

SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT, HON. DANIEL T. ARAP MOI, C.G.H., M.P., ON THE OCCASION OF JAMHURI DAY CELEBRATIONS, ON THURSDAY, 12th DECEMBER, 1985

My Fellow Kenyans,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I stand before you today with a great sense of pride and hope. I feel proud that for the twenty second successive year as a free people, we are able to celebrate this great national day in an atmosphere of unity and stability. The road to social and economic advancement has been arduous, but because of the unity, maturity and determination of all Kenyans, we have been able to achieve much progress in our short history as an independent nation. With these attributes, we are justified to look to the future with hope and confidence.

While we note the areas in which we have performed well, we must be thankful for all the blessings we have received. At the same time, we must be prepared to admit our mistakes and shortcomings, for in so doing we are better placed to face the challenges that lie ahead. As we celebrate this great day, therefore, let us remind ourselves of the importance of preserving and jealously protecting the unity which has enabled us to progress this far. Let us bear in mind that without unity, there can be no peace, which is the most important pre-requisite for development. And as I have always reminded Kenyans, peace cannot exist in a society which allows tribalism, hatred and corruption to flourish.

It is our duty, therefore, as a development-minded people, to seek to create and maintain the necessary conditions which bring peace and development. Political leaders will need to address themselves in a more determined manner, to the need for unity. We must all accept that the days of empty rhetoric are long gone. What Kenya needs now is pragmatic and development-conscious leadership. Our leaders should concern themselves more with improving the well-being of our people by initiating tangible development programmes, instead of engaging themselves in politics of hate.

The ruling Party KANU has a definite and crucial role to play in ensuring that the wisdom and enthusiasm of all leaders is directed towards the promotion of peace and prosperity for our nation. As we are all aware, much has been done to strengthen the party since its recent elections. As a result, we have witnessed a more active involvement of the party in identifying and addressing the various problems which stand in the way of our national progress. I wish to assure you all that this renewed vigour will not only be maintained and fortified, but we shall also ensure that the presence of the party is felt across the whole spectrum of our society.

It is abundantly clear that, right from the start, we have endeavoured to put our economic development above all else, in shaping our society in Kenya. We have understood all along, that the ultimate goal of all our efforts in nation-building, is to improve the welfare of each and every Kenyan. This fundamental conviction will continue to guide our efforts during the third decade of our development and beyond.

I wish, at this point, to make a few remarks on the general state of our economy. As Kenyans are aware, the effects of the serious drought of 1984 have more or less been overcome. The good rains which we have received during the year, and the hard work by farmers all over the country, have led to a good measure of recovery in the agriculture sector. As a result of measures we have taken to make the licensing of imports of essential raw materials more liberal, the manufacturing sector has also performed relatively well during the year. The performance of trade, finance and other service sectors has also been satisfactory.

On the whole, economic growth during 1985, is expected to be of the order of 4 per cent in real terms. This is a significant improvement from last year's performance when the economy grew at less than one per cent. This recovery is expected to gather strength next year and approach the targetted level of 5 per cent. It is clear from all this that the worst is now behind us, and that we have good reason to look to the future with hope.

Speaking of economic development, we must always bear in mind that the human resource constitutes the single most important instrument of national development. It is for this reason, that we have continued to invest a large portion of our financial resources to the development of education. However, it has become increasingly apparent that this education must be tailored to the needs of our rapidly growing economy. In this regard, we have found it necessary to review our education objectives from time to time.

You will recall that early this year, we implemented the new 8-4-4 system of education. I am glad to say that over three hundred thousand children sat for the new Kenya Certificate of Primary Education examination in November. Kenyans anxiously await the results of this examination, whose marking has been completed and which has based on practically-oriented curriculum.

The necessary preparations to enable those who will qualify for secondary education to pursue their studies smoothly have been made. The secondary school curriculum has been designed and various subject syllabuses have been developed. Form one teachers have already been trained for their new responsibilities in all the provinces. The relevant teaching materials are currently being written by the Kenya Institute of Education, and will be published soon.

