

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY, HON. D. T. ARAP MOI,  
C.G.H., M.P., PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF  
OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA  
ON THE OCCASION OF MADARAKA DAY, 1st JUNE, 1989**

DEAR KENYANS,

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

We assemble today to observe the 26th anniversary of the day we took charge of managing our own affairs. Madaraka Day evokes the bitter memories we have of countless Kenyans who sacrificed their lives so that we may be free. The struggle for our independence was a painful experience. But we now have every reason to celebrate, because the sacrifices we made enabled this country to be the success it is today.

As we celebrate this day, we should recall the early days of our struggle for self-determination, and remind ourselves of the significance of that bitter experience. We fought hard, against great odds to win back our God-given right to manage our own affairs. We won the battle. We have made great strides in all areas of development as a result of the peace and harmony which have prevailed since independence. But we must continue to be alert in guarding against the ill-intentions of the disgruntled few, who are bent on disrupting our peace and sowing seeds of discord and chaos.

This calls for responsibility on the part of each and every Kenyan whether in the private or public sector to safeguard our hard won Uhuru. Our freedom cannot have meaning if we continue to distrust one another. Kenya will not be able to maintain its present tempo of development if we exhaust our energies castigating one another and engaging ourselves in endless personality clashes. We must reject any temptation to engage ourselves in idle gossip. We must instead work hard to generate national wealth and above all, we must be patriotic to our motherland.

As I have mentioned many times before, the responsibility of developing our nation rests on Kenyans themselves. No one can develop this country for us. I recently launched the sixth National

Development Plan for the period 1989 to 1993, which has the policies, strategies and programmes of action to guide the economic management of our nation during the next five years. Arrangements are underway to publish a Swahili version, which will enable all Kenyans to familiarize themselves with what is contained in this important policy document.

I urge all Kenyans to read this document and participate fully in planning, implementing and the operation of their own development programmes within the framework of the District Development Strategy.

One of the most fundamental inputs in any planning system is for planners to understand the needs of the people. It is in pursuit of this objective that we have regularly sought to know the basic information for the formulation of programmes to improve the quality of life for our people. We shall, therefore, be conducting the third census since independence, on the nights of 24th and 25th of August this year. I call upon wananchi to co-operate in making this exercise a success.

There are some sections of our society who may still be holding onto some traditional beliefs which inhibit indicating the size of the family. It is important for all Kenyans to understand that an accurate and complete census is in their best interest and that of the country at large.

As one example, the census will for the first time gather information on the disabled. This information will help the Government to plan effectively for this important segment of our population. In this respect, I urge you all to assist in accurately determining the number of the disabled, the nature and extent of their disability.

As you all know, the aim of our country's development process, has always been to improve the well-being of our people. But this can be done effectively only if our people understand the need to have the number of children they are able to feed, clothe, educate and provide with adequate health care.

We have for some time now spent a substantial amount of resources in promoting the message of responsible parenthood. Already, there are encouraging indications that some sections of our society have accepted the message and are responding positively. But it appears as if a number of our people have chosen not to take this important message seriously. This should not be the case. All Kenyans must consider the current economic trends and be realistic about their ability to support a particular size of a family.

I expect the ruling party KANU to be at the forefront in this campaign. Another important forum is the church, which has often been at the forefront in many other national issues. There is a definite part to be played by the church in making Kenyans understand the benefits of having smaller families. It is perfectly acceptable for the church to come out against the use of birth control devices. But as the custodian of the society's moral values, the church has a vital duty to ensure that morally acceptable ways of responsible parenthood are adopted by all.

Given the rapid increase in our population, and the fact that barely one-third of Kenya's land mass is suitable for agriculture, it is obvious that Kenya's dry areas hold the key for further development of agriculture, employment and other income generating activities for the 1990s and beyond. In the past decade, the Government has undertaken a major evaluation and resource inventory of the potential in arid and semi-arid areas in the country. It is imperative now, for these areas to be developed as an alternative to the traditionally settled areas, under the new ministry recently created for the development of those areas.

The overriding concern in our development process must of course always be the maintenance of a secure environment. Our environmental policy is based on the clear principle of "Development without destruction". The policy recognizes the fact that our resources must be protected and enhanced at all cost. Indeed, it is in pursuit of this objective that the Government appointed District Environment Officers who will be the expert co-ordinators of our environment activities in the district.

