

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT,
HON. DANIEL T. ARAP MOI, C.G.H., M.P., ON THE
OCCASION OF MOI DAY ON 10TH OCTOBER, 1996**

MY DEAR KENYANS,
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I am pleased to join you this morning as we celebrate Moi Day and I wish to start my address by sending my greetings to all Kenyans wherever they are. I also take this opportunity to convey my gratitude to all our friends who have sent us greetings and messages of goodwill.

On previous occasions, I have proposed that this be a day of thanksgiving and a day when each of us can give practical service to fellow human beings. I am glad to note that in the past one week, Kenyans have demonstrated this spirit by extending various services to the sick, disabled, and the orphaned. It is encouraging that some of us have also helped out in cleaning activities and in other social activities.

The need to help others is indeed a strong element of our African traditions. It is therefore appropriate for me, on this occasion to talk on among other things, the culture of our people for I strongly believe that a people without a culture are a people without direction. The culture of our society stands threatened by negative influences.

Our youth have, through the electronic media been exposed to all sorts of evils such as violence, drug abuse and other social ills which have led to serious moral decay. As a result, practices that were unheard of and which are totally alien to African culture are starting to take root in our society. In order to arrest this erosion of our morals, parents and religious leaders should now be more determined in passing over sound moral values to our children.

You will recall that two years ago I appointed a commission of inquiry into the cult of devil worship, an issue which was of concern to all of us. The commission completed its work and came up with findings which revealed that indeed the cult of devil worship exists in its formative stages in the country. This practice, however, threatens to spread in our learning institutions if we do not take quick corrective action to curb it. Owing to the sensitive nature of the information contained in the report and the legal implications of some of the findings, it is not appropriate for the Government to make the findings public. The Government will, however, implement the recommendations in a manner that is most appropriate. I, however, wish on this occasion to remind Kenyans to be vigilant against this evil practice and to report to the authorities all cases of actual or suspected devil worship.

Fellow Countrymen,

One of the biggest problems facing our country today is that of unemployment among our youth. The magnitude of this problem is such that it needs the concerted effort of all Kenyans irrespective of their party affiliation. You will recall that recently, I initiated a fund to assist the youth in this country to start income generating activities. While I appreciate the positive response to this project by the majority of Kenyans it is disheartening to note the negative attitude adopted by a few Kenyans towards the fund. Contrary to the misconception that the National Youth Development Programme is meant only to benefit KANU youth, I would like to assure wananchi that all Kenyan youth will benefit from this fund irrespective of their party allegiance. I would, therefore call upon all Kenyans of good will to contribute generously towards this programme.

Matters of national importance must always be approached in a sober manner, bearing in mind that as much as we may hold divergent political views, we remain partners in development. Kenyans will recall that the country has recently witnessed a renewed campaign for constitutional reforms spearheaded by the churches, non-governmental organizations and the opposition. Indeed those clamouring for reforms feel so strongly about their

cause that they have threatened to unleash violence and call for civil disobedience, if these changes are not effected before the next general elections. This is most unfortunate, because it is not possible for us to undertake a proper constitutional review in an atmosphere of confrontation, intimidation and violence.

Apart from emotions, calls for constitutional reforms are not unusual neither are they peculiar to Kenya. As a matter of fact, some of the world's oldest democracies have begun to question certain aspects of their constitutions. For example, in the United Kingdom, the future of the monarchy has come under great scrutiny. As society changes, periodic review of the constitution becomes imperative so as to make it reflect contemporary social and political realities. However, constitutional changes must be carried out carefully and in a responsible manner. It is desirable for every Kenyan to be fully involved in making proposals in this important exercise of reviewing our constitution. The changes we effect must also reflect the views and wishes of a broad section of the population and not only those of a few leaders or groups.

The constitution, which is the backbone of our country is an important document through which both present and future generations must find stability and continuity. It is not a document to be subjected to short-term ad hoc changes which are tailored to suit the whims of certain groups in society. The review of our constitution is an involving task which takes a long time to complete. It is therefore not possible to carry out a sensible constitutional review before the next general elections. However, most areas of immediate concern are already being addressed at the legislative and policy levels.

With regard to the issue of voter registration, some Kenyans have expressed concern that the general elections may be called before all eligible voters have been registered. I would like to assure Kenyans that the registration exercise will be carried out in a free and fair manner so that all eligible voters are given the chance to exercise their right to vote. This is the essence of democracy and my Government is fully committed to it.

Fellow Kenyans,

As an essential part of the development of our democratic system it is vital that every citizen and resident of this country should be able to feel secure and to live in peace. My Government is therefore concerned about the incidents of crime being reported everyday in various parts of the country.

Kenyans will, however, understand that as a result of the insecurity being experienced by various neighbouring countries, illegal firearms have found their way into the hands of criminals in this country.

I want to remind Kenyans that their best security is first and foremost themselves as criminals do not live in isolation. They are our brothers and sisters. It is therefore our duty as peace loving Kenyans to report all suspected criminals to the law enforcement authorities.

I believe that through continued co-operation between the police and the public we will be able to minimize crime in our society. The Government would like to assure wananchi that it is committed to protecting them and their property at all costs.

In conclusion, fellow Kenyans, let me urge you all to uphold the principles of peace, love and unity. This is the only way through which we can effectively utilize our energies in the development of our country. Let us also continue to pray and provide support for the neighbours in Somalia, Sudan and Burundi in their search for peace so that we can all together enjoy the gift of life as we move forward into the future in this region.

THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU ALL.