

REMARKS BY HER EXCELLENCY DR. SAMIA SULUHU
HASSAN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF
TANZANIA DURING THE DIPLOMATIC SHERRY PARTY
HOSTED FOR THE HEADS OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS
AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS
7TH FEBRUARY 2024, STATE HOUSE, DAR ES SALAAM

- *Honourable January Makamba (MP), Minister for Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation;*
- *Deputy Ministers,*
- *Ambassador Dr. Moses Kusiluka, Chief Secretary,*
- *Ambassador Dr. Samwel Shelukindo, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation;*
- *Deputies Permanent Secretary,*

- *Your Excellency Dr. Ahamada El Badaoui Mohamed Fakh, Ambassador of the Union of the Comoros and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps;*
- *Excellencies, Heads of Diplomatic Missions and International Organizations,*
- *Chargé d'Affaires,*
- *Distinguished Guests;*
- *Ladies and Gentlemen;*

Good Evening!

Foreword

In the spirit of friendship, allow me to once again welcome you all to the State House here in Dar es Salaam for this

traditional annual diplomatic gathering – the Sherry Party. Thank you for honouring my invitation.

Since, we are meeting for the first time barely a month since the commencement of the new year 2024, let me use this opportunity to wish all of you a Happy New Year! It is my belief that, we have all started the year 2024 in good spirit and sound health.

There are High Commissioners, Ambassadors, and Representatives of International Organizations who have joined the Diplomatic Community since our last gathering. I warmly welcome you and assure you of my personal, and the Government's, full support during your tour of duty in the country.

Allow me to convey greetings and appreciation from H.E Dr. Hussein Ally Mwinyi, President of Zanzibar and Chairman of the Revolutionary Council of Zanzibar, for your participation in the 60th Anniversary of the Zanzibar Revolution.

Excellencies, 4th February 2024 was a sad day to many of us especially we members of the SADC region. We lost a great statesman, a gallant son of the soil - His Excellency Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia. The late President Geingob was a dear brother, a comrade and a friend to many. He was a true pan-Africanist, visionary leader, a freedom fighter and one among the pivotal figures who led Namibia's road to independence.

We in Tanzania share Namibia's grief and join our brothers to mourn the loss of this great statesman. We pray that the

Almighty God give the people of Namibia and his family, solace, courage and strength to endure this great loss. In this regard, May I now request you all to stand up and join me in observing a minute of silence in the memory of His Excellency Hage Geingob. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

May I also convey our best wishes to His Excellency Nangolo Mbumba on his assumption of the Presidency, and I assure him of our support and cooperation.

Domestic Situation

Politics and cohesion

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Just like the past years, the year 2023 had its challenges but we managed to sail through, remaining stable, peaceful and united.

This year, Tanzania will mark yet another milestone in its realization of the fundamental human right of freedom to participate in public affairs and in upholding democracy by holding Local Government Elections. We will ensure democratic space is open for all, adherence to the rule of law and good governance will be maintained by all and at all times during the elections. To ensure free and fair elections, I formed an independent Task Force to review and advise on necessary reforms in the entire political ecosystem in the country. The Task Force submitted its report last year, and most of its recommendations revolved around increasing transparency in the electoral processes including the appointment of the Chairman of

the Electoral Commission. Another recommendation was on the change and naming of the electoral body to reflect its independence. And so we have a new name, *Tume Huru ya Uchaguzi*. Most of the recommendations received were accepted by Government and all stakeholders involved, and these include the most considered controversial items. Among the few items that were deferred, directly or indirectly were contrary to the Constitution, and thus would be taken up during the constitution review process in due course.

In order for the accepted recommendations to have the force of law, we drafted and tabled to the Parliament three Bills aiming at addressing recommendations by the Task Force. Recently, the Parliament debated on the Bills and on 2nd February, 2024 the Bills secured an approval. I will Assent to the Bills into law in the due course.

With these reforms in place, we will ensure elections are held in a free and fair manner within an agreed Institutional framework. Rest assured that, peace and security will prevail at all times and at all costs. We will embrace opportunities for constructive engagements with your governments in line with our Constitution, national values, sovereign equality and our National Unity and cohesion. As usual, we expect strict adherence to the diplomatic customs and code of conduct and foreign electoral interference is not expected.

This year, 2024, our Union will mark 60 years since its establishment. This will serve as an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment not only to our Union, but also to the aspirations of the Union to improve the lives and livelihood of Tanzanians. As we mark this historic milestone, we invite you to join us in

commemorating this anniversary. It is gratifying to also note that, that we will also be commemorating 60 years of our relations with a number of your countries.

