

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT, HON.
DANIEL T. ARAP MOI, C.G.H., M.P., ON THE OCCASION OF
MOI DAY, ON WEDNESDAY, 10TH OCTOBER, 2001**

**MY DEAR FELLOW KENYANS,
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

We have gathered here today to celebrate Moi Day. This is an occasion for us all to give thanks to God for the blessings of peace, unity and stability, which we have continued to enjoy. It is also a time for each one of us to reassess, our involvement in activities that support and enhance the well-being of others, especially the less fortunate members of our society.

The need for Kenyans to support one another has become more urgent now than ever before. In African traditional society, communities subscribed to a social security system, which ensured that the poor, the weak and the vulnerable, were both protected and well taken care of. This is no longer the case. The dynamism of modern living has eroded many of the traditional social security mechanisms. Many people seem to have no time to spare for each other.

The spirit of everyone for himself has compounded many of the problems we face, including poverty, greed, corruption, violence, lack of discipline among the youth, as well as other social and political ills. It will require the joint efforts of all Kenyans to effectively tackle many of the ills afflicting our society.

Over the years, Kenyans have however, managed to overcome some of these problems through the harambee spirit, which is in line with our traditional African values and the policy of African Socialism. Through harambee we have successfully initiated many projects such as, schools, bursary funds, health centres and water facilities, amongst others. I therefore commend Kenyans

for the harambee spirit which has largely benefited those with little means. Helping others through harambee is both a social and moral issue and should therefore never be politicized.

Let me also add that the needy will always continue to be with us. After all, there is no society, however developed, which has succeeded in completely eradicating poverty. Nevertheless, the needs of the poor cannot be postponed in order to be dealt with on a particular day. I hope that Moi Day will continue to inspire Kenyans to strive to do good to one another at all times.

I would like to announce today, however, that in future, Moi Day will not be marked by national parades and other festivities. Indeed, if you will recall my address to you during the first Moi Day celebrations, I indicated that the day should be set aside for quiet reflection and thanksgiving to God for holding us together as one nation. I expect Kenyans to mark the day through quiet reflection on the blessings of peace and unity that we have continued to enjoy. The day should also serve as an annual reminder to us all, of our social obligation to assist the less fortunate members of our society.

Fellow Kenyans,

As a parent, teacher, and more so, as your Head of State, I feel duty bound to remind you yet again, that the future of this country depends on the youth. The youth must be prepared and equipped to play their role as the nation builders of tomorrow, just as we inherited that responsibility from the generation before us. I want to call upon parents to inculcate high moral values in their children. Parents must provide proper guidance to their children by leading exemplary lives. It is regrettable to see that the state of discipline in our society has deteriorated to the lowest level. The recent cases of violence in many schools have generated considerable debate and concern among peace loving Kenyans.

I want to emphasize that children do not grow up in a vacuum. They grow up in a society, where the actions and behaviour of the adult members, both parents and leaders, have a lasting impact

on the behaviour of the young ones. Indeed, it is a well recognized fact, that in general, children are better at imitating adult behaviour, than they are at listening to advice. The standards of proper behaviour that we set for our children must also apply in our own lives as parents and leaders.

It is disheartening that some youth in some of our major towns, especially Nairobi and the surrounding areas, shun productive work. Instead, some have chosen to engage themselves in criminal activities in order to get rich quickly. Such youth are an off-shoot of bad upbringing, not the result of poverty. The law enforcement authorities are under instructions not to rest, until all the perpetrators of acts of violent robbery, carjackings, rapes and muggings are apprehended and prosecuted.

Another issue which I would like to raise in my speech today, is the rising motor-vehicle accidents on our roads. We all agree that human life is sacred, and it must be safeguarded at all costs. Yet everyday, people are losing their lives or getting maimed through accidents which are mostly avoidable. There are many drivers on our roads who thoughtlessly and recklessly exceed speed limits that have been set in order to ensure the safety of all road users. There are also many instances where motorists fail to exercise the slightest courtesy to other road users and even to pedestrians. I want to urge motorists to act with care and humility while driving, in order to ensure the safety of human lives on our roads. I also urge the police to be more firm with those who violate traffic laws.

Before I conclude my remarks today, I want to remind the youth to stay clear of behaviour that may expose them to the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS. The disease kills many young people every year, thus endangering the very survival and future of our nation. I urge the youth to uphold high moral standards. I have said before that abstaining for two years will not cause any harm.

Finally, dear Kenyans, I urge you all to be peaceful and united. As I have said time and again, my greatest desire is to see you all living together in unity, for it is only through unity and peace, that we can hope to overcome the numerous problems that we

face, as we strive to increase economic prosperity for all Kenyans in this new century.

THANK YOU, AND MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL.