

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT,
HON. DANIEL T. ARAP MOI, C.G.H., M.P., ON THE
OCCASION OF THE 26th ANNIVERSARY OF JAMHURI
DAY, ON TUESDAY, 12th DECEMBER, 1989**

DEAR KENYANS,

Today, we celebrate, the twenty-sixth anniversary of the day we achieved full independence as a sovereign State. This is an anniversary of great pride to us, and we are grateful that our friends from all over the world have sent us messages of goodwill. On behalf of all Kenyans, I express my profound thanks for their brotherly gesture.

Kenyans have every reason to celebrate this anniversary with joy, because we have seen the fruits of being a free and independent nation. While this may be the case, however, we should not lose sight of the reality that being independent means a lot more. It means not losing our sense of direction, it means that we should know, at all times, and in whatever we do, where we are coming from, where we would like to be in the years ahead, and also how we intend to get there.

At independence we took up the responsibility of conducting our own affairs. We have not, and indeed have no intention, to isolate ourselves from the rest of the world. But we also reject outside supervision. We are confident that we have the ability, the know-how and determination to run our own affairs. Our friends outside who would wish to dictate terms to us should on this day understand that Kenyans cherish friendship that is based on mutual respect and understanding.

While this message should be clear to all, we here in Kenya must, as the one way of proving our seriousness, conduct our affairs with maturity and confidence. We must avoid actions or statements which place us in a position to be ridiculed by others.

The less we talk and the more we show our resolve through positive action the better for us. It is clear that we have achieved much progress in many areas of national development during the short period of our history as an independent nation.

One such achievement is the education system which has grown and has been restructured in accordance with the changing needs of our society. You all know that the primary and secondary phases of the 8-4-4 system are in place. Indeed the first group of more than one hundred and thirty thousand students have this year sat for the examination that will enable those who qualify enter into universities. At the university level, the integrated curriculum programme for the 8-4-4 system has been prepared and the recruitment of staff is in progress.

But parents will need to put in more effort in the construction of the required physical facilities. Only half the number of workshops, home science rooms and classrooms required have been completed. Some districts have almost completed construction of these facilities while others have performed far below expectations. I would like the officers concerned, in the districts which are lagging behind to redouble their efforts in putting up these facilities.

I also wish to make some remarks on the university loans scheme. The repayment of the loans has been poor since those who benefited are avoiding to meet their obligations. The university loan unit has been strengthened in order to improve the speed and efficiency of recovering the backlog of loans. I call on those who have benefited from this scheme, to start repaying the loans which have matured so that more Kenyans can be assisted with their education at our universities.

We have also done much to provide Kenyans with improved dwelling houses. During the past eleven years, over eighteen thousand housing units have been constructed by the National Housing Corporation in various urban centres. Many individuals have also been given loans to put up their own dwelling houses in rural areas.

In the major urban centres, the Government has embarked on a programme to develop slum areas. In Pumwani here in Nairobi, for example, two hundred and eighty-four houses have been constructed and are ready for occupation. An additional one thousand units will be completed next year. In Kibera, one thousand flats are nearing completion, while another one thousand will be built during the next two years.

But our population is growing rapidly and we shall need to cater for the housing needs of the additional population. It is therefore clear that the provision of decent shelter will continue to be one of the challenges we face during the second Nyayo decade. This is a challenge where the Harambee spirit can be applied more effectively. I am already aware that employees of various categories are faced with housing problems. This situation must be arrested from getting worse in both the rural and urban areas. I would like therefore employers, businessmen and relevant Government Ministries to come together and formulate a Harambee programme of increasing the stock of houses. The emphasis of this programme should be at the district headquarters level where housing needs are most acute.

My Dear Kenyans,

The problem of unemployment remains a matter of great concern to us all. The creation of employment opportunities is an urgent matter that calls for rational thinking on the part of those who seek employment. It calls for understanding on the part of investors. Faced, for example, with a choice to be a chargehand in a *Jua Kali* garage or to remain unemployed, I would expect a rational job-seeker to choose the income generating option of joining the *Jua Kali* garage. On its part, the Government will continue to provide an enabling environment for increased investment, but investors will need to be aggressive in planning for larger returns in later years instead of concentrating on making huge profits in the short-term.

