nos Balcões de Atendimento Único, através da transferência, em todas as capitais provinciais, de mais competências de licenciamento para estas instituições; e
- O estabelecimento de 20 Centros Multimédia Comunitários em sedes de Distrito e postos administrativos, que popularizam assim as tecnologias de informação e comunicação.

Continuamos comprometidos com a materialização dos direitos dos funcionários e agentes do Estado. Por isso, realizámos, desde 2007, mais de quarenta e duas mil promoções e progressões;

Temos estado a imprimir maior rigor ainda na responsabilização das lideranças e dos funcionários por forma a que na função pública imperem a integridade e os valores éticos e deontológicos. Assim, foram instaurados dois mil e quatrocentos e quinze processos que resultaram em oitocentas e treze expulsões e demissões do Aparelho de Estado.

Esta magna casa aprovou, por unanimidade e aclamação, a Lei do Estatuto Geral dos Funcionários e Agentes do Estado. Este instrumento, para além das grandes inovações que visam melhorar as relações laborais no Aparelho de Estado, estabelece a plataforma para a sindicalização na Função Pública.

Queremos saudar, de forma efusiva, todos os funcionários e agentes do Estado por esta conquista.

Estas reformas têm merecido elogios dentro do nosso País pois o seu impacto é visível na vida dos cidadãos. Fora das nossas fronteiras, estas reformas também são referência. É neste prisma que deve ser visto o prémio africano da função pública que conquistámos e as solicitações que temos recebido para partilhar a nossa experiência e resultados.

Senhores Deputados,

As reformas em curso têm como um outro objectivo, o apoio ao empresariado nacional para que seja mais forte, dinâmico e competitivo. No âmbito da simplificação de procedimentos e

melhoria dos serviços nas instituições públicas, introduzimos serviços com ligação electrónica. Esta inovação trouxe um grande impulso à reforma do Sector Público, tendo reduzido os tempos de espera para a obtenção de serviços, por parte dos cidadãos.

Ainda no quadro das reformas, adoptámos várias medidas que favorecem a actividade empresarial no País. Damos destaque às seguintes:

- A Estratégia para Melhoria do Ambiente de Negócios e a respectiva Matriz de Implementação;
- O Decreto de Licenciamento Simplificado;
- A estratégia para o Sector Têxtil e de Confecções;
- A estratégia para a Promoção de Pequenas e Médias Empresas;
- A revisão dos Códigos dos Impostos sobre o Valor Acrescentado, sobre o Rendimento de Pessoas Singulares e Rendimento de Pessoas Colectivas;
- A redução da Taxa Aduaneira Máxima para 20%, para Países Membros da SADC;
- A aprovação da Lei dos Tribunais Fiscais;
- A criação das secções comerciais nos Tribunais Judiciais das províncias Nampula, de Sofala e na Cidade de Maputo; e
- A introdução do Programa do Inovador Moçambicano.

A expansão da energia a mais localidades do nosso belo Moçambique, também contribui para a dinamização da actividade económica, desde os pequenos negócios aos das médias e grandes empresas. No mesmo quadro, a electrificação também dinamiza a actividade social permitindo a introdução de aulas no período nocturno, refrigeração de vacinas e outros medicamentos, o bombeamento regular da água e a realização de actividades culturais, bem como a criação de condições para o uso de televisão, do computador e o acesso à *internet*.

O uso de grupo de geradores e sistemas de painéis solares é a alternativa que estamos a adoptar para as localidades onde Cahora Bassa ainda está por chegar.

Este ano Massingir, Morrumbene, Massinga, Cherigoma, Marromeu, Guro, Changara, Moma, Chiúre, Montepuez e Mágoè gritaram com o resto da Nação “Cahora Bassa é nossa”.

Senhores Deputados,

O turismo afirma-se como uma das indústrias que regista crescente atracção de investimentos, nacionais e estrangeiros, contribuindo para a criação de mais postos de trabalho e para uma substancial contribuição para a economia.

Alguns dos resultados mais expressivos das nossas acções referem-se ao estabelecimento de infra-estruturas turísticas quer na costa e nas nossas ilhas paradisíacas quer no interior e nos parques e áreas de conservação.

Registámos ainda:

- A entrada de cerca de 771.000 turistas ao nosso País e o crescimento da capacidade de alojamento para mais de 17.000 camas;
- Registámos ainda, a arrecadação de receitas na ordem de 163 milhões de dólares americanos, o que corresponde a um crescimento de 17%, bem como; e
- A criação de mais de 37.000 novos postos de trabalho, 50% dos quais ocupados por mulheres.

Para o aproveitamento das oportunidades que serão trazidas pelo Mundial de Futebol 2010, o Governo aprovou uma estratégia que contempla o desenvolvimento de infra-estruturas diversas em diferentes pontos do nosso Moçambique.

A 24 de Maio último, esta Pátria de Heróis celebrou a admissão da Baía de Pemba, a maior Baía de África, para o Clube das Baías Mais Belas do Mundo. Hoje, Pemba, como o resto desta Pérola do Índico, inscreve com maior destaque o seu nome nas rotas do turismo mundial.

O Parque Nacional da Gorongosa começa a ocupar o seu lugar como fonte de atracção de turistas. Com efeito, os investimentos em curso, estão a criar as condições para que este Parque como os outros parques nacionais, destaque a vantagem comparativa do nosso País nesta área, isto é, praias e ilhas paradisíacas, na costa, e fauna

e flora no interior.

Temos estado a desenvolver acções que visam assegurar que as nossas comunidades derivem maiores benefícios das chegadas de turísticas e da actividade turística nesta Pérola do Índico. O emprego, a exibição de artes e cultura e a venda de obras de artesanato e comidas típicas são alguns dos exemplos. Porém, a participação directa dos nossos compatriotas em projectos de gestão turística deve continuar a crescer.

Minhas Senhoras e Meus Senhores,

O acesso à Justiça e ao Direito, premissa importante na garantia dos direitos e liberdades fundamentais do cidadão, mereceu grande atenção na prestação dos serviços de justiça, especialmente aqueles que, pela sua natureza, incidem directamente na vida dos cidadãos. Isto tem sido possível graças às reformas estruturais tendentes à organização judiciária e simplificação dos procedimentos, melhoria de desempenho e alargamento da rede das instituições de justiça até aos distritos.

O Instituto de Patrocínio e Assistência Jurídica, como garante da provisão da assistência jurídica e judiciária aos cidadãos carenciados foi revitalizado, de modo a aproximar os seus serviços cada vez mais ao nosso povo. No quadro da extensão da rede de assistência jurídica foram estabelecidas delegações em todas as províncias do País e garantida a cobertura de 57 distritos.

Por outro lado, na extensão da rede judiciária destaca-se a mobilização e alocação de recursos financeiros para garantir a realização de investimentos em infra-estruturas, o que permitiu incrementar os serviços prestados.

Nota de destaque vai para a construção de 5 Palácios Distritais de Justiça e respectivas residências de Magistrados, a serem inaugurados brevemente em concretização do conceito de desenvolvimento da rede de justiça adoptada pela Visão do Estado sobre a Justiça, projecto que lançámos em Setembro de 2006.

No quadro do pluralismo jurídico na resolução de conflitos no País, foi criado o mecanismo de articulação entre o Judicial e a Justiça comunitária, garantido através da Lei da

Organização Judiciária. Neste contexto, foram revitalizados mais de 1600 Tribunais Comunitários, o que vai concorrer para uma maior fluidez na resolução dos conflitos nas comunidades.

No âmbito do sistema prisional conseguimos reduzir a percentagem dos detidos a aguardar julgamento de 53%, em 2005, para 42%, em 2006, e 39%, em 2007, o que reflecte uma melhor conjugação de acções do trabalho das instituições da Justiça.

Ainda neste contexto, ao longo dos últimos anos foram realizadas reformas legislativas visando a unificação do sistema prisional com o objectivo de padronizar a sua gestão ao mesmo tempo que se iniciaram as acções práticas, no domínio da ocupação e formação, tendo como fim garantir a humanização dos estabelecimentos prisionais, bem como a reabilitação e reinserção social dos reclusos.

Na produção legislativa, gostaríamos de assinalar o grande impacto que terá, na nossa sociedade, o pacote de diplomas legais aprovados este ano, por esta magna casa. Neste pacote, são de destacar a Lei do Tráfico de Pessoas, a Lei sobre a Promoção e Protecção dos Direitos da Criança e a Lei da Organização Jurisdicional de Menores.

Celebrámos, através de diversas actividades a passagem dos 60 anos da Declaração Universal dos Direitos Humanos. Como enfatizámos em diversos momentos, esta Declaração cristaliza e universaliza os direitos básicos como o direito à alimentação, o direito a uma vida condigna, aos cuidados de saúde e às oportunidades de educação como extensivos a toda a Humanidade. Quer dizer, o direito de não sermos pobres é um direito universal. É um direito que nos é inalienável como um Povo, como uma Nação.

No domínio da luta contra a corrupção, vêm sendo levadas a cabo acções visando o seu combate, tendo sido reforçada a capacidade institucional do sistema da administração da Justiça. Disto resultou a adopção de medidas em curso tendentes à melhoria da tramitação dos processos e garantia do cumprimento da legalidade.

O combate à criminalidade constitui um dos pilares da nossa governação, visando propiciar um ambiente de ordem e segurança para pessoas e bens. As nossas acções nesta frente centram-se na formação e desenvolvimento de recursos humanos.

Foram assim formados mais agentes da Lei e Ordem na Escola Prática da Polícia da República de Moçambique de Matalana e na Academia de Ciências Policiais de Michafutene. Dada a importância que atribuímos à contínua capacitação em exercício, dos quadros, prosseguimos com a formação, no Curso Executivo, de oficiais da Polícia.

Os quadros formados nestes cursos foram depois afectos a diversos sectores de actividade, no quadro do reforço da nossa capacidade de resposta ao nosso compromisso de melhorar continuamente a segurança das pessoas e bens. A eles também cabe a tarefa de continuar a solucionar as fragilidades que, infelizmente, ainda se registam na instituição policial, particularmente no cumprimento das normas pelos agentes da Lei e Ordem e na segurança das cadeias e das unidades policiais.

Como o afirmámos em ocasiões anteriores e reafirmá-lo aqui, a manutenção da ordem, segurança e tranquilidade públicas deve continuar a ser participativa, envolvendo todos e cada um de nós, na residência, na via pública e no local de trabalho.

Saudamos o desempenho positivo dos Conselhos de Policiamento Comunitário, instalados em todo o nosso País. Na sua actividade consolidam a ligação da Polícia com o nosso Povo e reforçam a capacidade da Polícia de manter a ordem e a segurança públicas.

Reafirmamos o nosso compromisso de combater a corrupção e o crime e a sua vã pretensão de se tornarem mecanismos alternativos para a acumulação da riqueza.

Senhores Deputados,

Ao longo deste ano, continuámos a erguer infra-estruturas diversas. Assim, foram reabilitados diversos troços de estradas cuja entrada em funcionamento vem facilitar a circulação de pessoas e bens. Foram igualmente

inauguradas as pontes de Luambala, Guijá, Moamba, Lugela, e sobre o rio Meluli, cujo papel na dinamização das actividades económicas e sociais é por todos nós reconhecido.

Da Beira a caminho de Moatize, estão já reabilitados 370 Km da Linha de Sena. Hoje, o comboio de passageiros e carga já escala os distritos de Dondo, Muanza, Cheringoma e Marrromeu para a alegria dos nossos compatriotas que, beneficiando destes serviços, saúdam o empenho do seu Governo em melhorar as suas condições de vida e adensam a sua certeza de que a pobreza está a acabar em Moçambique.

O acesso à água potável constitui um dos direitos fundamentais do nosso Povo. As intervenções realizadas permitiram elevar a taxa de cobertura no Abastecimento de Água Rural de 48.5% para cerca de 50% que se prevê alcançar até ao fim deste ano. Paralelamente, a nossa taxa de cobertura no meio urbano subiu de 42% em 2007 para cerca de 50% em 2008.

Registamos também progressos na área de saneamento. Em 2007, a taxa de cobertura era de 47% para o saneamento Urbano e 39% para o Saneamento Rural. Até ao terceiro Trimestre de 2008, a taxa de cobertura estava em cerca de 50% para o Saneamento Urbano e 40% para o Saneamento Rural. Estima-se que até final de 2008 a taxa de cobertura para o Saneamento Urbano seja de 51% e para o Saneamento Rural seja de 41%.

Apesar deste crescimento há zonas onde se registam graves carências de água potável. Um destes locais é o Planalto de Mueda, em Cabo Delgado.

Minhas Senhoras, Meus senhores,

As actividades de pesquisa na área de hidrocarbonetos conheceram um grande incremento, resultante da introdução de importantes reformas legislativas. Apregoamos uma exploração sustentável dos nossos recursos e o seu enquadramento na nossa agenda de luta contra a pobreza. Este posicionamento informa a decisão do nosso Governo de reforçar a transparência na exploração dessas riquezas naturais e dos recursos financeiros daí advindos.

Deste modo, reiteramos o nosso compromisso em aplicar a legislação pertinente para a análise e aprovação dos contratos de concessão, bem como a que visa a racionalização dos incentivos fiscais aos projectos de investimentos nas áreas mineira e petrolífera.

De igual modo, já iniciámos o processo interno que culminará com a nossa adesão à Iniciativa de Transparência da Indústria Extractiva. Este processo envolve a constituição de um Comité de Coordenação e a elaboração de um programa de trabalho para a implementação da Iniciativa.

A nossa decisão de aderência à Iniciativa de Transparência da Indústria Extractiva foi já comunicada ao Secretariado Internacional desta organização, em Oslo, na Noruega.

Minhas Senhoras, Meus senhores,

Ao iniciarmos o nosso mandato, elegemos o desenvolvimento rural integrado como uma das nossas maiores apostas. Desde essa altura temo-nos empenhado para um célere estabelecimento de infra-estruturas sociais e económicas básicas no Distrito, através da descentralização.

É neste quadro que se inscreve o papel preponderante que o Distrito passa a assumir na planificação do desenvolvimento social e económico local.

A dotação de cada Distrito com 7 milhões de Meticais trouxe uma nova realidade social e económica para as autoridades locais e centrais bem como para as comunidades locais. Trata-se de uma realidade que contribui para a mudança de paradigmas de desenvolvimento rural e que induz mudanças nas atitudes de todos. Na verdade, priorizar, de forma lógica e transparente para todos, os projectos a financiar, dos muitos que são apresentados é um exercício novo, não só para quem deve decidir como para quem deve tirar os benefícios dessa decisão. Os debates que se geram dentro do Conselho Consultivo até se alcançarem os consensos sobre os projectos a financiar transformam este órgão numa escola sobre desenvolvimento sustentável, um desenvolvimento que se pretende endógeno e que conta com a activa participação das próprias comunidades.

Dada a importância deste fundo no desenvolvimento do Distrito, continuaremos a aperfeiçoar os mecanismos da sua gestão para que cresça o seu impacto na realização dos objectivos para que foi concebido.

O distrito passa também a contar com uma verba destinada à construção, reparação e manutenção de infra-estruturas públicas. Passa ainda a contar com fundos de manutenção de estradas.

Uma palavra de apreço vai para as autoridades comunitárias. Elas têm desempenhado um papel de relevo na promoção e valorização das nossas tradições e sistemas de valores, bem como na manutenção da paz e da harmonia social. Saudamos igualmente, o seu papel na mobilização e organização da população para participar em programas de luta contra a pobreza, a nível local, e pela colaboração com as autoridades administrativas locais. Eles são verdadeiros líderes das nossas comunidades e intérpretes das mensagens da nossa governação descentralizada e participativa.

Queremos saudar os nossos jovens pelo trabalho que já realizam nos distritos. A Declaração de Cheringoma saída do segundo encontro que reuniu cerca de 500 jovens oriundos de diferentes cantos do nosso belo Moçambique, reafirmou este compromisso.

Ainda no quadro do nosso enfoque no Distrito, a expansão do Sistema de Administração Financeira do Estado, SISTAFE, aos primeiros 31 distritos do nosso belo Moçambique, em complemento ao que já acontece em todas as províncias, constitui uma importante oportunidade de negócios que a nossa banca, felizmente, começa a explorar nos distritos.

Na verdade, os professores, os enfermeiros, os funcionários públicos e os agentes económicos que prestam serviços e providenciam bens ao Estado passam a ser pagos directamente, através do sistema bancário.

Esta decisão, conjuntamente com a de afectar mais recursos nos distritos, incluindo os 7 milhões, contribui para a viabilização da Política de Bancarização, lançada em Janeiro de 2007. Trata-se de uma política que visa encorajar os

bancos a colocarem-se nas províncias e distritos, uma política que também levou o Banco de Moçambique a fixar-se em mais províncias do nosso País, permitindo assim uma melhor gestão do processo de intermediação financeira. Existem hoje 44 Distritos cobertos pela rede de agências de bancos comerciais, tendo o número de balcões a operar em todo o território nacional aumentado para 344.

O distrito continua a mudar, caros compatriotas. Está a mudar graças a esta multiplicidade de intervenções. Os nossos concidadãos no distrito podem continuar a ter carências mas são mais dignos e sentem-se mais donos do seu próprio desenvolvimento. Esta é uma conquista do próprio distrito que todos nós devemos celebrar.

Senhores Deputados,

O nosso Governo adoptou e está a implementar o Programa Nacional de Produção de Alimentos para o período 2008-2011 que consiste na implementação acelerada da estratégia da *Revolução Verde* em toda a sua cadeia de valor.

O objectivo deste Programa é a eliminação progressiva do défice alimentar, e da dependência nas importações, nos produtos essenciais como o arroz, o trigo, a batata-reno, oleaginosas e produtos avícolas e piscícolas. É igualmente objectivo do programa garantir excedentes para exportação.

Embora o balanço da produção do milho e da mandioca se apresente positivo, estamos a intensificar as nossas intervenções para atingir níveis de produção e de produtividade cada vez mais elevados. Temos aqui em vista melhorar as nossas reservas alimentares e, para o caso da mandioca, popularizar o seu uso como um dos ingredientes para o fabrico do pão.

Em simultâneo demos, de entre outras acções, continuidade:

- À formação acelerada e afectação de extensionistas;
- À utilização da tracção animal; e
- À utilização de adubos orgânicos.

Na busca de parcerias para o Programa de Produção de Alimentos acolhemos, no nosso solo

pátrio, a vigésima nona Assembleia-Geral do Conselho Internacional para a Ciência e a Assembleia Anual do Grupo Consultivo da Investigação Agrária.

Foi um momento ímpar para os cientistas moçambicanos, porquanto estabeleceram contactos, trocaram experiências com especialistas de vários quadrantes, criaram parcerias para realização de Projectos conjuntos nas diversas áreas de conhecimento, com destaque para o desenvolvimento do Subsistema de Investigação Agrária, um dos pilares do nosso projecto da *Revolução Verde*.

Fazer mais campanhas agrícolas por ano é o nosso maior desafio, aproveitando os recursos hídricos existentes no nosso País. Referimo-nos, por exemplo, aos sistemas de irrigação de Ingúri e Chipembe na Província de Cabo Delgado, Chicamba Real na província de Manica, Chokwé na província de Gaza e às barragens de Massingir na Província de Gaza e Corumana na Província de Maputo.

Senhores deputados,

No quadro da nossa acção governativa, privilegiámos, uma vez mais, a Presidência Aberta e Inclusiva. Durante a sua realização, no período de 22 de Abril a 3 de Outubro, visitámos 42 Distritos e 16 Postos Administrativos. Nestes locais, tivemos a oportunidade de interagir com o nosso maravilhoso Povo, precisamente na frente onde se encontra engajado, isto é, a frente de luta contra a pobreza. Queríamos, uma vez mais, tomar contacto, no terreno, com os desafios que enfrentam, as soluções que adoptam e os conselhos que têm para a nossa governação.

Na realização deste Programa com as diferentes sensibilidades, tivemos o privilégio de constatar como se cristaliza, no seio do nosso Povo, o sentimento de auto-estima, de moçambicanidade, de valorização do nosso património e do aproveitamento crescente dos diversos recursos existentes. Testemunhámos igualmente o entusiasmo, o engajamento e a entrega do nosso Povo nas actividades produtivas, com vista a melhorar as suas condições de vida.

Inaugurámos estabelecimentos socio-económicos, nomeadamente unidades sanitárias,

estabelecimentos de ensino, sistemas de abastecimento de água, sub-estações eléctricas, pontes, infra-estruturas de comunicações e represas.

Nessa digressão pelo nosso País pudemos constatar, com agrado, de entre outros:

- O crescimento da produção agrícola;
- A melhoria das condições de habitação da população que se traduz na construção de casas, com uso do tijolo queimado. São casas espaçadas, com divisões espaçosas, janelas e portas amplas e cobertas de chapas de zinco; e
- Constatámos também, o aumento do número de associações com diversidade no objecto de actividade, com destaque para a agro-pecuária, a alfaiataria, a latoaria, a olaria, a cerâmica e a pesca artesanal.

Constatámos ainda como a nossa Estratégia de Educação e comunicação ambiental e o respectivo Plano de Acção estão em implementação nos distritos. Por exemplo, o programa *um aluno, uma fruteira por ano*, enquadra-se nesta estratégia. De igual modo, o projecto de floresta comunitária não visa apenas providenciar combustível lenhoso mais perto das comunidades. Visa igualmente garantir a sua educação sobre questões de ambiente.

Nessa digressão, de entre as orientações que deixámos, destacamos as seguintes:

- O administrador deve continuar a apurar, no quotidiano, as suas capacidades de liderança para levar os seus quadros e a população a melhor aproveitarem os recursos locais e a transformarem os seus problemas em desafios;
- A descentralização e a contínua capacitação do distrito para se assumir como pólo do nosso desenvolvimento é prioridade de toda a Nação Moçambicana; e
- O combate aos obstáculos ao nosso desenvolvimento, nomeadamente o burocratismo, o espírito de *deixa andar*, a corrupção e o crime, bem assim as doenças endémicas como a malária e o HIV e SIDA, deve continuar a figurar no centro da nossa agenda governativa, também a nível do Distrito.

Minhas Senhoras, Meus Senhores,

Registámos, com satisfação, os avanços

significativos no melhoramento das condições de saúde do nosso Povo e no crescimento do número de unidades sanitárias. Esse crescimento é acompanhado da elevação de níveis de conhecimentos científicos e práticos dos profissionais de Saúde, distribuídos por essas unidades sanitárias.

As iniciativas Presidenciais sobre o HIV e o SIDA e sobre a Saúde da Mulher e da Criança têm sido replicadas ao nível local, gerando debates e tomada de consciência de que cada um de nós pode fazer mais pela prevenção do SIDA e pela redução das mortes de mães e crianças.

Nos últimos 2 anos verificou-se uma melhoria no controle da Malária. Em 2007 e 2008 – e pela primeira vez nos últimos 20 anos – assiste-se a uma significativa redução no número de casos de doença e de óbitos por Malária.

Como tivemos a oportunidade de informar a esta magna casa, a 13 de Dezembro de 2007, os resultados divulgados a 1 de Dezembro desse ano indicavam ter havido uma redução de 16,2% para 16% da taxa de prevalência do SIDA em Moçambique. Tratava-se de resultados encorajadores. Todavia, eram resultados bastante modestos, tendo em consideração o nosso empenho na prevenção desta pandemia. Por isso, o Governo tomou a decisão de criar o Grupo de Referência de Prevenção da Infecção pelo HIV com a missão de identificar, de forma mais sistemática, os factores epidemiológicos e sociológicos que continuam a impulsionar a epidemia.

Como revelámos no dia 1 de Dezembro deste ano, a conclusão deste grupo de trabalho foi de que devíamos distinguir dois tipos de factores impulsionadores desta doença. Por um lado, a existência de relações sexuais com múltiplos parceiros e sem ou com baixo recurso à protecção pelo preservativo. Por outro, a influência de factores de natureza económica, cultural e social.

Guiados pelas conclusões deste Grupo lançámos, no dia 1 de Dezembro, a Estratégia de Aceleração da Prevenção da Infecção pelo HIV, aprovada a 25 de Novembro pelo Conselho de Ministros.

No quadro do combate ao HIV continuamos a prover o tratamento aos infectados tendo

alargado estes serviços a todos os 128 distritos do nosso País. Quando nos dirigimos a vós, senhores deputados, a 13 de Dezembro de 2007, tínhamos cerca de 88 mil pacientes em tratamento Anti Retroviral. A 31 de Outubro de 2008, tínhamos cerca de 121 mil pacientes e a nossa projecção é de 127 000 até 31 de Dezembro deste ano. Graças à expansão deste serviço, o SIDA já não é visto pelo infectado como uma inevitável pena de morte, podendo ser equiparado a doenças crónicas a exemplo da hipertensão arterial e de diabetes.

O segredo para que os nossos compatriotas possam tratar esta doença como crónica está na sua descoberta precoce. Por isso, encorajamos a contínua e crescente adesão à testagem, quer voluntária quer de rotina.

Também prosseguimos com acções de mitigação, providenciando apoio nutricional, vestuário, material escolar, utensílios domésticos e produtos de higiene a compatriotas nossos vivendo com o HIV e SIDA. Temos igualmente apoiado na criação de condições para que sejam os nossos próprios compatriotas a engajarem-se em actividades de rendimento para o seu próprio sustento.

Está a decorrer desde 1 de Março até 31 de Dezembro próximo, a Campanha Nacional de Saneamento do Meio e Promoção de Higiene. É uma campanha que está a registar adesão quer de cidadãos, individualmente, quer das instituições públicas e privadas. Para além de contribuir para a mudança de atitudes, esta Campanha tem estado a imprimir melhorias, particularmente no que se refere ao tratamento e gestão dos resíduos sólidos. Temos, no entanto, plena consciência de que muito há ainda por fazer no âmbito do saneamento do meio e da promoção de higiene. Por isso devemos, todos nós, Governo, Sector Privado, Sindicatos, Confissões Religiosas e restante Sociedade Civil assumir que esta campanha foi apenas o ponto de partida para uma acção prioritária nos próximos anos.

Como é do domínio público os surtos de cólera estão associados às condições de higiene e saneamento do meio. Presentemente, esta doença afecta o Distrito de Cuamba, na Província do Niassa; a Cidade de Nampula; os distritos de Alto Molócuè, Gurué e Gilé, na Província da

Zambézia; a Cidade de Tete e o Distrito de Changara, na Província de Tete; os distritos de Guro e Mussorize, na Província de Manica; o distrito de Inharrime na Província de Inhambane; os bairros Machava Sede, Tsalala, Matola A, Matola H, T3, Patrice Lumumba, e os distritos da Manhiça e Moamba na Província de Maputo, bem como alguns bairros da Cidade de Maputo.

Com muito orgulho, podemos anunciar que já temos em Moçambique muitos mais quadros de saúde que realizam intervenções cirúrgicas de alta especialidade e manejam aparelhos de alta precisão, adquiridos pelo nosso Governo e instalados nas principais unidades hospitalares do País, nomeadamente Nampula, Beira e Maputo. Este foi também o ano em que no Serviço Nacional de Saúde se fizeram as primeiras operações ao coração aberto e entrou em funcionamento a primeira Unidade de Hemodiálise. Graças a estes avanços, menos moçambicanos terão de se deslocar para fora do seu País em busca de tratamento.

No dia 29 de Janeiro de 2006, dirigimo-nos à Nação e ao Mundo para informar que em todas as nossas províncias existem casos de Lepra e que era em Cabo-Delgado, Niassa, Nampula, Zambézia, Manica e Sofala onde aquela doença ainda era, infelizmente, um problema de saúde pública. Exortámos toda a sociedade moçambicana a participar na mudança desta situação até finais de 2008.

Hoje, Senhores Deputados, podemos informar, à Nação e ao Mundo, que o ano de 2008 ficará registado na História da Saúde em Moçambique como o ANO DA ELIMINAÇÃO DA LEPROSA. A Lepra, deixou de constituir problema de saúde pública no nosso País.

Este é Moçambique a crescer. Estes são os moçambicanos a construírem o seu futuro melhor.

Minhas Senhoras, Meus Senhores,

A Educação é um meio indispensável para a afirmação e integração do indivíduo na vida social e económica. É também um instrumento básico para capacitar o País para enfrentar os desafios do desenvolvimento.

O professor constitui a peça chave na formação de quadros, pelo que o Governo continua a prestar uma atenção particular às acções de capacitação e formação desse grupo de profissionais. Assim, temos no País 23 instituições médias de formação, das quais 6 são construções de raiz localizadas em Pemba, Alto Molócue, Morrumbala, Chibata – Chimoio, Vilanculo e Inhamissa.

As nossas realizações no sector da Educação são complementadas pelas parcerias que incentivamos e estabelecemos com o Sector Privado e com outras organizações da sociedade civil. É neste quadro que se inscrevem, por exemplo, o Instituto Superior Dom Bosco na Cidade de Maputo, e o Instituto Superior de Educação e Tecnologia de Changanane, na província do Maputo, bem como as obras de construção da Escola Profissional de Mabote na província de Inhambane, e do Instituto Médio Profissional, localizado em Beluluane, província do Maputo.

A reforma da Educação Profissional ganha corpo com a concepção e elaboração de um conjunto de instrumentos de sua operacionalização. Estes importantes instrumentos da Reforma requereram uma ampla e contínua discussão com os professores e com o sector produtivo, bem como com os próprios alunos.

Continuamos a expandir o Ensino Superior, procurando abranger todo o território nacional. Assim, a Unilúrio, com sede na Cidade de Nampula, instalou, no ano em curso, a Faculdade de Engenharia e Ciências Naturais na cidade de Pemba, sendo o passo seguinte a instalação, em 2009, da Faculdade de Ciências Agrárias em Unango, Niassa. Estão também criadas as condições para a entrada em funcionamento da Unizambeze, com sede na Cidade da Beira, a partir de 2009.

Com esta nova Universidade, o País passa a contar com um total de 26 Instituições de Ensino Superior, sendo 13 públicas e as restantes privadas. Mais importante ainda é que estas instituições de ensino superior estão a abranger um crescente número de distritos, quer através da sua fixação física quer através dos programas de extensão e pesquisa. Esta actividade é complementada pelo

movimento crescente e entusiástico de estudantes para os distritos.

Esta é a outra forma de valorizarmos a nossa Independência Nacional. Esta é outra forma de demonstrarmos que valeu a pena lutar para que fôssemos donos dos nossos próprios destinos.

Não são apenas os moçambicanos que aplaudem os resultados do desenvolvimento dos recursos humanos em Moçambique. Recentemente, fomos recipientes do prémio do Instituto Afro-Americano, em Nova Iorque, em reconhecimento desta grande obra de formação de quadros.

Minhas Senhoras, Meus Senhores,

A afirmação e a valorização da nossa moçambicanidade continuam a ser nossas prioridades.

Assim, de 11 a 18 de Julho, Xai – Xai acolheu o Quinto Festival Nacional de Cultura, um evento que envolveu artistas oriundos de todo o nosso belo Moçambique, que para a capital de Gaza trouxeram o canto, a dança, a gastronomia e diversas produções culturais e artísticas.

O Festival foi um alto momento de exaltação da nossa diversidade cultural, da Unidade Nacional e de reafirmação de juntos continuarmos a construir a nossa Pátria Amada, inspirando-nos no nosso heróico e glorioso passado.

Ainda com as emoções do Festival de Xai-Xai a ecoarem, a Nação Moçambicana, virava as suas atenções para Quissico onde, a 30 de Agosto, se realizava a celebração nacional da proclamação, pela Organização das Nações Unidas para a Educação, Ciência e Cultura, da Timbila como Obra Prima do Património Imaterial da Humanidade. Para esta prestigiada galeria de bens do património mundial, à guarda da UNESCO, já alistáramos igualmente o Nyau, cuja cerimónia de proclamação nacional teve lugar em Ulóngue, Província de Tete, a 20 de Abril de 2007.

Este evento contribuiu para o reforço da nossa auto-estima, do orgulho da nossa criação artística e cultural. Serviu para sublinhar que esta Pérola do Índico tem uma valiosa contribuição a dar ao resto da Humanidade.

Em toda a largura e extensão do nosso solo pátrio foram, ao longo deste ano, organizados a

nível local e nacional por instituições públicas e privadas, festivais de diversas descrições, incluindo de música e de gastronomia.

Alguns destes eventos são regulares e têm um carácter multidisciplinar, atraindo cidadãos de diferentes partes de Moçambique e do Mundo. Estes festivais são ainda de um incomensurável valor na promoção do conhecimento mútuo entre os moçambicanos, na promoção de valores de Pátria e da Unidade Nacional e na projecção do bom nome desta Pátria de Heróis.

Reflectindo a nossa rica diversidade cultural, tendo em conta os louvores ao nosso Povo pelos nossos hóspedes, bem como as referências elogiosas a esta Pérola do Índico, particularmente na área do turismo, o nosso Governo criou a Marca Moçambique, cujo conceito é “*Destino Fascinante*”. A Marca Moçambique é fruto de uma introspecção nacional e do retrato que o mundo faz de Moçambique e do seu maravilhoso Povo.

A 11 de Abril deste ano, celebrámos, caros compatriotas, os 30 anos do Sindicato Nacional de Jornalistas. Na altura, congratulámo-nos com o crescimento qualitativo dos profissionais da comunicação social, sublinhado pelo aumento e diversificação dos prémios de imprensa, nacionais e internacionais, que conquistam. Congratulámo-nos ainda com o crescimento quantitativo quer dos órgãos quer do número de profissionais da comunicação social, bem como pela maior diversificação da propriedade dos órgãos de comunicação social nacionais. Sobretudo, saudámos a expansão dos nossos órgãos de comunicação social aos distritos e a maior frequência de artigos sobre as realizações nestas unidades administrativas do território nacional.

Ainda nesta área da comunicação social, gostaríamos de recordar a esta magna Assembleia que a nossa Cidade Capital foi o palco central das celebrações do Dia Mundial da Liberdade de Imprensa. Esta cerimónia contou com a presença do Director Geral da Organização das Nações Unidas para a Educação, Ciência e Cultura (UNESCO).

A realização deste evento mundial no nosso solo pátrio, sublinha, quanto a nós, que em Moçambique se consolida a liberdade de imprensa e de expressão, como aliás demonstra o

crescimento quantitativo e qualitativo dos órgãos de comunicação social.

Ao longo deste ano, prosseguimos, senhores deputados, com as acções de capacitação em matéria de género, empoderamento económico, divulgação dos direitos da mulher e combate à violência doméstica.

Nós acreditamos que a mulher, para se emancipar, deve estar continuamente engajada na implementação da nossa Agenda Nacional de Luta contra a Pobreza.

Continuamos com a implementação de programas de assistência a crianças, pessoas portadoras de deficiência e pessoas idosas em situação de vulnerabilidade, proporcionando-as meios necessários para uma vida condigna.

Assim, foram assistidas, em todo o País, cerca de 180 000 crianças em situação difícil, quer dentro das comunidades quer em infantários públicos e privados quer ainda em centros de acolhimento. Foram igualmente construídas cerca de 100 casas para crianças em situação difícil.

Em todo o nosso País, foram beneficiados de assistência social mais de dois mil compatriotas da terceira idade em Centros de Apoio à Velhice e em Centros comunitários abertos.

No âmbito da protecção social básica, prosseguimos com a implementação de programas específicos de assistência e desenvolvimento social, beneficiando directamente as pessoas carenciadas com ou sem capacidades para o trabalho. Foram, neste quadro, implementados diversos programas, incluindo os de geração de rendimentos.

No domínio da concertação social, a descentralização do diálogo social tripartido ao nível das capitais provinciais, resultou na implantação dos Fóruns de Consulta e de Concertação Social. Encorajamos que ao nível das capitais provinciais se consolidem estes fóruns por forma a constituírem espaços onde o diálogo sirva para a resolução de problemas do quotidiano.

A introdução de mecanismos extrajudiciais de resolução de conflitos laborais ao nível das capitais provinciais através da criação das respectivas comissões visa prover o cidadão com uma alternativa judicial célere na resolução dos conflitos emergentes das relações laborais ao nível das nossas empresas.

Lográmos reduzir, de forma substancial, os períodos de espera do pagamento de subsídio de funeral, de pensões e de outras prestações devidas aos beneficiários. Aumentámos, igualmente, a pensão mínima o que contribuiu para a subida da renda dos pensionistas na ordem dos 30%. Ainda neste domínio e no quadro da melhoria dos serviços prestados, destaca-se o facto de, em 2008 os pagamentos das pensões em algumas zonas do país terem passado a ser efectuadas através de instituições bancárias.

Senhores Deputados,

A crise mundial dos combustíveis teve uma consequência directa na eclosão da crise dos cereais. Estas crises tiveram repercussões no aumento do custo de vida, à escala planetária, fazendo-se sentir, por conseguinte, no nosso País.

Estas crises exigiram, do Governo, uma alocação adicional das suas reservas em divisas e, combinadas com as calamidades naturais e as mudanças climáticas, tiveram um impacto nefasto na dimensão humana e sócio-económica no País.

Os sectores que mais se ressentem com a crise são a Agricultura, Transportes, Indústria Transformadora e Produção de Electricidade.

O Governo procurou formas de suster esta crise. Um dos exemplos mais evidentes foi a acomodação temporária na moldura fiscal do subsídio de transportes, bem como os recursos disponibilizados em apoio às vítimas das calamidades.

Apesar destas crises e dos seus efeitos e dos programas de emergência que tivemos que atender, projectámos o alcance de 6,5% do Produto Interno Bruto.

Saudámos a todo o nosso Povo, o principal obreiro deste resultado.

Senhores Deputados,

A nossa acção externa consistiu não só no reforço das relações de amizade, solidariedade e de cooperação com outros países, povos e organismos internacionais, como também na consolidação da imagem positiva que o País goza no plano internacional.

Consistiu igualmente, na mobilização de recursos materiais e financeiros para a implementação de diversos projectos e programas

no âmbito da luta contra a pobreza e bem assim a atracção de investimentos externos para o País.

Efectuámos visitas ao Chile, Cuba, Dinamarca, Finlândia e ao Reino dos Países Baixos. No nosso solo pátrio, acolhemos altos dignitários estrangeiros, de entre eles, Chefes de Estado e de Governo de países irmãos e amigos, com destaque para: Sua Excelência Nong Duc Manh, Secretário Geral do Partido Comunista do Vietname; Sua Excelência Cavaco Silva, Presidente da República Portuguesa; Sua Excelência Lula da Silva, Presidente da República Federativa do Brasil; e Sua Excelência Jakaya Kikwete, Presidente da República Unida da Tanzânia.

Nos encontros com os Chefes de Estado e de Governo que visitámos ou que nos visitaram, foi reafirmado o compromisso mútuo com o reforço e a diversificação da cooperação bilateral.

Ainda no quadro do reforço das nossas parcerias internacionais, participámos em diversos fóruns internacionais, sendo de destacar: A Vigésima Oitava Cimeira dos Chefes de Estado e Governo da Comunidade para o Desenvolvimento da África Austral, SADC; A Quinta e a Sexta Assembleia dos Chefes de Estado e de Governo da União Africana; A Quarta Conferência Internacional de Tóquio sobre o Desenvolvimento de África, TICAD; A Sétima Cimeira da Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa; A Sexagésima Terceira Assembleia Geral das Nações Unidas; O Primeiro Fórum Global de Líderes sobre HIV e SIDA e Tuberculose, das Nações Unidas; A Décima Primeira Cimeira dos Chefes de Estado e de Governo da Organização da Conferência Islâmica; e A oitava Conferência da Fundação Leon Sullivan.

Nestes eventos demos a nossa contribuição ao empenho da comunidade internacional visando a manutenção da paz, estabilidade e desenvolvimento dos nossos povos e países.

Congratulámo-nos pela realização, em Maputo: da quadragésima terceira Reunião do Grupo Banco Africano de Desenvolvimento; das cerimónias centrais do Dia Mundial da Liberdade de Imprensa; da Conferência Internacional sobre a Mulher; da Vigésima nona Assembleia Geral do Conselho Internacional para a Ciência; da

Assembleia Anual do Grupo Consultivo da Investigação Agrária; Da quinta Conferência da Via Campesina; e Da nona Conferência das Igrejas de Toda a África.

