

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT,  
HON. DANIEL T. ARAP MOI, C.G.H., M.P., ON THE  
OCCASION OF MOI DAY, THURSDAY,  
10th OCTOBER, 1991**

MY DEAR KENYANS,

I send you my warm greetings wherever you are. My greetings also go to all our friends and well-wishers in all continents, especially those who have sent messages of greetings and goodwill.

In particular, and in a special way, I wish to express my warm and sincere thanks and that of Kenyans to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second and His Royal Highness Prince Philip the Duke of Edinburgh on their visit to Kenya early this week. We had useful and fruitful discussion. Her Majesty's visit underscored and greatly enhanced the already existing strong and cordial relations between our two sister states. I wish Her Majesty and His Royal Highness a pleasant stay in Africa and successful deliberations during the forthcoming Commonwealth summit in Harare, Zimbabwe.

This is not a day for lavish celebrations. It is a day during which we remind ourselves of one basic tradition in our society, namely: compassion, or what I have repeatedly referred to as "being mindful of each other's welfare."

This is a tradition that we must uphold and perpetuate, for it is a practice that will come under severe scrutiny during the process of rapid development and transformation of our economy. In particular, we must guard against the danger of being self-centred, despite the changing socio-economic circumstances, compassion, caring for each other and upholding of national values and objectives must remain central in everything we do or say.

Another important national objective I would like to mention briefly on this day is our firm commitment to building a democratic society characterized by transparency and public accountability in all its activities. As you know, this is not the first time I am highlighting these matters. But I am stressing them again because

we must not be misled by those who, for example, in an academic and impractical fashion, call for immediate introduction of pluralism in abstract terms. That advice becomes even more dangerous when pluralism is interpreted as it appears to be, in very narrow terms to mean only multiple political parties.

As you know, I am on record to have stated that multi-parties are not ruled out in the future political development of our country. But I have also stressed that without a cohesive society in which ethnic issues are subordinate to national ones, premature introduction of multi-parties will lead to civil unrest and its disastrous consequences. We do not have to look far to see the evidence of that kind of situation. Nothing but tragedy. Equally true, nothing but confusion, disruption of development and subsequent prolonged hardship to the people, normally follow in a political system that is riddled with strife. Again we do not need to look far to see the unbearable human and economic consequences of factionalism. We, therefore, must plan our future very carefully.

We must plan our future on our own, and implement the necessary changes, as we are already doing, but in a manner which does not disrupt the tempo and the direction of our national development.

At the same time I would like to stress that in our own political party system, we must ensure the full participation by the masses, for example, since Kanu is a mass party, the introduction of the district development committees, is expected to encourage that kind of participation.

Our system of local government is also expected to support that approach. However, we need to regularly review performance and practices in this vitally important area so that the achievement and fulfilment of that objective is not jeopardized by intolerance or the pursuit of individual political ambitions. In that connection, we must ensure that the administration of the party at the grassroot level promotes active participation by the people in all major economic and political decisions.

I wish in particular to urge party and national leaders to desist from engaging in unproductive and irresponsible public utterances. The spirit of tolerance and compassion that I have alluded to earlier should rule out all such utterances. The party's objective is to unite Kenyans. It is a party of national unity. Its leaders must work for that unity in both word and deed. We can bring about unity only if we avoid divisive and inflammatory statements which might injure the feelings of other Kenyans.

In whatever we do or say, we must always hold ourselves accountable for our actions and statements. This applies to corrupt practices in all sectors of our society. Corruption is a universal scourge. It knows no culture nor social status; no profession nor religion, it is a disease that, if not contained, threatens to destroy the very fabric of any human society.

My Government is already aware of this problem and is taking appropriate measures to deal with it. One of the measures being taken is the strengthening of existing legislation and machinery against corruption. We must not allow corruption to derail us. In this respect, therefore, I call upon every Kenyan whether in the public or private sector and the general public to work in one accord in the fight against corruption. Doing so, would be a clear demonstration of our patriotism and commitment to our country.

We are determined to ensure that political leaders, at all levels, remain faithful representatives of the people and be fully accountable to them. That is why we have had regular party, parliamentary and local government elections. In that regard and as far as the future is concerned, our programme is very clear. To begin with, we have scrapped the queue voting system in the nomination of candidates for elections. Secondly, a number of administrative measures are being undertaken to ensure that future elections enable all eligible Kenyans to participate effectively and in an orderly manner.

One of the measures is the review of electoral boundaries which is already underway. Another is the revision of electoral register. However, the decision on the actual dates for such elections is my sole responsibility, which I shall continue to exercise taking all

relevant factors into account. In that regard, peaceful and stable conditions are a major consideration. But one thing you can be absolutely sure of is that the elections will be free and fair, and that those who will be elected will be the people's own choice.

Therefore, people should concentrate on their day-to-day activities of nation building instead of engaging in premature electioneering. That message is particularly important for the few people who think that constant agitation for political change or the inciting of the public to be disorderly will lead to immediate elections. Such elements should be disowned. Let them hear, loud and clear, that disorder means, among other things, loss of human life. I value human life, I value each one of you, and I will not therefore allow that to happen.

Finally my fellow Kenyans, I urge each one of you to recognize that as our country faces the changing international economic and political system, we shall encounter many challenges—both economic and political. In the circumstances, we must realize that Kenya and indeed Africa as a whole, is very much on its own. The bigger powers are paying more and more attention to their own immediate interests. Our survival is truly our own responsibility. But that survival, and growing national prosperity, are only possible if we continue to be guided by our national motto of Harambee and the Nyayo philosophy of Peace, Love and Unity. This is the time to uphold these two pillars of our national development as firmly as possible.

THANK YOU.

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