Economic front

Excellencies,

On the economic front, we are all aware of the challenges facing the global economy. Tanzania, much like your own countries, had to take measures to mitigate the impacts of global shocks to our economy. We implemented robust monetary policies to ensure price stability, stimulate growth, and financial sector stability. We managed to keep inflation at 3.9 percent, below our target of 5 percent. Our GDP growth rate reached 5.2 percent, up from 4.7 percent in 2022. The national debt continues

to be sustainable with the debt-to-GDP ratio currently standing at 35.6 percent, below the threshold of 50 percent.

Encouragingly, we got more signals of confidence in our future economic situation. Up to December 2023, we registered 526 new large investment projects in total valued at over 5.6 billion US dollars, a 58 percent increase from the preceding year. Out of these 526 investments, 57 were expanded projects, signalling sustained confidence in Tanzania's growth trajectory. In addition, both Fitch and Moody credit rating agencies gave Tanzania a favourable credit score in 2023, a positive step in building international confidence and attracting more Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs). We pledge to ensure the existing investments are protected and secured.

We are continuing with our industrialization journey and we have experienced a rise in key economic sectors. The leading sectors include; Agriculture, of which its productivity continued to grow, with the food self-sufficiency ratio standing at 124%. In mining, we witnessed a 6.43% increase in mineral production. We have witnessed notable growth in the tourism sector with receipts rising from 2.33 billion US dollars in 2022 up to 3.22 billion US dollars in 2023. In the third quarter of 2023, industrial productivity grew by 4.2%.

Infrastructure

Excellencies,

In 2023, the Government continued its drive to ensure connectivity and connectedness between its people and regions through construction of roads, bridges, railways and ferries. By

mid-2024, we expect the stretch from Dar es Salaam to Makutupora, Dodoma of the Standard Gauge Railway to be operational. We thank all our development partners who are working with us in various lots of the railway. We are grateful to AfDB for securing funding for us to develop the SGR link to Burundi and subsequently connecting to the DRC. This project, along with road and sea projects, is expected to contribute significantly to enhancing the regional connectivity and connectedness.

Energy

Regarding the energy sector, we have been experiencing power deficits and we have already increased the use of other sources, like gas, to address the shortage. In the coming weeks we expect the historic launch of our flagship project the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Dam. This project will add 2,115

megawatts of sustainable, clean power to the national grid. We envisage that the turbines to be launched between now and March will cover the present power shortfall.

In 2024, Tanzania will continue to prioritize cross border power generation projects. We have done with the neighbouring country of Uganda last year where we launched the Murongo-Kikagati joint hydropower project. This year, we will commission the Rusumo project, undertaken jointly between Burundi, Rwanda and Tanzania. We will continue to champion efforts to promote availability of affordable energy to ensure energy sufficiency across the region.

Vision 2050

Your Excellencies,

For the last two decades our development agenda has been guided by Vision 2025 popularly known as TDV 2025 and it will come to an end in 2 years. The initial review of the Vision 2025 noted commendable progress in realizing outcomes, notably in social services sector. We have seen the significant reduction in maternal and child mortality rate, an increase in the number of safe births at health facilities and an increase in the overall life expectancy. We have also witnessed a large increase in the access to education for our youth. Whereas the economy has grown significantly, what the review showed was that the growth was often not in sectors that would lift many people out of poverty. That is the weakness of our implementation of Vision 2025. We have taken note of this to ensure our future aspirations will focus on the identified challenges. That being said, we express our

gratitude to all the development partners for their support in the implementation of the Vision 2025 over the past two decades.

On another move, The Planning Commission was re-established last year, and it was tasked to coordinate the drafting of the new vision, Tanzania Development Vision 2050 or TDV 2050. Among other things we hope the new vision document will provide some answers to the critical development questions including the shortfalls identified in the review of the Vision 2025. We request your continued support as we prepare our new development blueprint. Our Planning Commission will keep updating you on the process.

Reforms agenda

In our quest to improve performance of our State-Owned Enterprises (SOE), in 2023 we embarked on significant reforms at

the Office of the Treasury Registrar (TR), as the overseer of all state-owned enterprises. Necessary legal reforms have been undertaken to strengthen the office. The initial assignment by undertaken the Office of the Treasury Registrar last year, was the amalgamation of 16, and dissolution of 4 state-owned enterprises.