Moçambique orgulha-se de ser o berço das declarações e resoluções finais destes encontros internacionais. Os participantes nestes eventos testemunharam, porque esta Pérola do Índico é famosa pelo calor acolhedor do seu povo hospitaleiro e porque os nossos visitantes querem sempre para aqui voltar. Sobretudo, os participantes nestes eventos tomaram contacto directo com a nossa realidade, partilharam as suas experiências com os nossos quadros. Criaram-se assim condições para os nossos compatriotas firmarem, com os outros participantes, formas e mecanismos de dar seguimento aos compromissos alcançados.

Pela posição privilegiada que o Continente Africano e a Região Austral de África ocupam na nossa política externa, dedicámos uma atenção especial aos processos políticos em curso. Foi neste contexto que integrámos as Missões de Observação Eleitoral da SADC em Angola, Suazilândia e Zimbabwe.

Moçambique tem estado a dar o seu contributo, no contexto da SADC e do seu Órgão para a Cooperação nas áreas de Defesa e Segurança, do qual é Vice-Presidente, com vista a um desfecho positivo do processo negocial zimbabweano, mediado pelo Antigo Presidente da África do Sul, Thabo Mbeki.

No quadro da União Africana temos estado a contribuir para a manutenção da paz e estabilidade em Darfur, na Somália, no diferendo entre o Chade e o Sudão, bem como nos confrontos fronteiriços entre o Djibouti e a Eritreia.

Este ano comemorámos o Dia da SADC de forma particular, com o lançamento formal da Zona Comércio de Livre, facto que representa um marco histórico rumo à materialização da Integração Económica Regional.

Com o estabelecimento da Zona de Comércio Livre, abrem-se oportunidades para o incremento das trocas comerciais e maior geração de rendimentos que irão contribuir para a melhoria do bem-estar dos nossos povos.

Senhores Deputados,

Uma retrospectiva do ano de 2008 leva-nos a concluir que, apesar dos inevitáveis constrangimentos com os quais nos deparámos e a conjuntura económica mundial adversa:

- A Unidade Nacional, a Paz e a estabilidade, bem como a democracia multipartidária consolidam-se no nosso dia a dia;
- O desempenho das nossas instituições públicas produziu resultados positivos em termos sociais e económicos;
- O Distrito continua a mudar e a assumir-se como o palco central da nossa luta contra a pobreza;
- O prestígio de Moçambique no concerto das Nações continua a crescer;
- As relações de amizade e de cooperação com os nossos parceiros de desenvolvimento trouxeram resultados positivos para a implementação da nossa Agenda Nacional de Luta contra a Pobreza; e
- Isto permite-nos afirmar, senhores deputados, de forma categórica e inequívoca que 2008 foi coroado de êxitos. Que, em consequência desses resultados positivos, o ESTADO DA NAÇÃO É BOM.

Senhores Deputados.

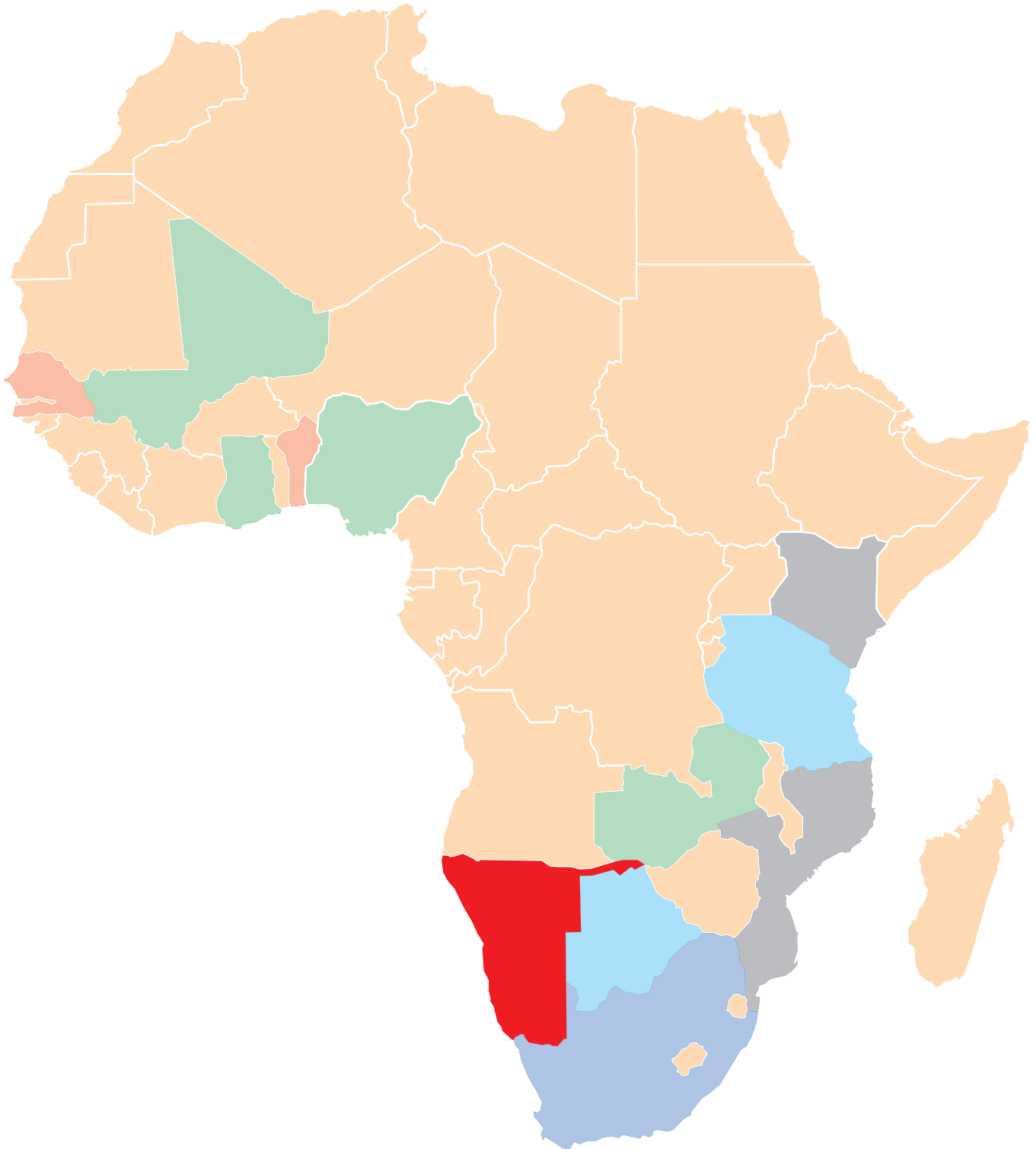
Assumimos o compromisso de continuar a implementar o nosso Programa Económico e Social, o mecanismo chave para a realização da nossa agenda Nacional de Luta contra a Pobreza.

Chegados aqui, caros compatriotas, gostaríamos de expressar o nosso sentimento de satisfação de nos dirigirmos à Nação Moçambicana a poucas horas do dia da Família e do Natal. Queremos, deste pódio, e através dos senhores deputados, desejar a todo o nosso Povo um Feliz Dia da Família e aos nossos irmãos cristãos um Feliz Natal. Que ao longo desta quadra festiva mantenhamos o civismo, a fraternidade, o ambiente de ordem e tranquilidade e de respeito pelas instituições.

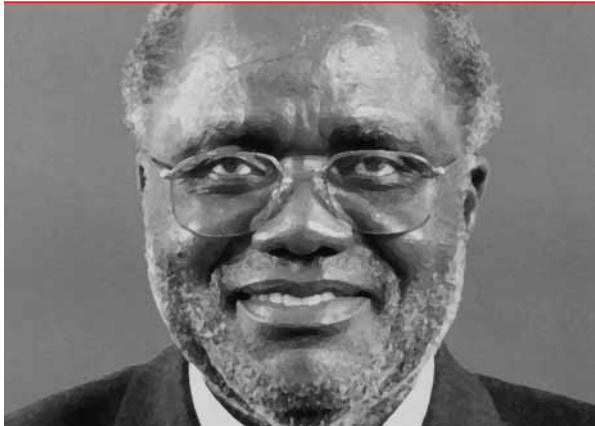
A Vós Senhores Deputados, formulamos votos de bom regresso aos vossos Círculos Eleitorais e ao ambiente familiar. Formulamos igualmente votos de um ano de 2009 cheio de prosperidade.

Muito obrigado pela vossa atenção.

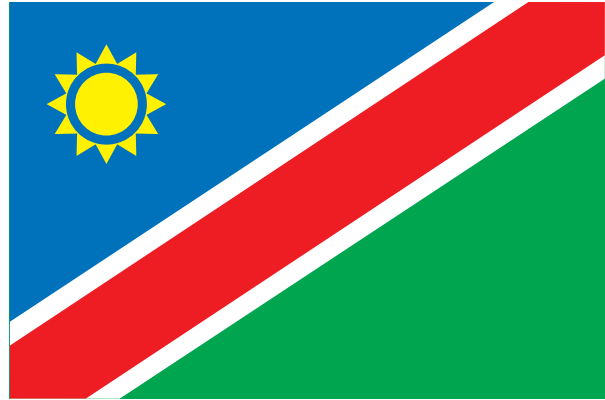
NAMIBIA



NAMIBIA



**State of the Nation Address by His
Excellency Hifikepunye Pohamba,
President of the Republic of Namibia
Windhoek, Namibia
April 10, 2008**



Honourable Speaker of the National Assembly;
Honourable Chairperson of the National
Council;
Your Excellency, Founding President and Father
of the Namibian Nation, Comrade Dr Sam
Nujoma;
Right Honourable Prime Minister;
Your Honour, the Chief Justice;
Honourable Deputy Prime Minister;
Honourable Dr Hage Geingob, First Prime
Minister of the Republic of Namibia;
Your Honour, the Judge President;
Comrade Dr Hendrik Witbooi, First Deputy
Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia;
Mr Kandy Nehova, First Chairperson of the
National Council;
Honourable Members of Parliament;
Your Excellencies, Members of the
Diplomatic Corps;
Distinguished Invited Guests;
Members of the Media;
Ladies and Gentlemen:
I stand before this joint sitting of our August
Parliament to fulfill an important constitutional
duty of informing you, my compatriots, about the
State of the Nation.

Article 32 of the Namibian Constitution
enjoins the President, after the tabling of the
National Budget, to inform the Nation, through
Parliament, about the policies and programmes
of Government in the preceding year, as well as
its plans for the new financial year. This occasion
also serves another equally important purpose,
namely, to reaffirm our commitment to the prin-
ciples of accountability, transparency, and good
governance. The framers of the supreme law of
the land, the Namibian Constitution, saw it fit to

put in place a framework of checks-and-balances that regulates interactions among the three organs of the state. This is one of the central pillars of our democratic traditions that have made it possible for our country to develop and build strong public institutions and systems.

We take pride in the fact that our constitutional democracy continues to flourish and function, providing us with the socio-political space to implement policies and programmes aimed at transforming our society and improving the living conditions of all our people through effective service delivery. Today, I intend to inform the Namibian Nation about the implementation of Government policies and programmes during the 2007-2008 financial year, as well as our plans for the new financial year, covering the 2008-2009 period.

The implementation of policies and programmes of our South West Africa Peoples' Organization (SWAPO) Party Government is carried out within the context of our stated development priorities that are encapsulated in our National Development Plans, the 2004 SWAPO Party Election Manifesto and Vision 2030. These policy documents spell out the priority areas on which we must focus and guide the actions of both political principals and members of the civil service towards the achievement of our stated objectives.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Chairperson:

The period under review was characterised by intensified focus by our SWAPO Party Government to expand and improve service delivery in all priority areas. Particular attention was given to the plight of orphans and vulnerable children; the youth and students; the elderly; war veterans; the San, Ovatus, and Ovatum; and the rural poor. Attention was also given to the provision of better health care, expansion of electricity (with special emphasis to rural areas), promotion of sanitation (with special focus to peri-urban areas), provision of potable water, expansion of infrastructure, employment creation, and food production.

Contingency plans were also activated to assist those affected by natural disasters such as the drought and floods.

The successful implementation of public policies must be supported by a vibrant and strong economy. Thus, specific attention must be given to different sectors of our economy in order to improve economic growth, support job creation initiatives, and enable the small- and medium-sized enterprises to grow stronger and create more employment opportunities for Namibians.

At the international level, the global economy has seen increased levels of inflation, particularly marked by high prices of oil and food. These pressures have also been felt in the Namibian economy.

Namibia is working with other countries in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region to promote deeper regional economic integration and cooperation. Last August, SADC Member States signed the Finance and Investment Protocol to facilitate cooperation and coordination in the critical areas of finance and investments. The aims are to diversify and expand the productive sectors, enhance inter-regional trade, achieve sustainable economic development, and eradicate poverty.

We have been pursuing negotiations towards the SADC-European Union (EU) Economic Partnership Agreement. Namibia raised a number of issues during negotiations and endorsed the Joint Text in December last year. We did this based on the understanding that our concerns would be addressed through further negotiations as SADC member states prepare to re-engage the EU in negotiations.

Other initiatives aimed at promoting regional economic integration are the SADC Free Trade Area and the SADC Customs Union. Plans are under way to launch the SADC Free Trade Area during the SADC Summit this August. The region has also started with the establishment of the SADC Customs Union. In this regard, a Customs Union Trade Team has been established to carry the preparatory work forward. Our hope is to launch the SADC Customs Union in 2010. When implemented, these regional trade and

investment configurations will bring many economic benefits to the people of our region.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Chairperson:

We look back at the period under review with a sense of satisfaction regarding the pace of implementation of programmes and projects, as well as delivery of services by various offices, ministries, and agencies of Government.

Earlier in my statement, I reiterated our resolve to assist and improve the lot of vulnerable groups in our society and other crucial constituencies such as the veterans of the liberation struggle, drop-outs, youth, women, rural communities, and workers. I will now provide a catalogue of Government action across a spectrum of these areas during the period under review, while highlighting our plans for the new financial year.

The social sectors of health, education, and housing, and provision of water and social grants, have continued to enjoy Government attention. Programmes to combat the spread of the HIV/AIDS pandemic have been intensified. In this regard, voluntary testing is now being offered at 110 health facilities countrywide.

The prevention of mother-to-child transmission has been rolled out to sixty percent of public health facilities. The number of people who are eligible to receive state-funded anti-retroviral treatment has increased and now stands at more than 41,000. The training of health workers and community counselors is ongoing to make the programme a success. I urge all Namibians who are infected by the virus to sign up and receive anti-retroviral treatment. Our Government has developed a national strategy to reduce incidents of maternal and newborn morbidity and mortality. In the face of the present floods, measures have also been put in place to address risks of communicable diseases such as cholera, malaria, wild polio, and typhoid fever. The outbreak of cholera in some parts of northern Namibia is under constant surveillance. I applaud the work of all the teams involved in these efforts, as well as the cooperation of the community. This has resulted in relatively low rates of fatalities.

In order to expand access to healthcare, new health facilities, particularly clinics, have been built in our rural areas. Our Government has also intensified training programmes for health-care professionals in conjunction with our development cooperation partners such as Cuba, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, Russia, and other countries.

The University of Namibia has started to offer courses for premedical studies for our future doctors, while the Polytechnic is offering new training programmes for environmental health professionals and medical laboratory technicians. The establishment of a cardiac unit this year will provide more affordable care to our people who will no longer travel abroad for treatment. We also look forward to the establishment of a local medical school to train doctors.

Assistance to Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) remains a priority, which is being implemented under the National Policy on OVCs. A Plan of Action on OVCs was launched last October to supplement ongoing interventions. The Government has started with the process of establishing a National Orphans and Vulnerable Children Database to ensure proper record keeping and planning. This will facilitate efficient provision of services to needy children. At present, 90,126 orphans and vulnerable children are receiving grants through the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare. The grant amounts to N\$200 for the first child and N\$100 for every additional child per one parent or foster parent. A new initiative has been launched by our Government with the support of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to support OVCs in the Omaheke, Caprivi, Kavango, Ohangwena, and Omusati regions. It focuses on strengthening the capacity of communities to care for OVCs through training, awareness campaigns, and income generating projects.

The welfare of veterans of Namibia's liberation struggle has been a source of concern, as many continue to live in difficult conditions of unemployment and poverty. These brave sons and daughters of Namibia deserve to be assisted. I am happy that the process of addressing their plight

has been intensified with the establishment of the Ministry of Veterans' Affairs and the passing of the Veterans' Bill.

Consultations have started with relevant stakeholders to facilitate the registration of eligible veterans before they can start receiving their grants. The budget for the 2008-2009 financial year provides for the monthly payment of N\$200 per veteran. The social safety net for the elderly is also being strengthened. The new budget increases social grants to the amount of N\$450 per month. Financial support to give our senior citizens descent burials when they pass on will also continue to be provided.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Chairperson:

Our Nation's future depends on our youth, who must be moulded to participate actively in the social and economic development of our country. Our Government recognises the challenges faced by our youth, especially the risks of HIV/AIDS infection, unemployment, unplanned pregnancies, drug abuse, and other social vices. I wish to assure the Namibian people of our Government's resolve to create opportunities for all our youth to realize their full potential.

The pro-youth policy interventions that are in place will be strengthened. Already, the National Youth Service Scheme is making a difference in the lives of many young Namibians by giving them new skills and competencies. I call upon the private sector to open their doors to thousands of our youth who go through the training programmes of the National Youth Service by offering them employment, apprenticeships, and scholarships to study further. We are conscious that the post-independence generation is slowly but surely coming of age. Those who were born after independence will this year exercise their democratic right to vote.

This is, therefore, a critical time for our country to reflect deeply on the challenges facing our youth today. A nation with a well-educated youth who aim for excellence is a nation with a brighter future. Therefore, the future of our country can only be secured if we give them the necessary

skills to compete in the modern economy.

The backlog in the provision of adequate and affordable housing is a challenge that is being addressed. The shortage is most vivid in rural and peri-urban areas. Legal mechanisms exist to address the shortage of housing in proclaimed areas. This has facilitated investment in the provision of housing by the National Housing Enterprise (NHE) in our towns and cities. In 2006-2007, more than N\$30 million was invested in the construction of new houses. For the 2007-2008 period, an amount of about N\$76.2 million was budgeted to build 700 new homes.

However, the situation is more critical in rural communities, where it has become difficult to acquire building materials for traditional dwellings and where NHE is unable to invest. The current floods have destroyed traditional homes in many communities. Innovative ways must be found to prevent our rural communities from becoming homeless.

A balance must be found between the imperative of environmental conservation and the need to meet the housing needs of rural Namibians. As it now stands, there is a policy vacuum whereby Government is constrained to address the housing needs of citizens who reside in non-proclaimed areas. This gap must be closed through innovative policy initiatives. Housing is one of the basic needs in human existence and it is central to the achievement of our long-term national development goals.

We are slowly but surely reaching our target of providing the majority of our communities with clean drinking water. During the review period, many existing boreholes were rehabilitated while new ones were drilled. The Ministry of Agriculture, Water, and Forestry has started to build earth dams to harvest water during the rain season for use during the dry periods. This will hopefully alleviate the problem faced by many rural communities of providing water for their livestock.

The network of water pipelines crisscrossing the country has reached many communities in remote areas. An amount of N\$25 million is available in the current budget to continue with

the work of providing more Namibians with clean drinking water.

I am concerned by reports that the water infrastructures in some areas have been vandalized. This should not be tolerated and those engaging in such destructive behaviours should face the full wrath of the law. In this respect, community members should remain on alert to protect their water points.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Chairperson:

Another important indicator of socioeconomic upliftment is the provision of electric power to households, businesses, industries, and public institutions such as schools, hospitals, and other facilities. Again, it is in the rural and peri-urban areas where the supply of electricity is disproportionately low. It is also in these areas where the effects of the limited availability of this important catalyst are most visible in the form of lower school pass rates, unemployment, higher rates of crime, poor hygiene, and etcetera. We will continue to intensify electrification in rural and peri-urban areas to address these problems.

At the same time, more efforts must be made to promote and expand the use of alternative and renewable sources of energy such as solar power.

In light of the power shortages in the SADC Region, I encourage Namibians to use facilities such as the Solar Revolving Fund, which is supported by Government, to acquire solar power installations.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Chairperson:

A vibrant economy is crucial for the achievement of our national development goals. In this regard, we must continue to introduce and implement innovative policies to foster economic growth, job creation, and competitiveness. Our efforts aimed at attracting investments and promoting employment creation are being implemented by a number of agencies, such as the Development Bank of Namibia (DBN), the Offshore Development Company (ODC), and the Namibia Investment Centre (NIC).

In 2007, the DBN financed projects in various sectors of our economy such as energy, mining, telecommunications, health, road infrastructure, and manufacturing. This has resulted in the creation of more than 2000 new jobs. In partnership with Bank Windhoek, the DBN has also provided support to the small and medium enterprises (SME) sector. Its Special Development Fund has extended just under N\$60 million to 74 SMEs and created 586 jobs.

In addition, the Offshore Development Company also facilitated the establishment of new business ventures. These include launching a granite polishing factory at Walvis Bay and establishing new diamond cutting and polishing factories. The establishment of the Namibia Diamond Trading Company to sell Namibian diamonds to local companies has increased interest for investments under the auspices of our Economic Processing Zone. These activities are contributing to the realization of our objectives towards increased value addition, industrialization, and exports of value-added goods. Investigations are continuing to recover funds that went missing at ODC. The nations will be informed at an appropriate time regarding progress made in this case.

I am happy to report that new industrial infrastructures were completed during the review period. Last May, I commissioned the David Shikomba Business Park at Ogwediva. SME Business Parks were also commissioned at Oshikuku and Katwitwi. Similar facilities to promote economic growth and business activities are planned in different parts of the country. At Oshakati, land has been acquired for the construction of the Agro-Food Processing Centre. Feasibility studies for the development of an automotive hub at Walvis Bay, business parks at Outjo, Okakarara, Helao Nafidi, and Ongwediva have been completed. Similar facilities are being planned for Karasburg, Omaruru, Okahandja, and other places where they do not exist.

After construction, the Cabinet has rescinded its earlier decision to dissolve the Namibia Development Corporation (NDC) and directed that the company should be restructured and given a new mandate. It will no longer be

involved in financing of enterprises as this is provided for in the mandate of the DBN. In this regard, the NDC Act and the DBN Act will be amended in order to give effect to this arrangement.

New jobs generated by our economy have not been sufficient to reduce the level of unemployment significantly. This calls for united action on the part of Government and the private sector to promote sustainable economic growth. In fact, all economic actors must join this endeavor so that, together, we can improve Namibia's future economic trajectory.

The growth in the mining sector has been encouraging, marked notably by the opening of new uranium mines in the country. The mines have not only raised our country's investment profile internationally, but they've also created new employment opportunities for our people.

We look forward to the commissioning of new uranium mines in the near future, when the Valencia Deposit and Trekkopje Project come on stream. In general, the value of exported minerals has increased considerably due to high demand in international markets.

Exploration activities for various minerals such as oil, gold, diamonds, and uranium are continuing. A viable gold deposit has been discovered at Otjikoto, where a new mine could be commissioned next year. Diamond exploration has increased in the Kavango and Caprivi regions. An agreement signed last year between our Government and De Beers ensures that sixteen percent of all cuttable diamonds mined locally are sold to companies operating in Namibia. There are now sixteen diamond cutting and polishing factories in the country. Mineral licenses have been granted to two companies to explore the viability of exploiting limestone deposits in the Erongo and Otjozondjupa regions for the production of cement. Our Government has also allocated N\$15 million to support small scale miners to enable them to improve their incomes.

Despite challenging environmental conditions, the fisheries sector continues to thrive, maintaining a workforce of some 13,400 people. Last year,

the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources completed the implementation of the Vessel Monitoring System. As a result, each fishing vessel licensed in Namibia is now fitted with an Automatic Location Communicator, except for those exempted by relevant regulations.

Authorities are now able to track and monitor the movements of fishing vessels operating in our exclusive economic zone and adjacent international waters. This has become an important tool in the protection, conservation, and sustainable utilization of our marine resources.

Complementing these measures is the acquisition of a new Fishing Patrol Aircraft, which was delivered and deployed for service in November last year.

Ongoing training programmes at the Namibia Maritime and Fisheries Institute have produced a corps of qualified personnel who are now serving the Namibian fishing industry. In order to take stock of developments in this sector over the last eighteen years and to chart a sustainable future course, an International Fisheries Conference will be hosted in the country this year.

The aquaculture subsector is showing promise with new projects having been launched in different parts of the country. The Kamutjonga Inland Fisheries Institute, which will be inaugurated next month, will provide deeper knowledge about this sub-sector through applied research. The Government has commissioned studies to investigate the potential of aquaculture in different regions of the country.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Chairperson:

Our Government fully supports the strengthening of the tourism sector. We, therefore, welcome the opening of new tourism facilities such as the Sossus Dune Lodge and the International Tourism Access Facilities at the MataMata and Sendelingsdrift Border posts. Our Government will continue to support the good efforts of our state-owned enterprise, Namibia Wildlife Resorts (NWR). Through the upgrading and establishment of tourism facilities, a number of jobs have been created for Namibian citizens.

I would, therefore, like to congratulate NWR and look forward to the establishment of more tourist facilities, especially in the Etosha National Park, so that more job opportunities can be created. The Etosha Centenary Celebrations last year exposed our tourism sector to increased international focus.

I am happy to report that according to the latest Tourism Satellite Account research released by the World Travel and Tourism Council, Namibia is projected to have the fastest growth in the travel and tourism industry in the world from 2009 to 2018. Our tourism sector is also projected to produce the second highest projected growth in terms of contribution to GDP, which is projected at 10.5 percent per annum. Direct employment is projected at 7.25 percent over the same period. These statistics provide a good indicator for achieving our national objectives as set out in Vision 2030. I am happy to report that Namibia's elephant management plan has been approved. This paves the way for the sale of ivory within the framework of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Tourism goes hand-in-hand with the conservation of our natural ecosystems. As such, we welcome the passing of the Environment Management Bill by our Parliament to support our existing conservation measures.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Chairperson:

Food production is at the centre of our drive to combat poverty. Through the Seeds and Fertiliser Subsidy Scheme, our Government has started to provide fertilizers to mahangu and maize farmers in order to improve crop yields.

The Ministry will conduct training and demonstration sessions to create awareness and best practices among the beneficiaries of the scheme. In the same vein, Agribank will soon start to offer training and support to emerging farmers in the areas of livestock and crop production. Another initiative will involve the provision of reduced interest rates on loans to emerging farmers with a view to improving

profitability and long-term sustainability of farming operations.

More Namibians are accessing and utilizing the services offered by Agribank to improve their farming operations. During the review period, more than 350 loans amounting to nearly N\$60 million were approved by Agribank.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Chairperson:

The Government has a duty to plan for the expansion and maintenance of our physical and communication infrastructure, which is the backbone and a crucial catalyst for the smooth running of our economy and the movement of people and goods. In this light, Government ministries and state-owned enterprises have implemented various capital projects in different sectors.

The construction of the new office block at the new State House has been completed. It was inaugurated during the eighteenth Independence Anniversary celebrations this year. The construction of the Presidential Residence has started. During the review period, 373 kilometers of gravel roads were upgraded to bitumen standards while the construction of a major highway from Rundu to Elundu has started.

This is an important project not only for Namibia, but also for the SADC Region in terms of regional trade and commerce. It is expected to cost about N\$810.5 million.

In addition, workers are already on site to rehabilitate the road between Okahandja and Karibib, which forms a vital link in the Trans Kalahari Corridor. The Eiseb-Otjinene-Epukiro and the Gam-Eiseb Road will be graveled.

Our Government has also funded the labor-based gravelling of approximately 160 kilometers of rural roads in Caprivi, Erongo, Kavango, Kunene, and Oshikoto regions. Many people will be employed during the construction phase of these projects. The construction of feeder roads is aimed at improving transport for rural communities and to promote trade.

The expansion and rehabilitation of our rail network is on track. We celebrated the completion of Phase One of the Northern Railway

Extension Project, which heralded a new era of rail transportation in Northern Namibia. We look forward to the completion of Phase Two, which will reach the border town of Oshikango from where it will eventually be linked to the Angolan Rail network as part of Trans Kunene Railway Project. Cargo transport on the Northern Railway Extension Project has seen remarkable growth with a positive impact on our economy.

The volume of cargo transport from Tsumeb to Ondangwa grew from 38,911 metric tones to 1,880,874 metric tones between April 2006 and February 2008. During the same period, cargo from Andangwa to Tsumeb grew from 324 metric tones to 1,711 metric tones. This phenomenal growth shows that the project has a positive impact on our economy. I have no doubt that the volume of cargo will continue to increase.

We also look forward to the completion of the upgrading of the runway at the Walvis Bay Airport in October this year. The runway is being upgraded to accommodate larger aircrafts, both for passenger and cargo transport.

Other important infrastructures that also have economic significance are our ports. NamPort has compiled a Master Plan for expansion of our ports. The plan has assumed a regional dimension, in line with our focus on regional economic integration. This regional focus was strengthened with the creation of Walvis Bay Corridor Group, as well as the Trans Caprivi, Trans Kalahari, Trans Kunene and Trans Orange initiatives, linking the Ports of Walvis Bay and Lüderitz with Angola, Botswana, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe via the surfaced road network. This new orientation will reposition Namibia as a key player in regional economic integration and seaborne trade between SADC and the rest of the world.

Over the next five years, our ports will undergo major upgrading to increase efficiency, improve capacity to handle larger cargo vessels, and provide additional services to clients. These include: lengthening the commercial quay; deepening the ports to sixteen meters; providing a dedicated fishing quay; acquiring ship-to-shore cranes; establishing an offshore ship repair facility; and building a bulk storage facility among others.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Chairperson:

All sectors of our economy must embrace the information technology revolution. This is vital for the Namibian economy to remain competitive. It will also enable citizens to communicate with each other better and for businesses to deliver goods and services to the consumers in a timely manner.

I am glad that Namibian companies in the information communication technology sector are able to bring Namibian consumers the latest services and products such as broadband internet access and mobile telephone services. Our Government is in the process of introducing a communications bill. When passed, it will establish a new Communications Regulatory Authority for Namibia to regulate electronic communication networks and services. It will also facilitate the reorganization of the state-owned companies in the information communication technology sector. It is for this reason that I restructured the old Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to the new Ministry of Information and Communication Technology.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Chairperson:

There is a strong correlation between the ability of the Government to deliver efficient public services and the professionalism and dedication of the civil service. A strong correlation also exists between the Government's ability to deliver *via-à-vis* the regulatory mechanisms and frameworks that we have put in place. In this context, the deployment of the civil service and the resources at our disposal must all be geared towards the achievement of our stated objectives. This calls for proper planning and coordination of all Government activities.

I have said it in the past, and I will say it again, that in the implementation process, the left hand must know what the right hand is doing and vice versa. After all, the provision of public amenities, the promotion of economic growth, the prevention of crime, the building of stronger communities, and the attainment of Vision 2030 are all

interrelated. We can only move forward with greater confidence if we make sure that all Government activities are well coordinated.

We will not relent in our pursuit to strengthen the capacity of the civil service to deliver more efficiently and effectively. Towards this end, the Namibia Institute of Public Administration and Management will be established soon. Another important measure is the completion of the public service-wide Strategic Planning Process. This will streamline and harmonise planning and goal setting in the public service.

It will also reintroduce the Performance Management System so that each civil servant can be held accountable for the agreed goals and targets of performance. The majority of offices, ministries, and agencies have completed their Strategic Plans, while others are in the process of doing so.

Our overall aim is to promote excellence across all aspects of service delivery, accelerate implementation of public policies, and reduce bureaucratic bottlenecks and red tape. Delays in the issuing of national documents, registration of companies, the backlog in our courts, inefficiencies at our ports of entry, and other delays in all areas of service delivery should become a thing of the past. The public service infrastructure must be fine-tuned so that it can operate professionally.

I am glad to report that, despite challenges, public service delivery has improved in many areas. The past headache caused by delays in the issuing of national identity documents has largely been resolved. The Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration has equipped ten vehicles to serve as mobile offices for the registration of national documents. This will provide welcome relief to many citizens who will no longer have to travel long distances to apply for or collect their national documents.

The waiting period for passports and various types of visas and permits will also be reduced drastically through an automation system. Plans are underway to install an integrated system linking the issuing of permits with the Border Control Management System.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Chairperson:

The administration of justice is a central feature of our constitutional democracy and the rule of law. Thus, everything must be done to ensure that our courts dispense justice speedily in line with the provisions of the Namibian Constitution. It is for this reason that measures have been implemented to address the backlog of cases on our court rolls. I agree with the sentiment that justice delayed is justice denied. For this reason, we as a Government should not be seen to be denying justice to anyone.

The establishment of two Regional Offices of the Ombudsman at Oshakati and Keetmanshoop is a welcome development. This must be accompanied by an aggressive education campaign to sensitive communities about the work and mandate of the Ombudsman. It will encourage members of these two communities and other Namibians to enforce their rights whenever and wherever they are violated.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Chairperson:

We can only achieve excellence in service delivery and good governance if our systems for enforcing accountability and transparency are strong. Towards this end, the work of our compliance enforcement agencies must be supported. Here, I have in mind the work of the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Ombudsman, and the Office of the Auditor General. The auditing function is crucial to ensure that funds allocated to various public bodies are utilized responsibly and for the stated purpose. I am informed that the Office of the Auditor has carried out various performance audits dealing with procurement, trophy hunting, medical stores, police vehicles, disaster management, over-crowding in prisons and holding cells, as well as capital projects.

We look forward to the tabling of these audits to hear and see what they reveal. I am pleased to report that, through hard work, the Auditor General has been able to clear the backlog on the audit reports of Government institutions. I urge all relevant institutions to ensure that Namibia

develops a complete and reliable system of accounting for all public assets, starting from fixed to mobile assets of different kinds. These assets belong to the Namibian people and Government should be able to account for each and every item.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Chairperson:

The drought and floods that occurred during the review period have devastated many communities. Many farmers lost substantial numbers of livestock to both the drought and the heavy rains that followed. As if that was not enough, the flood water inundated large parts of northern and northeastern Namibia. Given the magnitude of the challenge, I declared the flood situation in Namibia a “national disaster.” The flood has claimed several human lives and caused destruction to businesses, homes, public facilities, roads, and bridges, as well as crop fields. It has also caused the outbreak of water borne diseases such as cholera and malaria.

Our Government has mobilized resources to deal with the impact of the flood and provide relief to those affected. Several families have been evacuated from their flooded homes and placed in temporary shelter. A Disaster Coordinating Committee has been established to oversee relief efforts.

An in-depth assessment will be made to determine the extent of the damage caused to our national infrastructures, such as roads and bridges, in order to determine the resources required to repair the damage. I wish to express my appreciation to our citizens, businesses, non-governmental organizations, and our development cooperation partners who have supported our relief efforts. Your assistance is highly appreciated.

I also thank our neighbouring countries who have come to our rescue during this national disaster. This solidarity has, once again, underlined the importance of our engagement with other countries at the regional, continental, and international levels.

The period under review was a busy one on the diplomatic front. As part of our commitment

to strengthen bilateral cooperation between Namibia and other states, I visited a number of countries. Namibia was also honoured to host nine Heads of State and Government, and other dignitaries who visited our country. During these visits, a number of important agreements in various areas of cooperation were signed.

With a view to expanding and strengthening our representation abroad, Namibia opened new diplomatic missions in the Arab Republic of Egypt and the United Republic of Tanzania. I also commissioned new Ambassadors and High Commissioners to represent Namibia abroad, while I received numerous Ambassadors and High Commissioners accredited to Namibia during the past year.

The hosting of the Namibia International Investors Conference in Windhoek, which I co-chaired with His Excellency President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, has opened up new opportunities for foreign direct investments in our country.

On a multilateral level, Namibia has remained actively engaged in efforts towards promoting international peace and security, as well as sustainable social and economic development within the framework of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the African Union (AU), and the United Nations (UN). In this context, we actively participated in a number of Heads of State and Government summits, such as the Southern African Development Community Summit, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, and the EU-Africa Summit. We remain an active member of the AU Committee of Ten on the Reform of the United Nations. Namibia was also elected to the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) during the last Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

I am pleased to mention that Namibia successfully concluded our mission to Liberia as part of the United Nations Peace Keeping Mission and stands ready to make similar contributions in future under SADC, the AU, and UN.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Chairperson:

I address this August House at a time when the economic situation here in Namibia and the rest of the world is not very favourable. This has caused difficulties for many families as a result of the increase in the price of basic commodities and services, such as food and transport. Our Government is working hard to weather these difficult times. We are confident that through prudent macroeconomic policies, we will be able to bring more prosperity to our people. In order to do this, however, we must act pragmatically and with reasoned judgment at all times. That is what good leadership is all about.

The current economic situation should not be a cause for alarm. Our economic fundamentals remain strong and this gives us strong hope for the future. It also ensures us that the State of our Nation remains strong. We must use the available opportunities and our comparative advantages to build and reinforce a stronger foundation for competitiveness and prosperity. Namibians should join hands in the Nation's quest to make our country better. This is our home and our motherland. It is the place that we call home and the place where the future generations will call home. Let us make it better for the present and the future generations.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Chairperson:

Despite the remaining challenges, we can look at the period under review with a sense of accomplishment, because the implementation of our policies is progressing. There are many areas where improvement is definitely needed.

We need to redouble our efforts to improve the state of education; we need to accelerate the delivery of housing, electricity, and health care. At the same time, we need to expand access to services for our communities to enjoy modern amenities and services. We need to do more to promote economic activities and to economically empower the previously disadvantaged communities and create employment opportunities.

These are real challenges that we now face and will continue to face in the foreseeable

future. However, these challenges are not insurmountable. The policy mix of pragmatism and common sense will see us through these problems. Our priority areas have been articulated and are clearly set out in our National Development Plans (NDPs), the 2004 SWAPO PARTY Election Manifesto, and Vision 2030. We will continue to pursue these priorities for the benefit of all our people and the development of our country. The passing financial year is a vital milestone in our march towards the achievement of Vision 2030.

This was a period during which we further consolidated our gains and moved a step closer towards our stated goals. This financial year will be marked by hard work and relentless pursuit of our goals. The new budget has provided a clear framework and vision for increased delivery of goods and services to more Namibians. I am convinced that the pro-poor orientation of our budget is the right approach in both the short and long term. It will ultimately mean that no community is left behind in the socioeconomic development process. Our belief that all Namibian children deserve an equal chance must remain unshaken. It is only in this manner that we can transform our country both socially and economically to make it a better place for all to live. We cannot allow the majority of our people to swim in the sea of poverty, while a small minority is secure on islands of prosperity. That is not what the struggle for national liberation was all about. It is not what the hard won independence should perpetuate.

I wish to assure the Namibian people that our SWAPO Party Government is committed to improve and expand access to healthcare, education, potable water, electricity, housing, and other public services and amenities. We are also committed to promote transparency and combat crime. This will always be accompanied by concrete action and an implementation plan. In the same manner, we remain true to our resolve to ensure that our roads, railways, telephone networks, and other public infrastructure remain in a state of good repair, serving as catalysts for economic growth and smooth movement of people and goods. Our Government will continue to introduce measures aimed at providing our youth

with relevant skills and knowledge to make them competitive vis-à-vis their counterparts in the region and beyond. Their ingenuity and competencies represent a powerful force for the achievement of Vision 2030. Namibia has been blessed with peace and stability. This has enabled us to focus on development programmes and the delivery of public services. I, therefore, call upon Namibians to continue to maintain peace and harmony with their neighbours and, indeed, all their fellow Namibians. We must all preach and practice mutual respect, tolerance, and cooperation in the process of nation-building. We must continue to promote our policy of National Reconciliation.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Chairperson:

We start the new financial year with renewed commitment to the achievement of our national priorities. The Honourable Members of this August House have been scrutinizing and debating the 2008-2009 Appropriation Bill for the past few weeks. I am pleased that, overall, the Bill has received the support of the majority of the Honourable Members.

I am also pleased that, where warranted, genuine criticisms have been raised with the view to improve. The Appropriation Bill is a planning tool for the execution of Government plans over a specific period.

While I have highlighted some of the major intended plans of Government in the new financial year and beyond, the Appropriation Bill provides the full details of Government expenditure in the next 12 months.

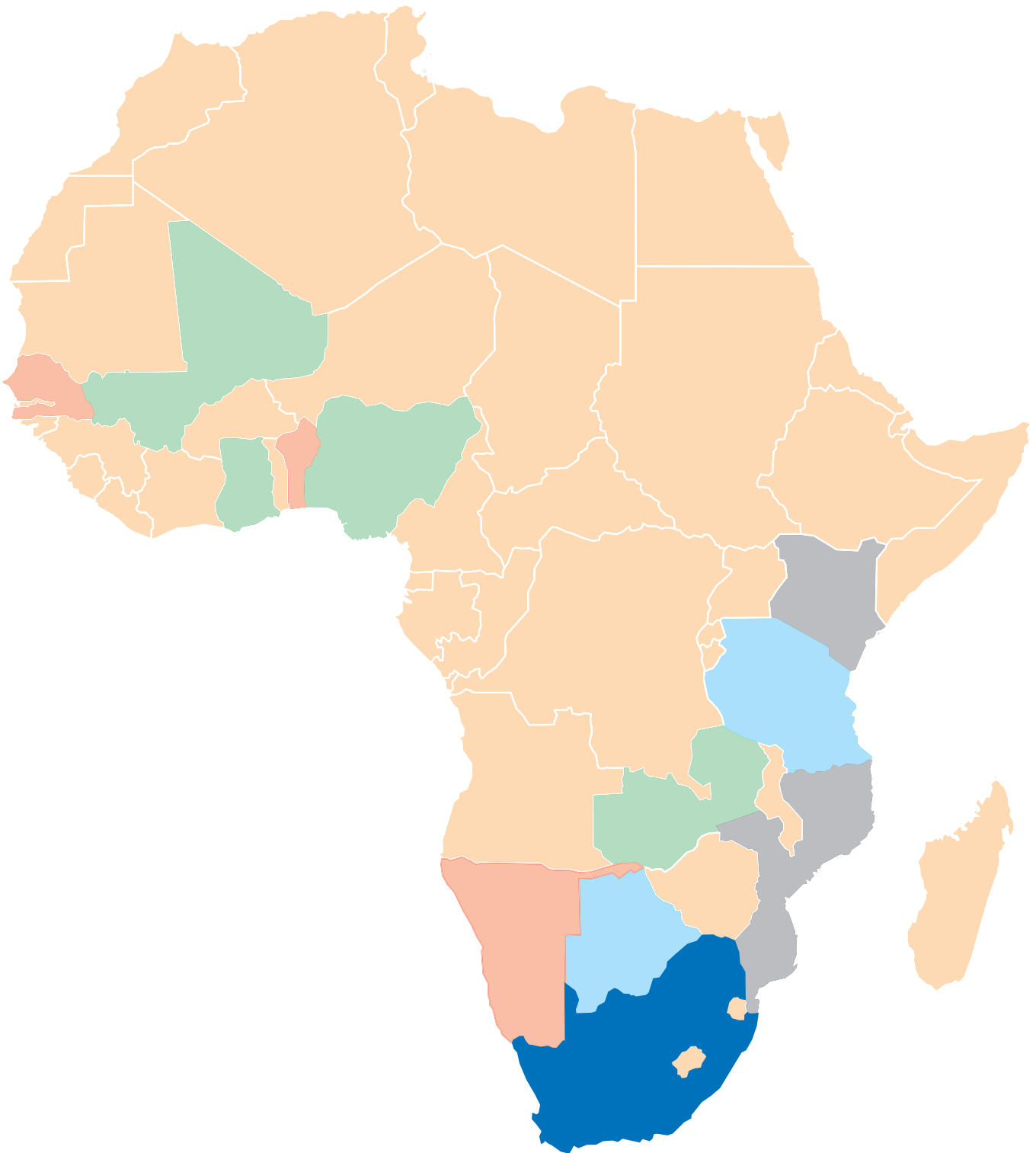
As we look back at the period under review, we are encouraged by the successes that have been recorded. At the same time, we are reminded of the improvements that we must make in order to serve more people, reach more communities, and improve the living conditions of those Namibians who live in difficult conditions. The lessons of the past have spurred us to plan better and work smarter. We are confident that we will do better, achieve more, and improve the performance of the public service in the new financial year and in the future.

Namibia must always be a winning nation. Namibia must continue to walk tall among the community of free nations. Namibia must be a country of equal opportunities to every citizen. Namibia must be a country of hope and pride for the current and future generations. Namibia must be a country where the vices of tribalism, regionalism, nepotism, corruption, racism, sexism, and crime have no place. Our SWAPO Party Government is fully committed to achieving these objectives.

Long Live the Republic of Namibia!

I thank you.

SOUTH AFRICA



SOUTH AFRICA



**State of the Nation Address by His
Excellency Thabo Mbeki, President
of the Republic of South Africa
at the Joint Sitting of Parliament
Cape Town, South Africa
February 8, 2008**



Madam Speaker of the National Assembly;
Chairperson of the National Council of
Provinces;
Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly and
Deputy Chairperson of the NCOP;
Deputy President of the Republic;
Honourable leaders of our political parties and
Honourable Members of Parliament;
Ministers and Deputy Ministers;
Mr Jacob Zuma, Former Deputy President of the
Republic and President of the African National
Congress;
Our esteemed Chief Justice and members of the
Judiciary;
Heads of our Security Services;
Governor of the Reserve Bank;
Distinguished Premiers and Speakers of our
Provinces;
Chairperson of South Africa Local Government
Association (SALGA), mayors and leaders in our
system of local government;
Chairperson of the National house of traditional
leaders and our honoured traditional leaders;
Heads of the state organs supporting our
;constitutional democracy;
Directors-General and other leaders of the
public service;
Your Excellencies, Ambassadors and High
Commissioners;
Distinguished guests, friends and comrades;
People of South Africa:
Allow me, on this occasion of the penultimate
Joint Sitting of the Third Parliament for the
annual debate on the State of our Nation, to wish
all the Honourable Members of Parliament a
happy and productive New Year.

I am confident that 2008 will be one of the most remarkable years of our democracy, as we all work together to realise the core aspiration of our people to attain a better life for all. I say this because, in our own estimation, it is not often that a nation is called upon to strain every sinew of its collective body to attain a dream. And, such is the injunction that history has imposed on us today.

I speak here today in the presence of my mother, Epainette Mbeki, MaMofokeng, who came to communicate an unequivocal message from the rural masses of the Transkei, among whom she has lived for many decades. She says these masses demand of all of us who claim to be their leaders, that we tell them and others like them elsewhere in our country, whether we remain committed to the undertaking we have made, that tomorrow will be better than today. In eight days time, on February 16th, she will be 92 years old. What she expects as her birthday present is the truth. I thank her for taking the trouble to be with us today and trust that we will not disappoint her.

I would also like to take this opportunity to salute President Nelson Mandela, one of the pre-eminent founding fathers of our democracy, who will mark his ninetieth birthday on July 18th this year.

We welcome to this occasion Mr. Arthur Margeman, representing the veterans of the Alexandra bus boycott of fifty years ago, which included Nelson Mandela. We are also privileged to have among us Ms. Jann Turner, the daughter of Rick Turner, who was murdered by apartheid agents 30 years ago.

We are also pleased that we have among us Mr. Dinilesizwe Sobukwe, son of the outstanding patriot and leader, Robert Sobukwe, who also passed away thirty years back after enduring many years of imprisonment, banishment, and other forms of repression. We acknowledge, both among the Honourable Members and our guests, the many founders of the United Democratic Front, founded 25 years ago.

All these honoured guests, representing both memory and hope, remind us by their presence

that ours is a task in a relay race of continuous rebirth so that the dream of a better life becomes a reality for all South Africans. Indeed, they represent a celebration of the indomitable spirit of our people and pose a challenge to all of us to act in ways that do not betray or disappoint the expectations of the people.

We are about to begin the last full financial year of the current and third democratic Parliament and Government, soon after which we will hold our fourth general elections. The Government has, therefore, reviewed the distance we have travelled in terms of implementing the mandate given by the people in 2004.

I am pleased to say that we have indeed done much to implement the commitments we made to the people in 2004. However, and not unexpectedly, it is obvious that we still have outstanding work to do in this regard.

Given that we are approaching the end of our mandate term, the Government decided that it should identify a suite of Apex Priorities on which it must focus in a special way, using these as catalysts to further accelerate progress towards the achievement of the objectives the people mandated us to pursue.

Happily, this state of the Nation Address has given me the opportunity to report to Parliament and the Nation on our 24 Apex Priorities, which the Honourable Members can find on the Government website during the course of next week.

The identification of the Apex Priorities means that all three spheres of Government—the national, provincial, and local, at both executive and administrative levels—are hereby making the firm undertaking that we will use the short period ahead of us to further energise our advancement towards the realisation of the all-important goal of a better life for all of our people.

The entirety of our system of governance is, therefore, making the commitment that in the period ahead of us, it will do its best to live up to the imperative – *Business Unusual!* We speak of *Business Unusual*, not referring to any changes in our established policies, but with regard to the speedy, efficient, and effective implementation of these policies and programmes so that the lives of

our people can change for the better, sooner rather than later.

To make certain that this happens; we have taken the necessary steps to ensure that the annual budget that the Minister of Finance will present later this month makes the necessary allocations to give us the means to implement the Apex Priorities. The main categories of these priorities are:

- the further acceleration of our economic growth and development;
- speeding up the process of building the infrastructure we need to achieve our economic and social goals;
- improving the effectiveness of our interventions directed at the Second Economy and poverty eradication;
- enhancing the impact of our programmes targeting the critically important area of education and training;
- accelerating our advance towards the achievement of the goal of health for all;
- revamping the criminal justice system to intensify our offensive against crime;
- further strengthening the machinery of Government to ensure that it has the capacity to respond to our development imperatives; and,
- enhancing our focus on key areas in terms of our system of international relations, with particular focus on some African issues and South-South relations.

More than at any other time, the situation that confronts our Nation and country, and the tasks we have set for ourselves, demand that we inspire and organise all our people to act together as one, to do all the things that have to be done, understanding that in a very real sense, all of us, together, hold our own future in our hands!

As we act together everywhere in our country, we must also understand that what we have to be about is – *Business Unusual!*

As I was preparing this address, one among us suggested to me that our country was being buffeted by strong crosswinds that made it especially difficult to foresee where our country will be tomorrow. He suggested this morning that, to

capture what he considers the essence of the reality confronting us, I should recall the well-known words with which Charles Dickens opened his novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*. And so, I quote these words:

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way - in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.”

You will ask whether I agree with this assessment, whether I too believe that we have entered an era of confusion in which all of us cannot but lose our way, unsure of our steps, unsteady on our feet, and fearful of the future!

My answer to this question is a definite “No!” Like the rest of our Government, I am convinced that the fundamentals that have informed our country’s forward march in the last 14 years remain in place. They continue to provide us with the strong base from which we must proceed as we keep our eyes firmly focused on the continued pursuit of the goal of a better life for all our people. Thus, we should all reaffirm that we remain on course as we continue to strive to make ours a winning nation.

However, like all the Honourable Members, I am aware of the fact that many in our society are troubled by a deep sense of unease about where our country will be tomorrow. They are concerned about the national emergency into which the country has been thrown by the unexpected disruptions in the supply of electricity.

They are concerned about some developments in our economy, especially the steady increase in interest rates and food and fuel prices, which further impoverish the poor especially.

Some among these worry about the possible impact on our own economy of the threat of economic recession in the United States.

They are worried about whether we have the capacity to defend the democratic rights and the democratic Constitution, which were born of enormous sacrifices. This is driven by such developments as the prosecution of the National Commissioner of Police, the suspension of the National Director of Public Prosecutions, fears about a threat to the independence of the judiciary and the rule of law, and the attendant allegations about the abuse of state power for political purposes.

They are worried about whether our country is threatened by the anarchy represented by the criminal torching of six passenger trains in Tshwane last month.

While they recognise and respect the right of the ruling party to regulate its own affairs, they are concerned that it must continue to play its role as one of the principal architects of a democratic, non-racial, non-sexist, and prosperous South Africa.

Most obviously, it would be irresponsible to ignore these and other concerns or to dismiss them as mere jeremiads typical of the prophets of doom. The real challenge is to respond to them in a manner that conveys the definite message to everybody in our country and the millions in Africa and elsewhere in the world who watch our country with keen interest, that we remain firm in our resolve to continue building the kind of South Africa that has given hope not only to our people, but also to many others outside our borders.

Let me, therefore, be bold and say that this historical moment demands that our Nation should unite as never before and strain every sinew of its collective body to address our common challenges and keep alive the dream that has sustained all of us as we travelled along the uncharted road towards the creation of the South Africa visualised in our Constitution.

The national emergency represented by the current power outages poses a challenge and presents an opportunity to the entirety of our nation to give concrete expression to the call we have just made for all of us to unite in action and

act in unity to keep our country on course. This must say to all of us that we are indeed in a period of challenges, but surmountable challenges. And, precisely because it is a period of challenges, it is also an era of opportunity!

In this regard, I would like to express our appreciation and full agreement with the comments made by the Chief Executive of Anglo American, Cynthia Carroll, when she addressed the Mining Indaba here in Cape Town earlier this week on Tuesday, February 5th.

As the Honourable Members know, she said:

“I don’t regard the problems of energy supply here as a disaster. And, South Africa is not alone; there are pressures on supply regarding our expansion projects in Chile and Brazil. Sure, the problems here are serious; overcoming them will require ingenuity, especially in energy efficiency and energy saving, as well as the development of alternative power supplies. But, if all of us can forge strong partnerships to tackle the situation, we will all come through—I hope relatively unscathed... This is not a time for finger pointing, but for working together in finding solutions.”

This having been said, it is, however, also necessary that we take this opportunity to convey to the country the apologies of both the Government and Eskom for the national emergency that has resulted in all of us having to contend with the consequences of load-shedding. I would also like to thank all citizens for their resilience and forbearing in the face of the current difficulties.

In the past two weeks, the Ministers of Minerals and Energy and Public Enterprises have outlined the nature of the emergency we confront and what each one of us can do to normalise the situation. Last week, the Honourable Members had an opportunity to reflect on these matters.

In essence, the significant rise in electricity demand over the last two years has outstripped the new capacity we have brought on stream. The resultant tight supply situation makes the

overall system vulnerable to any incident affecting the availability of energy. In this situation, we have to curtail the unplanned outages, and the only way we can do this immediately is to reduce demand and thus ensure a better reserve margin.

As Government, our task is to now lead and unite the country behind a campaign for energy efficiency that will address this challenge. Among other things, we must use the current adversity to ensure that our homes and economy become more energy efficient.

There are concrete actions each individual, household, and business can take. These are being disseminated by the Department of Minerals and Energy, and we remain open to any other suggestions that you, our compatriots, may give to us and share with one another.

Government will start implementing a campaign to ensure efficient lighting, solar water heating, and geyser load management in households, including housing standards for all new houses and developments. We urge households that can afford to act immediately to consider implementing these energy-saving measures.

An instruction has been issued for all Government buildings to reduce their consumption of electricity, and please feel free to name and shame those who do not.

The details of other voluntary and mandatory actions in the Power Conservation Programme have been set out by the Ministers, and these will be refined through consultation with the various stakeholders and then published.

On the supply side, Eskom is working furiously to ensure the introduction of co-generation projects as a matter of urgency. We are taking steps to enhance Eskom's maintenance capacity. We have emergency task teams dealing with the challenge of coal quality and supply with the coal mining industry, and we are working to fast track the approval and construction of gas turbine projects. All these actions, taken together with the electricity saving measures, will improve certainty and raise the reserve margin.

The massive Eskom build programme in new generation, transmission, and distribution capacity

will continue, and where possible, some projects will be accelerated. In this regard, I would like to thank the private sector for being prepared to assist in whatever way they can. In a meeting with the Chairman of General Electric (GE) during the course of last week, GE offered to assist by procuring scarce turbine equipment on our behalf. In South Africa, our own large companies such as Sasol, Anglo, and BHP Billiton are all in concrete discussions with the Departments of Mineral and Energy and Public Enterprises to find cost effective and sustainable solutions to the supply constraint. The approach is one of common action rather than recrimination.

I particularly want to pay tribute to the mining industry for the way in which they have assisted us and the economy to resolve a real crisis that hit us on the January 24th. We will all work to minimise the adverse impact these events had on the industry.

Collective effort and consultation are at the centre of our response to the emergency. Task teams are currently working in many areas. Next week the Provincial Premiers will convene their fora with Mayors to plan and implement the energy saving measures in all the municipalities across the country. They will be supported by technical teams from EDI Holdings, Eskom, and the National Energy Efficiency Agency. The Department of Provincial and Local Government will coordinate this activity supported by the line Departments of Mineral and Energy and Public Enterprises.

I will convene a meeting of the Joint Presidential Working Groups to coordinate our overall actions. I will also shortly announce a team of 'Energy Champions,' consisting of prominent and knowledgeable South Africans, who will assist government with the energy efficiency campaign and inform investors and communities on the actual situation and how they can help to address our current challenges.

The Minister of Finance will provide more information in the budget speech on the support that the Government will provide for the energy efficiency campaign and to Eskom in its build programme.

We face an emergency, but we can overcome the problems in a relatively short period. This situation has precipitated the inevitable realisation that the era of very cheap and abundant electricity has come to an end. However, given our large base of installed generation capacity, for a long time to come, ours will remain amongst the few economies with affordable electricity.

We are a minerals resource economy. We must, therefore, continue to support the mining industry. It is inevitable that if we are to continue on our growth path as a manufacturing country, we will also have to continue supporting the processing industry. However, it is imperative that all enterprises become more energy efficient. Indeed, energy efficiency itself provides economic opportunity.

Let us, therefore, use this emergency to put in place the first building blocks of the essential energy efficient future we dare not avoid. Let us ensure that all hands are on deck to address the turbulence that has hit us, inspired by the approach that our circumstances call for *Business Unusual!*

This is exactly the same approach we must adopt as we continue to prepare to host the 2009 FIFA Confederations Cup and the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup, which will kick off in our country 854 days from today. I mention this important matter here because the current challenges we are facing have led some elsewhere in the world, once more, to question whether we will be able to host these tournaments successfully.

Of course, I have absolutely no doubt that we will honour our undertaking to FIFA and the world community of soccer players and soccer lovers to create all the necessary conditions for the holding of the best ever FIFA Soccer World Cup tournament.

The sense that we get, across all sectors of South African society and further afield, represented by the actual daily progress we are making in terms of our all-round preparations, is one of *Business Unusual* - all hands on deck for 2010! We must ensure that we sustain this approach.

We are fully aware that a critical element of our preparations should be the building of a strong South African team that will do us and the

whole of the football fraternity proud. I am certain that the South African Football Association, our coaches led by Carlos Alberto Parreira, and the players are aware of the heavy responsibility they carry to prepare a national team of which both we and Africa should be proud.

Once more, we thank the Springboks for showing the way when they won the Rugby World Cup last year. This must inspire Bafana Bafana, as it must inspire our athletes who will compete in the Beijing Olympic Games later this year.

Let me now turn to the Apex Priorities I mentioned.

To further accelerate our economic growth and development, we will implement the Industrial Policy Action Plan. Government will continue our industrialisation programme and continue to create opportunities for growth and employment creation. In this regard, R2.3 billion has been budgeted for industrial policy initiatives and a further R5 billion in tax incentives over three years will support industrial policy.

Working together with business and labour, we shall also develop as urgently as possible key action plans in sectors where such plans do not exist, such as mining and minerals beneficiation, consumer durables, retail with a focus on improving support to small enterprises, construction, creative industries, agriculture, and agro-processing.

Once more, I would like to emphasise that we remain determined to support the automotive sector and will, therefore, ensure that the support given to this sector through the Motor Industry Development Programme is maintained.

At the macroeconomic level, we will continue to maintain a fiscal posture that supports continued economic growth and development, reducing our external vulnerability.

To speed up the process of building infrastructure, we will finalise the development of an integrated infrastructure plan, with specific emphasis on energy efficiency. This entails coordinating the programmes of the state-owned enterprises and overlaying all the infrastructure plans, including freight and other logistics, energy pipelines, information and communications technology, road infrastructure, water, and

electricity, both in terms of their timing and geographic location.

Cutting across these plans, and therefore a critical priority, is information and communications technology, both as a facilitator and a sector in its own right. Accordingly, this year we will complete the licensing and operationalisation of Infracore. Already, money has been allocated for Sentech to become a wireless internet wholesaler, as well as finance its digitisation. Working with other governments on the continent and with the private sector, we will complete the process to launch the undersea cables.

At the same time, we aim to provide digital broadcasting to fifty percent of the population by the end of the year. Attached to this will be a manufacturing strategy for the development in South Africa of set-top boxes, which should be finalised by the middle of the year.

Having noted that the tardiness with which Government processes applications for investment in relation to issues such as land acquisition, infrastructure, and environmental impact assessments can at times make or break investor decisions, we have decided, in the spirit of *Business Unusual*, work is progressing urgently to set up a call centre through which prospective investors and Government can track these processes.

An element of Government's Apex of Priorities will be deliberate focus on matters of skills development. Work to review the National Human Resource Development Strategy will be completed this year, and the projects that the joint team of Government, labour, business, and academic institutions organised under the Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA) will be intensified.

Indeed, we are greatly encouraged by the good response from the private sector as demonstrated through the commitment by the CEOs of seventy of the JSE Securities Exchange-listed companies to work with Government in addressing the challenge of scarce skills.

In addition to this work, in the coming period we will prioritise further interventions in the Further Education and Training (FET) colleges, the Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) institutions, thus resourcing schools in

the lowest three quintiles, freeing them from the responsibility to charge fees, and speeding up on-the-job training for professional graduates.

Further, after correcting weaknesses in our Adult Basic Education Programme, which we identified last year, we shall this month launch the Kha Ri Gude ("let us learn") mass literacy campaign. This will include the training of master trainers who will provide basic literacy classes to 300,000 adults and youth in 2008.

Madame Speaker and Chairperson:

At the centre of our economic programmes is, and should always be, the consideration whether their success is helping to improve the quality of life of all South Africans, acting as an important weapon in our War on Poverty and accelerating our advance towards the attainment of such objectives as the reduction of unemployment and advancing the goal of health for all.

In the programme to provide sustainable human settlements, we are now able to provide 260,000 housing units per annum, and an agreement has been reached with South African Local Government Association (SALGA) to place a moratorium on the sale of land that can be availed for the housing programme.

Along with the progress we are making in the variety of interventions focused on poverty reduction, we continue to address many weaknesses, including the processing of the Land Use Management Bill, the finalisation of the land restitution cases, the support programme for those who acquire land, and the development and implementation of a determined rural development programme.

These are some of the issues to which we will pay special attention during this year, and ensure that we meet the targets we have set for ourselves.

Yet another critical Apex Priority is the elaboration of an integrated and comprehensive anti-poverty strategy that addresses especially sections of the population most affected by this scourge. These include children, women, the youth, people living in rural areas and urban informal settlements, people with disabilities or chronic illnesses, and the elderly.

Among the key proposed interventions are:

- expanding the Public Works programme;
- employment subsidies for direct job-creation for targeted groups;
- enhancing employment search capability;
- improving education and training;
- improving services and assets among poor communities;
- specific interventions in poor households; and
- ensuring effectiveness of institutions supporting women and other sectors.

Among others, we will make an evaluation of the gender machinery so as to improve all aspects related to the empowerment of women.

Parallel to this initiative is a special project to examine interventions required to deal with vulnerable children over the age of 14.

But, we will all agree that our society, and the poor specifically, cannot wait for strategies and dialogues and workshops—important as these may be. In any case, most of the interventions possible are things that Government is already doing, though not sufficiently integrated. As such, in the spirit of *Business Unusual*, this year the Government intends to intensify the campaign to identify specific households and individuals in dire need and to put in place interventions that will help, in the intervening period, to alleviate their plight.

For this, we will require a National War Room for a War Against Poverty bringing together departments such as Social Development, Provincial and Local Government, Trade and Industry, Agriculture and Land Affairs, Public Works, and Health, as well as provincial and local administrations, which will work with NGOs and businesses to identify the interventions required in specific households and implement them as a matter of urgency.

This year, in pursuit of socioeconomic inclusion, we shall attend to other specific priorities that are critical to the country's war against poverty. These are:

- speeding up land and agrarian reform with detailed plans for land acquisition, better implementation of agricultural support services and household food support, and improving the capital base and reach of Micro-Agricultural Finance Initiative of South Africa (MAFISA) to provide micro-credit in this sector. Focus will be placed on areas of large concentrations of farm dwellers and those with high eviction rates, and we aim to increase black entrepreneurship in agricultural production by five percent per year, and the audit on land ownership will be sped up;
- the budget will provide for an increase in the social grant system by equalising the age of eligibility at 60 years old, thus benefiting about half a million men;
- intensifying efforts already started to scale up assistance to cooperatives and small enterprises especially those involving women, with emphasis on providing training and markets, including linking them up with established outlets;
- scaling up the National Youth Service programme, including a graduated increase of the intake in the Military Skills Development programme of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) from the current 4,000 to 10,000. R700 million has already been given to the SANDF to start scaling up this programme;
- intensifying the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) that, by surpassing the set targets, has shown potential to absorb more entrants. This will include increased intake of young people in the programme to maintain public infrastructure, doubling the number of children enrolled in Early Childhood Development to over 600,000 through 1,000 new sites with more than 3,500 practitioners trained and employed, thus increasing the number of care-givers. About R1 billion over the baseline will be allocated to programmes that fall within the EPWP; and, lastly,

- introducing the system of products for referential procurement by Government from small-, medium-, and micro-enterprises; and through the Small Enterprises Development Agency setting up a rigorous system to ensure that the 30-day payment period is observed.

We will also integrate the programme to speed up the development of sustainable human settlements with intensified efforts, as a matter of urgent priority, to accelerate universal access to water, sanitation, and electricity, so that by 2014, we should have decent human settlements and access by all households to these services.

Accelerating our advance towards the achievement of a goal of health for all includes intensified implementation of the National Strategic Plan against HIV/AIDS. We also aim during the course of this year to reduce TB defaulter rates from ten percent to seven percent, train over 3,000 health personnel in the management of this disease, and ensure that all multi-drug resistant and extreme drug resistant TB patients receive treatment.

We aim to complete the work on the comprehensive social security system, benefiting from the consultations that have started with social partners. As we put all our hands on deck and gear ourselves for *Business Unusual*, we should also intensify national dialogue on the issues that define us as a nation.

Two such issues deserve brief mention:

- The first of these is a proposal that we should develop an oath that will be recited by students in their morning school assemblies, as well as a Youth Pledge extolling the virtues of humane conduct and human solidarity among all South Africans. Next week, the Minister of Education will elaborate on the national debate on these matters.
- The second issue is about geographic and place names, which requires a synchronised process across all provinces so that we can create a base slate of changes to propose. We will launch this synchronised process soon, guided by the South African

Geographical Names Council and its provincial committees.

Madame Speaker and Chairperson:

When we reflected on the issue of crime at last year's Joint Sitting of Parliament, we all expressed grave concern, not only at the high rates of crime, but also at the indication that things seemed to be turning for the worse, especially with respect to murder—bucking the trend of the improvement since the attainment of democracy.

Accordingly, last year we engaged in systematic interaction with business and other sectors of the population, to develop a holistic approach towards revamping the criminal justice system in its totality.

In this regard, in the spirit of *Business Unusual*, Cabinet has agreed on a set of changes that are required to establish a new, modernised, efficient, and transformed criminal justice system. Among other things, this will entail setting up a new coordinating and management structure for the system at every level, from national to local, bringing together the judiciary and magistracy, the police, prosecutors, correctional services, and the Legal Aid Board, as well as other interventions, including the empowerment of the Community Police Forums.

As the Honourable Members are aware, some of these initiatives are already under way; but, we are certain that if they are all carried out in an integrated and complementary manner, the impact will be that much more effective in our fight against crime. The Ministers of the Justice, Crime Prevention, and Security Cluster will elaborate on the details of this and other initiatives during the course of the next week.

We shall also, during the course of this year: process the bills on the transformation of the judiciary in consultation with judges and magistrates; complete the strategy aimed at strengthening border control and security; further give life to the Victims' Charter; pay particular attention to the issue of repeat offenders; and continue the implementation of additional measures deriving from recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Informed by the imperative to intensify the offensive against organised crime, as well as the recommendations of the Khampepe Judicial Commission on the functioning and location of the Directorate of Special Operations and continuing reflections on this matter, including the reform of the Criminal Justice System, we shall by the end of March interact with Parliament on legislation and other decisive measures required to enhance our capacity to fight organised crime.

The absolute commitment of Government to fight organised crime and improve the management, efficiency, and coordination of our law enforcement agencies will continue to inform us as we take this step.

Of great importance, our success in the fight against crime depends on cooperation among all of us as law-abiding citizens, inspired by the principles of the rule of law, respect for our judiciary, and pursuit of equal human rights, which our Constitution enjoins us to observe in our daily lives and pronouncements.

Honourable Members:

We will continue this year with efforts to improve the machinery of Government so that it meets its obligations to citizens. If anything, the spirit of *Business Unusual* should apply to all individuals who carry the privilege of being public servants.

There are simple but urgent and critical priorities we will attend to as part of the overall effort to improve the organisation and capacity of the state.

Firstly, it has been agreed across all spheres of Government that especially the critical vacancies should be filled within six months of such openings emerging. The Department of Public Service and Administration will set up a monitoring system to track the implementation of this decision.

Secondly, by May of every year (and within two months of the beginning of the financial year at the Local Government level), all senior managers should have filed their Performance Agreements with relevant authorities. The Office of the Public Service Commission will set up monitoring systems in this regard.

Thirdly, recognising that the Department of Home Affairs touches the core of every citizen's life, this year we will intensify the implementation of the turn-around strategy approved by Cabinet. This includes improving the IT systems, training of staff on the new systems, rooting out corrupt elements, and piloting the new ID card.

Improvement of performance in the public service sector also depends on the quality of leadership provided by the executive and senior management. Further, it is critical to enhance the commitment of public employees to their duties—a task that belongs to the leadership, the public servants themselves, and the trade union movement.

In this regard, this year, in consultation with public sector unions, we will convene a Public Sector Summit to thrash out these issues so that the spirit of Batho Pele can find concrete expression wherever a Government service is provided.

Working with other social partners, we shall ensure that, by the end of this year, the second National Anti-Corruption Programme is adopted, and that the action plan agreed with organised business is implemented. At the Local Government level, we shall assist the first 150 of our municipalities to develop anti-corruption strategies.

This year, we shall continue to intensify efforts to strengthen Local Government capacity in line with the Five Year Local Government Strategic Agenda. To ensure systematic monitoring in this regard, SALGA has agreed to provide quarterly reports on the work being done.

In order to further improve the service being provided to vulnerable sectors such as veterans, women, and youth, we shall review the structures delegated to carry out these functions and examine the most appropriate arrangements, including the evaluation of the Government structures specifically established to focus on youth development and empowerment.

Many of the challenges we have identified in our work derive from serious weaknesses in terms of our planning. Thus, as part of our Apex Priorities, in the coming period we will complete the processes that will enable us to enhance Government's capacity to put in place realistic

and integrated plans, covering all spheres of Government.

Honourable Members:

The programme that we have outlined incorporates the commitments that our country has agreed with the leadership of the continent through the African Peer Review Mechanism.

Our focus, in promoting the African Agenda this year, will be on strengthening the African institutions, including the African Union and its development programme, the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD).

This we shall do, inspired by the common aspiration of the peoples of the continent for greater integration in pursuit of continental unity at all levels. A critical step in this regard is the consolidation of regional institutions and activities aimed at achieving regional integration.

We continue to be committed to a free trade area in the Southern African Development Community, and hope to use our Chairpersonship of SADC in 2008-2009 to give further impetus to the regional endeavours in this regard.

It is in this context, as well, that we shall continue our bilateral and multilateral interactions with our neighbours and the European Union, within the context of the process led by the African Union, to ensure that the negotiations on the Economic Partnership Agreement are completed as soon as possible, premised on accelerating the development of our region.

Over the past year, we carried out the mandate of SADC to assist the political leadership of Zimbabwe to find a lasting solution to the political challenges they face. We had an opportunity, on the fringes of the AU Summit in Addis Ababa to formally present a comprehensive report to the leadership of SADC on this matter.

In short, the parties involved in the dialogue have reached full agreement on all substantive matters the parties had to address. These include issues relating to the Constitution, security, media and electoral laws, and other matters that have been in contention for many years. The relevant laws in this regard have already been approved by Parliament, including the necessary constitutional amendments. What is outstanding,

however, is a procedural matter relating to the timing and the manner of the enactment of the new agreed Draft Constitution.

Accordingly, we join the SADC Heads of State and Government in congratulating the parties to the Zimbabwe Dialogue for their truly commendable achievements and encourage them to work together to resolve the remaining procedural matter. As requested by the SADC Heads of State and Government, we remain ready to continue to facilitate the Zimbabwe negotiations. At the same time, we wish the people of Zimbabwe success in the elections scheduled for the 29th of March.

Our multifaceted relations with the Democratic Republic of Congo will continue, as we seek to contribute to the efforts of the sister people of that country to attain lasting peace and implement their reconstruction and development programme.

Our Government will remain seized of the processes under way in Kenya, Chad, Burundi, Darfur in the Sudan, Western Sahara, Côte d'Ivoire, Somalia, the Comoros, and the Central African Republic to find lasting peace and stability.

We are particularly concerned by the senseless violence and killings in both Kenya and Chad, developments that clearly set back the progress we have been making in the last few years with regard to the regeneration of the African continent. We call on all African compatriots to do whatever we can, together, to help bring a stop to all these negative developments.

We will, of course, continue to carry out our tasks in the United Nations Security Council. Critical in this regard, is the strengthening of cooperation between the UN Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.

Impelled by the desire to promote the improvement in the quality of life of all peoples, particularly in the developing countries, we shall focus on further strengthening our participation in the India-Brazil-South Africa forums, the New Africa-Asia Strategic Partnership, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Group of 77, and negotiations to complete the SACU-MERCUSOR trade agreement.

In the same measure, we shall continue to contribute to the realisation of the objectives of the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change and ongoing improvements in this regard, and in giving further impetus to the negotiations on the World Trade Organization (WTO) Doha Development Round.

This year we celebrate the tenth anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between South Africa and the People's Republic of China. The mushrooming of relations in a variety of areas between our governments and peoples confirms that the China-South Africa Partnership for Growth and Development is a strategic relationship of mutual benefit, which can only grow from strength to strength.

Next year, South Africa will play host to the Review Conference to evaluate the implementation of the decisions of the World Conference Against Racism, which was held in our country in 2001. We are confident that, informed by their abhorrence of the scourge of racism and the devastating consequences it continues to exact on humanity, the governments and peoples of the world will work together with us to ensure that the Review Conference achieves its objectives.

These global responsibilities, including the hosting of the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup, bring out in even bolder relief the confidence that humanity has in our country as a strategic player in the noble endeavours of all humanity. But, we should not take this for granted.

I am confident that, under the leadership of the International Marketing Council, Trade and Investment South Africa (TISA), Tourism South Africa, and other agencies, we shall all put our hands on deck to communicate to the rest of the world the spirit of *Business Unusual*, continue our advance towards the creation of a society that cares, and create the conditions for the world to gather in our country to celebrate Africa's humanity in 2010.

Madame Speaker, Chairperson and Honourable Members;

Having said all that I have said, I come back to the question: what is the State of our Nation as we enter 2008?

What I do know and hereby make bold to say is: whatever the challenges of the moment, we are still on course!

I say this with unshakeable conviction because I am certain that South Africans are capable and geared to meet the challenge of history—to strain every sinew of our being—to respond to the national challenges of the day, including those relating to our economy, the political and economic situation in Africa and elsewhere in the world, and seize the opportunities that our country's progress over the last fourteen years has provided.

With all hands on deck and committed to conduct our business in an unusual and more effective fashion, we shall sustain the process of our reconstruction and development and take it to even higher levels.

Thank you.

SOUTH AFRICA

Final Letter as President by His Excellency Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa September 24, 2008

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Dear Colleagues,

To all Members of the National Executive:
As you know, tomorrow, September 25, the National Assembly will elect the next President of the Republic of South Africa, who will also swear his or her oath of office on the same day.

By law, I will therefore cease to be President of the Republic with effect from midnight today.

I thought I should send you this letter as one of my last communications to you as Head of our country's National Executive.

First of all, I would like to thank you for having agreed to serve in the National Executive when you were requested to do so.

This demonstrated your selfless commitment to serve the people of South Africa, which told me that I was indeed very privileged to have the possibility to work as part of such a collective of South African patriots.

All of us, together, have always understood that as members of the National Executive, we carry the heavy responsibility to stand in the front ranks of the national forces charged with the historic task to achieve the goals of the national democratic revolution.

All of us know that, by definition, all revolutions are, to quote Nelson Mandela, "no easy walk to freedom." Accordingly, our own continuing revolution has also not been, is not, and will not be an easy walk to freedom.

It will constantly test and pose a challenge to everybody, including ourselves, to prove through our deeds, rather than our words, that we are true revolutionaries.

This will demand that we demonstrate that we are able and willing to walk the long and hard road to freedom, always conscious of our obligation to serve the people, rather than promote our personal interests.

As tried and tested combatants for the victory and consolidation of our democratic revolution, you have had no need for an instructor to educate you about the challenges we would face, and do face, to achieve the objectives of the revolution.

Your decision to serve in the National Executive has, therefore, meant that you are willing to walk a hard road that would necessarily demand personal sacrifices.

It is for this reason that I have thanked you for your conscious and voluntary agreement to join the National Executive.

In this regard, I must emphasise the fact that the charge given to the National Executive during the years of our freedom, since 1994, mandated by the people through democratic elections, has been to pursue the goal of the revolutionary transformation of our country.

I make this observation in part to pay tribute to you for the loyal and principled manner in which you have consistently and consciously approached your responsibilities as revolutionary democrats.

I also make it to thank you for the contribution you have made towards the achievement of the revolutionary goals of the democratic revolution.

Fifteen years ago now, on the eve of the victory of the democratic revolution, the movement to which I belong took various decisions about the immediate tasks of this revolution. These were encapsulated in two important documents, these being: "Ready to Govern" and the "Reconstruction and Development Programme."

Repeatedly, over the years, we have summarised the strategic focus of these documents, and, therefore, the democratic revolution, as:

- The creation of a non-racist society;
- The creation of a non-sexist society;
- The entrenchment and defence of the democratic order, as reflected in our National Constitution;

- The restructuring, modernisation, and development of our economy to create a prosperous society, characterised by the eradication of poverty and underdevelopment, and a shared prosperity;
- The implementation of social policies consistent with the preceding goals;
- The transformation of the state machinery to ensure that we build a developmental state; and,
- The Renaissance of Africa and the building of a better world, focused on the challenge to defeat global poverty, underdevelopment and inequality.

Over the years, since 1994, the objectives of the movement to which most of us belong have served as the centre piece of the election manifestoes on whose basis the people of our country mandated the ANC to assume the honoured position of the ruling party of South Africa.

With immense pride, I would like to convey to you my firm conviction, empirically demonstrated by life itself, that you have indeed honoured your responsibilities to our country and Nation, as mandated by the people in the 1994, 1999, and 2004 general elections.

If need be, it would not be difficult to detail the factual accuracy of this statement. Neither would it be difficult to demonstrate the appreciation of the overwhelming majority of the masses of our people for what has been done to improve the quality of their lives.

Apart from the ever-increasing levels of approval stated by the people in all the general and municipal elections after 1994, I have experienced this popular sentiment personally in the many community imbizos we have convened in all parts of our country, both urban and rural.

The fundamental message I would like to communicate to you in this regard is that you have indeed discharged your revolutionary obligation to further advance the goals of the national democratic revolution.

At the same time, I am certain that during the years we have served as members of the National Executive, we have made mistakes. I am equally

convinced that the only way we could have avoided these mistakes would have been if we had done nothing to strive to achieve the fundamental social transformation of our country.

In this context, as revolutionaries, we must at all times remain open to criticism and self-criticism, precisely to ensure that we identify whatever mistakes might have occurred and correct these.