On their part, wananchi participated in massive fund raising meetings organized in districts to support the construction of standard eight classrooms and other physical facilities. Parents demonstrated their commitment to the education of their children at these meetings. I have no doubt that this determination on the part of both wananchi and Government officials, will continue to guide our efforts in implementing the remaining stages of the new system of education. Today, I wish to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed towards implementing this new system of education.

Turning now to agriculture, I am pleased to observe that in recent times our agricultural research institutions have succeeded in breeding new varieties of important crops which are resistant to disease.

Our researchers have also developed high-yielding and quick-maturing varieties of maize, pigeon peas, cow peas and other traditional crops such green-grams, cassava and sweet potatoes. I am confident that these breakthroughs will enable our farmers to get better returns. I would like therefore, to commend our researchers for the good work and assure them of continued Government support in their work.

At the same time, extension staff should redouble their efforts to ensure that there exists no gap between research findings and the application at the farm level. Farmers will themselves need to ensure that high potential areas of our country are fully utilized and that marginal areas are irrigated and made more productive. And after harvesting their produce, the farmers must endeavour to establish sufficient food storage facilities in their homesteads. They must resist the temptation to sell the whole crop and strive instead to retain a certain amount for family consumption.

We must, however, not allow the full utilization of our land to drive us to the indiscriminate cutting of trees in the water catchment areas. We must never forget that water is the basis of all forms of life and no meaningful development of land can take place without water. It is of utmost importance, therefore, that we protect and conserve our water resources.

To this end, the Government has plans to introduce advisory services to wananchi on the preservation of rain and ground-water resources for productive use. District Development Committees will be expected to include in their programmes, tangible water conservation and storage methods. However, it is important for everyone to accept that Government efforts alone, will not suffice. It is, therefore, expected that wananchi will take a keen interest in the construction and operation of their own water projects. In this way, we shall not only build the facilities we require, but also reduce the vandalism, wastage and misuse that is presently evident in many of our water projects.

Before I conclude my discussion on the various sectors of our economy, I wish to reiterate that the Government is committed to rapid industrialization, especially in the rural areas, as one way of

increasing people's incomes and generating employment opportunities in those areas. From now on, entrepreneurs who have distinguished themselves in rural areas will, on the recommendation of their District Commissioners, be provided with unsecured loans. At the same time, the Kenya Industrial Estates has embarked on a programme of financing projects outside their own facilities within the industrial estates. This programme will be continued and strengthened.

In an effort to further improve commercial activity in the rural areas, the Government has embarked on a programme to increase the funds allocated to the Joint Loan Boards starting this Financial Year. Along with increasing the financial allocations, the Government has taken measures to streamline the administration and management of these Boards. The accounting for the loan funds will be improved so that they benefit more traders. Wananchi who will benefit from these new arrangements will in turn be expected to improve on the management of their investments and there be able to pay back the loans when due.

I have always been a firm believer in the need for frank and constant communication between the people and their Government for democracy to succeed. Kenyans will recall that over the past year, I have taken every opportunity, and made use of every forum, to draw your attention to the looming danger of the uncontrolled growth of our population. Over the last two decades, our country has undergone several economic crises which, happily, and with the blessings of providence, we have managed to overcome. Today I wish to remind Kenyans not to be complacent over past victories. We must be prepared to face future challenges in a realistic and practical manner.

One of the challenges which must continue to be the prime concern of each and every Kenyan is that of planning the rate of growth of our population. At the current rate of population growth, Kenya will have a population of about thirty-five million by the turn of the century. This will be slightly less than twice the number of people we had last year. This population will include

about fourteen million people of working age, which is seven million more workers than we had last year. It will therefore be necessary for us to double the number of jobs in the next fifteen years, to accommodate these future workers who have already been born.

In order to provide for a rapidly growing population, we shall need to enter into a new phase of development. Without a rapid economic growth, the economy will not have the capacity to provide even the most basic needs. It is of paramount importance, therefore, that we increase the productivity of agriculture to feed the nation. We shall need to revolutionize rural non-farm activities to provide more jobs outside the urban areas; we shall require a dynamic informal sector which will create jobs at lower costs; and we shall need to re-structure the industrial sector in order to make it more productive. We shall need to direct our economic growth towards those activities which will lead to highest production.

While some of our short-term problems have been brought under control, and while some progress has been made in re-orienting the economy, 1986 presents a ripe opportunity to look much further ahead, towards the end of the century, to determine what kind of an economy Kenya is going to have then, and how it is going to get there. In this regard, my Government is in the final stages of preparing a Sessional Paper which will set out a new strategy for renewed economic growth. The Sessional Paper will take a more fundamental and long-term approach than previous mid-term reviews. It will therefore represent a major departure from previous practice whereby Sessional Papers on the economy have been issued mid-way between two Development Plans, with the aim of adjusting policies and programmes in the face of changes in economic conditions.

While the Government will ensure that the necessary requirements are put in place for our economy to grow at desirable rates, wananchi have the vital role to ensure that our population grows only at the rate that we can provide for adequately. Let us therefore not make the mistake of expecting help from elsewhere

in planning the growth of our population. It is our own responsibility, just as much as we have the duty to plan for our own prosperity.

Turning now to international affairs, I am proud to say that Kenya as a member of the international community participated actively in the celebrations to mark the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations. Our youth have also taken an active part in many events within as well as outside our borders to mark the International Youth Year. Regionally, we have played our part in strengthening our trade and other forms of regional co-operation. Kenyans would like to assure the world, that we shall continue to do our utmost towards improving the world we live in.

The deteriorating situation in South Africa continues to cause us much concern. It is indeed disheartening that even after many resolutions that have been made by the international community to dismantle apartheid, the racist Government of South Africa has continued to waste away the lives of its people. The recent turn of events go to prove to the entire world that the racist regime understands no other language than violence.

If violence and loss of life will liberate South Africa as it has done here in Kenya and elsewhere in Africa, then let us show the South African racists that we shall not turn back until we get a just government of men in that part of Africa. Kenyans wish their brothers and sisters who continue to be oppressed by the racists in South Africa to know that they have our unflinching support in their just struggle.

Kenya is committed to peace throughout the world. We are also committed to the spirit of good neighbourliness and to the unity and prosperity of East Africa. Kenyans believe that the war in Uganda cannot bring victory or glory to any of the warring parties. Indeed, the carnage and insecurity which has plagued Uganda for nearly twenty years, has only succeeded in creating despair, excessive suffering and irreparable damage which has shaken the very fabric of society. As a result of this prolonged

instability, many Ugandans have left their homeland in search of peaceful life in other countries.

This state of affairs cannot obviously continue without jeopardizing the peace and development of all the neighbouring countries who are made to provide an alternative home to displaced persons. It is therefore perfectly clear that we here in Kenya, and all other countries have a stake in seeing a peaceful Uganda. It is for this reason that we have gone out of our way during the past few months to provide facilities for the warring parties to bring peace to Uganda.

I wish to reiterate today, that in the final analysis, it is only Ugandans themselves who can guarantee their own peace. It is therefore, the ardent hope of all Kenyans, and indeed all peace loving peoples of the world, that those who are fighting in Uganda, and those who are negotiating for peace in Nairobi will see the need to give their people the gift of peace during this Christmas season.

I now conclude by reminding Kenyans of the need to think more deeply about the call of our own national anthem. We pray God to bless our nation. We vouch that justice will be foundation of our development. We pledge to work hard to build and defend our country. We recognize that by doing this, we shall earn the respect we deserve as a nation. Every Kenyan must now think more seriously about this oath and prayer; this great commitment we make every time we sing our national anthem. As we go about building our nation in peace, love and unity, let us resolve to make 1986 a year of positive action by vigorously implementing decisions we have made in the past.

For the past seven years, I have been encouraged and motivated by the support you have all given me. I assure you that I will continue to serve this country to the best of my ability. This is because I know that I can count on the support of each and every Kenyan today, as I have done in the past, as we together strive to build a more prosperous and united Kenya.

Thank you.