We shall also do everything possible to strengthen the development of rural areas to alleviate unemployment and improve the

standard of living for our people. Towards this end, I have today directed the Office of the Vice-President and Ministry of Finance to set up a fund to be known as "Rural Enterprises Fund". Initially, the Government is setting aside some one hundred and twenty million shillings for the fund. Meanwhile, disbursement mechanisms are being worked out. The fund, which will be managed through the district development committees will enable small-scale traders and industrialists to set up viable projects in the rural areas.

We cannot, however, benefit fully from these efforts, when those who are charged with the responsibility of managing public funds do not fulfil their duties. The Government has for instance invested large sums of public money in State corporations with the hope that the organizations would create employment opportunities, increase investments and family incomes. In effect, the Government expected them to contribute to the basic objective of improving the well-being of Kenyans. But the overall performance of State corporations has left much to be desired. They have, by-and-large, failed to realize the objectives for which they were established.

There are some cases of outright mismanagement, and misappropriation of public funds which will be dealt with according to the laws of the land. Those responsible for such unpatriotic behaviour should know that Kenyans are no longer prepared to tolerate this state of affairs. No individual Kenyan has the right to enrich himself or herself from public resources. From now on, those who have betrayed the national cause will be taken to task and will accordingly be called upon to account for their misdeeds.

I have on many occasions urged all Kenyans to be mindful of the welfare of their fellow countrymen. But it appears as if some people are hesitant to heed this call. There are a number of Kenyans who have come to me with problems which could be solved by their district commissioners or some particular Government officer. Some wananchi have even told me that they find it easier to communicate with me directly than hoping for assistance from this or that Government Ministry.

Further, it has come to my attention that some public servants have ignored the fact that they are the servants and not the masters of wananchi. They have, therefore, developed an attitude of indifference towards serving them. As the chief servant of wananchi, I cannot allow such an attitude to take root. The needs of all wananchi must be attended to at all cost. From now on therefore, appropriate steps will be taken against Government officers who fail to assist wananchi with their problems. It will henceforth be assumed, that those who fail to offer the required services to wananchi have a part to play on the problem. Consequently, they should not blame me or other people when they are punished for their inability to serve wananchi well.

Another matter of concern is the fact that many Kenyans have lost their lives and many more have been left with permanent injuries as a result of motor accidents. Most of these accidents are caused as a result of overloading, overspeeding and outright carelessness by drivers and other road users. Most of these accidents are avoidable, if we can only respect the sanctity of human life and act responsibly when on the roads. We may continue to make laws or issue regulations on safer use of the roads, but in the final analysis it is our attitude towards one another on the roads, that will determine the success we make in reducing motor accidents. Let us all remember that it costs nothing to be courteous to other road users.

On the international front, we believe in having a world that is free from war. A world in which all human beings can devote their energy for social and economic progress. We shall continue to uphold the principle of good neighbourliness. We seek genuine friendship of all our neighbours on an equal basis, and no more no less than the same treatment from them.

Kenyans know that no development can be possible in an atmosphere of chaos. This is the reason why we shall work towards peace among all nations of the world. We pray for peace in the Sudan, in Ethiopia, Mozambique and in southern Africa. We shall

continue to call upon all peace loving nations of the world to bring sufficient pressure to bear on South Africa to abandon apartheid. Mere statements by the racist leaders towards the abolition of apartheid are not enough. We want racial segregation to be completely dismantled in South Africa.

In conclusion, my dear Kenyans, I call on you all, that as we celebrate this day to renew our commitment to building our country. We cannot achieve the growth and prosperity we need if we allow petty personal differences to divert us from the national cause. We cannot improve our well-being if we devote our energy to unproductive activities of undermining one another.

Let us, therefore, resolve on this great day to consolidate our national unity; pull together and build one united and strong nation in the living spirit of our national philosophy of love for one another, peace for mankind and unshakable unity.

THANK YOU AND MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL.