

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT, HON.
DANIEL T. ARAP MOI, C.G.H., M.P., ON THE OCCASION OF
KENYATTA DAY
TUESDAY, 20TH OCTOBER, 1992**

MY DEAR KENYANS,

It gives me great happiness, on this important national day, to convey to you and your families my warm greetings. I also convey on behalf of all of us warm greetings to Kenyans who are in foreign countries. We hope that they too, collectively where possible, have made arrangements to mark this year's Kenyatta Day. At this time we also remember all who for one reason or another are unable to join us to celebrate this day, which occupies such an important place in our national calendar.

I would also like to take the opportunity, early in my address, to thank those many countries, and their leaders, who have sent us greetings and messages of goodwill. As I have mentioned in the past, Kenya values the good working relations it has with other countries. I am saying that because we Kenyans know that no country, nor individual, can live entirely on their own. We all live in a community of nations. And we all need each other. The important requirement is that in the various interactions between countries there should always be respect, harmony and equity. In all this it should be recognized that the pursuit of mutual benefits in an equitable manner is the only secure foundation on which effective relations between independent states can flourish.

MY DEAR KENYANS,

Kenyatta Day is of very great significance in our noble task of nation building. This day reminds us of the enormous sacrifices which the founding father of our nation, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, and others made in the struggle for our country's independence. Since this is the last Kenyatta Day celebrations before the forthcoming general elections, I would like to make a few observations about the significance of Kenyatta Day in relation to our future nation building efforts.

First and foremost, Kenyatta Day reminds us that personal sacrifices of one sort or other are essential in building a nation. In Kenya's case the sacrifices needed were particularly demanding because we first had to achieve our independence from colonialists and then organize ourselves for a determined effort to decolonize our economy through mounting effective programmes for elimination of poverty, ignorance and disease from our people. However, looking specifically at sacrifices made during that struggle for independence, it is important to remember that many freedom fighters made the biggest sacrifice of all: They gave their own lives so that their country could achieve political independence. No sacrifice can be bigger than that. We shall therefore continue to treasure these sacrifices. And it is particularly important that as we continue with our nation building efforts our young people, who do not have first-hand knowledge of the struggle for independence, should know the true history of that struggle and the many sacrifices it entailed. This is not only in order to increase their knowledge about the past, more important is that such knowledge should inspire them as they undertake their own roles in our economy and society. In that regard our young men and women should know that they too will be called upon to make personal sacrifices in the service of our country and its people.

MY FELLOW KENYANS,

While we shall never forget those galant sons and daughters who either died or were imprisoned or detained for many years during the struggle for independence, we should also remember that there were many others who, although they never earned the title of "prison graduates", worked very hard and courageously not only for the release of Mzee Jomo Kenyatta and others but also for early independence of our country. There is no doubt that those Kenyans too made many personal sacrifices, including bearing degrading harassment and humiliation from the colonialists. Those Kenyans were also the people who ensured that the imprisonment and subsequent detention of Mzee Jomo Kenyatta and others did not mean an end to the struggle for independence. Therefore on this occasion we should, as Mzee Jomo Kenyatta himself urged us to, remember all those who made personal sacrifices for the independence of our country.

The second major observation I would like to make is that those who made sacrifices for our country's independence did not do so merely for the purpose of achieving political independence. There was a much broader vision and objective in consideration. In particular Mzee Jomo Kenyatta and others were fighting so that Kenya could become an independent and united country in which Kenyans live in prosperity and dignity. Those national freedom fighters were not therefore seeking power for its own sake. The aim was to achieve political power as the necessary step for establishing economic and social programmes for Kenya's rapid development and general welfare of its people.

This is a very important point which should be borne in mind all the time. In fact it is the one reality which directly links the present and future generations to the sacrifices which were made in the struggle for independence. The link is simple and direct: It is based on the fact that the task of nation building and achievement of high welfare of all Kenyans is one which in many ways has no end. In that regard although we in Kenya have made considerable progress in fighting poverty, ignorance and disease we still have a long way to go before we can, for example, reach the living standards and welfare achieved in many developed countries.

That means each one of us must be ready to continue making sacrifices for the development of the country and its people. Above all, it should be stressed that political leadership demands willingness and readiness to make personal sacrifices. I want to stress that point because these days one sees statements by some individuals, with ambitions for national leadership, which indicate that the concept of leadership in the minds of those individuals is that of position of power, privilege, glory and personal enjoyment. The truth is that our country needs leaders who recognize that their responsibility is to serve Kenya and its people in a dedicated manner. It would really be tragic if we did not insist on such quality on the part of our political leaders. This is because in addition to morality aspects and the need to establish good role models for the youth, our country faces many economic and social challenges which can only be overcome if Kenya enjoys the kind of political leadership I am urging here.

These are matters which we Kenyans now must discuss very frankly with each other. The struggle for development and nation building now in our hands is different from the struggle for political independence. In the struggle for freedom we had one common and external enemy—the colonialists. In the struggle for nation building, we have enemies internally and externally. While there may be very little we can do about external factors, it is surely our responsibility to deal with whatever internal weaknesses inhibit our nation building efforts. This is the reason why I am giving such emphasis to the requirement of able and dedicated political leadership in our country.

At this point it is appropriate to say that under the leadership of Kanu, Kenya has made major strides in all fields of development since independence. In past speeches I have, for example, indicated the tremendous progress we have made in the fields of education and health and other sectors. Today we should also recognize that Kenya has become a very diversified economy with tremendous potential for industrialization in the years to come. Kenya is also now a remarkably united country in many ways, including the fact that each region of the Republic is now easily accessible in terms of transport and telecommunications. We also feel very proud that Kenya has remained politically stable and peaceful all these years.

It is clear that all these achievements could not have been realized without able and dedicated leadership, which recognizes that its primary responsibility is to serve and not to be served. I want to stress these points because very soon Kenyans will have the opportunity of choosing their leaders when the general elections are held. Today I want to reaffirm yet again that those elections will be free and fair. In that regard, objective examination of the measures taken so far will show that thorough efforts are being made to ensure that the elections will be completely free and fair. To begin with there was the country-wide registration of voters which, in spite of initial boycott calls by misguided opposition leaders, was very successful. I believe all those who qualified to register as voters were given the opportunity to do so. The voter registration exercise, which was conducted by the independent Electoral Commission, has been followed by open and public inspection of the registers of voters.

Another important measure, and contrary to statements made by some politicians, opportunities have been given to various political parties to organize themselves and air their views freely to the public. Furthermore, foreign observers from the Commonwealth, the European Community and the United States have been invited to come and witness the whole election process when it takes place.

I am highlighting these measures in order to assure all those interested—whether they be political parties or foreign governments and organizations—of my firm commitment to ensure that the elections will be free and fair. Unfortunately, there are some politicians who, because they already recognize that they will not be able to get sufficient votes, are now making statements to the effect that the programme towards the general elections is not being well and fairly executed. But as I have just indicated, no efforts are being spared to prepare for free and fair elections.

In this connection I want to stress that if our objective is to promote democracy, stability and development of our country and its people, then each and every political party must be prepared to accept the outcome of the forthcoming elections. Those politicians who are now saying that if they do not win then the elections would have been rigged must be seen as what they really are: namely, individuals who are hungry for power for its own sake and who have a hidden agenda instead of integrity, stability and development of Kenya and the welfare of all its people. I repeat that Kenya does not need such people. Indeed it would be quite wrong to refer to them as “leaders”.

MY DEAR KENYANS,

As I said last week on Moi Day, we must not underestimate the challenge we have in handling the emergence of multi-party politics in our country. Today I want to emphasize that as we face that challenge we should know that no political system, of whatever form, will ever flourish and be effective unless those who are elected leaders are men and women of integrity and whose principal objective is to serve the people. Once again I call upon all Kenyans to recognize the importance of this factor in determining not only their own welfare but also that of their children and future generations.

We should also know that the development of a country is not like driving a motor-car. You can stop and start a motor-car on your journey. However, in the case of national development stopping means collapse, with all its undesirable consequences. We must therefore avoid anything which would lead to such a situation. In that regard during the forthcoming elections the vote will give millions of Kenyans the power to choose. Personally and as I said recently I look forward with confidence because I know that Kenyans will choose wisely and, in particular support those they can work with for their country's development and continued prosperity of its people.

MY FELLOW KENYANS,

In conclusion I urge all Kenyans to uphold discipline in all their activities and conduct. I am doing that because of late there appears to have been a sharp increase in reported cases of indiscipline, malpractices and low moral standards. This undesirable trend appears to have affected very many sectors of our national life, including our education institutions at all levels.

This undesirable trend must be arrested and reversed. It is important that all Kenyans should realize that a breakdown in discipline and moral standards will lead to the breakdown of the nation itself, and that is something which we must avoid at all costs.

And since today we are remembering sacrifices made during the struggle for our independence, let us also realize that that noble struggle would not have been won without high standards of discipline amongst other requirements. Similarly, the commendable progress which this nation has made in the areas of economic and social development since independence could not have been achieved without discipline.

Therefore, as Kenya enters its next stage of national development, let us be clear that success will depend on hard work, loyalty to our country and high levels of discipline, and that means each one of us—man or woman, young or old—has a direct role to play in ensuring the achievement of that national success.

THANK YOU.