Another major reform during the period, was the enactment of a legislation on the Universal Health Insurance. We are aware that, this is going to be an uphill task, but we find it to be a just cause. Our aspiration is to reform the sector and ensure universal health coverage to our population. We are continuing with institutional capacity building and improving capabilities of the personnel, to ensure access to affordable healthcare for all in line with the WHO guidelines and recommendations. We count on your usual support in this noble cause.

Bilateral Cooperation

Excellencies, Dear Friends,

I am pleased with the progress made in fostering bilateral cooperation among our partners. In 2023, myself and other top government officials undertook various high-level visits to many of your countries. We also had the honour and privilege to host high-level dignitaries from across the world. Through these visits, we have significantly solidified and concretised our relations especially on areas of priority to Tanzania including agriculture, health, energy, blue economy, manufacturing, technology, technical know-how in extractive industry, and human capital development. We will ensure effective implementation of the outcomes of these visits. More areas of cooperation are expected

to emerge through the Joint Permanent Commissions and Joint Cooperation Commissions (JPCs /JCCs).

We value the partnership we have with your respective countries and organizations and appreciate the significant contribution in the implementation of our national development. In 2024, Tanzania was approved for the MCC Threshold Program. We appreciate the partnership that we continue to have with the US and its contribution to Tanzania's development. We also welcome Denmark's decision to continue its diplomatic presence in Tanzania. We value this decision given the historic significance of our relations as the first African country that Denmark established diplomatic relations with. All these attest to the reform agenda we are undertaking particularly in areas of good governance and Human Rights.

Regional Integration

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Fostering regionalism is one of the key principles of our foreign policy. We firmly believe in and appreciate the role of regional and sub-regional organizations in addressing regional challenges. This is especially so in areas of trade and investment, as well as infrastructure development, and socio-economic issues. Henceforth, we are determined to boost intra and inter-regional trade of goods and services while encouraging free movement of people, goods and capital. This is in facilitation of the African free trade market.

The role of regional and sub-regional organisations has also been key in addressing challenges in the areas of peace and

security. The situation in the region has a bearing on Tanzania, we will continue to support regional efforts to finding durable solutions and lasting peace in the Great Lakes Region. Under the SADC framework, Tanzania joined SAMIM in Mozambique and SAMIDRC in Eastern DRC as part of the military approach, complementing the political approach.

Notwithstanding this, we underscore that a lasting solution will be arrived at through dialogue. As such, we will also continue to support all mediation efforts already in place. Recent developments on instability in the region is of great concern. It does not augur well for regional integration and also threatens the gains made in the regional integration process.

The regional blocks have to prioritize dialogue over conflict, and choose understanding and resolution instead of perpetuating

obstacles and strife. As such, Tanzania will continue advocating for dialogue and peaceful settlement of disputes and differences.

On another front, Tanzania commends the African Union Member States that successfully held elections in 2023. We are also expressing our best wishes to Member States scheduled to undertake elections in 2024, and urge them to maintain the recent positive democratic momentum witnessed on the continent.

International/Multilateral Cooperation

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the year 2023, Tanzania took part in various fora seeking to find solutions to the challenges facing our region and our world. Tanzania added its voice to critical conversations at the

United Nations General Assembly, African Union, BRICS, NAM and COP28. We also hosted a number of fora critical to advancing Africa's development agenda. In collaboration with the World Bank, Tanzania hosted the African Heads of State Human Capital summit, and also hosted the Africa Food Systems Summit in partnership with the AGRF. We appreciate your involvement in making these and other meetings a success.

Defending Multilateralism

In the year 2024, Tanzania will continue advocating for multilateralism and actively participating in efforts that seek to address the common challenges facing humanity. In 2023, we continued to experience the devastating impacts of unilateralism, including in the Middle East.

Tanzania remains fully committed and ready to support the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security to make the world a safer place to live in. In this regard, we have and will continue to contribute to peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts, in Africa and elsewhere in the world. Tanzania is the 10th largest contributor to peacekeeping operations and currently contributes to 5 UN missions, namely MONUSCO, MINUSCA, UNIFIL, UNMISS and UNISFA. We also encourage the effective use of peaceful settlement of disputes as envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations and for the Security Council to fulfil its responsibilities.

Tanzania is concerned by the ongoing war in Palestine which is causing the uncalled for, senseless killing of innocent children and civilians. We underscore the need for a lasting solution and we support the two-state solution with Palestine and

Israel living side by side in peaceful co-existence, with pre-1967 borders. We also call for a cessation of hostilities and resumption of humanitarian aid access.