At the same time, I am aware of the reality that there are some in our country who are convinced that such mistakes as we might have made, as well as the reality that in fifteen years we have not eradicated a 350-year legacy of colonialism, as we could not, derive from our strategic commitment to a reactionary, neo-liberal perspective and programme.

In addition, it is also clear that there are different views in our country with regard to the assessment of the objective national and international circumstances within which we have sought to achieve the goals of the democratic revolution.

Some claim that we have deliberately overestimated the constraints posed by this objective reality, precisely to justify our failure to undertake what they consider to be an imperative obligation to implement what they regard as a more revolutionary and appropriate programme for the fundamental social transformation of our country.

Further, to complicate the challenges with which we have had to contend, the matters that have been raised by some of our opponents have required that we engage a discourse that relates to intellectual paradigms relating to philosophy, ideology, and politics.

All this, including the practical politics to which we necessarily had to respond, has imposed on the National Executive the obligation to consider and respond correctly to the dialectical relationship between the two phenomena of human existence, the objective and the subjective.

Confronted by the reality that as Government we must govern, and therefore take decisions that have a national, structural, and long-term impact, we have consequently had the task to relate the subjective to the objective, to find the necessary relationship between theory and practice.

During our years as members of the National Executive, we have discussed all these matters, which relate to the fundamental and critically important issue of the strategy and tactics of the democratic revolution.

I remain convinced that on all occasions we have addressed these matters in an open, honest, and objective manner, always informed by our fundamental understanding of the nature and goals of our national democratic revolution.

Among other things, in the end, this has found expression in various documents we have adopted, which have, without let or hindrance, sought honestly to review the performance of the Government in which all of us have been honoured to serve, centred on the impact its policies and programmes have had on our society.

By decision of the ruling party, the ANC, acting within its rights, the current Government I have been privileged to lead, has been obliged to end its tenure a few months ahead of its popularly mandated term.

In the interest of the masses of our people and country, personally I accepted this eventuality without resistance or rancour, and acted upon it accordingly. I trust that all of us, members of the National Executive, will respond in similar fashion.

At the same time, as we bid farewell to one another as members of the elected 2004-2009 National Executive, we must do so with our heads held high.

We must adopt this posture not out of any sense of arrogance or self-satisfaction.

We must do so, as I suggest, because we can honestly say that we did the utmost, to the best of our ability, as a united collective:

- To advance the goals of the democratic revolution;
- To accelerate the advance towards the achievement of the goal of a better life for our people;
- To pursue the objective of the fundamental reconstruction and development of our country;

- To honour the mandate, and respect the expectations of the masses of our people; and,
- To meet our obligations to the peoples of Africa and the rest of the world.

I am proud without reservation of what you have done to achieve these historic achievements.

I am proud of the manner in which you have functioned, in the context of the intricacies of our democratic and constitutional governance system, to do the detailed work that constitutes the daily fare of our ministries and departments.

As you lead your lives in the aftermath of the early termination of the term of the life of the 2004-2009 National Executive, and with all due humility, I plead that in addition to what I have already said in this letter, you should do everything you can, constantly to:

- Affirm your personal integrity, refusing to succumb to the expedient;
- Assert your commitment to principle, rejecting opportunism and cowardice;
- Reaffirm your commitment to selflessly serve the people, determined to spurn all temptations to self-enrichment, self-promotion and protection of material personal benefit, at the expense of the people;
- Remain loyal to the values of truthfulness and honesty; and,
- Respect the views and esteem of the masses of our people.

I make these comments, at this particular moment, to reemphasise the value system that has informed all of us as we served in the National Executive, concerning our quality as individuals charged with the responsibility to play a leading role as revolutionary activists of the democratic revolution.

In this regard and in the end, the ultimate motive power that would inform and has informed our behaviour as individuals are our conscience and self-respect, individually.

I am absolutely certain that at this particular moment in the history of our country, the masses of our people need the unequivocal assurance,

demonstrated practically, that they continue to be blessed with the kind of ethical leadership they have seen serving in our country's National Executive during the last fourteen-and-half years.

Surely, as we sought to achieve what Nelson Mandela described as "the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of the soul," as well as implement the Moral Regeneration Programme, we have known that we must lead by example, serving as role models in terms of the morality and value system we have urged our people to respect!

I thank you most sincerely for the comradely manner in which we have worked together in the National Executive, the openness of our debates, the friendship among ourselves we have enjoyed, and your firm commitment to the realisation of the goals that our history and reality have dictated.

I wish you success in all your future endeavours, convinced that you constitute a corps of patriots on whom the masses of our people can continue to count as their reliable and selfless leaders, regardless of whether you occupy positions in organs of state or you do not.

You, an outstanding and immensely talented collective of patriots, have, during the years we have worked together, placed and demonstrated confidence in me as the leader of the National Executive.

Please accept my humble thanks to you for this, as well as my apology that it is only now, as I leave Government, that I convey this sentiment to you. However, in this context, I would like to assure you that I am fully conscious of my responsibility to you, at all times to honour your confidence and respect.

This has told me that I owe an obligation to you and the masses of our people at all times to remain loyal to the morality of our revolution.

It has told me that I must always strive to serve the people.

It has told me never to betray those who are my comrades-in-arms, committed to achieve agreed common objectives.

It has told me never to dishonour the revolutionary democratic cause, by allowing my personal

desires to assume precedence over the interests of the masses of the people.

As we part, I would like to assure you that I am determined to respect and act in accordance with the value system I have just described.

Today is Heritage Day. It may, therefore, be appropriate that today this outstanding collective of South Africans, the National Executive, should make a commitment to hand to our people, as part of their heritage, a tradition of honest government that is firmly opposed to corruption, duplicity, and disrespect for principle.

I trust that, in time, history will hand down the judgment that when we, as our country's National Executive, were given the opportunity, we lived up to the expectations of the masses of our long-suffering people to serve them as honest and selfless leaders—men and women of conscience.

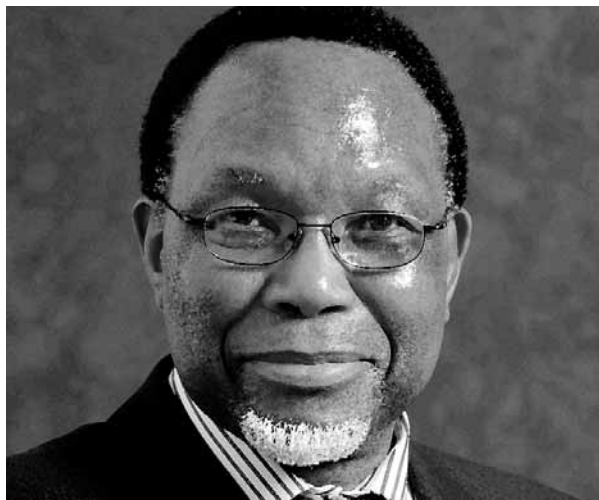
Please convey my humble thanks to your families that they released you to enable you to perform the outstanding public service for which I sincerely thank you.

I bid you a fond farewell as a member of the National Executive.

Because we are, or have become comrades, friends, and partners in the pursuit of a common cause, I trust that it will be possible for us to continue informally talking to each other and one another, concerned, still, together to serve the peoples of South Africa, Africa, and the rest of the world.

Yours sincerely,
Thabo Mbeki

SOUTH AFRICA



**Pledge to South Africa by His
Excellency Kgalema Petrus Motlanthe,
President of the Republic of
South Africa
September 26, 2008**

Today, I make a solemn pledge that I will do all to live up to these expectations and to undertake this task to the best of my ability.

I wish to record my sincere thanks and appreciation to outgoing President Thabo Mbeki, in whose cabinet I have had the honour to serve these last few months.

I know that I speak on behalf of all the people of this country when I say that we have been privileged to have you as our president these last nine years. There is no value that we can place on the service you have rendered to your country, nor any tribute that can adequately capture your contribution to building this Nation.

For all that you have done for South Africa, for our continent, and for the advancement of the global community, we remain forever indebted.

Madame Speaker, I wish also to express my gratitude to my cabinet colleagues, most of whom

were appointed in 2004 in my presence while I was Secretary-General of the African National Congress (ANC) and with whom I have been part of a team in Government.

I am grateful to the ANC for the tasks and responsibilities it has given me over several decades, for providing the political and analytical grounding that is so essential for effective public service.

The ANC is a movement with a rich political tradition. While conditions have changed, and tactics have had to be adapted, the policy orientation of the ANC has remained consistent for over fifty years.

The vision espoused in the Freedom Charter remains at the core of the work of this movement, reflected in the mandate of this Government.

Since the attainment of democracy in 1994, as the leading party in Government, the ANC has kept a steady hand on the tiller.

Even when faced with difficulty, and confronted by unanticipated challenges, the ANC has remained unwavering in its commitment to advance the interests of all the people of South Africa.

This has been reflected in the policies of three successive ANC Governments, as it will continue to be reflected in the final months of this, the country's Third Democratic National Government.

In 2004, the people of this country gave a clear and unequivocal mandate to this Government to forge a people's contract to create work and fight poverty. It placed on this Government the responsibility to use all means at its disposal to ensure that by 2014 we would be able to reduce poverty and unemployment by half.

When its term ends next year, this Government will be able to report to the people that indeed it has done as it was mandated.

It will be able to report on an economy that has sustained a pace of growth unprecedented in recent South African history, that has created jobs at an accelerated pace, and that has enabled Government to dedicate greater resources to meeting the basic needs of our people.

It will be able to report on significant progress in pushing back the frontiers of poverty. This Government will be able to report on tangible

advances in the provision of housing, electricity, water, sanitation, and other basic services to millions of our people. And, it will be able to report on major improvements in the access of poor South Africans to healthcare, education, and social security.

South Africans across the length and breadth of the country will attest to these and many other achievements.

But they know, too, that much work still lies ahead. They know the challenges our country faces, and the hardships that many of our people continue to endure.

To them, and to the world at large, we say that we shall not falter in leading the national effort to build a society in which all South Africans, regardless of their background, race, or gender, have equal access to an expanding array of opportunity.

To them, and to the world at large, we say that this Government will continue, as it has done under the leadership of President Thabo Mbeki, to dedicate every day that it remains in office towards the achievement of this goal.

The resolve of this Government will not slacken. The pace of implementation will only quicken, and the fulfilment of its mandate will only ever draw closer.

We are able to make such pronouncements with neither hesitation nor doubt, precisely because the policies we are charged to implement are the policies of the African National Congress.

These policies, which Government will continue to implement unchanged, are the product of an extensive consultation and decision-making process.

These policies are the property of a collective. They do not belong to any one individual. And, it is not for any one individual to change them.

The policies of this Government are clear. They are based on the 2004 Manifesto of the African National Congress, enhanced by the decisions of both the ANC's policy conference, as well as its 52nd National Conference held in Polokwane in December 2007.

Mine is not the desire to deviate from what is working. It is not for me to reinvent policy. Nor

do I intend to reshape either the Cabinet or the public service.

We will not allow the work of Government to be interrupted.

We will not allow the stability of our democratic order to be compromised.

And we will not allow the confidence that our people have in the ability of the state to respond to their needs to be undermined.

At this moment in our history, as we stand poised to make still further advances towards the achievement of a better life, it is as important as ever that we stand united as a nation.

It is as important as ever that we retain our faith in the resilience of our constitutional order and the vibrancy of our democracy.

Though we may at times experience difficulty, though we may suffer moments of doubt and uncertainty, we have both the will and the means to rise above the challenges of the present and to forge ahead with our historic mission to liberate all our people from discrimination, oppression, and want.

Therefore, we stand here to send out a message that Government remains on course to deliver on its commitments to the poor, who rely on us daily for the fulfilment of their basic needs and for the provision of important services like health, education, and social security.

We remain on course to halve unemployment and poverty by 2014.

We remain determined to stamp out crime, violence, and abuse, whomever it affects and wherever it manifests itself. We remain committed to building safer communities and protecting the vulnerable in our society from abuse.

But, in doing so, we need all our people to work with, and within, the criminal justice system so that together we stamp out crime.

We are here to assure all those on our continent and in the world that we will continue to meet our international obligations. We will continue to play a positive role within international institutions and forums. We will continue to provide whatever assistance we can in the pursuit of peace, security, democracy, and development in Africa.

We remain on course to host in 2010 the best FIFA World Cup ever—an African World Cup.

We fully expect to meet every commitment our Nation has made to the football world.

In a turbulent global economy, we will remain true to the policies that have kept South Africa steady and that have ensured sustained growth.

We will intensify the all-around effort to accelerate the rate of growth and job creation, and ensure that the benefits of growth are equally shared by all our people.

In the spirit of building a united, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist, and prosperous South Africa, I look forward to a constructive relationship with all parties within this Assembly, even as we begin preparations for next year's elections. I hope to benefit from the critical eye that a vibrant and alert opposition brings to politics.

We will continue the regular engagements between Government and the various working groups representing vital sectors within our society. These, together with initiatives like the nationwide Izimbizo Programme, provide a crucial opportunity for enhancing popular engagement with the highest levels of Government.

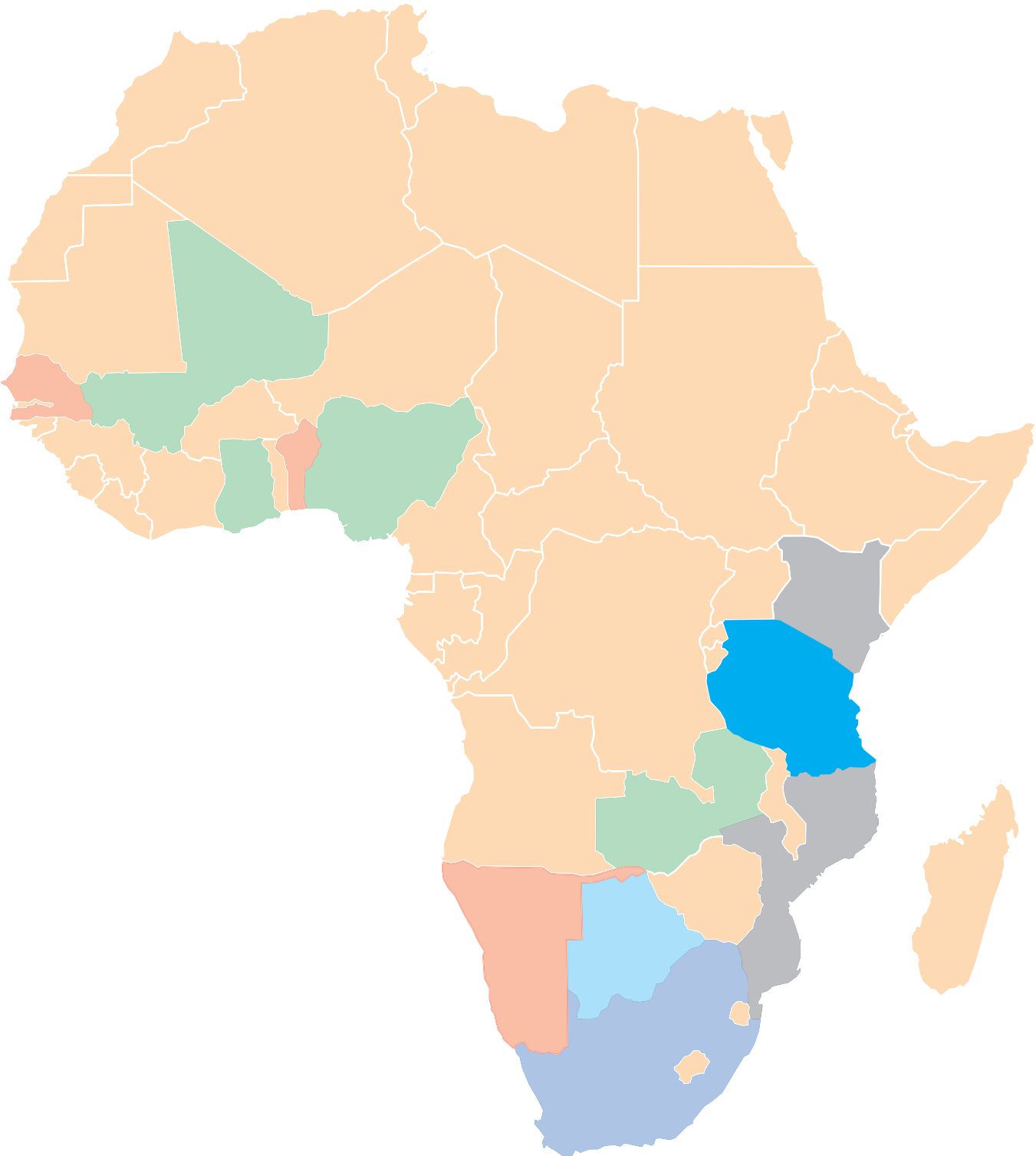
We live in challenging times. We see before us many mountains that are yet to be climbed and numerous rivers that still need to be crossed.

Yet, for all the challenges that lie ahead, the incontrovertible truth is that never before has South Africa been closer than it is today towards the achievement of a better life for all its people.

We, therefore, have a shared responsibility to build on these results and to strive together—sparing neither courage nor strength—towards the achievement of a better South Africa, a better Africa, and a better world.

I thank you.

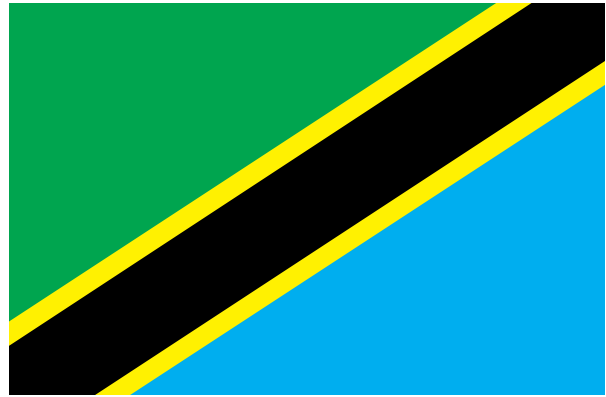
TANZANIA



TANZANIA



**Speech by His Excellency Jakaya
Mrisho Kikwete, President of the
United Republic of Tanzania, to
Parliament
August 21, 2008
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania**



Honourable Speaker,
Let me start, or should I say, let us all start by thanking God—the Compassionate—for blessing us with life and good health, as well as making it possible for us to meet again here in Parliament two years and seven months since I last addressed your August House.

Honourable Speaker,
As we all know, there are five fellow Members of Parliament who were not lucky enough to be with us today, because God has called them to present themselves before heavenly justice. These colleagues who have returned to our Maker are the Late Amina Chifupa, the Late Juma Akukweti, the Late Salome Mbatia, the Late Benedict Losurutia, and the Late Chacha Zakayo Wangwe. Let us continue to pray to God, requesting that they be granted good rest, Amen.

Honourable Speaker,
I, personally, thank you and your fellow Honourable Members of Parliament for granting me this rare and esteemed opportunity to address your August Assembly. This is the second time I am addressing this esteemed House since I received the singular honour of being elected the President of our country. The first time was on December 30, 2005, when I inaugurated this particular Parliament. In that speech, I described and explained the policy vision and main objectives of our new Government, which has come to be popularly known as the Fourth Phase Government. I then offered my basic assessment of what constituted the strategic and tactical

thrust of the implementation of that given policy direction and set of objectives, including the proposed measures aimed at the implementation of the General Election Manifestos of the ruling Revolutionary Party, Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM). Today, having covered half of our five year journey, I thought it prudent to come again before this esteemed Parliament to discuss with you where the Nation was, where we are, and where we were heading in the remaining half of our term in office.

Honourable Speaker,

I am happy to say that in the first half of our five year journey, we have recorded some heart-warming successes in a large number of cases in several areas. The levels of success attained, of course, differ from one area to another; but, overall things are not bad.

In our journey, we have met with different kinds of obstacles and we will meet with many more as we progress in our journey. What is gratifying is that—notwithstanding all those obstacles—we have been able to score impressive successes, which make us proud. This allows me to believe that we will continue to have more successes; and, that eventually, we will be able to meet our noble promises to our country and to our people. Victory is inevitable. I am certain that we will attain victory.

THANKS TO LEADERS

Honourable Speaker,

I am obliged to acknowledge and thank fellow senior leaders in the Government and in the Nation, as a whole, whose wise counsel, cooperation, and assistance to me has acted as the catalyst and is the secret of our success. The first leader whose help I wish to acknowledge and thank most sincerely is the Vice President Dr. Ali Mohamed Shein. He has been my most reliable advisor and principal assistant.

Honourable Speaker,

The second person is His Excellence Abeid Amani Karume, the President of Zanzibar and

the Chairman of the Revolutionary Council. I wish to thank him for his understanding, cooperation, and his help. Truly, he has been a pillar and key link in measures to deal with threats to our union. It is an obvious truth that mutual understanding and cooperation between us senior leaders, as well as between our two Governments, is a necessity. I am satisfied with the level of cooperation between us.

Honourable Speaker,

Furthermore, I wish to thank most sincerely the Prime Minister Honorable Mizengwo Pinda (together with the Prime Minister who came before him Honorable Edward Lowasa, the Member of Parliament for Monduli) for their immense and good work in coordinating Government business in this August Assembly. Also, I want to thank the Prime Minister for coordinating—very well—the day-to-day affairs of the Government.

I wish to thank the Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, Regional Commissioners, District Commissioners, and all Government functionaries, at all levels. I commend them for their efforts, which have allowed us to get to where we are, with outcomes that we can talk about with pride to Tanzanians.

DEFENCE AND SECURITY ORGANS

Honourable Speaker,

I would be less than generous if I did not acknowledge and thank the leaders, and the rank and file, of all our country's defense and security organs. I thank them for their trustworthiness and obedience to me. I thank them for their trustworthiness to the Nation, as well as for their quality service.

I know the difficult work environment that they have to contend with, but I want to assure them that we will continue taking measures, already commenced, aimed at improving matters and solving pending problems so that they may be able to continue discharging their duties in more conducive working environments.

Honourable Speaker,

With regard to the police force, I have to offer special thanks to the Inspector General Said Mwema. I thank him for offering strong and wise leadership. Upon our assumption of office, you and I can bare witness to the fact that the people's trust in the police force was at an all time low, but under his leadership, that trust has now been restored. Respect for the police now exists in the eyes of the people. Faith in the police had been seriously eroded when the wave of armed robberies had reached fever pitch, and the police were seen to be either helpless and outwitted, or part of the problem. When I made that assertion during the campaign, and when I said here in this Parliament, that we would not allow armed robbers to get away with impunity; what I said was based on my trust and pride in the police force, which had the capacity to handle this problem. I thank Inspector General Saidi Mwema and his colleagues very much for helping me keep that promise. They rescued me from embarrassment; because if we had not kept the promise, we would have been too embarrassed to say anything more. I plead with them to continue those commendable efforts; and we, in Government, will continue to provide the support they need, including making further improvements in their work environment and strengthening this important organ of ours.

Honourable Speaker,

Similarly, I very much thank the Chief of the Defense Forces, General Davis Mwamunyange. I thank him for his strong leadership. He is calm, innovative, and prudent in the way he assesses situations and proceeds to take appropriate measures as would be expected of a good leader.

Our borders are safe and secure as a result of the good work that is being done by the Tanzania Peoples Defense Forces under his able leadership. In addition to all this, I have to state—here in this Parliament—my special appreciation for the work recently done by our Defense Forces in the Comoros Islands. As a result of the commendable job done by them, the integrity and unity of that Nation has been restored and

strengthened after our Defense Forces succeeded in chasing the rebel leader, Colonel Mohammed Bakary, out of the Island of Anjuani. Colonel Mohammed Bakary sought to control that Island so that it could secede from the United Republic of the Islands of Comoros.

Honourable Speaker,

Our Defense Forces deserve praise for the great sophistication it has exhibited, that is to say, in modern parlance, the great professionalism that they have shown in carrying out that particular job.

There were no people killed and none injured. Nor was any property destroyed. Those were the worries of many people. I remember a few days before the implementation of that operation, I received telephone calls from several people expressing those very fears. Precisely because of those very fears, some people even suggested that the operation be abandoned. I explained to those who had these misgivings that it would be difficult to abandon this operation that had been ordered by the African Union, with Tanzania being appointed to join Sudan, Senegal, and Libya in assisting the Government of Comoros. I gave those that had these fears assurances that the work would be done well. Indeed, the work was done well. Many were pleasantly surprised and generously poured praise on our country, our Defense Forces, as well as on our colleagues, with whom we worked cooperatively.

Honourable Speaker,

In recognition of the great honor that our Defense Forces brought to our country, I decided to bestow an Award of Honor on every member of our Defense Forces that participated in what we designated as Operation Democracy in the Comoros. That award of honor will be designed and we will bestow it on them. While all of the members of the Defense Forces, who served when the Operation was launched, will be awarded a medal of honor; those that went to the war front will be given two medals. Those who served while staying at home will be awarded a single medal.

UNITY, PEACE AND TRANQUILITY

Honourable Speaker,
The Revolutionary Party, Chama Cha Mapinduzi, has, at all times, steadfastly given utmost priority to the preservation and promotion of unity among our people, as well as the preservation of peace and tranquility in our country. That has been the guide and firm stand, as well as the vision of the Fourth Phase Government. We have taken various measures with this in mind. I am happy to say before your esteemed Parliament that the measures we have taken have borne the expected results. Brotherly and sisterly relations among Tanzanians of different races, religions, ethnic and tribal groups, as well as different political affiliations have continued to be preserved. Our people are still so united that political cynics, who thrive on sowing discord among society members, find it surprising. Relations between political parties and among members of political groups have been normal. There is no hatred capable of causing any major headaches or anyone to lose sleep. These are signs of great successes.

THE UNION

Honourable Speaker,
Our country is still one, its people are one, and our union is still strong. In the history of our union, there have been various challenges at various times. I have been lucky to have participated in high level sittings of our country's leadership; first, at a tender age, as an officer in the Party helping our elders and later as a leader in my own right. I have personally witnessed many major historical events that took place in our country. I can recall times when there were difficulties. The most important lesson that I have learned is that whenever such challenges presented themselves, they were dealt with through the use of mechanisms and procedures that the Party and Government had put in place. I believe that even the challenges that recently surfaced, about whether Zanzibar was a country or not, will be resolved through dialogue, using

structures and procedures that we have set up ourselves.

Honourable Speaker,

I strongly believe that even the current thick cloud will dissipate; just as other, even thicker clouds that covered the political landscape in the past, dissipated. I wish to repeat my plea to my fellow political leaders that we should restrain ourselves from making pronouncements that will further complicate and make matters worse than they already are. We should give a chance to the organs and procedures that we have put in place to deal with the real and relevant problems of the union.

Honourable Speaker,

In the last two and half years, a number of firm measures have been taken in an effort to resolve various problems confronting our union. In the first instance, we have directed our energies towards strengthening the mechanisms and procedures that we have put in place that can be used in resolving problems of the union. We have given a new lease on life to the Joint Committee of the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister, which was especially established for purposes of dealing with union issues. Early this year, with the view to strengthening the power of said committee, I decided that the Vice President will, from now on, head the Committee.

That Committee has already held four meetings, with two of these being chaired by the Vice President of the United Republic of Tanzania. This, in itself, counts as a special kind of success in the history of the meetings of this Committee. I am happy that Committee members have now agreed to meet every two months.

Honourable Speaker,

Under the auspices of this system—of the joint meeting by the Committee of the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister—more than twenty meetings have been held. Those meetings included those held by Permanent Secretaries of Ministries of both Governments, as well as meetings by institutions and various organs of our two Governments

We have a Joint Commission on financial matters that is led by Honorable William Shellukindo, the Member of Parliament for Bumbuli. We have completed the appointments to the commission, established its leaders, and facilitated it so that it may undertake its responsibilities well.

Honourable Speaker,

Through the meetings of these organs, many of our union's most difficult issues have been discussed and we have found ways of resolving them. I ask for your indulgence so that I may mention some of the issues that have been discussed and offer some understanding as to how they may be resolved: (1) Sharing of income that derives from foreign assistance, relief of IMF debts, and profit-based income by the Central Bank; (2) Complaints by Zanzibari business people regarding taxation matters; (3) Extending the implementation of human rights legislation in Zanzibar; (4) The issue of the exploration and exploitation of oil and natural gas; (5) Fishing on the ocean shores; (6) Implementation of legislation relating to "merchant shipping" in the United Republic and issues relating to membership in the International Maritime Organization (IMO); (7) Cooperation between Zanzibar and foreign institutions; (8) Participation of Zanzibar in the East African Community; (9) Recruitment of Zanzibaris in institutions of the union; and (10) Looking for funds to be used in implementing very large irrigation projects under the auspices of the Agricultural Sector Development Program (ASDP).

Honourable Speaker,

I mention all of these things to provide confirmation that people have not been staying idly by; but, rather that major efforts have been made aimed at consolidating our union, with encouraging results having come out of such efforts. Union matters have been discussed in a transparent manner. Mutual understanding has been struck on almost all of the issues. Most problems have been resolved, except those issues on which it was agreed that more work needed to be done.

Among these are matters relating to the exploration and exploitation of oil and natural gas. We continue to jointly think over the matter.

Honourable Speaker,

Due to the existence of firm institutional structures that can be used in resolving our differences, there is no issue that we can not resolve through dialogue. There is no reason why we should engage in public shouting matches because when we do, we plant seeds of division in our country, and we give our people uncalled for headaches. What makes it worse is when those of us who are engaged in these public shouting matches happen to be leaders, including those who are members of the Joint Committee and principal advisors of our Governments. This, brothers and sisters, is not right.

IS ZANZIBAR A NATION?

Furthermore, Honourable Speaker, even this issue about which we are currently engaged in a shouting match—"whether Zanzibar is a Nation or not"—makes one very unhappy. Is it true that forty-four years on, we, fellow Tanzanians and fellow leaders, have failed to understand what was decided on the 26th of April 1964, by our founding leaders? That is to say, the Late Julius Nyerere, as the then President of the Republic of Tanganyika, and the Late Abeid Amani Karume, as the then President of the Peoples Republic of Zanzibar, voluntarily decided to unite their two sovereign nations in order to create one new nation, the United Republic of Tanzania.

By that very decision, our old leaders made the conscious choice of establishing a new authority, which in English is known as "sovereignty." Both of our then two nations were free sovereign states. They decided to unite their two authorities, the two sovereign states, and form a new authority, one new sovereign state, called the United Republic of Tanzania.

Honourable Speaker,

From that day on, it was the United Republic of Tanzania that became the new sovereign authority and the new nation; that jointly united

and gave us a new identity in the eyes of other Nations in the world, the people and Nation of Zanzibar, as well as the people and Nation of Tanganyika. Our founding elders did put in place good and transparent mechanisms and procedures to help in running state affairs in our new nation. In this regard, where matters relating to foreign affairs were concerned, the authority that represented our identity and us as a nation was the United Republic of Tanzania. For matters considered internal to each part of the union, our founding elders agreed that these would be run by the relevant parts of the union, with the exception of matters of joint consideration. These were the ones that were called union matters. It was agreed that matters that were internal to the Nation of Zanzibar, as a part of Tanzania, which were not union matters were to be run by the Government of Zanzibar; and matters of concern to the Nation of Tanganyika, as a part of Tanzania, which were not union matters, were to be taken care of by the Government of the United Republic. Therefore, our elders determined that there would be no special authority to take care of matters that were internal to the Nation of Tanganyika, which is now popularly known as Tanzania Mainland.

Honourable Speaker,

In English, this intense debate would be called “very unfortunate.” It did not deserve to take place, especially given the way the union started. What I am saying is that where the fate of Zanzibar is concerned, it depends on the context or perspective from which one is speaking. From the perspective of assessing the relations between Nations internationally, that is to say where one is looking at relations between our Nation and another in a foreign affairs context, Tanzania is the Nation. But, if one is talking about matters internally within Tanzania, matters that are internal to Zanzibar, as part of Tanzania, were to be supervised by the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar. Matters internal to the Nation of Tanganyika, as part of Tanzania, were to be presided over by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. Where is the problem?

What I am saying is that after forty-four years of the union, for there to be a debate on this matter is something that is unclear to me. As a matter of fact, this debate on whether Zanzibar is a nation or not, the way the debate has been conducted, and the overall character of the debate, has been very unfortunate. If some of us have other agendas, we had better get them into the open and let us talk about them, because the issue about whether Zanzibar is a Nation or not should be above debate.

CCM AND CUF ACCORD

Honourable Speaker,

It will be recalled that in my speech on December 30, 2005, I expressed my profound distress at the political impasse in Zanzibar and my strong desire to seek intensified efforts to find a solution to that impasse. We have made those efforts. Talks were held between the two main political parties in Zanzibar, CCM and CUF, and a basic understanding was achieved on what the situation would be after the 2010 General Election. Unfortunately, some differences of opinion have emerged between the two parties on how to conclude the talks, and this has caused a stalemate. The parties have agreed on all the issues, and the outstanding matter is on how to implement what has been agreed upon and how the talks are to be brought to a close. This is where there is a stalemate.

It is my desire, and the desire of all my colleagues who wish our country well, to continue seeking ways to get the talks back on track as quickly as possible so that we may proceed to the next step. We have been making efforts to resolve the impasse, and we will continue making those efforts.

All the same, Honourable Speaker, I have to confess there are some serious complications. In my opinion, I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal of mistrust between the two parties. This mistrust causes the parties to approach any new proposals that they may present to each other with intense suspicion, even when the relevant proposal may be a good one

on its own merit. This is the main cause of the stalemate. If this problem of mutual mistrust did not exist, to a large extent, there would not be any further obstacles to reaching an agreement, because the parties have talked about and agreed on all the major issues. This level of intense mistrust and mutual suspicion does show that there is indeed a great need for the talks to resume. Efforts have to continue to ensure that the talks do resume and that they are eventually concluded. This is in the national interest and serves the interests of the parties. I would like to assure your Esteemed House that I have not given up on the resumption of the talks, and we can not afford to lose hope. We will continue the important work we started earlier, until we are able to complete it successfully, as soon as possible.

CORRUPTION

Honourable Speaker,
On corruption, I made a promise here in Parliament that the Fourth Phase Government would continue the fight against corruption without end. We have been doing this since then until now. There have been broad measures to enhance the participation of all citizens in this fight: First, by the citizens themselves understanding what corruption is and hating corruption. Second, by enhancing the readiness of all citizens to participate in the fight against corruption through cooperation and helping state organs such as the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) in exposing those engaged in giving or receiving bribes.

I wish to use this occasion to recognize the role citizens, the mass media, and Honorable Members of Parliament have played, as well as extend my thanks to them for the important contribution they all have made in exposing corrupt behavior in our society. I am asking citizens, Honorable Members of Parliament, and the mass media to continue extending your cooperation in this fight.

Honourable Speaker,

One important measure that we took in increasing our readiness for this fight is the efforts we have made to strengthen the capacity of our state organ for coordinating and leading the fight against corruption, that is, the Prevention and Combating Corruption Bureau (PCCB). We have done two things in that regard. First, your esteemed Parliament has passed a new piece of legislation on the matter, and I have already given my assent to it. This legislation, which replaces the Act Number 16 of 1971, widens the general scope and ability to fight corruption.

Honourable Speaker,

The 1971 Act listed four categories relating to corruption. The new Act identifies twenty-four cases and thus widens the scope in identifying corrupt behavior, which in turn provided organs leading the fight against corruption wide room for maneuvering in investigating corrupt behavior. The Act also provides PCCB with wider powers in the fight against corruption. Now, PCCB can arrest and prosecute perpetrators of crime. Furthermore, there is now protection for PCCB operatives and whistle blowers among the general public. I thank you, Honorable Members of Parliament, for passing that legislation.

Honourable Speaker,

The second measure we have taken is strengthening and enhancing the capacity of this institution by way of providing PCCB with additional working tools, relevant personnel, and training opportunities. Because of this, PCCB has been able to open offices in every district throughout the country, and they have recruited 442 new staff. Furthermore, they have managed to organize training, both in country and abroad, to about 1,000 of their staff. All these measures build the capacity of the Bureau and enhance the basis of its capacity to assume its responsibilities effectively.

Good results are beginning to be seen. The numbers of investigative reports produced by the Bureau has increased from 3,121 in 2005 to 8,235

in 2007. Public servants against whom relevant disciplinary measures have been taken have increased from 111 in 2005 to 280 in 2007. Fifty cases were taken to court in 2005, while in 2007 there were 196. The PCCB won six of the cases taken to court in 2005, while 35 cases were won in 2007.

Honourable Speaker,

Efforts to fight against grand corruption are also continuing. We are continuing with efforts to plug grand corruption loopholes. We have focused on the public procurement system and especially the big Government contracts. Contracts and public procurement are the biggest corruption corridor through which grand corruption flows. We intend to review the legislation governing Government procurement, procedures for effecting public procurement, and entering into contracts by the Government, with the intent to make improvements in that regard.

Honourable Speaker,

With regard to the need for taking appropriate action against those alleged to have been involved in grand corruption, PCCB is urged to increase its pace in assuming its responsibilities in this area. That there were only two cases relating to grand corruption in the last two years suggests that the pace of action in this area is very slow. Of these two cases, one is ongoing and the other one is the radar contract scandal involving an alleged culprit who is said to have escaped. Efforts in tracking the alleged culprit are being intensified. PCCB are, in their own defense, pleading with Tanzanians to be patient. There are also six lines of investigations that are making good progress, and PCCB believes one or two cases may be brought before the law anytime now. PCCB are asking that they be left to pursue the investigations in a calm and professional manner so that they are assured of success in court once they bring a case to trial. Furthermore, they are requesting that they be allowed to avoid being unfair or bringing shame to persons who may have committed no crime. Allegations of corruption affect an individual's

prestige and integrity in the society, and for a politician it destroys his political career completely. It is therefore necessary that great care be taken before arriving at the decision to bring someone before a court.

In spite of all the heavy weight of good explanations given above, I have persisted in asking PCCB to explain to me why in these last two years, only two cases of grand corruption had even come up. They told me that this was because the investigation of such big cases was often very difficult and that these difficulties were confounded when some of the transactions being investigated were effected abroad; thus creating the need to secure information from outside Tanzania, where the corrupt payments happened to have been made, or where the relevant corrupt money happened to be banked.

We face enormous difficulties in securing information from foreign banks, even from countries with which we have good relations in fighting crime. Access to such information is relatively easier where the relevant foreign Governments have a vested interest in the given case. This is well illustrated in the investigations relating to allegations of corruption in the sale of radar equipment to Tanzania by the British company BAE.

Because state organs in Great Britain have a vested interest in this matter, it has been easy—to some extent—to get cooperation and assistance from them. All the same, even with the considerable capabilities of the British state organs, the investigations of the allegations have taken about four years, and they are still not yet completed.

CONCLUSION

Honourable Speaker,

I have said a lot, although I did not expect to cover so much. I only came here to give a report on where we have come from, where we are, and where we are heading. I have taken an unduly long time because I tend to speak slowly. Those who speak much faster may have taken half of the time. I wish to end by thanking you again Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members of

Parliament, and fellow Tanzanians for your cooperation and assistance. I thank Tanzanians for their understanding and for trusting us, as well as supporting us.

We have a broad agenda and firm purpose, we have good reason, and we have undoubted ability. All that I have outlined can be done if every man, woman, and child assumes their responsibilities.

God Bless Africa

God Bless Tanzania

Thank You!

TANZANIA

Hotuba ya Mheshimiwa Jakaya

Mrisho Kikwete, Rais wa Jamhuri ya

Muungano wa Tanzania, Kwenye

Bunge la Jamhuri ya Muungano

21 Agosti, 2008

Mheshimiwa Spika,
Sina budi nianze au tuanze kwa kumshukuru Mwenyezi Mungu mwingi wa Rehema kwa kutujalia uhai na afya njema na kutuwezesha kukutana tena hapa Bungeni miaka miwili na miezi saba baadaye.

Mheshimiwa Spika,
Kama tujuavyo wapo wenzetu Wabunge watano ambao hawakujaaliwa kuwa nasi siku ya leo, kwa kuwa wametangulia mbele ya haki. Wenzetu hao ni Marehemu Amina Chifupa, Marehemu Juma Akukweti, Marehemu Salome Mbatia, Marehemu Benedict Losurutia na Marehemu Chacha Zakayo Wangwe. Tuendelee kumwomba Mwenyezi Mungu awape mapumziko mema. Ameen.