With regard to technical training, the youth of this country should be given specialized training for both wage and self-employment. Towards this end, a number of policy strategies are underway to extend and improve the quality of technical and vocational programmes in the country. Plans are at hand to include production units in each one of the technical training institutions in the country. The production units will assist the trainees to obtain practical skills that will enable them enter into self-employment and contribute effectively towards rapid technological advancement.

Another important consideration has been the need to provide those who have acquired practical training skills with the necessary facilities to undertake productive work. For some time now, the Government has, through the Kenya Commercial Bank, developed a credit programme to reach small-scale workshop operators, manufacturers and traders. The scheme, which has been in operation on a pilot scale, has proved successful. The demand for loans has grown substantially and a number of Kenyans have benefited from this programme. The Government is currently looking for ways to involve other willing banks and financial institutions to assist more Kenyans in undertaking Jua Kali activities.

The development programmes I have announced today and others that will follow are expected to jointly contribute to the well-being of our people. The measures are intended to improve the standard of living for both the urban and rural dweller. The benefits are, however, not expected to accrue in the short run. As an immediate measure in this regard, I have directed that the minimum wages in Nairobi and Mombasa be increased by thirteen per cent and those in other areas be adjusted appropriately.

The current minimum wages for various skilled and unskilled personnel were last adjusted in April, 1987. Since then, the purchasing power for all income groups has been eroded by an average inflationary factor of about ten per cent. A compensation of the magnitude I have announced today should be a welcome relief to our workers, who in return will be expected to work harder.

Turning now briefly to the international scene of which we are an inseparable part, I note with encouragement the gradual moves

that are being made towards peace in various parts of the world. The spirit of accommodation that is currently prevailing between the super powers is a source of much hope to all peace loving nations.

In southern Africa, encouraging moves are being made towards peace. I am particularly delighted by the statement that was made recently by the South African Government declaring its commitment to dismantle apartheid. Kenyans welcome this positive move. We hope that the regime will prove its sincerity by taking swift actions. By doing so, the regime will save precious lives currently being lost in the fight against the inhuman system.

The situation in the Middle East has improved for the better in the recent past, although there are some fundamental issues which need to be sorted out amicably. It is my conviction, that ultimately the solution to the Middle East problem must be based on mutual trust and willingness between all the parties concerned. Further, the love for human life must be placed above the need for political and material gains. The current state of affairs whereby many young Palestinians are being killed should be brought to a halt before any meaningful discussions towards peace can be held.

Kenya has maintained friendly relations with all countries that are willing to reciprocate friendship and will continue to do so in future. I wish in this regard, on behalf of all Kenyans to thank the government and the friendly people of the Federal Republic of Germany for cancelling a debt of over eight billion shillings we owed them. I also wish to express our sincere gratitude to other friendly countries such as France which have expressed their willingness to cancel some of our debts. I hope that all our friends will continue to support us as they have done in the past.

Before I conclude my remarks today, I wish to mention one attribute which must remain at the core of our efforts to maintain national identity. At independence, we inherited a disjointed foreign orientation and an injured African culture. Kenyans have since then made a determined effort to restore the African image,

its dignity and self-respect. Appropriate measures will continue to be taken in order to achieve this goal.

One of the most important virtues of our traditions is tolerance and forgiveness. We must, therefore, give a second chance to those who may have gone astray. As you may be aware, there are a few Kenyans who have run away to foreign lands for reasons best known to themselves. Whatever reasons they had, some of them have been forced by the harsh realities of life in these lands to malign their motherland as their only source of livelihood. Others have since realized that their imagined reasons for running away were ill-conceived, and misplaced. In the spirit of our traditional values of tolerance and forgiveness, I extend a general pardon to those Kenyans who ran away and who are remorseful to come back and join us in nation building.

Dear Kenyans,

We have come a long way in our development efforts, because of our unity. We must not, therefore, lose sight of the importance of remaining united at all times. Through unity of purpose and determination, we shall no doubt continue to build this country to yet greater heights of prosperity. Kenya is our home and we must always be proud of it.

THANK YOU