I also wish to underscore that Tanzania is firmly committed and will continue to support the One China Policy which recognizes Taiwan as an inalienable part of China.

Sustainable Development Goals

Tanzania is fully committed to implement the SDGs. In 2023, Tanzania presented its second Voluntary National Report (VNR) which shows significant progress with respect to SDGs 2 – 7 characterized by an increase in food self-sufficiency ratio, availability of essential medicines, decline in under 5 mortality, increase in pre and primary education Gross Enrollment Rate

(GERs), significant milestones in pioneering gender equality, improved water supply coverage in urban and rural areas as well as population connected to electricity.

To ensure successful implementation of SDGs, Tanzania is determined to take actions to further improve the domestic revenues, while capitalizing on Public Private Partnerships (PPPs). We are also prioritizing investments in the social service sectors, agriculture and agribusiness, value addition and infrastructure development, as well as uplifting of skills for the youth.

Climate Change

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Climate change is an existential threat affecting many countries globally. Tanzania like other countries in East Africa faced devastating El Niño-induced heavy rains from September to December 2023 that claimed lives, left many displaced and destroyed properties. The devastation caused by a landslide in Katesh township of Hanang district of Manyara region is still fresh in our minds. We thank all friends and partners who extended a helping hand during the disaster. With your much needed support and solidarity, the Government was able to make prompt interventions such as the drilling of water wells, distribution of water tanks, provision of tents and essential medicines to prevent waterborne diseases. Ongoing heavy rains have also affected roads, bridges and houses in different parts of the country, especially here in Dar es Salaam. Despite all this, our commitment to reconstruction has never faltered one bit. In due

course, we will recover and build resilience to withstand future crises.

In terms of climate actions, I wish to applaud the landmark decision of COP28 to implement a Loss and Damage Fund, which will direct funding toward countries most vulnerable to the effects of extreme weather conditions. Moreover, COP28 provided a platform to conclude the first-ever global stocktake, a comprehensive assessment of progress since the 2015 Paris Agreement. It is encouraging to see member states agree on the UAE consensus that calls on nations to transit from fossil fuels to green energy, so as to achieve net zero by 2050. We also agreed to triple global renewable energy production by 2030, and establish a Fund to help developing nations adapt to the effects of climate change.

On our part, we will continue to plant and maintain 1.5 million trees-target annually as stipulated in the Manifesto of Chama Cha Mapinduzi.

We will also promote clean cooking for rural women in Africa, in the context of the African Women Clean Cooking Support Programme (AWCCSP), which I had the honour of launching during COP28. Following the launch, I will Co-Chair the International Summit on Clean Cooking in Africa that Tanzania is co-organizing with Norway and the International Energy Agency. The Summit will be held in May 2024 in Paris, France. The Clean Cooking Support Programme will assist in the implementation of the national strategy for clean cooking energy, aiming to ensure 80 percent of Tanzanians use clean cooking energy by 2033.

Excellencies,

It is undeniable that Tanzania's outlook on the global scene in 2023 was promising. In the year 2024, we will raise our voice, offer solutions, and actively participate in efforts that seek to resolve common challenges facing humanity. We will do so, while maintaining the traditional tenets that have guided our foreign attitude since independence, including promotion of peace and stability, good neighbourliness, adherence to the principle of non-alignment, non-interference in domestic affairs of other countries, upholding human rights, including the right to development, and promoting regionalism and multilateralism.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It will be remiss of me if I do not appreciate the support rendered by your respective Governments to various

candidatures of Tanzania in different international organizations including the Presidency of the Inter- Parliamentary Union (IPU) at the election held in Luanda, Angola in October 2023. Your support enabled Right Honourable Dr. Tulia Ackson, Speaker of the National Assembly of the United Republic of Tanzania to emerge victorious and become the first female President of IPU from Africa. Indeed, this is a remarkable achievement and a great sense of inspiration to the girl child in Tanzania and beyond. This year, Tanzania will continue to bank on your invaluable support.

Excellencies,

Allow me to conclude by re-assuring you of my unwavering commitment and that of my Government to enhance the existing ties and partnership with your countries and organizations. It is my sincere hope that in year 2024 we will have more enriching

encounters and success in our endeavours both on bilateral and multilateral bases.

I should now end my remarks as I began by wishing you, your families, staff, Governments and Organizations a happy and prosperous new year 2024.

May I now request you to join me in a toast:

- *For the continued peace and prosperity of the United Republic of Tanzania;*
- *For the strengthened friendship and cooperation between Tanzania and your countries and organizations; and*
- *For the continued wellbeing of all of us here present.*