Mheshimiwa Spika,
Nakushukuru sana wewe binafsi na Waheshimiwa Wabunge kwa kunipa fursa hii adimu na adhimu ya kuzungumza mbele ya Bunge lako Tukufu, Hii ni mara yangu ya pili kufanya hivyo tangu nipate heshima kubwa ya kuwa Rais wa nchi yetu. Mara ya kwanza ilikuwa tarehe 30 Disemba 2005 wakati wa kuzindua Bunge hili. Katika hotuba yangu ya kuzindua Bunge nilieleza na kufafanua mwelekeo wa kiseru yaani Dira na Malengo ya Serikali yetu mpya maarufu kwa jina la Serikali ya Awamu ya Nne.

Nilitoa mawazo yangu ya msingi kuhusu mikakati na mbinu za kutekeleza mwelekeo huo na malengo hayo, pamoja na kutekeleza Ilani ya

Uchaguzi ya Chama cha Mapinduzi. Leo tukiwa tumefika nusu ya safari yetu ya miaka mitano nimeona nje tena mbele ya Bunge lako Tukufu kwa nia ya kuzungumzia kule tulikotoka, hapa tulipo sasa na kule mbele tuendako katika nusu yetu iliyosalia.

Mheshimiwa Spika,
Nafurahi kusema kuwa katika nusu ya kwanza ya safari yetu tumepata mafanikio ya kutia moyo, kwa mambo mengi katika maeneo mengi. Viwango vya mafanikio vilivyofikiwa vinatofautiana kati ya eneo moja na lingine lakini, kwa ujumla mambo si mabaya.

Katika safari yetu hii njiani tumekumbana na vikwazo vya aina mbalimbali na bado tutavikuta vingine kadri safari yetu inavyoendelea. Jambo la kuleta faraja ni kuwa pamoja na kuwepo kwa vikwazo hivyo tumeweza kupata mafanikio ya kujivunia. Hii inanifanya niamini kuwa tutaendelea kupata mafanikio zaidi na kwamba hatimaye tutatimiza makusudio yetu mema kwa nchi yetu na watu wake. Ushindi ni lazima tupate na nina hakika tutapata ushindi huo.

SHUKRANI KWA VIONGOZI

Mheshimiwa Spika,
Sina budi kuwatambua na kuwashukuru viongozi wenzangu wakuu katika Serikali na Taifa ambao ushauri wao, ushirikiano wao na msaada wao kwangu vimekuwa kimea na siri kuu ya mafanikio yetu. Wa kwanza ninayependa kumtambua na kumshukuru sana Makamu wa Rais Dokta Ali Mohammed Shein. Amekuwa mshauri na msaidizi wangu mkuu wa kutumainiwa.

Mheshimiwa Spika,
Wa pili ni Mheshimiwa Abeid Aman Karume, Rais wa Zanzibar na Mwenyekiti wa Baraza la Mapinduzi. Namshukuru kwa uelewa wake wa mambo, ushirikiano wake na msaada wake kwangu. Kwa hakika amekuwa nguzo na kiungo muhimu katika kufanikisha shughuli za Muungano wetu. Ni ukweli uliodhahiri kwamba maelewano na mashirikiano mazuri kati yetu sisi Viongozi Wakuu na kati ya Serikali zetu mbili

tunazoziongoza ni jambo la lazima. Naridhika na kiwango cha ushirikiano kilichopo kati yetu.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Vilevile namshukuru sana Waziri Mkuu Mheshimiwa Mizengo Pinda, pamoja na Waziri Mkuu aliyemtangulia Mheshimiwa Edward Lowasa, Mbunge wa Monduli, kwa mchango wao mkubwa katika mafanikio ya Serikali ya Awamu ya Nne. Namshukuru Mheshimiwa Mizengo Pinda kwa kazi kubwa na nzuri anayoifanya kuongoza shughuli za Serikali hapa Bungeni. Pia namshukuru kwa kusimamia vizuri utendaji wa kila siku wa shughuli za kila siku za serikali.

Nawashukuru Mawaziri, Makatibu Wakuu, Wakuu wa Mikoa, Wakuu wa Wilaya na Watendaji wote wa Serikali wa ngazi zote. Nawashukuru kwa jitihada zao ambazo ndizo zilizotufikisha hapa tulipo sasa, ambapo tunacho kitu cha kusema na kuonesha mbele ya Watanzania waliotuchagua.

VYOMBO VYA ULINZI NA USALAMA

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Nitakuwa mwizi wa fadhila kama sitawatambua na kuwashukuru viongozi na watumishi wa vyombo vyetu vya ulinzi na usalama nchini. Nawashukuru kwa utii na uaminifu wao kwangu, nawashukuru kwa uaminifu wao kwa Taifa, na nawashukuru kwa utumishi wao ulio bora.

Natambua mazingira ya kazi waliyoyonayo, lakini napenda kuwahakikishia kuwa tutaendeleza juhudi tulizozianza za kutatua matatizo yaliyopo ili waweze kutimiza ipasavyo wajibu wao katika mazingira yaliyo bora zaidi.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Kwa Jeshi la Polisi sina budi kutoa shukrani maalumu kwa Inspekta Jenerali Said Mwema. Namshukuru kwa uongozi wake thabiti na weledi. Wakati tunaingia madarakani mimi na ninyi ni mashahidi, imani ya wananchi kwa Jeshi la polisi ilikuwa chini sana, lakini chini ya uongozi wake, imani hiyo sasa imerejea. Heshima ya Askari Polisi machoni mwa wananchi sasa ipo. Imani ilipotea sana pale wimbi la ujambazi

lilipopamba moto, na Polisi kuonekana kuwa ama wamezidiwa maarifa, ama ni sehemu ya tatizo.

Nilipokuwa natoa kauli wakati wa kampeni na niliposema hapa Bungeni kuwa hatutawaacha majambazi watambe, nilikuwa nasema vile kwa kuamini na kujivunia kuwepo kwa Jeshi la Polisi lenye uwezo wa kukabiliana na tatizo hilo. Nawashukuru sana Inspekta Jenerali Saidi Mwema na wenzake kwa kunisaidia ahadi ile kutimia. Wamenitoa mchanga wa macho, maana isingetimia sasa hivi tungekuwa hatuna cha kusema. Nawaomba waendeleo na juhudi hizo nasi katika Serikali tutaendelea kuwaunga mkono na kuboresha zaidi mazingira yao ya kazi na kuimarisha chombo chetu hiki muhimu.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Hivyo hivyo namshukuru sana Mkuu wa Majeshi ya Ulinzi, Generali Davis Mwamunyange. Namshukuru kwa uongozi wake thabiti. Ni mtulivu, mbunifu na makini wa kupima mambo na kuchukua hatua muafaka ambazo ni sifa nzuri ya kiongozi.

Mipaka yetu iko salama kutokana na kazi nzuri ifanywayo na Jeshi la Ulinzi la Wananchi wa Tanzania chini ya uongozi wake. Pamoja na hayo, shukrani maalumu kwa Jeshi letu ambazo sina budi niziseme hapa Bungeni, ni kwa kazi nzuri waliyoifanya katika Visiwa vya Comoro hivi karibuni. Kutokana na kazi yao hiyo nzuri, umoja na muungano wa nchi hiyo umerejeshwa na kuimarishwa, baada ya Jeshi letu kufanikiwa kumtimua Kiongozi muasi katika Kisiwa cha Anjuani aitwaye Kanali Mohammed Bakary. Kanali Mohamed Bakary alikuwa na njaa ya kukitenga Kisiwa hicho kisiwe sehemu ya Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Visiwa vya Comoro.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Jeshi letu linastahili pongezi kwa umahiri mkubwa iliouonyesha yaani kwa maneno ya siku hizi kwa weledi (professionalism) wa hali ya juu sana katika kutekeleza jukumu hilo.

Hakuna mtu aliyeuawa, hakuna aliyeyeruhiwa na wala hakuna mali iliyoharibiwa. Hizo ndizo zilizokuwa hofu za watu wengi. Nakumbuka kabla ya kutekelezwa operesheni ile, siku chache

kabla ya utekelezaji wa operesheni nilipigiwa simu na baadhi ya watu kuelezea hofu hizo. Kwa sababu ya hofu hizo baadhi walidiriki kuomba tusitisha operesheni. Niliwaelezea ugumu wa kusitisha operesheni ile ambayo iliamuliwa na Umoja wa Afrika na Tanzania kuteuliwa kujumuika na Sudan, Senegal na Libya kusaidia Serikali ya Comoro. Nikawahakikishia kwamba kazi itafanyika vizuri. Na kweli ikafanyika vizuri. Wengi walishangaa na kumwaga sifa tele kwa nchi yetu, Majeshi yetu na wenzetu wa Sudan tulioshirikiana nao.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Kwa kutambua sifa kubwa waliyoliletea Taifa nimefanya uamuzi wa kuwatunikia Nishani wanajeshi wote walioshiriki Operation Democracy in the Comoros. Nishani hiyo tutaitengeneza na watapeleka. Lakini pia wanajeshi wote waliokuwepo Jeshini wakati wa Operesheni hiyo, nao pia tutawatunikia Nishani. Wale waliokwenda watakuwa na Nishani mbili na wale waliobakia huku nyumbani watakuwa na Nishani moja.

UMOJA, AMANI NA UTULIVU

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Wakati wote kulinda, kudumisha na kuendeleza umoja wa Taifa letu na watu wake pamoja na kudumisha amani na utulivu wa nchi yetu, ni mambo ambayo Chama cha Mapinduzi kimeyapa kipaumbele cha juu. Huo ndiyo mwongozo na msimamo thabiti na dira ya Serikali ya Awamu ya Nne. Tumekuwa tunachukua hatua mbalimbali kwa ajili hiyo.

Nafurahi kusema mbele ya Bunge lako Tukufu kuwa juhudi zetu zimeweza kutuletea matokeo tuliyoyatarajia. Mahusiano ya kidugu miongoni mwa Watanzania wa rangi mbali mbali, wa dini mbalimbali, wa makabila mbalimbali, na vyama mbalimbali vya siasa yameendelea kudumishwa. Watu wetu bado ni wamoja kiasi cha kuwashangaza na kuwaaibisha masakubimbi wa siasa wanaopenda kuchochea mifarakano katika jamii yetu. Mahusiano baina ya vyama vya siasa na wanachama wa vyama vya siasa yamekuwa ya kawaida.

Hakuna tatizo la uhasama la kusumbua akili zetu na kutunyima usingizi. Haya ni mafanikio makubwa.

MUUNGANO

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Nchi yetu bado ni moja, watu wake ni wamoja na Muungano wetu bado ni imara.

Katika historia ya Muungano wetu kumekuwapo na changamoto mbalimbali kwa nyakati mbalimbali. Nimepata bahati nikiwa katika umri mdogo sana ya kushiriki katika vikao vya juu vya uongozi wa siasa wa nchi yetu; kwanza nikiwa Afisa wa Chama kuwasaidia Wazee na baadaye mimi mwenyewe nikiwa kiongozi. Matokeo mengi makubwa ya kihistoria kwa nchi yetu yametokea nayaona. Nakumbuka nyakati gani kulikuwa na matatizo. Fundisho kubwa nililolipata ni kuwa wakati wote changamoto hizo zilipojitokeza zimekuwa zikishughulikiwa kwa kutumia mifumo na taratibu tulizojiweka ndani ya chama na ndani ya Serikali. Mimi naamini hata haya yaliyozuka hivi karibuni kuhusu Zanzibar ni nchi ama si nchi tutayamaliza kwa njia ya mazungumzo kupitia mifumo na taratibu tulizojiweka.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Mimi naamini kwa dhati kabisa kuwa hata hili wingu hili nalo litapita kama yalivyopita mawingu mengine mazito zaidi ya hili huko nyuma. Naomba nirudie kuwasihii viongozi wenzangu kwamba tujizuie kutoa matamshi ambayo yataikoroga zaidi hali na kufanya mambo kuwa magumu zaidi. Tuviachie vyombo na taratibu tulizoweka kushughulikia matatizo ya Muungano viyashughulikie kama kweli kuna tatizo.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Katika miaka miwili na nusu tumechukua hatua thabiti za kushughulikia matatizo mbalimbali yanayokabili Muungano wetu. Kwanza kabisa tumeelekeza sana nguvu zetu katika kuimarisha mfumo na taratibu tulizojiweka za kushughulikia matatizo ya Muungano. Tumeipa uhai mpya Kamati ya Pamoja ya Waziri Mkuu na Waziri Kiongozi

iliyoundwa maalumu kwa ajili ya kushughulikia masuala ya Muungano. Mwaka huu mwanzoni kwa nia ya kuongeza nguvu kwenye Kamati niliamua kuwa Makamu wa Rais aongoze Vikao vya Kamati hiyo.

Kamati hiyo imeshafanya vikao vinne na viwili vimefanyika chini ya uongozi wa Makamu wa Rais wa Jamhuri ya Muungano. Haya ni mafanikio ya aina yake katika historia ya vikao hivyo. Nafurahi kwamba sasa wamekubaliana kukutana kila baada ya miezi miwili.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Chini ya mfumo huu wa Kamati ya pamoja ya Waziri Mkuu na Waziri Kiongozi vikao zaidi ya ishirini vimefanyika. Vikao hivyo ni pamoja na vile vya Makatibu Wakuu wa Wizara za Serikali zetu mbili, vikao na vya Taasisi na vyombo vya Serikali zetu.

Tunayo Tume ya pamoja ya fedha ambayo inaongozwa na Mheshimiwa William Shellukindo, Mbunge wa Mbumbuli. Tumeikamilishia safu zake za uongozi na kuiwezesha kufanya kazi zake vizuri.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Kwa kupitia vikao vya vyombo hivi, masuala mengi yanayoleta utata kwenye Muungano wetu yamezungumzwa na kutafutiwa namna ya kuyamaliza. Naomba mnivumilie niwatajije baadhi ya mambo ambayo yamezungumzwa na maelewano ya ufumbuzi wake kukubaliwa. (1) Mgawano wa mapato yatokanayo na misaada kutoka nje ya nchi, misamaha ya mikopo ya fedha kutoka IMF na faida inayotokana na mapato ya Benki Kuu. (2) Malalamiko ya wafanyabiashara wa Zanzibar kuhusu masuala ya kodi. (3) Utekelezaji wa sheria ya haki za binadamu Zanzibar. (4) Suala la utafutaji na uchimbaji wa mafuta na gesi asilia. (5) Uvuvi katika ukanda wa bahari kuu, (6) Utekelezaji wa sheria ya “Merchant Shipping” katika Jamhuri ya Muungano na masuala ya uanachama wa “International Maritime organisation”. (7) Ushirikiano wa Zanzibar na Taasisi za Nje. (8) Ushiriki wa Zanzibar katika Jumuiya ya Afrika Mashariki, (9) Ajira ya watumishi wa Zanzibar

katika taasisi za Muungano, na (10) Utafutwaji wa fedha kwa ajili ya kugharamia mpango mkuu wa umwagiliaji Zanzibar kupitia mpango wa maendeleo ya kilimo (ASDP).

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Nayataja haya kwa sababu ya kuthibitisha kwamba watu hawakukaa kimya bali jitihada kubwa zimekuwa zinafanywa kuimarisha Muungano wetu na mafanikio ya kutia moyo yamekuwa yanaptikana. Masuala ya Muungano yamezungumzwa kwa uwazi. Maelewano yamepatikana kwa takribani masuala yote. Mengi yamemalizwa isipokuwa yale ambayo yalikuwaliwa yaendeleo kufanyiwa kazi zaidi. Moja katika hayo ni suala la utafutaji wa mafuta na gesi asilia. Bado tunaendela kulitafakari kwa pamoja.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Kwa misingi ya mifumo tuliyonayo ya kushughulikia mambo yetu hakuna jambo lolote tunalotofautiana ambalo hatuwezi kulizungumza tukalimaliza. Hatuna haja ya kulumbana hadharani kwani tunaigawa nchi, tunawaumiza vichwa wananchi. Na mbaya zaidi ni pale tunaofanya hivyo ni viongozi tena ni wale wale ambao ni wajumbe wa Kamati ya Pamoja na wengine ndiyo washauri wakuu wa Serikali zetu. Hili ndugu zangu siyo sawa.

JE ZANZIBAR NI NCHI?

Isitoshe Mheshimiwa Spika hata hili tunalolumbana nalo yaani suala la “Zanzibar ni nchi au siyo nchi” linanisikitisha sana. Hivi Watanzania wenzangu na Viongozi wenzangu miaka 44 baadaye tunashindwa kuelewa juu ya kile kilichoamuliwa tarehe 26 Aprili, 1964 na viongozi wetu waasisi? Yaani Marehemu Julius Nyerere wakati huo akiwa Rais wa Jamhuri ya Tanganyika na Marehemu Abeid Amani Karume wakati huo akiwa Rais wa Jamhuri ya Watu wa Zanzibar. Viongozi wetu hao waliamua kwa hiari nchi zao mbili huru ziungane na kuunda nchi moja mpya, Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania.

Kwa kitendo kile Wazee wetu wale walifanya uamuzi wa kuunda mamlaka mpya kwa lugha ya Kiingereza inaitwa “sovereignty”. Nchi zetu

mbili kila moja ilikuwa huru na mamlaka yake ya dola (sovereign state) zikaamua kuunganisha mamlaka zao pamoja na kuunda mamlaka mpya iitwayo Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania. Mheshimiwa Spika;

Kuanzia siku ile Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania ndiyo mamlaka mpya na ndilo taifa jipya linalowaunganisha na kuwatambulisha watu na nchi ya Zanzibar na watu na nchi ya Tanganyika kwa pamoja mbele ya mataifa mengine. Kuhusu utaratibu wa kuendesha mambo katika taifa letu jipya wazee wetu waasisi waliweka utaratibu mzuri na ulio wazi. Hivyo basi kwa mambo ya nje, mamlaka inayotutambulisha na kutuwakilisha sisi kama nchi ni Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania. Kwa mambo yetu ya ndani walikubaliana kila upande uendeshe mambo yake isipokuwa yale ambayo pande zote mbili zilikubaliana yawe ya pamoja; mambo ya muungano. Mambo ya nchi ya Zanzibar kama sehemu ya Tanzania ambayo hayakuwa ya Muungano yalikubaliwa yaendeshwe huko na Serikali ya Mapinduzi Zanzibar na yale mambo ya Nchi ya Tanganyika kama sehemu ya Tanzania yalikubaliwa yaendeshwe na Serikali ya Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania. Hivyo hakutakuwepo mamlaka maalum kwa ajili ya nchi ya Tanganyika maarufu kwa Tanzania Bara.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Makubaliano haya kwa Kiingereza wanasema ni “very unfortunate”. Halikustahili kutokea na hasa kwa namna ilivyotokea. Kwa ujumla ninachosema ni kwamba suala la mstakabali wa Zanzibari unategemea unauzungumza kwa mtazamo upi. Kama ni kwa mtazamo wa mahusiano baina ya mataifa yaani nchi moja na nchi nyingine iliyopo nje, nchi ni Tanzania. Lakini, kama ni kwa mahusiano na mambo yetu ya ndani, mambo ya Nchi ya Zanzibar kama sehemu ya Tanzania yalikubaliwa yasimamiwe na Serikali ya Mapinduzi ya Zanzibar na mambo ya Nchi ya Tanganyika kama sehemu ya Tanzania, yasimamiwe na Serikali ya Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania. Tatizo ni nini? Nasema miaka 44 baadaye tunapolumbana kwenye jambo hili mimi sielewi. Kwa kweli mjadala huu wa Zanzibar ni

Nchi ama si Nchi na hasa jinsi ulivyoendeshwa na sura iliyochukuliwa ni jambo la bahati mbaya sana kutokea. Kama zipo agenda zetu nyingine tuziseme, tuzizungumze, siyo hili.

MUAFAKA WA CCM NA CUF

Mheshimiwa Spika,
Itakumbukwa kwamba katika hotuba yangu tarehe 30 Desemba, 2005, nilieleza kusononeshwa kwangu na mpasuko wa kisiasa Zanzibar na kueleza nia yangu ya kujaribu kuupatia ufumbuji. Juhudi hiyo tumeifanya. Mazungumzo baina ya Vyama Vikuu vya Siasa kule Zanzibar CCM na CUF, yalifanyika na maelewano ya kimsingi kufikiwa juu ya hali itakavyokuwa baada ya uchaguzi wa mwaka 2010. Bahati mbaya tofauti baina ya vyama hivyo viwili kuhusu namna ya kumaliza mazungumzo baina yao imeleta mkwamo. Wamekubaliana yote, sasa haya waliyokubaliana tunayamalizaje? Hapo ndipo kwenye mkwamo.

Ni nia yangu na ya wenzangu wenye nia njema na nchi yetu kutafuta njia za kuyanasua mazungumzo hayo mapema iwezekanavyo ili twende hatua inayofuata. Juhudi za kutufikisha hapo tumekuwa tunazifanya na bado tunaendelea nazo.

Hata hivyo, Mheshimiwa Spika, lazima nikiri kuwa kuna uzito wa namna fulani. Mimi katika kutafakari kwangu nilichojifunza na nilichobaini ni kuwepo kiwango kikubwa cha kutokuaminiana baina ya pande hizi mbili. Kiasi cha kufanya watiliane shaka kwa kila jambo jipya linalosemwa na mwingine hata kama jambo hilo ni jema. Hiki ndicho kiini cha tatizo. Kama mazingira haya ya kutokuaminiana kwa kiasi kikubwa yasingekuwepo, hapangekuwepo na tatizo kwa sababu wameyazungumza yote yamemalizika.

Kutokuaminiana huko ni uthibitisho tosha kwamba kuna haja ya mazungumzo. Jitihada za kuhakikisha kuwa mazungumzo yanaendelea na yanakamilika lazima ziendelee kufanywa. Ni kwa maslahi ya nchi yetu na ni kwa maslahi yetu sote. Lakini napenda kulihakikishie Bunge lako Tukufu kwamba sijakata tamaa na hatujakata tamaa. Tutaendelea kutafuta njia bora zaidi za kukamilisha kazi hii muhimu tuliyoianza mapema iwezekanavyo.

BUNGE

Mheshimiwa Spika,
Kuhusu Bunge, naomba nianze kwa kukushukuru wewe binafsi, niwashukuru Waheshimiwa Wabunge wote wa Bunge lako Tukufu kwa ushirikiano wenu kwangu na Serikali yetu. Msaada wenu na ushirikiano wenu umetusaidia sana kuimarisha utendaji wa Serikali yetu. Ni ukweli ulio wazi kuwa tunapozungumzia mafanikio ya Serikali ya Awamu ya Nne, kwa hakika unauona mchango mkubwa wa Bunge letu.

Wakati nilipokuwa nafungua Bunge hili nilisema wachemsheni Mawaziri, lakini muwatendee haki. Ninapoangalia mjadala Bungeni naona kama vile wakati mwingine mnazidisha kidogo; badala ya kuwachemsha mnawahenyeshi!

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Pamoja na yote napenda kusema kwamba Bunge letu leo hii ni kielelezo halisi cha kuthibitisha ustawi na ukomavu wa demokrasia nchini mwetu. Naomba tuendeleo kushirikiana, tuendeleo kusaidiana kwa manufaa ya nchi yetu na watu wake

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Nilitoa ahadi mbele ya Bunge hili kwamba Serikali itafanya kila iwezalo kutimiza ipasavyo wajibu wake kwa Bunge kuhusu upatikanaji wa rasilimali za kutosha ili liweze kutimiza majukumu yake kwa ufanisi zaidi. Nafarijika kusema kwamba ahadi hiyo tumeitimiza kwa kiasi kikubwa sana. Nyie na mimi ni mashahidi, bajeti ya Bunge tumeiongeza mara mbili katika miaka miwili hii, tumeitoa kwenye shilingi bilioni 29 na sasa ni shilingi bilioni 57. Ni uthibitisho wa udhati wa dhamira yetu hiyo. Maslahi ya Wabunge tumeyaboresha na tutaendelea kuyaboresha kadri uwezo unavyojitokeza. Tunaendelea na ujenzi wa Ofisi za Waheshimiwa Wabunge awamu kwa awamu mpaka tutakapozimaliza. Kila ofisi inagharimu si chini ya shilingi milioni 40.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Ni vyema kueleza wazi kuwa Serikali imekubali kuanzisha Mfuko wa Maendeleo ya

Jimbo yaani CDF. Mimi ninaamini kwamba Mfuko huu utatoa fursa kwa Waheshimiwa Wabunge kupata na kusimamia kiasi fulani cha fedha kwa ajili ya kupunguza kero ndogo ndogo zinazowakabili wapigakura wenu majimboni. Maana si vizuri Mheshimiwa Mbunge unatembelea Jimbo lako, watu wanakuomba bati tano tu wakamalize mradi wao wa zahanati huna uwezo nazo. Mfuko huu utasaidia hayo. Lakini yale maombi mengine ya wapiga kura kuhusu matatizo ya binafsi hayatashughulikiwa na fedha za mfuko huu. Ukiweza kumsaidia kutoka vyanzo vyako binafsi sawa na yakikushinda acha.

Ni matumaini yangu kuwa maelewano na wabia wetu wa maendeleo yatafikiwa mapema iwezekanavyo ili twende hatua inayofuata ya utekelezaji.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Nafurahi kuliarifu Bunge lako Tukufu kuwa Baraza la Mawaziri limekwishamaliza kazi ya upande wake kuhusu Kutungwa Sheria ya Uendeshaji wa Bunge. Naamini hatua zinazofuatia baada ya hapo zitakamilishwa mapema iwezekanavyo na wanaohusika ili jambo hili liwasilishwe Bungeni na limalizwe.

MAHAKAMA

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Ahadi yangu kwa mhimili wa kutoa haki yaani Mahakama ni kama ile niliyoitoa kwa mhimili huu wa kutunga Sheria yaani Bunge. Sisi katika Serikali yaani Utawala ambao ndiyo wenye jukumu la kukusanya mapato tunatambua vyema wajibu wetu wa kuiwezesha Mahakama ya Tanzania kwa rasilimali fedha, rasilimali vifaa na rasilimali watu ili mhimili huu muhimu wa dola uweze kutimiza ipasavyo wajibu wake. Tunaendelea kutimiza wajibu wetu huo. Tumeongeza bajeti ya Mahakama kwa takribani asilimia hamsini kutoka shilingi bilioni 32.7 hadi shilingi bilioni 47.9 kati ya mwaka 2005 na mwaka 2007. Natambua kwamba nyongeza hii si kubwa ukilinganisha na mahitaji. Nataka kuahidi mbele ya Bunge lako tukufu kwamba tutaendelea kuongeza fedha kwenye Bajeti ya Mahakama

mwakani na miaka inayokuja.

Kwa upande wa rasilimali watu tumeongeza sana Majaji wa Mahakama ya Rufani na Mahakama Kuu. Pia tumeongeza sana Mahakimu Wakazi na Mahakimu wa Mahakama za Mwanzo. Mahakama ya Rufani sasa ina Majaji 15, kutoka Majaji 9 wakati tunaingia madarakani, bahati mbaya mmoja wao, Jaji Simon Kaji juzi alifariki. Mungu amrehemu na ampe mapumziko mema. Lakini, maadamu nafasi ni 15 mwingine atapatikana badala yake.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Katika kipindi hiki hiki pia tumeteua Majaji wanya 32 wa Mahakama Kuu na kuifanya Mahakama hiyo sasa iwe na Majaji 56. Idadi hizi za Majaji zinaiongezea Mahakama yetu nchini uwezo mkubwa zaidi wa kutoa haki. Lakini, kubwa zaidi katika historia hiyo ni kuwa na Majaji wengi wanawake kuliko wakati mwingine wowote katika historia ya nchi yetu. Aidha, tumeendelea na kazi ya kuimarisha na kupanua miundombinu ya Mahakama nchini ili kupeleka huduma za utoaji haki karibu na wananchi.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Napenda kutumia nafasi hii kumpongeza sana na kumshukuru Jaji Mkuu Mheshimiwa Brigida Jenerali (Mstaafu) Augustino Ramadhani kwa uongozi wake thabiti wa chombo hiki muhimu. Dalili za matumaini ya mabadiliko yenye tija zimeanza kuonekana. Ninamhakikishia Jaji Mkuu, Majaji na Mahakimu na watendaji wote wa Mahakama, ushirikiano wangu binafsi na wa wenzangu wote Serikalini.

RUSHWA

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Kuhusu rushwa, niliahidi hapa Bungeni kwamba Awamu ya Nne, itaendeleza vita dhidi ya rushwa bila kuchoka. Tumekuwa tunafanya hivyo tangu wakati ule mpaka sasa. Tumechukua hatua za kuhamasisha wananchi kushiriki katika mapambano haya. Kwanza, kwa wao wenyewe kuelewa na kuchukua rushwa. Na pili kwa wao kuwa tayari kushirikiana na kusaidiana na vyombo

vya dola hususan TAKUKURU katika kufichua wahusika na vitendo vya utoaji na ulaji rushwa.

Napenda kutumia nafasi hii kutambua na kuwashukuru wananchi, vyombo vya habari na Waheshimiwa Wabunge kwa mchango wao muhimu wanautoa katika kufichua vitendo vya rushwa katika jamii yetu. Nawaomba wananchi, Waheshimiwa Wabunge na vyombo vya habari tuendeleo kushirikiana katika mapambano haya.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Jambo lingine muhimu tulilolifanya katika kujizatiti kwa mapambano haya ni kujenga uwezo wa chombo chetu cha taifa cha kuratibu na kuongoza mapambano dhidi ya rushwa yaani Taasisi ya Kuzuia na Kupambana na Rushwa (TAKUKURU). Tumefanya mambo mawili kwa ajili hiyo. Kwanza, kuwa na sheria mpya ambayo Bunge lako tukufu limeshaipitisha na mimi nimeshaitia saina. Sheria hii mpya ambayo inachukua nafasi ya Sheria namba 16 ya mwaka 1971 inaimarisha upeo na uwezo wa kupambana na rushwa.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Sheria ya mwaka 71 ilikuwa na makosa 4 tu ya rushwa. Sheria mpya ina makosa 24 hivyo kuongeza upeo wa makosa ya rushwa na kubana zaidi vitendo vya rushwa. Sheria hii pia inatoa uwezo mkubwa kwa TAKUKURU katika mapambano dhidi ya rushwa. Sasa TAKUKURU inaweza kukamata na kushtaki wahalifu. Aidha, TAKUKURU sasa kuna kinga kwa watendaji wa chombo hiki na watoa taarifa pia. Nawashukuru Waheshimiwa Wabunge kwa kupitisha sheria hiyo.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Jambo la pili, tulilolifanya ni kuimarisha na kuiwezesha taasisi hii kwa vitendea kazi, watumishi na mafunzo. Bajeti ya TAKUKURU imeongezeka. Kwa ajili hiyo TAKUKURU imeweza kufungua ofisi katika kila wilaya nchini na wameajiri watumishi wanya 442. Aidha, wameweza kutoa mafunzo kwa watumishi wao wapatao 1,000 ndani na nje ya nchi. Yote haya yanaijengea Taasisi uwezo na msingi mzuri wa kutimiza majukumu yake.

Mafanikio yameanza kuonekana. Taarifa za uchunguzi zimeongezeka kutoka 3,121 mwaka 2005 hadi 8,235 mwaka 2007. Watumishi wa umma waliochukuliwa hatua za nidhamu wameongezeka kutoka 111 mwaka 2005 hadi 280 mwaka 2007. Kesi zilizofunguliwa mahakamani zilikuwa 50 mwaka 2005 na mwaka 2007 zilikuwa 196. Kesi ambazo TAKUKURU ilipata ushindi zilikuwa 6 mwaka 2005 na mwaka jana ilipata ushindi kwenye kesi 35.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Jitihada za kupambana na rushwa kubwa nazo zinaendelea. Tunaendelea na jitihada za kuziba mianya ya rushwa kubwa. Tumeelekeza macho yetu kwenye eneo la manunuzi ya umma na hasa mikataba mikubwa ya Serikali. Mikataba na manunuzi ya umma kwa jumla ndiyo uchochoro mkubwa wa rushwa. Nia yetu ni kutazama upya sheria ya manunuzi ya umma, taratibu za manunuzi na kuingia mikataba kwa lengo la kuziboresha.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Kwa upande wa kuwachukulia hatua na kuwafikisha mbele ya haki watuhumiwa wa rushwa kubwa, TAKUKURU haina budi kuongeza kasi. Uwepo wa kesi mbili tu za rushwa kubwa mahakamani ni kidogo mno. Kati ya hizo kesi moja inaendelea na nyingine ya rada mtuhumiwa katoroka. Jitihada za kumtafuta zinaendelea. Katika utetezi wao TAKUKURU wanaomba Watanzania kuwa na subira. Ziko taarifa nyingine 6 ambazo uchunguzi wake umefikia hatua nzuri na wanaamini kesi moja au mbili zitafikishwa mahakamani wakati wowote. TAKUKURU wanaomba waachwe kufanya kazi yao ya uchunguzi wa kila tuhuma kwa uhakika ili wajihakikishie ushindi mahakamani. Aidha, wanataka waepuke kuonea au kufedhehesha watu wasiokuwa na makosa mbele ya jamii. Tuhuma ya rushwa ina athari za unyanyapaa katika jamii na kwa mwana siasa inammaliza kisiasa. Hivyo inahitaji uangalifu na kujiridhisha kiushahidi kabla ya kufikia uamuzi wa kumfikisha mtu mahakamani.

Hata hivyo, pamoja na maelezo hayo mazuri

yenye uzito wa hoja mimi niliendelea kuwauliza TAKUKURU kwani nini katika miaka hii miwili kesi za rushwa kubwa ni mbili tu. Wakasema ni kwa sababu uchunguzi wa tuhuma za rushwa kubwa kuwa mgumu na ugumu huzidi pale ambapo huyu aliyeiba uchunguzi unataka taarifa zipatikanae kutoka nje ya Tanzania ambako malipo yalifanywa au fedha husika zilihifadhiwa.

Hata kwa zile nchi ambazo tuna uhusiano wa kusaidiana kwa mambo ya uhalifu kupata kumbukumbu kutoka mabenki yao ni kazi ngumu sana. Aghalabu upatikanaji wa taarifa hizo huwa rahisi kwa masuala ambayo vyombo na Serikali ya nchi hizo zina maslahi nayo. Kama ilivyokuwa kwa uchunguzi wa tuhuma za rushwa katika mchakato wa uuzaji wa rada kwa Tanzania kulikofanywa na Kampuni ya BAE ya Uingereza.

Kwa vile, vyombo vya usalama vya Uingereza vina maslahi nalo imekuwa rahisi kwa kiasi fulani kupata msaada na ushirikiano. Hata hivyo, pamoja na uwezo wa vyombo vya Uingereza, uchunguzi wa tuhuma hiyo umechukua takribani miaka minne na bado haujakamilika.

MAADILI YA UONGOZI

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Kimsingi rushwa ya viongozi ama watumishi wa umma ni kielelezo cha mmomonyoko wa maadili. Kwa sababu hiyo tumeelekeza nguvu zetu katika kuweka misingi imara ya kukabiliana na tatizo hilo. Nimeitaka Tume ya Maadili ya Umma kuhakiki taarifa wanazozitoa viongozi na watumishi waandamizi wa umma kila mwaka kuhusu mali zao. Hivi sasa kazi hiyo haifanyiki ipasavyo. Haitoshi na wala haina maana watu kujaza fomu ambazo taarifa zake hazihakikiwi. Nimewataka wahakiki ili wathibitishie ukweli wa taarifa na mali iliyopo. Kubwa zaidi ni kuthibitisha mali hiyo ilivyopatikana na waridhike

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Hivyo basi viongozi wenzangu mtakapowaona Maafisa wa Tume ya Maadili wakipitapita kwenye miradi yenu au kwenye mali zenu au wakiwataka maelezo msiseme bwana mdogo shika adabu yako, muelewe sababu yake. Naomba mshirikiane nao.

Waambieni yote kwani wanatimiza wajibu wao. Kama mali umeipata kihalali una hofu ya nini? Si utawaambia tu nimeuza mananasi yangu ndiyo maana najenga nyumba kijijini, nimeuza ng'ombe wangu ndiyo maana nina gari. Naamini Tume ikiifanya kazi hii kwa dhati itatusaidia kuhamasisha uadilifu miongoni mwa viongozi na watumishi wa umma.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Kwa nia ya kusisitiza uadilifu miongoni mwa viongozi na watumishi wa umma na hasa kuondoa mgongano wa maslahi, siku za nyuma nilizungumzia nia ya kuangalia namna ya kutenganisha shughuli za biashara na shughuli za uongozi na utumishi wa umma. Nilipoamua vile nilitiwa moyo na mifano ya wenzetu mbalimbali duniani wanaofanya hivyo. Nafurahi kuliarifu Bunge lako Tukufu kuwa wenzetu wa Tume ya Maadili walishaanza mchakato wa kulifanyia kazi jambo hili. Taarifa yao imekamilika. Nimewataka wawashirikishe Ofisi ya Mwanasheria Mkuu wa Serikali, Msajili wa Vyama vya Siasa, Katibu wa Tume ya Uchaguzi na Mkurugenzi Mkuu wa TAKUKURU kupata maoni zaidi na kukamilisha mapendekezo yao. Dhamira yangu kwa kweli mwakani Bunge la Aprili, 2009 kazi hii tuikamilishe. Sheria itungwe, taratibu za utekelezaji zitengenezwe mapema iwezekanavyo. Watu wapate fursa ya kuisoma na kuelewa mapema kabla ya uchaguzi wa mwaka 2010.

UKUAJI WA DEMOKRASIA NA UHURU WA VYOMBO VYA HABARI

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Kuhusu demokrasi, napata faraja sana kuona kwamba demokrasi nchini inazidi kustawi na kujengeka. Ni ukweli usiopingika kwamba wananchi, wanasiasa, vyama vya siasa na vyombo vya habari, vina uhuru wa kutosha wa kutoa maoni na kufanya shughuli zao bila ya kubugudhiwa. Ukiona kuna tatizo lolote jua kuna ukiukaji wa sheria si vinginevyo. Vinginevyo hakuna bugudha. Wananchi wa Tanzania wanaruhusiwa kufanya maandamano kutoa maoni yao bila ya woga wala kutiwa misukosuko. Hali hii imetafsiriwa na

baadhi yetu kwamba nchi sasa inakosa nidhamu na ati mambo yanakwenda ovyo. Kila mtu anayo haki ya kutoa maoni yake; ndiyo uhuru wenyewe huo katika mfumo wa kidemokrasia. Naelewa sababu zinazowafanya wawe na fikira hizo lakini niwaombe watambue kuwa wakati umebadilika. Tujifunze kuzoea mazingira mapya ya uhuru wa watu ulio mpana zaidi. Lakini, inasikitisha kuona baadhi yetu tunautumia uhuru huo isivyo. Hata hivyo sina budi kusisitiza kuwa uhuru una mipaka na hauna budi uzingatie kanuni ya msingi ya kudumisha umoja, udugu, mshikamano na mashirikiano ya watu katika jamii. Kuchochea ghasia, katika jamii kuchochea chuki miongoni mwa wana jamii, kusema uongo, kufitinisha watu na kuchonganisha watu si matumizi stahili ya haki hii.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Nawaomba sana ndugu zangu uhuru huu tuutumie inavyostahili. Lakini pale ambapo mtu atakiuka hataachwa; ndiyo wajibu wa Serikali. Mtu asiseme ni uhuru wake kwani uhuru wake una mipaka. Hakuna uhuru wa kumwacha mtu kuvuruga nchi. Haiwezekani. Mtu huwezi kuwa kwenye chombo cha habari anatoa habari, ama unaandika habari za uchochezi zinazogombanisha Waislam na Wakristo, wananchi na Serikali yao, watu kwa watu ndani ya jamii halafu akasema kufanya hivyo ndiyo kutumia haki yake ya uhuru kutoa maoni. Mimi nasema kama hiyo ndiyo tafsiri ya uhuru, bora uhuru huo usiwepo kwani utahatarisha usalama na kuleta maafa makubwa. Hatutaruhusu hali hiyo itokee.

USHIRIKI WA WANAWAKE KWENYE NAFASI ZA UONGOZI NA UAMUZI

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Kama nilivyoahidi wakati wa kampeni na kwenye hotuba yangu ya Bunge; tumechukua hatua za kuongeza ushiriki wa wanawake katika ngazi mbalimbali za uongozi na uamuzi katika taifa letu. Ahadi ile tumeitekeleza na tutaendelea kufanya hivyo. Tanzania ya leo imepiga hatua kubwa sana katika kuwapa wanawake nafasi za uongozi na uamuzi. Katika historia ya nchi yetu, hivi sasa ndiyo wakati ambapo kuna wanawake

wengi zaidi katika nafasi za uongozi na uamuzi kuliko wakati mwingine wowote.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Tumefikia lengo la asilimia 30 ya wanawake Bungeni kama mwongozo wa SADC unavyotaka. Tunao wanawake wengi katika nafasi za Mawaziri, Majaji, Makatibu Wakuu, Wakuu wa Mikoa, Wakuu wa Wilaya, Wakurugenzi na Watendaji katika ngazi mbalimbali. Nilishawahi kusema siku za nyuma kuwa kila ninapopata mapendekezo ya uteuzi kama jina la mwanamke mwenye sifa lipo hupendelea kumpa kipaumbele mwanamke. Nimekuwa nafanya hivyo katika jamii ambayo ina mazoea ya kutokufanya hivyo. Hatuna budi tuendeleo kuelimishana juu ya nafasi ya mwanamke katika jamii. Lakini, mwalimu mkubwa kuliko wote ni wanawake waliopata fursa hizo kuchapa kazi kwa bidii kuthibitisha kwa vitendo kuwa wanawake wanaweza kuonyesha na kutumia vipaji vyao wakipewa fursa.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Kwa ajili hiyo wiki chache zijazo nakusudia kuanzisha rasmi mchakato wa kutekeleza ahadi ya uwakilishi wa hamsini kwa hamsini Bungeni. Jambo hili limezua fikra mbalimbali na lina mjadala mkali. Kuna mawazo mengi, wako wanaosema sasa kila jimbo liwe na Wabunge wawili, mmoja mwanamke na mwingine mwanamume.

Wako wanaokuja na mawazo ya uwakilishi wa uwiano (proportional representation). Lakini maana ya kwanza ya mfumo huu wa uwiano ni kwamba tunafuta kabisa utaratibu wa majimbo ya uchaguzi tuliouzoa. Maana ya pili ni mfumo mchanganyiko ambao sehemu ya Wabunge hutoka Majimboni na sehemu nyingine hutokana na uwakilishi wa uwiano. Mjadala wa mapendekezo haya nao si rahisi. Lakini nasema mchakato huo lazima tuanze sasa. Tuanze tuone tutafikanao wapi. Tutakwenda nao vipi. Hili ni jambo lenye uharaka wake hasa kwa maana ya matayarisho ya mipaka ya majimbo ka uchaguzi wa 2010. Ni nia yangu kwamba tulenge mabadiliko ya sheria husika za uchaguzi ifikapo Aprili, 2009.

UPATIKANAJI NA MATUMIZI YA PESA ZA UCHAGUZI

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Mheshimiwa Spika, nilipolihutubia Bunge hili kwa mara ya kwanza nilielezea wasiwasi wangu juu ya hatari ya kujengeka kwa dhana, kwamba uongozi unaweza kununuliwa na wagombea wenye fedha au wagombea wenye wafadhili wenye fedha. Hili nalo ni suala muhimu la maadili ya uongozi. Niliahidi kwamba tutaangalia utaratibu wa kupata na kutumia fedha kwa ajili ya kugharamia chaguzi au shughuli za chaguzi ndani ya vyama vya siasa na chaguzi katika nafasi za uongozi na uwakilishi za dola.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Nimezungumzia hata ndani ya vyama vya siasa kwa makusudi, kwa sababu mchakato wa kuwapata wagombea kwa nafasi za dola huanzia katika vyama. Isitoshe, wenzetu waliojiwekea taratibu za aina hii wameanzia ndani ya vyama vyenyewe. Mchakato wa kura za maoni ndani ya vyama unaongozwa na sheria na taratibu za nchi. Viwango vya fedha za kumchangia mgombea na namna ya kuchangia vimefafanuliwa katika sheria na taratibu hizo. Na sisi hatuna budi kufanya hivyo kabla mambo hayajawa mabaya. Muelekeo wa siku hizi si mzuri hata kidogo. Lazima kutahadhari kabla ya hatari.

Nafurahi kuliarifu Bunge lako tukufu kuwa jambo hili tumelifanyia kazi. Kamati Maalum inayomjumlisha Mwanasheria Mkuu wa Serikali, Msajili wa Vyama vya Siasa, Mwakilishi wa TAKUKURU na Mwakilishi wa Tume ya Uchaguzi, imeshatoa mapendekezo yake ya msingi. Hivi karibuni katika Baraza la Mawaziri tutayaangalia na kuamua ipasavyo.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Dhamira yangu ni kwamba kwenye Bunge la mwezi Aprili, 2009 tukijaliwa tuletete Muswada wa Sheria utakaotoa mwongozo thabiti wa jambo hili. Ningependa katika uchaguzi wa mwaka 2010 wagombea na wananchi tuongozwe na taratibu za sheria mpya. Jambo hili lina nafasi maalum katika maadili ya uongozi na mapambano

dhidi ya rushwa. Tukifanikiwa kuliwekea suala la matumizi ya fedha katika chaguzi mfumo ulio wazi na unaozua fursa zisizokuwa stahili kutumika, tutakuwa tumetoa mchango mkubwa katika mapambano dhidi ya rushwa na kupata viongozi waadilifu.

HALI YA UCHUMI NCHINI

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Katika hotuba yangu ya Desemba 30, nilieleza Bunge lako tukufu kuwa Serikali itatoa kipaumbele cha juu katika kukuza na kujenga uchumi endelevu na wa kisasa. Nिलieleza pia kuwa Serikali ya Awamu ya Tatu chini ya Uongozi wa Rais Mkapa, imetuachia msingi mzuri ambao ahadi yetu ni kwamba hatukusudii kuubomoa bali kujenga juu yake na kuongezea. Hiyo ndiyo dhana ya kupokezana vijiti inavyopaswa iwe.

Katika miaka miwili na nusu hii uchumi wa Tanzania umeendelea kuimarika pamoja na changamoto nyingi tulizokabiliana nazo zikiwemo, ukame, upungufu wa chakula, matatizo ya umeme na hasa kupanda sana kwa bei za mafuta duniani. Uchumi umeendelea kukua kwa kasi ya kuridhisha. Mwaka 2006 uchumi ulikua kwa asilimia 6.7. Mwaka 2007 uchumi ulikua kwa asilimia 7.1 na mwaka huu tunategemea uchumi utakua kwa asilimia 7.8. Sekta zinazokua kwa haraka ni Mawasiliano (asilimia 19), Madini (asilimia 14), Huduma ya Fedha (asilimia 12) na Ujenzi (asilimia 9.7). Sekta ya Kilimo imekua kwa asilimia 4.8 ambayo ni kwa kasi ndogo sana.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Pato la Taifa limeongezeka, kutoka shilingi trilion 16 mwaka 2005 na sasa tumefikia trilion 21 mwaka 2007. Kwa sababu hiyo pato la wastani la Mtanzania limepanda pia kutoka shilingi 441,030 mwaka 2005 na sasa upo kwenye laki 546,956. Pamoja na ongezeko hilo lakini unapochukua kiasi cha ukubwa wa pato la taifa na ukubwa wa pato la wastani la wananchi, Tanzania bado ni nchi maskini sana. Watu wake bado ni maskini sana. Hii ina maana moja tu kwetu: tunayo kazi kubwa ya kufanya ya kukuza uchumi wa nchi yetu kwa kasi kubwa zaidi na kuhakikisha

kuwa mapato yanawafikia watu wengi sawia. Wataalam wa uchumi wanatambua ili tuweze kufikia lengo la kuwa nchi ya uchumi wa kati ifikapo mwaka 2025 uchumi wetu unatakiwa kukua kwa zaidi ya asilimia 10 kwa zaidi ya miongo miwili mfululizo. Hiyo ndiyo shabaha yetu na namna ya kufika huko ndiyo miongoni mwa changamoto ambazo tunaendelea kuzihangaikia.

MAPATO NA AKIBA YA FEDHA ZA KIGENI

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Mapato yetu ya fedha za kigeni nayo yameongezeka kutoka dola milioni 2,994.9 mwaka 2005 na kufikia milioni 3,736 mwaka 2007. Akiba yetu ya fedha za kigeni nayo imeongezeka kutoka dola milioni 2,180 yaani dola 2.21 bilioni mwaka 2005 na sasa tuko kwenye dola milioni 2,888 yaani 2.8 bilioni. Thamani ya shilingi imeimarika, kutokana na hatua zilizochukuliwa na Benki Kuu na kufuta dhana kwamba mwelekeo wa shilingi yetu ni kuporomoka tu.

Jambo moja muhimu ningependa Waheshimiwa Wabunge na wananchi watambue ni kuwa, pamoja na akiba ya fedha za kigeni kuongezeka, uwezo wetu wa kununua bidhaa umeshuka kwa sababu ya kupanda kwa bei ya mafuta na mfumuko wa bei katika masoko ya nje tunakonunua bidhaa. Akiba yetu sasa inatosha kuagiza bidhaa kutoka nje kwa miezi 4.6 ukilinganisha na miezi 6 kwa akiba ya mwaka 2005. Hatuna budi kuongeza mauzo nje na kutunza akiba yetu ya fedha za kigeni.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Deni la taifa nalo limepungua kutokana na kuendelea kulipa madeni na kupata msamaha wa madeni ya nje. Msamaha huo tuliupata ni kielelezo cha mafanikio ya diplomasia yetu ya uchumi. Deni la ndani nalo limepungua, kwa sababu tumeacha kukopa kwenye mabenki na tumepunguza kutegemea kuuza dhamana za Serikali kwa ajili ya kufidia bajeti ya Serikali. Kwa sababu hiyo basi uwiano wa deni la Taifa kwa pato la Taifa, yaani National Debt to GDP

Ratio imeshuka kutoka asilimia 90 ya miaka ya nyuma hadi asilimia 23 sasa.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Hali hii imekuwa na maana kubwa sana kwa nchi yetu kwamba sasa Tanzania tunakopesheka. Kabla ya hapo Tanzania ilikuwa ni nchi ya kupewa ruzuku tu (grants). Tulikuwa hatukopesheki kwa sababu uwiano wa deni la taifa na pato la taifa lilikuwa halitupi uwezo wa kulipa madeni yetu. Kwa kiwango cha sasa cha asilimia 23 tunakopesheka ingawaje bado tunaendelea kupata ruzuku kwa sababu ni nchi maskini sana.

MFUMUKO WA BEI

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Haya si mafanikio madogo katika miaka miwili na nusu hii. Ni mafanikio makubwa. Hata hivyo kudhibiti mfumuko wa bei imekuwa moja ya changamoto kubwa inayoendelea kutusumbua. Wakati mwezi Desemba, 2005 mfumuko wa bei, ulikuwa asilimia 5, Juni, 2006 ulipanda na ukawa asilimia 6.8. Desemba, 2006 ukashuka na kuwa asilimia 6.7 na Juni 2007 ukaendelea ukashuka na kufikia asilimia 5.9. Lakini Desemba, 2007 ukapanda tena na kuwa asilimia 6.4 na Aprili, 2008 ukaendelea kupanda na kuwa asilimia 9.8. Baadae ukashuka na kuwa asilimia 9.3 mwezi Juni 2008 kiwango ambacho bado ni cha juu zaidi ya ilivyokuwa miaka ya hivi karibuni.

Mheshimiwa Rais;

Athari za kuongezeka kwa mfumuko wa bei ni kupanda kwa gharama ya maisha kutokana na kupanda kwa bei za bidhaa. Hii ndiyo hali ilivyo hapa nchini na ndicho kilio cha kila mtu. Ni kilio cha kweli. Swali ambalo napenda sote tujilize na kulipatia jibu ni je, mfumuko wa bei unasababishwa na vitu gani kwa mazingira yetu sisi? Kwa nadharia ya uchumi, mfumuko wa bei husababishwa na: kwanza, ujazi wa fedha kuwa mkubwa mno kupita kiasi katika uchumi (excess liquidity). Na sababu ya pili ni kupanda kwa bei ya bidhaa muhimu kwa matumizi ya binadamu na kubwa zaidi ni kupanda kwa bei ya vyakula. Hapa kwetu tumefanikiwa kudhibiti ujazi wa

fedha. Hilo si tatizo linalosababisha mfumuko wa bei kama ilivyokuwa katika miaka ya 80 na 90.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Hapa kwetu kuongezeka kwa mfumuko wa bei kunachochea na kupanda sana kwa bei ya mafuta duniani. Kupanda kwa bei ya mafuta kumeongeza gharama za uzalishaji, gharama za uchukuzi wa bidhaa pamoja na chakula. Tulipoingia madarakani bei ya mafuta ilikuwa dola 52 kwa pipa, mwaka jana katikati ikafikia kuwa dola 147. Imeanza kuteremka na sasa tuko dola 115. Sijui itateremka mpaka wapi au hasa itabaki mpaka lini kabla ya kupanda tena.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Jambo la tatu linalochangia mfumuko wa bei hapa nchini ni kule kupanda kwa mfumuko wa bei katika nchi tunazofanya nazo biashara kati ya Juni 2007 na Juni, 2008. Kwa mfumuko wa bei umepanda katika nchi hizo, bei za bidhaa zao pia zimepanda. Nitatoa mifano. Sisi tunaagiza bidhaa kutoka Marekani ambako mfumuko wa bei umepanda kutoka asilimia 3.4 Juni hadi asilimia 5 Juni, 2008. Katika kipindi hicho kwa nchi za Jumuiya ya Ulaya mfumuko wa bei umepanda kutoka asilimia 2.5 hadi asilimia 5, wakati ule wa China umepanda kutoka asilimia 1.6 mwaka jana hadi 7.1 mwaka huu, India umepanda kutoka asilimia 5.6 mwaka jana hadi asilimia 11. Kenya ambako tunanunua bidhaa nyingi za matumizi ya binadamu mfumuko wa bei umepanda kutoka asilimia 7.6 mwaka wa jana hadi asilimia 29.3 mwaka huu. Na, Uganda umepanda kutoka asilimia 4.8 hadi asilimia 12.4.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Kwa bidhaa tunazozigiza kutoka nchi hizo mfumuko wa bei wa nchi hizo unakuwa umekwishapandisha bei za bidhaa hizo huko zinakozalishwa. Hivyo basi, tunaziagiza kwa bei ya juu zaidi kuliko ilivyokuwa kabla ya mfumuko huo. Hivyo kupanda huko kwa bei hakusababishwi na sisi kushindwa kudhibiti mfumuko wa bei au kwa Serikali kutokuwa na uchungu na raia wake. Napenda kuwahakikishia kuwa mapenzi yangu kwa Watanzania hayana

kipimo. Nitakuwa mtu wa mwisho kufanya vitendo vya kuwaumiza Watanzania.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Napenda kukuhakikishia wewe, kuwahakikishia Waheshimiwa Wabunge na Watanzania wenzangu kwamba Serikali imekuwa inafanya jitihada kubwa kudhibiti kasi na athari za uongezekaji wa mfumko wa bei. Jitihada zetu hizo ndizo zimesaidia mfumko wa bei uendelee kuwa chini ya asilimia 10 yaani kuendelea kubaki kuwa wa tarakimu moja.

Miongoni mwa hatua hizo ni pamoja na ile ya kudhibiti ukuaji wa ujazi wa fedha kama nilivyokwisha itaja huko nyuma. Nyingine ni hatua za makusudi tunazozichukua za kusaidia kuongeza uzalishaji wa mazao ya chakula na bidhaa viwandani kwa matumizi ya binadamu. Ruzuku ya mbolea na mbegu tunazotoa kwa mazao makuu ya chakula zimesaidia uhakika wa upatikanaji wa chakula. Bei ya chakula hapa nchini kwa kiasi kikubwa inapandishwa na gharama za uchukuzi kwa sababu ya kupanda kwa bei ya mafuta. Aidha, kupanda gharama ya kulima kwa trekta na bei ya mbolea zinachangia kuongezeka kwa bei ya chakula. Hata hivyo kupanda huko kuna nafuu kwa sababu tunacho chakula cha kutosha nchini, hatuagizi kutoka nje ambako bei imepanda sana.

Kwa upande wa bidhaa za viwandani zinazohitajiwa sana na wananchi; hatua za makusudi za kukabiliana na upungufu unaosababisha kupanda kwa bei tunazozichukua zimesaidia kudhibiti. Kwa upande wa saruji shabaha yetu ni kuongeza uzalishaji hapa nchini ili kutosheleza mahitaji ya ndani na kupata ziada kubwa ya kuuza nchi za nje. Katika miaka miwili ijayo tunategemea kuwa na viwanda vipya vitatu na kimojawapo kitakachojengwa Mtwara kitazalisha tani milioni 5 na kuifanya Tanzania kuwa nchi mojawapo inayozalisha saruji kwa wingi duniani. Mheshimiwa Spika,

Jambo lingine ambalo limesaidia katika kudhibiti mfumko wa bei ni kazi inayofanywa na EWURA na SUMATRA. Najua bado kuna kutokuridhika na kazi waifanyayo. Hata hivyo hatuna budi kutambua kuwa kama siyo kazi

inayofanywa na SUMATRA na EWURA ya kuwabana watoa huduma hali ingekuwa mbaya zaidi kwa upande wa bei za umeme, mafuta na nauli. Kuwepo kwake ndiyo nusura yetu sote. Makampuni yanayotoa huduma yangeachwa kuamua hali ingekuwa ngumu sana. Hata hivyo, kilio cha wananchi kuhusu utendaji kazi wa SUMATRA na EWURA tumekisikia tufanya jitihada za kuyaimarisha na kuboresha utendaji wake.

MAPATO YAMEONGEZEKA, UTEGEMEZI UNAPUNGUA

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Katika hotuba yangu ya kuzindua Bunge lako tukufu, niliahidi kwamba Serikali ya Awamu ya Nne, itakuwa makini zaidi kwenye usimamizi na udhibiti wa mapato na matumizi ya Serikali. Nafarijika kusema kuwa katika kipindi cha miaka miwili na nusu hii tumeongeza ufanisi katika ukusanyaji wa mapato ya ndani, kutoka kiwango cha juu cha shilingi 198 bilioni Desemba 2005 na sasa tumefikia kiwango cha juu cha bilioni 321 mwezi Juni, 2008.

Tumeongeza bajeti ya Serikali kutoka trilioni 4.13 mwaka 2005 hadi trilioni 7.2 mwaka huu. Nategemea tutaendelea kufanya hivyo mwaka hadi mwaka. Ukuaji wa mapato ya ndani umeongeza uwezo wetu wa kutekeleza ahadi zetu kwa wananchi. Pia umepunguza utegemezi wetu kwa wafadhili. Katika mwaka wa fedha 2006/2007 wafadhili walichangia asilimia 42 ya bajeti ya Serikali. Mwaka 2007/2008 tukapunguza hivyo wakagharamia asilimia 39 na mwaka huu tumepunguza zaidi hivyo watagharamia asilimia 34 tu ya bajeti ya Serikali.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Maana katika kipindi hiki ambacho bajeti ni kubwa sana kama mapato ya ndani yasingeongezeka utegemezi ungekuwa mkubwa zaidi. Kwa mara ya kwanza baada ya muda mrefu sana mwaka huu tutajitegemea wenyewe kwa matumizi ya kawaida yaani, (recurrent budget). Pamoja na hayo zitabaki fedha kutokana na mapato ya ndani ambazo tutazipeleka kugharimia

sehemu ya bajeti ya maendeleo. Ambayo sehemu kubwa inagharimiwa kwa msaada wa marafiki zetu wa maendeleo kutoka nje. Nako pia shabaha yetu ni kupunguza kidogo kidogo utegemezi ili hatimaye tufike mahali tuongeze mchango wetu kwa bajeti hiyo.

Ndugu zangu kujitegemea ni uhuru na uhuru ni kujitegemea. Hivyo kufanya juhudi ya kupunguza utegemezi ni jambo la msingi sana.

NIDHAMU YA MATUMIZI

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Ni ukweli ulio wazi kuwa kuongeza sana mapato pekee haitoshi bila ya kuwepo nidhamu katika matumizi ya fedha za Serikali. Niliieleza wakati wa ufunguzi wa Bunge hili dhamira yangu ya kusisitiza nidhamu katika matumizi ya fedha za umma. Nafurahi kuliarifu Bunge lako Tukufu kuwa tumefanya hivyo na tunaendelea kuifuatilia ahadi hiyo. Hili ni jambo endelevu ni mchakato wa kudumu tutafuatilia bila kuchoka.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Niliona mahali pa kuanzia katika ufuatiliaji ni taarifa za Mdhibiti na Mkaguzi Mkuu wa Hesabu za Serikali anazotoa kila mwaka. Mdhibiti na Mkaguzi Mkuu amekuwa anatoa taarifa hizo kila mwaka lakini hazikuwa zinapewa uzito unaostahili kwa maana ya kusomwa na kujadiliwa na wale wanaozungumzwa na taarifa hizo. Kwa hiyo nikaamua kwa mara ya kwanza hebu sisi tunaosemwa na taarifa hizi tukutane tuizungumze taarifa hii. Tumwite Bw. Ludovick Uttoh mwenyewe aje atuambie kasoro zetu ni zipi na tusikilize ushauri wake juu ya nini kifanyike. Tukafanya hivyo kwa Mawaziri wote, Wakuu wa Mikoa wote, Wakuu wa Wilaya wote na Wakurugenzi wa Halmashauri wote na Wenyeviti wao.

Katika Mkutano ule tumeambiana ukweli kwa njia ya uwazi. Wasiofanya vizuri walitajwa na kuzungumzwa. Hatima ya yote tukakubaliana sote twende tukafanye vizuri zaidi. Tulikubaliana pia viongozi wa kisiasa wajihusishe kwa karibu na matumizi ya fedha kwenye maeneo yao ya uongozi. Mawaziri, Wakuu wa Mikoa, Wakuu wa

Wilaya na Wenyeviti wa Halmashauri waone na kujadili taarifa ya fedha inayotolewa kila robo mwaka na Mhasibu Mkuu. Wao ndiyo wawe wenyeviti, waviongoze vikao hivyo na wahakikishe kuwa vitabu vinaandikwa vizuri na fedha zinatumiwa vizuri kwa mipango iliyokusudiwa. Mheshimiwa Spika;

Nimelisisitiza suala hili kwa sababu vitabu vinaweza kuandikwa vizuri na idara husika ikapewa hati safi lakini, matumizi na kazi halisi iliyofanyika vinaweza visilingane. Inaweza kuwa chini ya kiwango kilichostahili au kikawa na ubora wa chini sana. Kwa sababu hiyo tumelewana Mdhibiti na Mkaguzi Mkuu wa Hesabu za Serikali kuwa sasa ukaguzi uende zaidi ya uandishi wa vitabu vya uhasibu na kuhusu ukaguzi wa thamani ya fedha kwa kazi iliyofanywa. Naomba nitumie nafasi hii kukuomba wewe na Wabunge wa Bunge lako Tukufu kujipa muda wa kutosha kujadili taarifa muhimu ya Mdhibiti na Mkaguzi Mkuu wa Hesabu za Serikali ili kuimarisha utawala bora nchini. Sauti yenu itasaidia kuhimiza nidhamu ya matumizi Serikalini. Nawaomba tusaaidiane. Kwa wenzangu Serikalini nirudie kusisitiza umuhimu wa kuongeza ukusanyaji wa mapato na wakati huo huo kuimarisha nidhamu ya matumizi ya fedha za umma.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Tulikubaliana kubadilika, kujisahihisha na kufanya vizuri. Hii ilikuwa mwaka wa jana, matokeo yake tunayatarajia kwenye hessabu za mwaka wa fedha wa 2007/2008 na kuendelea. Tusubiri tuone taarifa za ukaguzi zitakuwaje. Ni matumaini yangu mambo yatakuwa bora zaidi.

HATUA ZA KINIDHAMU

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Ukiacha hayo ya kujadili na kusisitiza nidhamu ya matumizi tumekuwa tunachukua hatua kwa wale wasiojali kufanya vizuri na kujihusisha na wizi na ubadhirifu. Mwaka huu Maofisa 10 wanaoshughulikia Mahesabu kwenye Mawazara wamefikishwa Mahakamani kwa makosa ya wizi na ubadhirifu wa mali ya umma.

Katika miaka miwili hii Wakurugenzi wa Maendeleo 27 tumewavua madaraka kwa kushindwa kutekeleza wajibu wao kwa upande wa matumizi ya fedha. Wafanyakazi wengine wapatao 795 katika Idara za Fedha za ngazi mbalimbali nchini wamechukuliwa hatua za kinidhamu kwa sababu ya kukiuka taratibu za usimamizi wa fedha.

Kwa nia ya kuimarisha udhibiti na matumizi ya fedha tulileta Muswada wa Sheria hapa Bungeni wa kuongezea uwezo Ofisi ya Mdhibiti na Mkaguzi Mkuu wa Hesabu za Serikali. Uwezo ambao utasaidia kuboresha ufanisi wa kazi wa ofisi hiyo. Tunayafanya yote haya kwa nia ya kuongeza mapato na kudhibiti matumizi ya serikali. Hivyo hatuna budi kuhakikisha moyo ni mzima na unafanya kazi vizuri ya kusambaza damu mwilini.

KILIMO

Mheshimiwa Spika,
Sasa naomba nizungumzie kilimo. Katika hotuba yangu ya tarehe 30 Desemba, 2005 nilisema kuwa tutachukua hatua za dhati kuboresha uvuvi, ufugaji na kilimo. Kauli yangu ile ilikuwa imesheheni jumla ya maelekezo ya Ilani ya Uchaguzi ya Chama cha Mapinduzi, kuhusu sekta hizo. Kwa ajili ya kutekeleza dhamira hiyo tulianzisha mpango kabambe wa kuendeleza kilimo na ufugaji nchini ujulikanao kwa lugha ya Kiingereza Agricultural Sector Development Programme. Kwa kifupi (ASDP).

Bado hatuna mpango wa aina kama hiyo kwa upande wa uvuvi lakini tutajipanga kufanya hivyo baada ya muda si mrefu. Katika kipindi kilichobaki tutatengeneza utaratibu wa kuendeleza uvuvi. Hatuwezi kufanya mambo yote kwa wakati mmoja, tumeliweka sawa la kilimo na ufugaji sasa tunakwenda kwenye la uvuvi nako.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Malengo makuu ya ASDP ni kuongeza kilimo cha umwagiliaji, matumizi ya mbegu bora, matumizi ya mbolea na madawa. Aidha ASDP inakusudia kuboresha upatikanaji huduma muhimu za ugani, masoko na uchukuzi kwa wakulima. Kwa upande wa mifugo ASDP,

inakusudia kuboresha aina ya mifugo ili kuongeza mazao ya mifugo ambayo ni nyama, maziwa na ngozi. Aidha, ASDP inalenga kuboresha upatikanaji wa huduma muhimu za ugani, maji, majosho, madawa ya kinga na tiba pamoja na masoko ya ndani na nje kwa mifugo yetu.

VIWANDA VYA KILIMO

Mheshimiwa Spika;
ASDP pia inahimiza uendelezaji wa viwanda vya kuongeza thamani kwa mazao ya kilimo na mifugo na vile vya kuhudumia sekta hizo kwa mahitaji yake muhimu ya zana, vifaa na pembejeo. Kufanya hayo ni sehemu ya utekelezaji na mkakati wa kuendeleza na kukuza viwanda nchini. Kwa upande wa kuongeza thamani uendelezaji wa viwanda vya kusindika mazao ya kilimo na mifugo umepewa kipaumbele. Ni makusudio yetu kuvutia uwekezaji katika uanzishaji na uendelezaji wa viwanda vya kusindika nyama, maziwa na matunda pamoja na viwanda vya kutengeneza maji ya matunda (sharubati) na bidhaa nyinginezo.

Kwa upande wa zao la pamba tunahimiza uwekezaji katika uanzishaji wa viwanda vya nyuzi, nguo na mavazi ili tupunguze kuuza pamba ghafi nje na kunufaika na uongezaji wa thamani. Ni makusudio yetu pia kuchukua hatua za dhati kutimiza ufufuaji wa viwanda vya ngozi nchini na katika viwanda vinavyotumia ngozi kutengeneza bidhaa mbalimbali kama vile viatu, mabegi na kadhali.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Ni makusudio yetu katika ASDP kuwa tuhimize uwekezaji katika viwanda vya kutengeneza pembejeo, zana na vifaa vya kusaidia ukuaji wa sekta za kilimo na ufugaji. Shabaha yetu hapa ni kuona viwanda vya mbolea, viwanda vya kuunganisha matrekta, viwanda vya majembe ya mkono na ya kukokotwa na wanyama, viwanda vya kutengeneza madawa ya mifugo na mimea na vinginevyo vinaanzishwa nchini ili kusaidia katika kuleta mapinduzi za kilimo nchini.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Mpango mzima wa ASDP unakadiriwa kuwa

utagharimu shilingi bilioni 2,492 katika miaka saba ya utekelezaji wake. Tunategemea kupata msaada kutoka kwa marafiki zetu wa maendeleo lakini tumejiandaa kugharimia wenyewe sehemu kubwa ya mpango huo kama hapana budi. Hatutapenda kuona mpango huu unakwama kwa sababu ya kukosa fedha za marafiki zetu wa maendeleo. Tayari tumepeleka fedha nyingi sana kwenye Halmashauri za Wilaya kwa ajili ya utekelezaji wa ASDP. Napenda Wabunge na wananchi watambue kwamba, wakati mwaka 2005 kwa ajili ya kilimo Serikali ilipeleka bilioni 4, mwaka wa fedha 2006/2007 Serikali ilipeleka jumla ya shilingi bilioni 14.1 katika Halmashauri za Wilaya. Katika mwaka wa fedha 2007/2008 tulipeleka shilingi bilioni 54.1 na mwaka huu (2008/2009) tutapeleka bilioni 58.9.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Ninayasema yote haya kuwahakikishia Waheshimiwa Wabunge na wananchi kwa jumla kwamba kuendeleza kilimo ni jambo ambalo tumelipa uzito unaostahili. Tumekuwa tunatenga fedha nyingi kwa ajili hiyo na tutatenga nyingi nyingine katika bajeti zijazo na kila itakapojitokeza fursa ya kufanya hivyo. Nitathibitisha hayo baadae katika hotuba yangu hii.

Matokeo ya msukumo wa sasa katika kilimo yameanza kuonekana. Kwa miaka miwili mfululizo tumekuwa na ziada ya chakula wakati ambapo tulikuwa na baa la njaa wakati tunaingia madarakani. Hata hivyo, ziada yetu ni ndogo sana. Ziada ya tani 1,000,000 kwa nchi yenye watu 40,000,000 si kiasi cha kutufanya tulale usingizi mnono kwani kukitokea ukame au mvua nyingi mno katika msimu mmoja tu tunaweza kuwa kwenye matatizo. Kwa kutambua ukweli huo ndio maana tunaendelea kuchukua hatua za kuongeza fedha za kuimarisha na kuendeleza kilimo nchini. Kuongeza tija na uzalishaji wa mazao ya chakula kumepewa kipaumbele cha juu sana.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Kwa upande wa mazao ya biashara nako mafanikio yanaonekana pia. Uzalishaji wa pamba umeongezeka kwa 53.7%, tumbaku kwa 13.1%, sukari kwa 38.2%, pareto kwa 12.4%, korosho

kwa 7.1% na mkonge kwa 7%. Haya ni mafanikio ya kutia moyo na mwelekeo wa usoni ni mzuri. Pamoja na hayo ni muhimu kutambua kuwa fursa ya kupata mafanikio makubwa zaidi ipo tele. Serikali itaendelea kuwekeza katika kuongeza tija na ufanisi katika kilimo na ufugaji katika maeneo haya.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Mpango wa upatikanaji wa Maafisa Ugani 3,500 tulioahidi mwaka wa jana tumeanza kuutekeleza. Tayari wameshaajiriwa Maafisa Ugani 1,200 na sasa hivi wengine 2,270 wako katika mafunzo. Watakapomaliza na kuajiriwa tutakuwa tumelitimiza lengo letu hilo kama tulivyoahidi. Kuhusu upatikanaji wa mbegu bora tumeanza mikakati ya kuimarisha na kuendeleza shughuli za utafiti wa mbegu na kufufua mashamba ya mbegu nchini. Nimeagiza Idara ya Magereza na Idara ya Jeshi la Kujenga Taifa (JKT), nao washiriki kwenye juhudi za kujenga uwezo wetu wa ndani wa uzalishaji wa mbegu. Hivi sasa, ndugu zangu, tunaagiza mbegu kutoka nje jambo ambalo tunaweza kabisa kuepukana nalo. Ni muhimu kufanya hivyo mapema iwezekanavyo kwani kwa kawaida mbegu zinatafitiwa na kuzalishwa katika mazingira yale yale zitakapotumika. Huo ndio utaratibu hata hapa kwetu. Kwa ajili hiyo kila Kanda ina kituo au vituo vyake vya utafiti na uzalishaji wa mbegu. Bahati mbaya shughuli za utafiti wa mbegu na uzalishaji wa mbegu zinakabiliwa na matatizo mengi yaliyoathiri ufanisi wake. Tumeanzisha juhudi maalum ambazo zikifanikiwa mambo tutayarejesha na kuwa mazuri na tutajitegemea kwa mbegu. Moja katika malengo yetu katika jitihada hizo ni kufufua mashamba ya mbegu. Yakishafufuka tunategemea siku za usoni kuwahusisha wadau wengine pamoja na wale wa sekta binafsi kuyaendeleza.

UPATIKANAJI WA MBOLEA

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Tumelishughulikia sana suala la mbolea. Niliahidi kufanya hivyo hapa Bungeni Desemba 30, 2005 na wakati wa kampeni kote nchini. Wakati wa kampeni nilipofika katika mikoa ya Ruvuma,

Iringa, Mbeya na Rukwa, kila niliposimama kilio kilikuwa upatikanaji wa mbolea. Maswali yalikuwa yanafanana, “tuambie tukikuchagua utafanya nini kuhusu mbolea?” Nami majibu yangu kote yalifanana, nipigieni kura, nawahakikishieni kuwa tutaongeza fedha kwenye mfuko wa ruzuku ya mbolea. Tumetimiza ahadi hiyo, haikuwa ahadi ya “ondoa ngoma juani” watupigie kura halafu basi hakuna kinachoendelea.

Ninyi hapa Bungeni ni mashahidi, mwaka wa jana tuliongeza fedha za ruzuku ya mbolea kutoka shilingi bilioni 7 hadi shilingi bilioni 21. Hii ni nyongeza ya mara tatu. Mwaka huu mfuko ule tumeuongeza zaidi na umefikia bilioni 31.5 yaani mara nne ya kiwango cha mwanzo. Kwa kweli, ungetegemea kwamba kwa vile tumeongeza mara nne fedha za ruzuku na upatikanaji wa mbolea kwa mkulima ungekuwa bora zaidi mara nne. Lakini, mambo hayako hivyo! Kwa nini? Sababu ni kwamba bei ya mbolea huko tunakoinunua imepanda sana.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Tulikuwa tunainunua mbolea ya DAP yaani Diammonium Phosphate, kwa bei ya dola 252 kwa tani. Lakini, kati ya Januari na Julai 2008 bei imepanda na kuwa dola 1,202 kwa tani. Bei, imeongezeka kwa mara nne. Mbolea ya urea ambayo kwa tani moja tulikuwa tunainunua kwa dola 260 sasa ni dola 830. Mbolea hizi mbili ndizo zinazohitajika sana kule Ruvuma, Iringa, Mbeya na Rukwa. Nyongeza yote tuliyoitoe ni kama vile imefutwa na bei hii kubwa.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Swali analojiuliza mkulima na mnalojiuliza nyinyi wawakilishi wao ni je sisi katika Serikali tunasemaji na tumeamua nini? Mini na wenzangu Serikalini tunasema kwamba hatutamtupa mkono mkulima hata kidogo. Mkulima ni mtu muhimu sana, mkulima ndiyo nguzo yetu, mkulima ni mwenzetu hivyo wakati wote tutakuwa naye pamoja bega kwa bega, kukabiliana na tatizo hili na mengineyo yanayomsibu. Nasema kwamba kama ni kushindwa tushindwe pamoja na kama ni kushinda tushinde pamoja. Mimi ninaamini tutashinda pamoja.

Tumeamua kufanya mambo mawili. La kwanza; tutaendelea kuongeza fedha za ruzuku ya mbolea na pembejeo nyingine za kilimo katika bajeti ya Serikali kila mwaka. Hatutakatishwa tamaa na nyongeza ya bei. Tutaongeza fedha za ruzuku ya mbolea ili tupunguze makali ya ongezeko la bei kwa wakulima.

Jambo la pili tuliloamua kufanya ni kuzalisha mbolea yetu wenyewe hapa hapa nchini. Bahati nzuri Mwenyezi Mungu katujalia malighafi ya kutengeneza mbolea ya DAP na urea na nyinginezo. Mbolea ya urea na mbolea ya ammonia inayochanganywa na mbolea ya phosphate zinatokana na gesi asilia. Bahati nzuri tunayo phosphate ya kutosha pale Minjingu. Tunayo gesi asilia nyingi kule Mtwara, Kilwa na Mkuranga hivyo kilichobaki sasa ni kujengwa kwa kiwanda ili mbolea hizo zizalishwe. Mipango ya kujenga kiwanda hicho kule Mtwara inaendelea vizuri. Makampuni karibu 10 yaliyo maarufu kwa uzalishaji wa mbolea duniani yamejitokeza kutaka kuwekeza kwenye mradi huu. Tunaendelea na mchakato wetu wa ndani kuhusu upatikanaji wa gesi. Baada ya hapo hatua zipasazo zitachukuliwa ili ujenzi wa kiwanda uanze.

Ni matumani yangu kuwa tukikamilisha mambo yote husika miezi michache ijayo, baada ya miaka miwili au mitatu ijayo uzalishaji wa mbolea utanza. Kitendo hicho siyo tu kitatuhakikishia upatikanaji wa mbolea ya kutosha kwa mahitaji yetu nchini bali tutapata ziada kubwa ambayo tutauza nje na kutuletea mapato. Tanzania itakuwa nchi mojawapo Afrika itakayokuwa mzalishaji na muuzaji mkubwa wa mbolea. Na sisi tutanufaika na bei kubwa ya mbolea duniani.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Kupanda sana kwa bei ya mbolea za urea na DAP kunasabishwa na kupanda kwa bei ya gesi asilia duniani. Gesi asilia na mafuta ya petroli ni bidhaa za asili moja zenye sura mbalimbali. Hupatikana sehemu moja taratibu na gharama zake za kutafuta ni zile zile. Kwa ajili hiyo kila bei ya mafuta inapopanda na bei ya gesi asilia hupanda. Ndiyo maana bei ya mbolea zitokanazo na gesi asilia imepanda.

USHIRIKA

Mheshimiwa Spika,
Upatikanaji wa soko la uhakika na bei nzuri kwa mazao ya mkulima ni moja ya malengo makuu ya ASDP. Moja ya kilio kikubwa cha wakulima ni bei ndogo ya mazao na masoko yasiyokuwa ya uhakika. Kiini cha tatizo hilo ni pale vyama vya ushirika viliposhindwa kununua mazao ya wakulima kwa sababu ya madeni makubwa hivyo kutokopesheka na vingine kwa sababu ya kufa. Hatutaki kurudi kwenye historia kuhusu nini kilitokea mpaka ushirika ukatetereka nchini. Ni mafunzo mazuri kuyazingatia hasa sasa tunapofanya juhudi za kufufua ushirika. Hata hivyo, kwa leo jambo muhimu kujua ni kuwa Serikali iliamua kubeba mzigo wa madeni wa vyama vya ushirika ili vikopesheke, viweze kununua mazao ya wakulima. Tulianza na vyama vya zao la korosho Mtwara, Lindi na Pwani. Baada ya kuwatua mzigo wa madeni, vyama hivyo vilipata mkopo Benki ya CRDB na NMB na kununua mazao ya wakulima kwa bei nzuri na soko la uhakika. Hivi leo wakulima wa korosho wa mikoa hiyo wanachekelea. Baada ya mafanikio kwa upande wa korosho sasa tunaelekeza macho yetu kwa zao la pamba. Baada ya pamba tutashughulika na zao la tumbaku na kufuatia na mazao mengine.

UTALII

Mheshimiwa Spika,
Katika miaka miwili na nusu iliyopita tumefanya jitihada kubwa ya kuendeleza sekta ya utalii nchini. Kama nilivyoahidi katika hotuba yangu hapa Bungeni, tumeendelea kuboresha huduma na miundombinu ya utalii yaani, malazi, chakula na usafiri. Lakini, pia tumeongeza kutangaza kwa nguvu vivutio vyetu vya utalii huko nchi za nje. Siku moja nilikutana na viongozi wa sekta ya utalii, wakalalamikia, Kenya kutangaza Mlima Kilimanjaro uko kwao. Mimi nikawaambia hivi nyie wenye huo mlima mmesema nini? Ninyi wenye Mlima hamsemi, wenzenu wanasema mnalalamikia wanachosema. Nikasema na sisi tuseme, ndilo jawabu lake. Tutangazie dunia kupitia mbinu zinazotambulika

na kutumika. Msione gharama kulipia matangazo.

Tukaelewana. Tukalipa dola 750,000 na tukatangaza kwenye TV ya CNN kwa miezi sita ndani ya Amerika. Mimi mwenyewe nilizindua matangazo hayo pale New York. Matangazo yale yamezaa matunda tuliyo yatarajia. Hapa nchini sasa, watalii wanaoongoza ni kutoka Marekani wakati zamani tulikuwa tunawapata kidogo kutoka huko. Hii inatufundisha kuwa kupata kitu kuna gharama zake hivyo ukitaka kukipata lazima uwe tayari kulipia gharama zake. Bila ya shaka tumejifunza vya kutosha na tutaendelea kutangaza ili tuvutie watalii wengi zaidi kuja nchini. Wakati ule tulielewana kuwa baada ya kutangaza ndani ya Marekani tutafanya hivyo kwa dunia kupitia CCN – International. Sijui tumefanya? Kama hatujafanya nashauri wahusika wafanye hivyo. Faida yake tutaiona.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Kwa ujumla jitihada tulizozifanya za kutangaza na kuboresha miundombinu ya utalii sekta ya utalii inazidi kuimarika. Watalii wanaoingia nchini wameongezeka kutoka 612,754 mwaka 2005 hadi 719,031 mwaka 2007. Fedha za kigeni tulizoingiza kutokana na utalii zimeongezeka kutoka dola milioni 823.5 mwaka 2005 sasa tunapata dola milioni 1,033/= au dola 1.03 bilioni. Sasa Sekta ya Utalii ndiyo inayoongoza kwa kulipatia taifa fedha za kigeni. Ni sekta yenye fursa kubwa ya kufanya vizuri zaidi ya hapa. Tuendeleo kutangaza kote duniani na tuendeleo kuboresha mahoteli na nyumba za kufikia wageni pamoja na huduma za chakula na usafiri.

MADINI

Mheshimiwa Spika,
Kama tujuavyo madini ni moja ya sekta kuu za uchumi wa nchi yetu. Wakati tunaingia madarakani tulikuta mchango na mwenendo wa ukuaji wa sekta ya madini ukiwa mzuri. Niliahidi kudumisha mafanikio hayo. Nafurahi kwamba mchango na mwenendo wa sekta hii umeendelea kuwa mzuri. Uwekezaji na mapato umeendelea kukua mwaka hadi mwaka. Tanzania inaongoza kwa kuvutia vitega uchumi katika madini. Uzalishaji wa madini umeongezeka na mapato

yatokanayo na madini yemeongezeka pia. Mwaka 2005 madini yaliingiza dola 727.5 na mwaka 2007 mapato yalikuwa dola milioni 886.5.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Nilipoingia madarakani niliona haja ya kuchukua hatua za kurekebisha baadhi ya mambo hasa katika mikataba ya madini ili na sisi tunufaike kama wanavyonufaika wawekezaji. Tukachukua hatua za kuzungumza nao na tukafanikiwa kwa makampuni matatu. Mazungumzo yanaendelea kwa makampuni mengine. Baadae niliamua kuwashirikisha wenzetu wengine nje ya Serikali kupata mchango zaidi kuhusu namna ya kuboresha shughuli za sekta hii muhimu kwa taifa. Nikaunda Kamati ya Rais ya Madini iliyoongozwa na Jaji Mark Bomani. Baadhi ya Wabunge walishiriki katika Kamati ile.

Kamati ile imefanya kazi nzuri sana, imetoa maoni mazuri sana. Kiserikali tumeshajidili taarifa ya Kamati hiyo na kufanya maamuzi mbalimbali kuhusu mapendekezo yake. Tumekubaliana kuanza kuchukua hatua. Hatua hizo zitahusu kurekebisha sera ya madini, kufanya marekebisho ya sheria za madini na taratibu zake. Mimi naamini kuwa tukiyafanya hayo katika sekta ya madini mambo yatanyooka na kutunufaisha sote sawia; mwekezaji na sisi wananchi wenye raslimali. Natambua kuwepo hofu kuwa mabadiliko mapya yatakandamiza wawekezaji kutoka nje. Hilo si kweli, siyo nia yetu wala ya kamati ya Bomani. Nia yetu ni kutaka sote tufaidike sawia.

AJIRA

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Moja ya ahadi kubwa ya CCM kwa Watanzania katika Ilani yake ya Uchaguzi ni kukuza ajira. Ilani imetuagiza tuwe tumetengeneza ajira mpya 1,000,000 ifikapo mwaka 2010. Tunaendelea na utekelezaji wa ahadi hiyo na mwelekeo si mbaya. Taarifa ya Ofisi ya Taifa ya Takwimu inaonesha kuwa tunapiga hatua ya kutia moyo. Mpaka Desemba 2007 ajira 667,729 zilikuwa zimepatikana. Idadi hii inawahusu zaidi wale walio kwenye maeneo rasmi ambayo watu wa takwimu wameweza kuwafikia. Lakini naamini

inawezakana kuna wengi zaidi ya hao ukifuatilia kwenye maeneo yale ambayo maafisa wa Takwimu hawawezi kufika. Kwa mwelekeo huu naamini agizo la ajira 1,000,000 tunaweza kulitekeleza ifikapo 2010. Lakini jambo muhimu ninaloliona mimi ni kwamba hata tutakapofikia ajira 1,000,000 wasiokuwa na ajira bado watakuwa wengi zaidi kuliko hao 1,000,000 tuliowapa ajira.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Upatikanaji wa ajira bado ni tatizo kubwa nyeti. Tukifikia ajira 1,000,000 angalao inatupa msingi mzuri wa kujiwekea malengo makubwa zaidi. Jambo la msingi ni kwamba hatuna budi kutafuta mbinu bora zaidi za kukabiliana na tatizo la ajira nchini. Kwa upande wa Serikali hakuna matumaini makubwa ya upanuzi wa ajira. Katika miaka miwili na nusu Serikali imetoa nafasi za ajira 76,841 kati ya zile 667,726 zilizopatikana. Hii inasisitiza ukweli kwamba ajira nyingi zitatolewa na sekta binafsi ama kwa kupata ajira za ujira au kwa kujajiri mwenyewe. Ndiyo maana nilisema wakati wa kampeni kwamba tutakuwa marafiki na sekta binafsi, tutafanya kila tunachoweza ili sekta binafsi istawi nchini. Na, tumekuwa tunafanya hivyo. Mimi mwenyewe nimekuwa nakutana na viongozi wa sekta binafsi nchini kuzungumzia matatizo yanayowakabili na jinsi ya kuyakwamua. Tumejitahidi kuchukua hatua muafaka na niko tayari kufanya zaidi ya hayo kwa ajili ya kuendeleza sekta binafsi.

UWEKEZAJI UNAKUA

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Tumekuwa tunafanya kazi kubwa ya kuhamasisha na kuhimiza wawekezaji kutoka nje waje kuwekeza nchini. Hii ni kutimiza ahadi tuliyotoa. Mwelekeo si mbaya. Mwaka 2005 thamani ya uwekezaji ilikuwa dola milioni 447.6 mwaka jana tumefikisha 512.5 milioni. Bado kiwango hiki si kikubwa kwa kweli ningetamani uwekezaji uwe mkubwa zaidi ili uchumi ukue kwa kasi zaidi na watu wapate ajira na mapato yao yaongezeke. Hata hivyo, kiasi hicho si haba ukilinganisha na majirani zetu.

Kwa upande wa uwekezaji wa ndani changamoto yetu kubwa ni namna ya kuwasaidia

wazawa wapate uwezo wa kuwekeza. Masuala makubwa ni upatikanaji wa mitaji ya kuanzishia, kuendeshea na kuendeleza shughuli zao. Lingine ni ufahamu wa kanuni za ujasiriamali na kuzizingatia. Jitihada tuliyoianza sasa ya kuongeza mtaji kwenye Benki ya Rasilimali (TIB) ina shabaha ya kutoa jibu kwa tatizo hilo.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Kwa wajasiriamali wadogo ule mpango wa mikopo ya wajasiriamali wadogo wa bilioni moja kila mkoa kwa upande wa bara na milioni 100 kwa mikoa minne ya Zanzibar na milioni 200 kwa mkoa wa Mjini Magharibi nao lengo lake ni hilo hilo. Uwawezeshe wajasiriamali wadogo kupata mitaji ya shughuli za kuwapatia kipato na kupunguza umaskini. Taarifa zinaonyesha kuwa hadi tarehe 30 Juni, kupitia benki za CRDB na NMB bilioni 47.6 zilikuwa zimekopeshwa. Wajasiriamali wadogo 38,542 walikuwa wamenufaika. Yaani wakopaji mmoja mmoja 15,699 na wengine 22,843 wamepata kupitia SACCOS zao. Nimefurahi kusikia urejeshaji wa mikopo unaridhisha kinyume na hofu zilizokuwepo mwanzoni.

Awamu ya pili ya ukopeshaji kupitia asasi ndogo za fedha kama vile Pride, SCULT, SELF, Benki ya Posta na Benki ya Wananchi tayari imekwishaanza. Na fedha zilizobaki yaani shilingi bilioni 10.5 zimeanza kutolewa na watu wameanza kukopeshwa. Katika mikopo kupitia mabanki ya NMB na CRDB watu wa vijijini hawakufikiwa. Matumaini yangu ni kuwa asasi ndogo za fedha zitasaidia kuwafikia watu hao. Katika miaka hii miwili ya kuendesha mpango huu tumejifunza mengi mazuri na kasoro zilizojitokeza. Kwa vyovyote vile ni mpango wenye manufaa ambao hatuna budi tuendeleo nao na tuongeze uwezo kwani wenye mahitaji bado ni wengi. Lakini, lazima tuyajue mafunzo ya miaka miwili ya utekelezaji wa mpango huu kabla ya kuongeza fedha zaidi. Ni makusudio yangu kuunda kikundi kazi cha kufanya tathmini ya mpango huu ili kupendekeza namna bora zaidi ya kuendelea nao.

ELIMU

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Ahadi yetu kwa watanzania kuhusu elimu ilikuwa ni kuipanua na kuiboresha kutoka ngazi ya mwanzo mpaka ile ya juu kabisa yaani Chuo Kikuu. Tumeendelea kuitekeleza vizuri ahadi hii. Madarasa ya awali yamefunguliwa kote nchini, watoto wenye umri wa kwenda shule walioandikishwa wameongezeka kutoka asilimia 95 mwaka 2005 hadi asilimia 97 mwaka huu. Kiwango cha kufaulu darasa la saba kimeongezeka na hivyo kuongeza kundi kubwa la vijana wanaotafuta nafasi ya elimu ya sekondari.

Kwa nia ya kulipatia ufumbuzi tatizo hilo CCM imetuagiza kuwa kila Kata nchini iwe na sekondari yake. Tumeanza utekelezaji wa mradi huo na ninafurahi kusema kwamba kwa sababu ya muitikio mkubwa wa wananchi unakwenda kwa kasi inayotupa moyo. Matokeo yake ni shule za sekondari kuongezeka kutoka 1202 mwaka 2005 na kufikia 3,339 mwaka huu. Ongezeko kubwa linatokana na shule za sekondari za Kata. Idadi ya wanafunzi wanaoingia kidato cha kwanza imeongezeka kutoka 180,239 mwaka 2005 hadi kufikia wanafunzi 448,448 mwaka 2007 na mwaka huu idadi hiyo imefikia wanafunzi 432,000. Idadi imeshuka kwa vile matokeo ya mitihani ya darasa la saba hayakuwa mazuri kama ilivyokuwa mwaka uliopita.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Idadi ya wanafunzi katika shule za sekondari imeongezeka kutoka vijana 524,325 mwaka 2005 na kufikia vijana 1,222,403 mwaka 2008. Mpango wa upanuzi wa elimu ya sekondari umefanikiwa kuliko tulivyotazamia. Inaelekea kulikuwa na kiu kubwa ya elimu hiyo nchini. Baadhi ya kata wananchi wamejenga sekondari zaidi ya moja. Kule Lushoto kata ya Shume ina sekondari saba. Ukuaji huu wa haraka umezua changamoto nyingi hasa kwa upande wa mahitaji muhimu ya walimu, vitabu, vifaa vya maabara, nyumba za walimu na mahitaji mengineyo. Shule nyingi hazina maabara jambo ambalo lazima tulikabili ipasavyo kwa maslahi ya maendeleo ya nchi yetu. Napenda kuwahakikishia

Waheshimiwa Wabunge kuwa tunayatambua matatizo hayo na kila moja tunalitengenezea mkakati wake wa kulikabili. Sina budi kuwashukuru wananchi kwa kuitikia vyema mwito wa kuchangia kwa hali na mali uendeshaji wa elimu ya sekondari nchini. Nawashukuru viongozi wa ngazi zote mikoa, wilaya, tarafa, kata na vijiji kwa uongozi wao mzuri uliotupatia mafanikio haya makubwa ya kujivunia katika kipindi kifupi.

CHUO KIKUU CHA DODOMA

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Nilipozunguza na Wabunge siku ile ya Desemba 30, 2005 tulitaja malengo 10 ya kuendeleza elimu nchini. Lengo la 9 lilikuwa kujenga angalau Chuo Kikuu kingine kipya. Lengo hilo limetimia. Chuo Kikuu cha Dodoma kimeanza. Kilianza na wanafunzi 1200 mwaka jana na mwaka huu kitafikisha wanafunzi 8960. Shabaha yetu ni kukifanya Chuo Kikuu hiki kiwe ndicho kikubwa kuliko vyote nchini iko pale pale. Lengo letu bado ni lile lile la Chuo Kikuu cha Dodoma hatimaye kichukue wanafunzi 40,000. Napenda kutumia nafasi hii kumpongeza kwa dhati kabisa Mkuu wa Chuo hicho cha Dodoma Rais Mstaafu Benjamin William Mkapa. Nampongeza kwa uongozi wake mzuri. Nampongeza pia Mwenyekiti wa Baraza la Chuo Kikuu hicho Dr. Mohamed Ghalib Bilali kwa kazi nzuri waliyoifanya. Kadhalika nampongeza Makamu Mkuu wa Chuo Profesa Idriss Kikula na watendaji wenzake kwa uhodari wao wa kubuni mambo, kutengeneza mipango na kuitekeleza. Wamenishangaza sana!

Nilipofanya uamuzi wa kuwa na Chuo Kikuu cha Dodoma na kuwateua wao kuwa watendaji wakuu hawakufanya ajizi kulifanyia kazi wazo langu na uamuzi wangu. Lazima nikiri, nilipotembelea pale mara ya kwanza mwaka uliopita nilishangazwa sana na mikakati na mipango ya utekelezaji waliyokuwa wanaipanga. Maendeleo yaliyofikiwa tangu wakati ule yanastaajabisha. Hawa ni watu makini, ni watu wazuri, tuwapongeze na kuwaunga mkono. Ninachoomba, Waheshimiwa Wabunge,

mtembelee kule Chimwaga muwashauri na kuwatia moyo.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Yale tunayoyaona yanayoendelea pale ni mipango iliyobuniwa na wao. Kuna Mifuko ya Akiba ya Wafanyakazi minne, inajenga vyuo vya ndani vinne. Wapo watu mashuhuri duniani kama vile Bwana Billgates wa Microsoft ameonyesha nia ya kutusaidia kuwa na Chuo Kikuu cha Afrika cha IT hapo.

HUDUMA ZA AFYA

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Wakati wa kampeni na baada ya uchaguzi katika nyakati mbalimbali nilielezea imani yangu kuwa ili tuyakabili matatizo ya huduma ya afya nchini lazima tuwe na mpango unaofanana na ule wa MEM na MMES. Nilieleza imani kuwa mpango wa chini ya hapo hauwezi kukabili tatizo hili kubwa hapa nchini. Nafurahi kusema kuwa tumeanzisha mwaka huu Mpango wa Maendeleo ya Afya ya Msingi (MMAM) ambao ndiyo MEM na ndiyo MMES ya huduma ya afya. Mpango huu wa miaka kumi unahusu ujenzi na uboreshaji wa zahanati, vituo vya afya na hospitali pamoja na uboreshaji wa upatikanaji wa dawa na wataalamu wa afya nchini. Tukifanikiwa kuutekeleza kama iliyokusudiwa utaongeza uwezo wetu wa kupambana na maradhi mbalimbali yanayosumbua na kuua watu wetu wengi. Tutakuwa tumeimarisha sana afya za Watanzania na hivi kuboresha maisha yao. Kuwa na afya njema ni kuwa na maisha bora.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Changamoto kubwa iliyo mbele yetu ni kuhakikisha kwamba raslimali za kutosha zinapatikana kutekeleza mpango huo. Naahidi kuwa tutaendelea kuiangalia kwa jicho la makini bajeti ya sekta ya afya ili mpango huu utekelezake. Mwaka huu bajeti ya sekta hii ilikuwa ya tatu kwa ukubwa baada ya elimu na miundombinu. Tutaendelea kuipa umuhimu wa juu. Tutaendelea pia kuzungumza na marafiki zetu wa maendeleo ili watuchangie nguvu na wao.

Wapo wengine tumeshawapata tayari na tunaendelea kutafuta wengine. Shirika la Touch Foundation la Marekani kwa mfano, wameonyesha nia ya kutusaidia kufundisha madaktari na wauguzi. Kwa miaka kumi wanafikiria kuchangia dola milioni 100 kwa ajili hiyo. Shirika la Touch Foundation ndiyo wanaosaidia katika kutafuta rasilimali za kujenga Chuo Kikuu cha Tiba Cha Bugando, Mwanza.

MAPAMBANO DHIDI YA UKIMWI

Mheshimiwa Spika;
Tuliahidi kuongeza kasi katika mapambano dhidi ya UKIMWI na fikra zangu zikiwa tufanye juhudi za kupunguza maambukizi mapya. Niliona tufanye mambo mawili. Kwanza, tuendeleo kuhimiza na kuhamasisha wananchi kuepuka kupata maradhi hayo kwani ni kitu kinachowezekana. Pili, tuhamasishe watu wengi wajenge mazoea ya kupima afya zao ili wajue mustakabali wao kwa maradhi hayo. Tukaanzisha kampeni ya kitaifa ya kupima virusi vya UKIMWI kwa hiari Julai 14, 2007. Nafurahi kwamba watu 4,023,100, kupita lengo letu, wamejitokeza kupima na katika hao ni pamoja na mimi na mke wangu Salma. Tumefikia na kuvuka lengo lakini nimeagiza upimaji uendeleo. Hivi sasa sisi tuliopima tunaujua mustakabali wetu dhidi ya maradhi haya hatari. Walio salama wanajijua na wasio salama wanajijua. Pia tumepata ushauri nasaha juu ya namna gani tuishi vizuri. Aliye salama ahakikishe hapati maambukizi na wale ambao bahati mbaya hawako salama waishi kwa matumaini na wajiepushe na kuambukiza wenzao. Kwa upande wa Serikali taarifa za upimaji zinasaidia kujipanga vizuri kimkakati kukabiliana na tishio hili.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Takwimu zinaonyesha kuwa maambukizi nchini ni asilimia 4.8 na jumla ya watu 1.4 milioni ndiyo wameathirika. Hii inatoa sura mpya tofauti na ile ya zamani. Inatupa fursa kwa upande wa Serikali kujiandaa kukabiliana na tatizo la maradhi haya kwa kujiamini zaidi kwani idadi ya waliombukizwa inajulinana kwa uhakika.

Takwimu pia zinaonesha maeneo yanayohitaji mkakati maalum katika mapambano haya. Mkoa wa Iringa wenye asilimia 14 ya maambukizi na mkoa wa Mbeya wenye asilimia 13 ya maambukizi ambayo ndiyo yenye kiwango cha juu kuliko mkoa yote nchini, inahitaji mpango na mkakati maalum wa kukabili tatizo hili.

Hata katika mikoa ile yenye maambukizi ya chini kwa jumla yapo baadhi ya maeneo ambayo maambukizi yako juu sana. Mkoa wa pwani, kwa mfano, una maambukizi ya asilimia 5.3, lakini pale kwetu Chalinze maambukizi ni asilimia 18. Ni juu sana. Je kwa nini? Tufanye nini kupunguza tatizo. Ndiyo maswali ya kujiuliza na kuyapatia majibu.

MAJI

Mheshimiwa Spika;
Tuliwaahidi Watanzania kuwa asilimia 65 ya wakazi wa vijijini na asilimia 90 ya wakazi wa mijini watakuwa wanapata maji salama ifikapo 2010. Kazi ya kutekeleza ahadi hiyo inaendelea. Tulianzisha mpango kabambe kwa ajili hiyo. Mpango huo ujulikanao kama Water Sector Development programme umekadiriwa kuwa utagharimu dola 951 milioni. Utekelezaji wake unaendelea na uko hatua mbalimbali za utekelezaji. Naamini tutafika lengo tulilojiwekea kama rasilimali zinazohitajika zitapatikana. Tunaendelea kuzitafuta rasilimali hizo.
Mheshimiwa Spika;

Niliona ni vyema nieleze kuwa hatimaye mradi mkubwa wa maji kwa kuipatia maji miji ya Kahama na Shinyanga umekamilika. Mradi huu uliogharimu zaidi ya shilingi bilioni 250 umetekelezwa kwa fedha zetu. Ulianza wakati wa Awamu ya Tatu na kumalizwa na Serikali ya Awamu ya Nne. Kukamilika kwa mradi huu kunatufundisha juu ya nini tunachoweza kufanya bora ili makusanyo ya mapato ya serikali yawe mazuri na uamuzi wa makusudi ufanywe. Tumeandika historia mpya. Ni makusudio yangu kuwa tufanye miradi mingine kwa utaratibu huu.

NISHATI

Mheshimiwa Spika,
Miaka miwili hii kwa upande wa nishati imekuwa ni miaka ya mtihani mkubwa. Kwanza mara baada ya kungia madarakani tulianza na tatizo kubwa la upungufu wa umeme. Baadaye likaja tatizo kubwa la kupanda sana kwa bei ya mafuta. Tukachukua hatua kubwa za dharura ili kulikabili tatizo la umeme. Hatua hizo zikatuletea mgogoro mkubwa maarufu kwa sakata la Richmond ambalo tunaendelea kulishughulikia. Waziri Mkuu atafafanua hatua tunazoendelea kuchukua. Namshukuru Mwenyezi Mungu kuwa bado nchi yetu ni moja na inaendelea kuwa tulivu pamoja na yote makubwa yaliyotokea.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Kuna mambo tuliyojifunza nayo kutokana na tatizo hili la umeme. Waingereza wana msemo usemao *There is a Silver lining to every cloud*, kwamba hata wingu likiwa jeusi kiasi gani lakini mle pembeni mna ufito wa fedha. Tatizo la umeme limetufundisha mambo mengi mazuri ya kufanya. Kwanza, tupunguze kutegemea mno umeme wa maji na kwamba tuongeze matumizi ya vyanzo vingine vya nishati. Bahati nzuri tunayo gesi asilia Mkuranga, Kilwa na Mtwara na tunayo makaa ya mawe huko Kiwira, Mchuchuma na kwingineko. Pia tunao upepo mwingi maeneo ya makambako na Singida unaoweza kutumika kuzalisha umeme. Kwa hiyo, tunachukua hatua za dhati kuviendeleza vyanzo hivyo. Kazi hiyo imeanza na ipo katika hatua mbalimbali za michakato ya utekelezaji, sina haja ya kuchukua muda mrefu kuelezea yote hayo.

Pili, katika sakata la Richmond kuna kitu pia tulichojifunza ambacho kinasisitiza haja ya kuitazama upya Sheria ya Manunuzi ya Umma ili kuifanyia marekebisha yapasayo kwa lengo la kuiboresha. Pamoja na kufanya marekebisha yaliyopendekezwa na Kamati Teule ya Bunge lako Tukufu pia ni muhimu tuliangalie suala zima la manunuzi ya dharura, inapotokea dharura kubwa kama ile iliyopita. Naamini taratibu zikiwekwa sawa tutaepuka migogoro ya namna ile siku za usoni. Tusiporekebisha tunaweza kujikuta tuna migogoro ya namna ile tena siku nyingine.

USAMBAZAJI UMEME

Mheshimiwa Spika;
Jambo lingine kuhusu umeme ambalo tulikuwa tunalishughulikia katika kipindi hiki ni kuendelea kusambaza umeme mijini na vijijini ili watu wengi waweze kuupata na kuutumia. Tumeanzisha Wakala wa Umeme Vijijini na tumeongeza fedha kwenye mfuko wa umeme vijijini ili kuwawezesha na kurahisisha kazi ya usambazaji umeme vijijini.

Tunaendelea na kazi ya kuipatia umeme miji ya makao makuu ya wilaya nchini ambayo haina umeme. Kutokana na juhudi hizo wilaya za Ludewa na Serengeti umeme tayari unawaka na wilaya za Mbinga na Simanjiro utawaka wakati wowote kuanzia sasa.

Tumetenga fedha za kuipatia umeme miji ya makao makuu ya Wilaya za Kilindi, Kilolo, Uyui, Bahi, Bukombe, Ngorongoro, Longido, Kasulu na Kibondo. Michakato ya utekelezaji ipo katika hatua mbalimbali. Ahadi ya msaada wa fedha wa kuzipatia umeme Wilaya za Kasulu (Marekani) kupitia mpango wa MCC na Namtumbo (Sweden) ni za uhakika. Serikali ya Marekani itasaidia kujenga kituo cha kuzalisha umeme katika Mto Malagarasi. Umeme huo utasaidia kutatua tatizo la umeme la Kigoma Mjini na mji wa Kasulu. Japo hivi sasa mji wa Kasulu utapatiwa umeme wa jenereta, watakapounganishwa na umeme wa kutoka Malagarasi jenereta hizo zitahamishiwa sehemu nyingine.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Kwa mujibu wa taarifa hii wilaya moja tu nchini yaani Nkasi ndiyo inabaki ambayo kwa sasa haijatengewa fedha za kuipatia umeme. Napenda kuwahakikishia wananchi wa Namanyere Makao Makuu ya Wilaya ya Nkasi kuwa, hawajasahaulika hata kidogo. Mipango inaandaliwa ili na wao wapate umeme kama wengine. Ni imani yangu kwamba ikifika 2010 hakutakuwa na wilaya hata moja ambayo itakuwa haina umeme.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Moja ya agizo la Ilani ni kuunganisha Mikoa ya Kigoma, Kagera, Rukwa na Ruvuma kwenye grid ya Taifa. Serikali ya Sweden imeonyesha nia

ya kutusaidia kwa Ruvuma. Pia wamekubali umeme huo ukitoka Makambako upelekwe Ludewa na ukifika Songea upelekwe Namtumbo na Mbinga. Bado tunahangaika na Mkoa wa Kigoma, Rukwa na Kagera. Tunaendelea kutafuta misaada Inshallah! Mwenyezi Mungu atatujalia nako pia tutafanikiwa!

KUPANDA KWA BEI YA MAFUTA

Mheshimiwa Spika,
Kama nilivyokwisha kueleza, kupanda sana kwa bei za mafuta ya petroli imekuwa ni changamoto kubwa sana kwa Serikali yetu. Katika kipindi hiki bei za mafuta zimeongezeka kwa takriban asilimia mia mbili. Ongezeko hilo kubwa limekuwa kichocheo kikubwa cha kupanda sana kwa gharama ya maisha kwa Watanzania kwani limesababisha kupanda sana kwa bei za vitu na huduma muhimu kwa maisha yao. Hatuna uwezo wala maarifa ya kuzuia bei hizo zisipande.

Katika mazingira ambayo hatuna uwezo mkubwa wa athari bei ya mafuta iwe ile yenye ahueni kwetu nashauri tufanye mambo mawili. La kwanza, narudia ushauri wangu kwa Watanzania wenzangu kwamba tuwe waangalifu katika matumizi ya mafuta. Tuepoke matumizi yasiyokuwa ya lazima. Ni mzigo mkubwa kwa taifa letu kwa upande wa matumizi ya fedha za kigeni. Chochote tutakachokifanya kupunguza uzito wa mzigo huo kitathaminiwa.

Pili, tuitumie fursa hii kuvutia uwekezaji wa makampuni ya kutafuta mafuta nchini. Tanzania ni moja ya nchi ambazo zinaaminika kwamba huenda zina mafuta. Lakini bado hatujafanikiwa kuyapata hapo yalipo. Utafiti unaendelea na leseni 25 zimetolewa kwa ajili hiyo. Tuzidi kumuomba Mungu safari hii sasa tufanikiwe.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Tuitumie fursa hii pia kuwavutia wawekezaji katika uendelezaji wa nishati hai, bio-fuel nchini ili tujipunguzie mzigo wa kuagiza mafuta kutoka nje. Tukizalisha ethanol bio-diesel tutapunguza mzigo wa kuagiza mafuta ya petroli na dizeli kutoka nje si haba. Nafurahi kwamba makampuni kadhaa yamejitokeza kwa ajili hiyo. Tuyapokee na tuyahamasishe yaje kuwekeza. Nawakumbusha

wenzetu Wizara ya Nishati na Madini wakamilishe haraka muongozo wa uwekezaji katika uendelezaji wa nishati hii. Nisingependa kuona kesho na keshokutwa tunalaumiana kuwa hatukufanya vizuri kwa hili na lile.

BARABARA

Mheshimiwa Spika,
Kuimarisha miundombinu ya barabara ni lengo kuu la Ilani ya uchaguzi ya CCM na la Serikali yetu. Nilithibitisha hivyo katika hotuba yangu ya tarehe 30, Desemba hapa Bungeni. Katika mikakati yetu ya utekelezaji tuliamua kwanza, tukamilishe ujenzi wa barabara tulizozikuta zinaendelea kujengwa. Nasikia kuna mjadala hapa Bungeni eti kwamba Serikali ya Awamu ya Nne imejenga barabara gani? Hizo zinazoendelea ndizo tunazojenga. Hivi mlitaka tuziache zile na kuanza zetu? Kufanya hivyo ni kinyume na dhana ya kupokezana kijiti katika uongozi wa taifa. Kupokezana kijiti maana yake unakamilisha kwanza kazi ya wenzako ambayo haijamalizika halafu ndipo unapoanza yako au unaweza kufanya yote kwa pamoja iwapo rasilimali unazo.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Wakati nalihutubia Bunge lako Tukufu kulikuwa na miradi 10 ya barabara iliyokuwa inaendelea kujengwa yenye urefu wa kilomita 1,093. Ujenzi wake ulikuwa umefikia kati ya 10% na 40%. Kati ya barabara hizo kulikuwapo na barabara 6 ambazo zilikuwa zinajengwa kwa fedha zetu wenyewe na ambazo jukumu la kutoa fedha za kuendelea mpaka kumalizika lilikuwa langu mie. Zilikuwepo barabara 5 zilizokuwa zinajengwa kwa fedha za marafiki zetu wa maendeleo ambapo serikali nayo inao wajibu wa kulipia gharama fulani fulani ambayo ni mzigo mdogo. Jukumu la kutafuta hizo fedha likawa langu. Kazi yetu ya kwanza ilikuwa ni kuhakikisha kwamba barabara hizi zinakamilika. Nashukuru na kufurahi kwamba tumetimiza ipasavyo wajibu wetu huo. Barabara 4 zinazojengwa kwa fedha zetu zimekamilika yaani Mingoyo – Mbwemkulu, Mbwemkulu – nangulukulu, Geita – Buzirayombo na Buzirayombo – Kyamiyoka. Barabara ambazo bado hazijakamilika ni Dodoma - Manyoni lakini

tumebakiza kilomita chache, na barabara ya Manyoni – Singida kuanzia Isuna kuja Manyoni. Fedha zake zipo na kazi inaendelea vizuri. Nilipokuwa ziarani Singida nilikwenda kuzindua ujenzi wa barabara ile kwa hiyo nayo tutaikamilisha. Kwa barabara tulizopata msaada wa wafadhili tatu zimekamilika yaani Nzega – Ilula, Tinde – Isaka na Singida – Shelui. Barabara ya Kigoma – Biharamulo bado kwa sababu mkandarasi ametimuliwa na mwingine anatafutwa.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Nafurahi kusema kuwa katika miaka miwili na nusu hii tumeibua miradi mipya mikubwa ya ujenzi wa barabara, ukarabati na upanuzi wa barabara kubwa za lami za urefu wa kilomita 2114. Sina haja ya kuzirudia kuzitaja kwani naamini Waziri wa Miundombinu Dr. Shukuru Kawambwa amezitaja wiki chache zilizopita. Miradi hii iko katika hatua mbalimbali za utekelezaji. Naomba kuitumia nafasi hii niwahakikishie Watanzania wenzangu, kwa mara nyingine tena kwamba ujenzi wa barabara ni jambo tunalolipa umuhimu wa juu sana iwe za kumalizia au zilizoahidiwa kwenye ilani au zitakazojitokeza papo kwa papo.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Ninaposema ujenzi wa Barabara tumeupa kipaumbele cha juu mtajiuliza maana yake nini na malengo yetu ni yepi? Kwanza kabisa tunataka kuwa mikoa yote inaunganishwa na mikoa mingine kwa barabara za lami. Mikoa ambayo tumeelekeza nguvu zetu kwa ajili hiyo ni Kigoma, Tabora, Rukwa, Ruvuma, Lindi na Mtwara. Tuko katika hatua mbalimbali za utekelezaji. Kwa barabara ya kutoka Kigoma hadi Manyoni mpaka sasa tuna uhakika wa kipande cha kutoka Kigoma mpaka kilimita 20 kutoka mto malagarasi kuelekea Urambo. Tumepata fedha za ujenzi wa daraja katika mto Malagarasi na barabara ya urefu wa kilimita 22.5 pande zote mbili tutaijenga kwa fedha zetu na msaada wa Abu Dhabi Fund. Bado tunahangaika kutafuta fedha za kipande cha kutoka darajani mpaka Manyoni. Juhudi zinaendelea tumetega mitego sehemu mbalimbali ni mapema mno kusema chochote. Kwa Kigoma

bado tunahangaika kupata fedha za barabara ya Kigoma – Nyakanazi.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Wamarekeni kupitia mpango wa MCC watatusaidia kujenga barabara ya kutoka Sumbawanga kwenda Tunduma. Bado tunahangaika kutafuta fedha za kutoka Sumbawanga kwenda Kigoma kupitia Mpanda. Tupo katika hatua mbalimbali za kuunganisha mikoa ya Mtwara na Ruvuma. Tumeanza na Wajapani kutoka Masasi kuja Mangaka, muelekeo si mbaya wa kupata fedha za kutoka Mangaka kuelekea Tunduru. Wamarekeni watatusaidia kutoka Namtumbo kwenda mpaka Mbinga. Tunabaki na eneo la katikati pale ambapo napo kuna mahali tumetegesha, kama mtego utanasa mambo yatakuwa safi; tutatoka Mtwara mpaka Songea mpaka Mbinga kwa barabara ya lami. Mazungumzo yanaendelea kuhusu kutoka Mbinga kwenda Mbambabay. Barabara ya kutoka Dar es Salaam kwenda mikoa ya Lindi na Mtwara imebakia sehemu ndogo ya kutoka Somanga kuja Ndundu. Taratibu za fedha na zabuni zimekamilika, inasubiriwa kazi kuanza.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Kwa ajili ya kuhakikisha barabara hizo zinakamilika na nyingine muhimu kwa uchumi wa nchi yetu na kuliunganisha taifa tumeamua kutafuta uwezekano wa fursa yetu ya kukopesheka kupata mikopo kwa ajili ya ujenzi wa barabara hizo. Makusudio yetu ni kukopa kwa utaratibu wa kuuza dhamana ya taifa kwa kiingereza Sovereign bonds. Ni utaratibu wa kawaida. Nimeambiwa hata Waingereza walitumia utaratibu huo mwaka 1956 na fedha walizozipata ndizo walizojengea baadhi ya barabara za lami nchini. Madeni yale tunayalipa sisi baada ya uhuru. Hivi karibuni nchi za Ghana na Guinea walifanya hivyo na wamepata pesa za kujengea miundombinu yao. Mchakato kwa upande wetu unaendelea vizuri. Tutapeana taarifa kadri tutakavyoendelea.

RELI

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Kuhusu usafiri wa reli naomba niseme kuwa mimi na wenzangu Serikalini tunatambua kwamba usafiri huu ni mhimili mkubwa wa uchumi wetu na ni tegemeo kubwa la majirani zetu na wananchi wengi wa Tanzania. Ni ukweli ulio wazi kuwa hali ya usafiri wa reli nchini siyo nzuri kwa sababu ya Shirika la Reli la Tanzania kuwa katika hali mbaya kwa miaka kadhaa. Hali ilizidi kudidimia mwaka hadi mwaka na kulazimisha Serikali ya Awamu ya Tatu kuanza mchakato wa kutafuta menejimenti mpya kwa masharti ya kuingia mkataba wa kuendesha reli kwa miaka 25. Sisi tulipoingia madarakani tulimalizia hatua zilizobakia na kukabidhi reli kwa mwendesha mpya ambaye ni kampuni ya RITES ya India.

Tunatambua jitihada inayofanywa na menejimenti mpya katika kuiboresha huduma hiyo. Natambua pia kuwa bado kuna hali ya kutoridhika na huduma inayotolewa na Shirika la Reli. Naomba tuwe na subira kazi ya kulitoa Shirika la Reli kule lilikokuwa mpaka mambo yatengemae siyo rahisi. Napenda kuwahakikishia kuwa sisi tupo na tunafuatilia kwa karibu. Hatutasita kuchukua hatua muafaka pale itakapostahili kufanya hivyo.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Kwa upande wa Reli ya TAZARA, hali nayo si ya kuridhisha na ipo haja ya kuchukua hatua thabiti kulinusuru Shirika hilo. Tunaendelea kushirikiana na mbia mwenzetu, Serikali ya Zambia, kuhusu hatua muafaka za kuchukua.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Napenda kutumia nafasi hii kueleza kuwa kwa nia ya kurahisisha shughuli za uchukuzi na usafirishaji wa mizigo itokayo na iendayo Rwanda, Burundi na Jamhuri ya Kidemokrasia ya Kongo, mimi na viongozi wenzangu wa nchi hizo tumekubaliana kuziunganisha nchi hizo na Reli yetu ya Kati. Matayarisho ya hatua ya mwanzo ya ujenzi wa reli kati ya Isaka na Kigali yameanza na yanaenda vizuri. Kazi ya upembuzi yakinifu inaendelea kwa msaada wa Benki ya Maendeleo

ya Afrika. Baada ya kukamilika hatua hiyo ndipo tutakapoingia hatua ya kutafuta fedha za ujenzi wa reli. Mwelekeo ni mzuri kwani mradi huu unaungwa mkono na marafiki zetu wengi wa maendeleo.

MAMBO YA NJE NA MAHUSINANO YA KIMATAIFA

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Kwa upande wa uhusiano na ushirikiano wa kimataifa katika kipindi cha miaka miwili hii kumekuwa na mafanikio makubwa. Diplomasiya ya Tanzania imechanua. Nyota ya Tanzania imeng'ara sana katika medani ya kimataifa. Tumefikia mahali pazuri, sasa tunasikilizwa, tunaheshimiwa, tunathaminiwa na kuaminiwa katika majukwaa ya Kimataifa.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Uteuzi wa Mheshimiwa Dr. Asha-Rose Migiro kushika nafasi ya juu sana duniani ni ushahidi tosha. Maana katika civil service ya Kimataifa wa kwanza ni Katibu Mkuu wa Umoja wa Mataifa na wa pili ni Naibu Katibu Mkuu. Ni mafanikio makubwa sana kwa diplomasiya ya Tanzania kwani mwenendo wa Jumuiya ya Kimataifa unaonyesha kuwa mtu hapatii nafasi kubwa kama ile kama nchi yake haithaminiwi, kama Serikali yako haikubaliki kwenye Jumuiya ya Kimataifa. Dkt. Asha Rose Migiro amepata kwa sababu Tanzania inaaminika na Serikali yetu kimataifa inakubalika.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Kufanikiwa kwa diplomasiya yetu kunajidhihirisha pia kwa kuwa hakuna mji mkubwa ambao hatujafika. Mialiko hiyo ni ishara ya kukubalika kwetu. Tumekuwa tunashirikishwa katika mambo mengi duniani tena tunashirikishwa kwa heshima kubwa. Kila tuliposhirikishwa tulipewa dhamana kubwa ya uongozi wa vikao muhimu au kuwa wajumbe wa Kamisheni ya masuala mazito kimataifa. Hii ni dalili ya mafanikio makubwa. Tumetembelewa na viongozi wengi mashuhuri katika kipindi hiki: Waziri Mkuu wa Norway, Waziri Mkuu wa Canada na Mawaziri wengi na mwisho kabisa

ziara ya kihistoria ya Rais George W. Bush.

Tumefanikiwa sana na manufaa yake tunayaona. Misaada ya maendeleo imeongezeka, tumepata misamaha ya madeni hata kwa wale ambao hawafanyi hivyo, watalii wameongezeka, wawekezaji kutoka nje wameongezeka na fursa ya masoko kwa bidhaa zetu zimeongezeka. Kilichobakia sasa ni sisi kuchangamka ili tuzitumie fursa hizo. Tusipofanya hivyo tujilaumu wenyewe. Lazima tuchangamke kwani hali nzuri ya namna hii haidumu milele.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Mimi na wenzangu Serikalini tutajitahidi kushika uzi huo huo katika kipindi kilichobakia. Tutaendelea kutafuta marafiki wapya na kuwashikilia tulio nao. Tutaendelea kushiriki kwa ukamilifu katika masuala yahasuyo eneo letu la Afrika Mashariki, Nchi za Maziwa Makuu, SADC na Umoja wa Afrika. Tutaendelea kuwa mwanachama mwema wa Umoja wa Mataifa na jumuiya ya kimataifa. Tumefika pazuri, tuna jina zuri, tuna sauti kubwa kuliko nguvu yetu ya kiuchumi na ya kijeshi. Kwa Kiingereza tunaweza kusema “we are punching above our weight”. Wito wangu ni kwamba tusiharibu sifa hii na tuendeleo kuidumisha.

SAKATA LA EPA

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Sasa na tuzungumzie sakata la EPA. Naomba nianze na historia ya jambo lenyewe. Wakati wa matatizo makubwa ya uchumi na hasa upungufu mkubwa wa fedha za kigeni katika miaka ya 1970 na 1980 nchi yetu ilikuwa na tatizo kubwa sana la kuwalipa watu na makampuni ya nje yaliyotoa huduma na kuuza bidhaa hapa nchini. Waagizaji wa bidhaa kutoka nje walilipa kupitia Benki fedha za Tanzania za thamani ya fedha za kigeni za kulipwa makampuni ya nje yaliyoleta bidhaa hizo. Lakini malipo kwa makampuni hayo ya nje yalichelewa kwa sababu ya uhaba wa fedha za kigeni. Malipo yalifanywa pale fedha za kigeni zilipopatikana.

Matokeo ya hali hiyo ni kuwepo kwa malimbikizo makubwa ya madeni hayo. Akaunti maalum ya kushughulikia malipo hayo ilifunguliwa katika Benki ya Taifa ya Biashara. Baadae Julai,

1985 akaunti hiyo ikahamishiwa Benki Kuu na kuwepo huko mpaka sasa. Akaunti hiyo ilijulikana kwa jina la External Payment Arreas Account au EPA kwa kifupi.

Hadi mwaka 1999, malimbikizo ya madeni katika akaunti hii yalifikia dola milioni 623. Baadaye yakaongezeka na kufikia dola milioni 677. Mwaka 2004 baada ya uhakiki mpya na baada ya baadhi ya madeni kuingizwa kwenye michakato mbalimbali ya misamaha ya madeni, ikaonekana kuwa deni lililobaki ni dola milioni 233.

Kwa kuwa shughuli za akaunti hiyo si shughuli za msingi za Benki Kuu akaunti hiyo haikuwa inakaguliwa. Kitendo hicho ndicho kilitoa fursa kwa watu wasiokuwa waaminifu kuzitumia visivyo fedha zilizokuwepo.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Katika ukaguzi wa Hesabu za Benki Kuu ya Tanzania kwa mwaka wa fedha wa 2005/2006 uliofanywa Agosti, 2006, Mkaguzi wa Kampuni ya Deloitte and Touche, aliamua kufanya ukaguzi wa Akaunti ya Bakaa ya Malipo ya Nje, yaani External Payment Arreas Account (EPA). Hususan alitaka kukagua malipo ya thamani moja tu ya akaunti hiyo kwa kutonywa na mtu. Kukatokea kutokuelewana kati ya Benki Kuu na Mkaguzi huyo kuhusu jambo hilo na kupelekea mkaguzi kuondolewa Benki Kuu.

Taarifa za kitendo hicho zilifikia Waziri wa Fedha, Mheshimiwa Zakia Meghji wakati ule. Baada ya Waziri Meghji kupata ukweli ambao ulikuwa tofauti na taarifa aliyopewa awali na Gavana wa Benki Kuu, aliamua na kumtaka Gavana wa Benki amuache Mkaguzi aendelee na ukaguzi. Bahati mbaya wakati huo Mkaguzi alishaondoka. Tuliposhauriana kiserikali tulikubaliana kuwa Waziri wa Fedha amtake Mdhibiti na Mkaguzi Mkuu wa Hesabu za Serikali yaani CAG ambaye kwa mujibu wa Sheria mpya ya Benki Kuu ndiye Mkaguzi rasmi wa mahesabu ya Benki Kuu ahakikishe kuwa ukaguzi unafanywa.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Waziri aliagiza pia kwamba ili kuondoa hofu ya kuficha ukweli CAG atafute Mkaguzi

wa nje kufanya huo ukaguzi badala yake. CAG akatangaza zabuni ya kimataifa ili kuipata kampuni ya kimataifa ya ukaguzi ifanye ukaguzi wa kina kwenye Akaunti hiyo. Zabuni zikatangazwa na ndipo Mei, 2007 ikateuliwa kampuni ya Ernst and Young. Kampuni hiyo ilifanya kazi yake kati ya Septemba, 2007 na Desemba, 2007. Tarehe 7 Januari, 2008 CAG akanikabidhi taarifa ya ukaguzi huo.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Taarifa hiyo ilithibitisha kuwepo kasoro kwenye akaunti hiyo na kwamba makampuni 22 yaliohusika badala ya moja alilolibaini Mkaguzi wa kutoka Deloitte and Touche. Taarifa ilionyesha kwamba, katika mwaka 2005/2006 yalifanywa malipo ya jumla ya shilingi 133,015,186,220.74 kwa hayo Makampuni 22 ya hapa nchini. Kati ya fedha hizo, kiasi cha shilingi 90,359,078,804.00 zililipwa kwa makampuni kumi na tatu (13) ambayo yalitumia kumbukumbu, nyaraka na hati ambazo Mkaguzi alizishuku kuwa ni batili na za kughushi. Kuhusu makampuni tisa (9) ambayo yalilipwa jumla ya shilingi 42,656,107,417.00, Mkaguzi hakuweza kupata nyaraka husika za malipo hayo, hivyo alishindwa kuthibitisha ukweli kama malipo hayo yalikuwa halali au hayakuwa halali.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Mkaguzi alipendekeza hatua 17 zichukuliwe kuhusu tuhuma hizo. Miongoni mwa hatua hizo, ni hizi zifuatazo:

- Serikali ifanye uchunguzi rasmi wa kisheria dhidi ya yale makampuni 13 yaliyolipwa shilingi 90,359,078,804.13, uchunguzi huo pia uwahusu wakurugenzi wa kampuni hizo na maofisa wa Benki Kuu waliohusika na malipo na hatua zipasazo za kisheria zichukuliwe;
- Serikali ichukue hatua za kisheria, mapema iwezekanavyo, kuyabana yale makampuni 13 kurejesha hizo pesa, shilingi 90,359,078,804.13 walizopata isivyo halali. Wakati hayo yakifanyika, akaunti za benki,

mali zao, pamoja na pasi zao za kusafiria zikamatwe mpaka mwisho wa zoezi hilo na uchunguzi;

- Hatua za kinidhamu zichukuliwe kwa mujibu wa taratibu za ajira dhidi ya maofisa wa Benki waliohusika na kuwezesha pesa hizo kulipwa isivyo halali. Miongoni mwa waliopendekezwa kuchukuliwa hatua ni Gavana wa Benki Kuu;
- Serikali ichukue hatua za kujenga utawala bora Benki Kuu kwa kutenganisha nafasi ya Mwenyekiti wa Bodi na Mtendaji Mkuu na ile ya Kamati ya Ukaguzi. Aidha Bodi ya Benki Kuu iunde Kamati Ndogo ya Ukaguzi ambayo Gavana hatakuwa Mwenyekiti wake.
- Uchunguzi zaidi ufanywe kwa yale malipo ya shilingi 42,656,107,416.61 ambazo Mkaguzi hakuweza kuthibitisha uhalali wake. Alipendekeza kwamba katika uchunguzi huo mawasiliano yafanywe na hayo makampuni ya nje ambayo inadaiwa yametoa idhini fedha hizo zichukuliwe na hayo makampuni 9 ya hapa nchini kwa niaba yao.
- Pawepo na maelewano kati ya Wizara ya Fedha na Benki Kuu kuhusu uendeshaji wa akaunti ya EPA ili usimamizi wa Wizara ya Fedha uwepo. Mkaguzi aligundua upungufu huo katika utaratibu uliopo na kuifanya Benki Kuu peke yao kuamua watakayo.

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Baada ya kuisoma taarifa hiyo, nikaamua kama ifuatavyo:

- Nikaunda Kamati iliyojumuisha Mwanasheria Mkuu wa Serikali, Inspekta Jenerali wa Polisi na Mkurugenzi Mkuu wa TAKUKURU kuchunguza na kuchukua hatua zipasazo za kisheria dhidi ya yale makampuni 13 yaliyolipwa shilingi 90,359,078,804.13 ikiwa ni pamoja na kuwabana wahusika walipe. Niliwapa miezi sita kufanya kazi hiyo;
- Nilimvua madaraka aliyekuwa Gavana wa Benki Kuu, hayati Daudi Balali;
- Niliagiza Bodi ya Benki Kuu ichukue hatua

za kinidhamu kwa Maofisa wote wa Benki Kuu waliotuhumiwa na Mkaguzi ambao wako chini ya Mamlaka ya Bodi.

- Nilimuagiza Waziri wa Fedha avunje Bodi ya Benki Kuu na kuiunda upya.
- Niliagiza Gavana asiwe Mwenyekiti wa Kamati ya Ukaguzi;
- Akaunti ya EPA ifungwe, shughuli za malipo zisimame na isifunguliwe mpaka kwa idhini yangu;
- Kwa vile usimamizi wa Akaunti ya EPA siyo shughuli ya msingi ya Benki Kuu ni vyema Benki Kuu ikaacha kujihusisha nayo.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Nafurahi kuliarifu Bunge lako tukufu kuwa takriban mambo yote niliyoyaagiza yametekelezwa.

- Bodi ilivunjwa na wajumbe wapya kuteuliwa. Naelewa hoja ya Wajumbe wanaoingia kwa nyadhifa zao kuendelea kuwa Wajumbe hata pale Bodi inapovunjwa kwa kupungukiwa sifa. Tunalitafakari.
- Gavana siyo tena Mwenyekiti wa Kamati ya Ukaguzi na Bodi imeunda Kamati huru ya Ukaguzi inayowajibika moja kwa moja kwa Bodi;
- Akaunti ya EPA imefungwa na sasa nataka shughuli zake ziondolewe kabisa kutoka Benki Kuu. Tuache Benki Kuu ifanye kazi zake za msingi. Pesa za EPA zichukuliwe na Serikali na Serikali itenge pesa kwenye Bajeti yake ya kila mwaka ya kujiandaa kulipa madeni hayo iwapo wenyewe halali wa pesa hizo watajitokeza kudai. Hii itaondoa mzizi wa fitina.
- Bodi ya Benki Kuu imeanza kuchukua hatua za kinidhamu kwa maafisa waliohusika walioko kwenye mamlaka yake.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Kuhusu kazi ya Kamati ya Mwanasheria Mkuu wa Serikali, Inspekta Jenerali wa Polisi na Mkurugenzi Mkuu wa TAKUKURU, napenda kuliarifu Bunge lako Tukufu kuwa wamekamilisha kazi na juzi tarehe 18 Agosti, 2008 walinikabidhi taarifa yao. Nimeisoma na nitaendelea kuisoma

na kuitafakari zaidi. Kwa muhtasari yafuatayo ndiyo mambo ya msingi:

- Kamati imefanya uchunguzi wa tuhuma dhidi ya makampuni yote 22. Kwa makampuni 13 yaliyochukua shilingi 90,359,078,804, uchunguzi wake ulikamilika. Kwa makampuni 9 yaliyochukua shilingi 42,656,107,417, uchunguzi wa ndani umekamilika lakini bado ule wa nje ambao haujakamilika. Polisi wametumia Interpol na utaratibu wa kusaidiana nchi na nchi kwa masuala ya uhalifu kuomba msaada wa wenzao kufanya uchunguzi na kuwatumia taarifa za matokeo yake. Bado wanasubiri.
- Kwa sababu hiyo, Kamati imeomba kibali cha kuendelea na suala la haya makampuni 9 mpaka watakapopata majibu kutoka kwa Interpol na nchi walizozomba kuwasaidia. Ombi hilo nimelikubali kwani tunapenda ukweli ujulikane, hatua zipasazo zichukuliwe na watuhumiwa watendewe haki.
- Kuhusu yale makampuni yaliyochukua shilingi 90,359,078,804, taarifa inasema waliyabana makampuni hayo kulipa kama alivyoshauri Mkaguzi, ingawaje walitumia mbinu tofauti. Aidha, wamekamata mali zao na akaunti zao pamoja na pasi zao za kusafiria. Hadi tarehe 18 Agosti, 2008, shilingi 53,738,835,392/= zilikuwa zimerejeshwa. Nilipowauliza fedha hizo ziko wapi wakanijibu zimehifadhiwa kwenye akaunti maalum Hazina. Nilipowauliza kwa nini hawakuziingiza katika Mfuko Mkuu wa Serikali walisema ni kwa sababu si mali ya Serikali. Fedha hizo ni mali ya makampuni ya nje ambazo bahati mbaya hazikuweza kupelekwa kwao na kuishia kutumiwa kijanja na wajanja.
- Kamati imeleza kuwa ulipaji unaendelea na hawakuusimamisha. Hivyo, kwa mikataba waliowekeana na baadhi ya wadaiwa ifikapo Oktoba 31, 2008, jumla ya shilingi 64,844,770,688/= zitakuwa zimerejeshwa. Kiasi hicho kitakuwa sawa na asilimia 73 ya fedha zote zilizothibitika kulipwa isivyo halali.

Kamati imeomba idhini kuwa madeni hayo yaendeleo kulipwa mpaka tarehe hiyo. Nimekubali maombi hayo na kutaka waendeleo kuwadai.

- Kamati inapendekeza kuwa ifikapo tarehe 31 Oktoba, 2008, wale ambao watakuwa hawakumaliza kulipa, wafikishwe Mahakamani na kuomba Mahakama isaidie kuwalazimisha kulipa na wasipofanya hivyo hatua zaidi zichukuliwe dhidi yao. Nimekubali pendekezo hilo na nimewaagiza kuwa kuanzia tarehe 1 Novemba, 2008 wale watu waliokaidi kulipa wakamatwe na kufikishwa mahakamani.

FEDHA ZA EPA ZICHUKULIWE NA SERIKALI

Mheshimiwa Spika;
 Nilisema pale awali kuwa shughuli za EPA ziondolewe Benki Kuu ili Benki Kuu ibaki na shughuli zake za msingi. Nimesema shughuli hizo zihamishiwe Hazina ikiwa ni pamoja na kumbukumbu za madeni na fedha zenyewe. Fedha ziingizwe katika Mfuko Mkuu wa Serikali na ziendeleo kutumika kwa shughuli za Serikali. Serikali itenge kwenye bajeti yake fedha za kuwalipa wadai halali iwapo watatokea. Aidha, nataka fedha hizo zinapoingizwa kwenye Mfuko Mkuu wa Serikali zitumike kwa ajili ya kuongeza fedha za ruzuku ya mbolea kwa wakulima na madawa ya mifugo. Nyingine zipelekwe Benki ya Rasilimali (TIB) kuongeza fedha kwa ajili ya mikopo ya kilimo. Kama nilivyokwishasema awali, fedha za mikopo ya kilimo hapo TIB zitakuwa ndiyo mbegu ya kuanzishia Benki ya Kilimo siku za usoni. Nyongeza kutoka fedha za EPA itasaidia kukuza fungu hilo.

MASLAHI YA WAFANYAKAZI

Mheshimiwa Spika,
 Kabla ya kuhitimisha nataka nizungumzie jambo la maslahi ya wafanyakazi na michezo.

Kuhusu maslahi ya wafanyakazi niliahidi wakati wa hotuba yangu ya kufungua Bunge

Desemba 30, 2005 kwamba tutachukua hatua za kuboresha mishahara na maslahi yao kwa ujumla. Tuliunda Tume maalum kwa ajili hiyo, imetupa mapendekezo mengi ambayo tutaendelea kuyafanyia kazi na kuyatekeleza kadri ya uwezo wa fedha utakavyoturuhusu. Kuchukua hatua za kuangalia na kuboresha maslahi na mishahara ya wafanyakazi. Kwa upande wa maslahi tumeshughulikia suala zima la Wafanyakazi kupandishwa madaraja na kurekebishiwa mishahara yao. Mambo yamerekebishiwa na kama bado wapo wenye matatizo si wengi ukilinganisha na hali ilivyokuwa.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Wakati tunaingia madarakani mishahara wa mfanyakazi kima cha chini kilikuwa shilingi 45,000/=. Mwezi Januari, 2006, tukaongeza tukafikisha shilingi 65,000/=. mwezi Juni, 2006, tukaongeza tena kikawa shilingi 75,000/=. na mwaka jana tukaongeza ikawa shilingi 80,000/=. Kima cha chini tukakiongeza toka shilingi 80,000/= mwaka huu na kufika kwenye 100,000/=. Katika miaka hii miwili tumepandisha kima cha chini kwa asilimia 110 kutoka shilingi 45,000/= hadi shilingi 100,000/=. Hatua tulizochukua mpaka sasa ni ushahidi wa kutosha kuwa sisi ni watu tunaosikia na tunajali. Natambua kuwa kiasi hicho cha mishahara hakitoshi katika hali ya sasa. Natambua haja ya kuboresha zaidi. Bado ahadi yangu ipo pale pale kuwa tutaendelea kuongeza mishahara ya wafanyakazi kadri uwezo wa bajeti utakavyoruhusu.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Baadae kukajitokeza malalamiko ya wafanyakazi hususan walimu kuwa na madai ya miaka kadhaa ya malimbikizo makubwa ya malipo ya uhamisho, likizo na mengineyo. Tukaambiwa wafanyakazi wanatishia kugoma madai yao yasipolipwa. Tukaagiza uhakiki ufanyike, nyaraka husika zihakikiwe na malipo yafanyike kwa madai yanayostahili. Uhakiki ulifanyika na malipo yakafanywa. Tena tuliagiza Wakuu wa Mikoa wahakikishe wanasimamia kwa karibu zoezi hilo kuhakikisha malipo yanafanywa ipasavyo.

Hivi karibuni nikapata taarifa kuwa viongozi

wa Chama cha Walimu wanakutana na wanachama wao kuwashawishi wakubali kugoma kwa sababu madai yao ya malimbikizo ya likizo, uhamisho na mengineyo hayajalipwa. Nikashangaa sana. Nikawauliza wahusika wakasema na wao wanashangaa kwani madai ya mwanzo walishawalipa wote waliostahili. Madai haya mapya hawayajui labda yanawahusu wale ambao hawakulipwa kama walivyodai kwa sababu madai ya kila mtu yalipohakikiwa kwa vielelezo walivyotoa wenyewe yapo madai yaliyoonekana hayastahili. Yapo baadhi yalikataliwa kwa kuonekana ni ya kugushi.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Napenda kuitumia nafasi hii kuwaambia walimu na wafanyakazi wengine wa umma kuwa Serikali iko tayari na ni wajibu wake kumlipa mtumishi wa umma madai yake. Kile kitendo cha kulipa shilingi bilioni 4.363 za madai yao mbalimbali ikiwa ni pamoja na mishahara, uhamisho, matibubu na posho za walimu wapya, mpaka mwezi Agosti, 2008 ni udhibitisho wa utayari wetu kutimiza wajibu wetu huo. Kwa ajili hiyo sioni haja ya vitisho vya kugoma kwani Serikali haijakataa kuwalipa wale wanaodai. Je, walimwambia nani Serikalini aliyekataa kuwalipa ndipo wafanye uamuzi wa kuitisha mgomo? Kama ni madai ya mapunjo katika malipo ya madai yaliyopita, ninachosema wale wenye madai wajitokeze kwa mamlaka zilizowalipa kuwasilisha madai yao. Ninachowaahidi madai ya kila mmoja yatachambuliwa na ukweli kujulikana. Nawahakikishia kuwa yeyote mwenye madai ya haki atalipwa. Hatutamdhulumu mtu yeyote mwenye madai halali. Naomba pia muelewe kuwa hatuko tayari kumlipa mtu kile asichostahili. Wenye madai wajitokeza tutayashughulikia ipasavyo. Kuitisha mgomo wa walimu wote katika mazingira haya haistahili. Si matumizi mazuri ya haki hii ya msingi ya wafanyakazi. Kumkusanya kila mtu hata yule asiyekuwa na madai siyo sawa.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Nimeambiwa tena hivi majuzi tu kwamba wafanyakazi wa umma wanatishia kugoma kwa

sababu ya marekebisho ya mishahara mipya hayajafanyika na malimbikizo ya mishahara mipya hawajalipwa. Napenda kusema malalamiko yao ni halali kama kweli mishahara mipya haikulipwa Julai, kama tulivyoahidi. Serikali inawajibu wa kutoa maelezo ya kuchelewa kulipa. Nilipolifuatilia suala hilo Hazina, nimeelezwa kuwa marekebisho ya mishahara yamefanyika kuanzia Julai ila malimbikizo ya mishahara yatalipwa mwezi Agosti. Wanafanya uhakiki na kukusanya mapato kwani inachukua muda kupata mapato mapya. Hayapatikani Julai mosi baada ya bajeti kutangazwa. Katika hali hiyo, kama mwezi Agosti umepita na malimbikizo ya mishahara hawakulipwa ndipo mchakato wa mgomo uanze. Lakini tunaambiwa imetangazwa Jumatatu wafanyakazi wa Serikali watagoma. Kufanya hivyo siyo sawa hata kidogo.

Migomo ina taratibu zake. Haki ya kugoma ni haki ya mfanyakazi, lakini imewekewa taratibu zake za kuitumia.

Wafanyakazi hawawezi kuamua kugoma na wakafanya hivyo siku hiyo hiyo. Ni kinyume cha sheria na taratibu za migomo. Chama cha Wafanyakazi kinatakiwa kupata ridhaa ya wanachama kugoma. Aghalabu ridhaa hiyo hupatikana kwa wanachama kupiga kura. Baada ya hapo ndiyo nia ya kugoma hutangazwa na muajiri kupewa siku 60 kushughulikia matatizo ya wafanyakazi. Kama siku hizo zitapita na maelewano hayakupatikana ndipo mgomo huitishwa. Lakini serikali inapoambiwa leo kuwa mgomo upo Jumatatu siyo sawa. Siyo halali hatuwezi kuukubali. Naomba wenzangu tufanye mambo yetu kwa kufuata taratibu na sheria. Hatumnyang'anyi mfanyakazi haki yake ya kugoma hata kidogo, lakini aitumie haki hiyo kwa misingi ya sheria na taratibu zilizowekwa.

MICHEZO

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Nimalizie kwa soka. Wakati nazungumza na Bunge nilielezea dhamira yangu ya kuendeleza michezo na niliwaambia wapenzi wa mpira wa miguu, mimi niko tayari kumlipia mwalimu na ninyi mnaohusika huko msimamie utawala na

mambo mengine. Nimetimiza ahadi yangu na mambo yanakwenda vizuri. Tumepata mwalimu mzuri tu Marcio Maximo na soko la Tanzania sasa linaendelea kupanda. Tanzania sasa siyo kichwa cha mwenda wazimu tena, bali Tanzania sasa inaelekea kuwa kinyozi. Tunaanza kutambulika na baada ya muda si mrefu tutaheshimika katika soka la Afrika.

Nina mambo mawili ya kusema. Kwanza, kwamba mchango niliyotoa kwa TFF si wa milele. Wanapaswa kuanza kujijengea uwezo wao wenyewe wa kuajiri mwalimu wa mpira siku za usoni. Haiwezi kuwa kazi ya Serikali ni kazi yao. Tuko kwenye mazingira maalum na tunataka kutoka hapa tulipo ndiyo maana nimefanya vile. Hivyo, basi wenzetu wa TFF kwa fedha wazipatazo kwa vyanzo mbalimbali waanze kutenga fungu la kuwaajiri makocha. Wasile zote. TFF watambue kuwa wao ni chama cha hiari, wasipojenga uwezo wao kwa walimu vishawishi vya sisi kuwaingilia kwa mambo yao vitakuwepo. Watakosa ule uhuru wao.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Jambo la pili ni kwamba sasa kwenye mpira wa miguu tumeweka mambo vizuri, tunataka twende kwenye michezo mingine. Nataka twende kwenye riadha. Nitakaa na viongozi wa Wizara mkimaliza Bunge na viongozi wa riadha na wenzao tuone tufanye nini kwenye mchezo huo nao. Mimi nawaahidi kuleta mwalimu au hata walimu wa riadha. Tukimaliza riadha na mambo tukiyaweka sawa tutakwenda kwenye michezo mingine.

HITIMISHO

Mheshimiwa Spika,

Nimesema sana na wala sikutegemea kusema kwa kiasi hiki. nimekuja tu kuwapeni taarifa ya kule tulikotoka, tulipo sasa na mbele tuendako. Nimechukua muda mrefu kwa sababu nina tabia ya kusema polepole. Kwa wale wanaosema haraka angetumia nusu ya muda wangu. Naomba nimalize kwa kuwashukuru tena wewe Mheshimiwa Spika, Waheshimiwa Wabunge, Watanzania wenzangu wote kwa ushirikiano wenu na msaada wenu. Watanzania nawashukuru kwa uelewa wao na

kwa kutuamini na kutuunga mkono. Mambo hayo yamekuwa faraja kubwa kwetu na kutufanya tusife moyo.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Katika shughuli hizi kuna vipindi vigumu mnavyopita na vingine huwa vigumu sana. Lakini nilikuwa nawaambia wenzangu katika kipindi kigumu ni vizuri kutulia. Kipindi kigumu ukihamanika kiongozi utavuruga kila kitu. Lakini kinachotupa moyo ni kuendelea kuungwa mkono na wananchi. Nawasihi muendele kutuamini, muendele kutuunga mkono ili tupate nguvu, ari na kasi zaidi ya kuwatumikia.

Tumekabiliiana na changamoto nyingi katika nusu ya kwanza ya uongozi wetu na bado tutakabiliiana na changamoto nyingi nyingine na pengine ngumu zaidi katika nusu iliyobaki. Ushirikiano wenu na msaada wenu bado unahitajika sana.

Nawasihi viongozi wenzangu wa siasa tusaidiane. Tunajenga nyumba moja tusigombee fito. Tushirikiane ili tuwashirikishe Watanzania katika maendeleo ya Taifa lao. Tusivutane bila sababu, bali tuvute pamoja upande mmoja tena kwa nguvu moja.

Mheshimiwa Spika;

Kupitia Bunge lako tukufu, nawaahidi Watanzania kuendelea kuchapa kazi kadri ya uwezo wangu wote na kadri nitakavyojaaliwa na Mwenyezi Mungu ili kulipa deni la heshima kubwa waliyonipa la kuwatumikia kwa nafasi hii ya juu kabisa katika nchi yetu. Mimi natambua kuwa tumepata mafanikio mengi ya kutia moyo kwenye maeneo mengi lakini la uchumi bado kuna kazi kubwa zaidi ya kufanya. Ni makusudio yangu sasa kuelekeza nguvu zangu na zetu kwenye masuala ya uchumi ili tuinue hali yetu ya maisha na kuifanya kuwa bora zaidi.

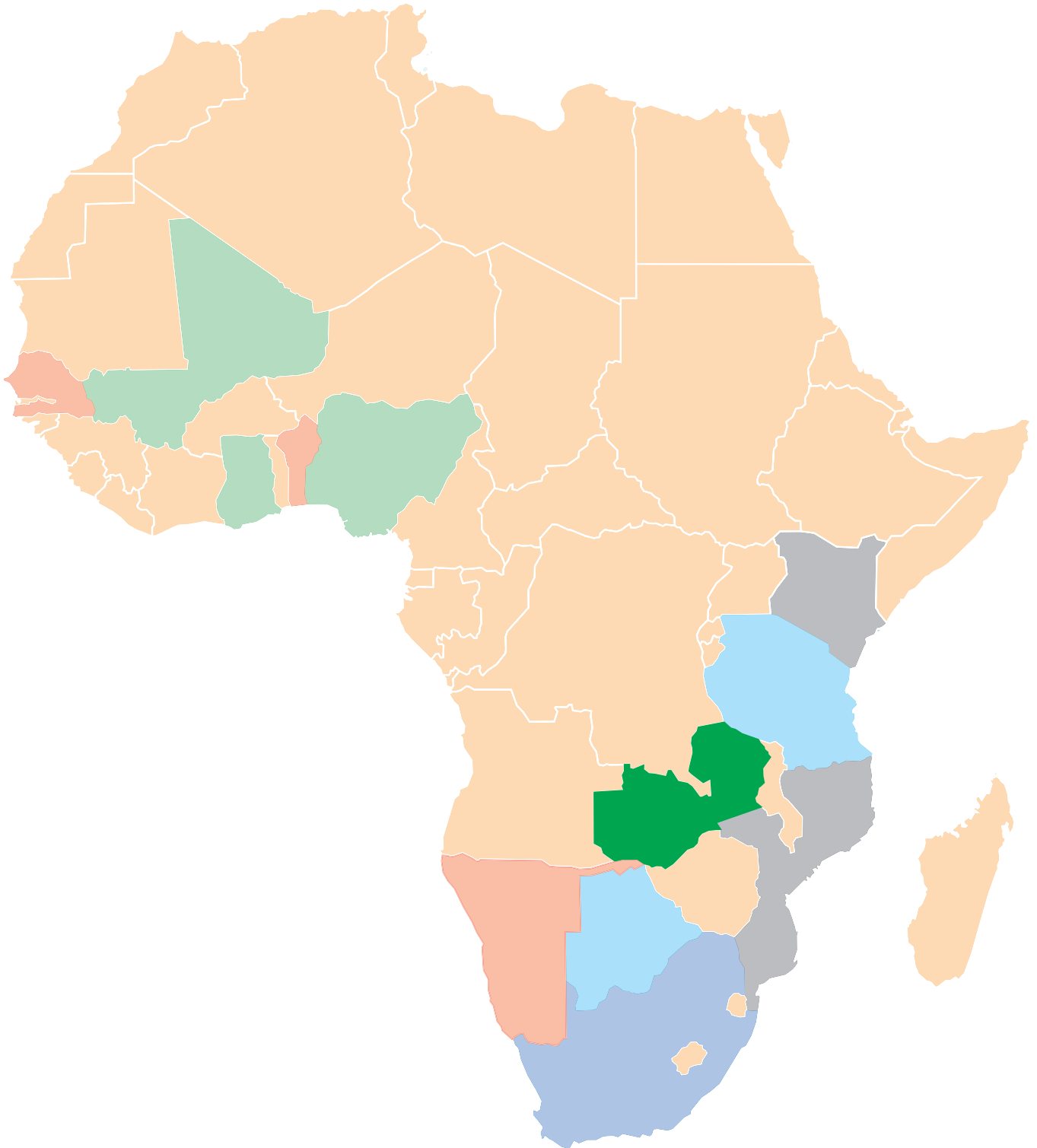
Nia tunayo, sababu tunayo na uwezo tunao. Inawezekana, kila mmoja wetu hana budi atimize wajibu wake.

Mungu Ibariki Afrika

Mungu Ibariki Tanzania

Asanteni sana!

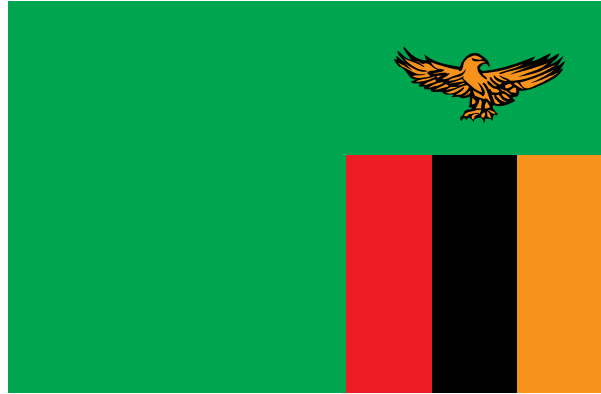
ZAMBIA



ZAMBIA



**Speech by His Excellency
Dr. Levy Patrick Mwanawasa,
President of the Republic of Zambia,
at the opening of the South African
Development Community Summit
on Poverty in the Region
Pailles, Mauritius
April 20, 2008**



Your Majesty King Mswati the third;
Your Excellencies, my fellow heads of state and
government of SADC member countries;
Your Excellencies, Ambassadors, and High
Commissioners;
Your Excellencies, representatives of international
organisations;
Honourable ministers;
Senior government officials; and
Distinguished ladies and gentlemen:
It is with great pleasure and honour that I stand
before you today to officially open the Southern
African Development Community (SADC)
International Conference on Poverty and
Development in this beautiful tourist city of
Pailles in Mauritius.

At the outset, I wish on behalf of the SADC
heads of state and all the delegates, to convey my
heartfelt gratitude to the Government and the
people of Mauritius for warmly welcoming us
and availing to us these comfortable conference
facilities. I am certain that this beautiful environ-
ment is an added incentive for all of us to apply
ourselves with maximum creativity so that we can
accomplish with excellence what we have come
here to do.

We are gathered here because we, the SADC
countries, are gravely concerned at the large
number of our people living in abject poverty.
The region's poverty levels are quite high, with
over forty percent of our population living on
less than one U.S. dollar per day. This poverty
exists in spite of the abundant resources such as
land, water, minerals, talented human capital, and
many others that are found in the region. All of
us agree that this is not acceptable.

The poverty suffered by our people is clearly reflected in the poor social indicators that every one of us is so much aware. The indicators include high levels of malnutrition, illiteracy, unemployment, underemployment, declining life expectancy, unsatisfactory access to basic social services, and lack of infrastructure needed to sustain basic human capacities. Further, lack of capacity to cope with external shocks, such as natural disasters of droughts, floods, and cyclones; diminishing energy; and communicable diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, have had their fair share in worsening the poverty situation in the region.

Considering the immense challenges of poverty in the region, the summit held in Maseru, Kingdom of Lesotho, in 2006, mandated the SADC Secretariat, in consultation with member states, to prepare and convene an international conference on poverty and development in the SADC region. I am, therefore, very pleased that the Maseru decision is being implemented through the summit conference that we are holding this weekend.

Being a large body of different nation states, the key factors that have caused poverty in our region vary from country to country. However, there are some key common factors behind the poverty. Among these are slow or negligible economic growth and job creation over most of the 1980s and 1990s, declining social services, and rising disease burden, especially related to HIV/AIDS. Country specific causes of poverty have included internal conflict and strife, poor governance, and natural calamities.

As we ponder over the issues of poverty in our region, it is important that we also recognise the tremendous progress in the fight against poverty that has occurred in some of our member countries. In a sense, this demystifies the fight against poverty; it encourages all of us that, indeed, this fight can be won, and it must be won because our neighbours have demonstrated that this is possible.

As we all know, our host country, Mauritius, is a shining example of the successful countries, and, for this, I wish to congratulate the Government and people of this impressive country. We

all look forward to emulating the transformation that has taken place here.

It is also gratifying that even for many of our countries where poverty is much higher than here in Mauritius, real progress in the fight against poverty or, at least, stopping it from rising further, is clearly visible. Even where progress is modest, we must still recognise it because it signals that, at least for now, the worst may be over if we continue to make the progress that we have been making. The challenge is to make this progress happen even faster.

I express this hope because for the first time in many years after independence, our economies have shown strong, consistent economic growth. As we have been told by experts, economic growth or wealth creation is a prerequisite for fighting poverty, even though it may not be enough by itself. In other words, poverty can be ended by sharing rising wealth, which is what is happening now. Poverty cannot be ended by sharing increasing poverty, which is what happened before.

Coming to the discussions that are about to start, I have been informed that we are privileged to have experts on the topics that we are going to discuss. Equally important, we have participants from countries outside of our region who have managed to significantly reduce poverty in spite of whatever odds they faced. Let us take advantage of these resource persons to learn what we can do, in practical terms, for our region.

I am also told that the main discussions will be through panel discussions in breakout groups. As we discuss, no doubt lots of proposals will be laid on the table.

While accepting that many of the suggestions are useful, I urge all of us to focus on a few key suggestions for which we have the capacity to implement. I believe in the principle that for most problems, a few key steps are usually sufficient to resolve most of the problem at hand. As is known, most of us already have a lot of programs that we are implementing, so we have to be careful that we clearly prioritise the actions that we shall agree to implement from this meeting. It is, therefore, not useful to come up with too many resolutions that we know will not be implemented.

Related to this, I am extremely delighted at the large turnout of the member states to this conference, taking into account that Heads of State and other Senior Government Officials are very busy. This good gathering should therefore enable us to exchange experiences on what each one of us is doing in our countries to fight poverty. No doubt, we shall all learn about what works and what does not work.

But, I wish to caution us, once more, that we need to go beyond exchanging experiences about what is happening in our individual countries. We should also avoid preparing a regional plan by merely amalgamating our individual country poverty reduction plans.

In my opinion, the output of this Summit will be more useful if we focus on those steps and actions that are necessary at a regional level to help us to fight poverty. In other words, we must, at the regional level, prioritise the implementation of those actions that require us to act in unison with other members in order to put a dent in poverty. In my view, this is the only way in which we can render a regional approach to poverty reduction to be a meaningful exercise.

As I conclude my opening remarks, let me emphasize that we, the SADC Heads of State and Government, are very pleased to be here to chart the way forward on the poverty issues in the SADC region. I thank all of my colleagues who have made it here, as well as our staff, the cooperating partners, and the technical experts from all over the world who will interact with us. I also thank the Secretariat for the excellent follow-up on the Maseru Decision so that we are able to meet this weekend.

With these remarks, I look forward to fruitful discussions and attaining the goals and objectives that we have set ourselves to attain through this conference.

I wish this meeting God's guidance in its deliberations.

Thank you.



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**The African Presidential Archives
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NOTES
