



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

Speech

by

His Excellency

Hon. Daniel T. arap Moi, C.G.H., M.P.

President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces
of the Republic of Kenya

on the occasion of

**The State Opening of the Fourth Session
of the Seventh Parliament**

on

Tuesday, 21st March, 1995

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT,
HON. DANIEL T. ARAP MOI, C.G.H., M.P., ON THE
OCCASION OF THE STATE OPENING OF THE
FOURTH SESSION OF THE SEVENTH PARLIAMENT
ON TUESDAY, 21st MARCH, 1995**

MR. SPEAKER,

My first and very pleasant duty this afternoon is to welcome all Honourable Members to the Fourth Session of our Seventh Parliament. I trust that Honourable Members have had enough time to consult their constituents and are now even better prepared to represent the wishes of the electorate for the benefit of the country.

Our happiness is, however, incomplete on this occasion due to the recent departure of our colleague the late Hon. John Musembi Kyalo, Member of Parliament for Machakos Town. May I now request this House to rise up and observe a minute's silence in honour of that faithful son of Kenya and a knowledgeable debater.

THANK YOU.

During the Third Session of the Seventh Parliament, I appealed to Honourable Members to be at the fore-front in adopting a patriotic stand to national issues. I deliberately emphasized this need for a united, selfless and patriotic approach to national issues for two reasons; firstly, it is my genuine conviction that Kenyans deserve the best from all their leaders. Secondly, that it is the duty of Parliament to set a good example and offer guidance to other institutions, especially the local authorities.

Mr. Speaker, I will never get tired of reiterating that the overriding concern of every Kenyan, and in particular leaders like the Honourable Members in this august House, irrespective of party affiliation, should be to preserve peace, unity and the essential character of our nation.

Mr. Speaker,

As we go about our business of formulating laws and debating policies, in this august House, we are duty bound to speak and conduct ourselves in a disciplined manner, indeed a manner befitting Honourable Members. All of us should carefully examine the statements we make both in this House and elsewhere and ensure that they are beneficial to the nation. Irresponsible utterances can mislead our people and undermine the unity we have worked so hard to achieve.

In discussing Bills either sponsored by opposition or the Government, I hope Honourable Members will draw a clear distinction between narrow party interests and broader national interests. In this regard, as I have said on a previous occasion, I do not expect members of the ruling party to oppose a bill merely because it is sponsored by the opposition. Similarly, I do not expect the opposition to block legislation simply to frustrate the Government. We must all work towards the realization of the national interest. That is what our people expect from us.

Mr. Speaker,

As I have said on many occasions the welfare of wananchi and our national sovereignty must remain the focus of all our national development efforts. There is need therefore to rededicate ourselves to the ideals of patriotism. As law makers, we are duty bound to promote and safeguard the interest of the people and country at large. This can only come about through the harnessing of our efforts and resources in all our development goals and strategies. Meaningful development must therefore bring with it tangible benefits which will enhance the quality and standard of life for our people. It is therefore imperative for all of us to endeavour to always promote peace and stability.

I need not over-emphasize the importance of maintenance of law and order in our midst. We should not take our hard-won peace and development achievements for granted.

More than ever before we should strive to maintain peace and tranquility without which there can be no development. The painful lessons of the breakdown of law and order leading to total chaos and national disintegration in some countries of the region are all too clear examples for us to take note of. It is, therefore, imperative for all Kenyans to be vigilant against all designs and forms of threats to our security, national stability, and sovereignty as a country. My Government will never compromise in discharging its duty to protect all Kenyans and their property. Honourable Members must play their part in the consolidation of national unity. Divisive and parochial political interests, which encourage destructive politics which can undermine the very basis of our nationhood must not be allowed to take root.

Mr. Speaker,

As you are aware, my Government supported the Structural Adjustment Programmes with a hope to putting the economy back on high positive growth path. Indications so far are that these reforms have begun to yield substantial gains. However, the reforms have had a severely negative impact on the lives of the vulnerable members of our population. It is in recognition of this and the need to cushion the poor from the effects of liberalization that I convened and chaired a National Conference on Social Dimensions of Development on 12th October, 1994.

My Government with the assistance of donors, is already funding some social dimension projects which are part of the Public Investment Programme. Some of these were presented at the National Conference on Social Dimensions of Development mentioned earlier and at the Consultative Group Meeting in Paris in December last year.

My Government's participation in the recently concluded World Summit on Social Development, in Copenhagen, Denmark, where alleviation of poverty was discussed at

length, forms part of the efforts aimed at identifying more projects and seeking for additional support in this endeavour.

During the working of the Fourth Session of the Seventh Parliament, Honourable Members will be called upon to deliberate on a number of Bills which will be laid before the House by my Government. The Bills cover wide range of issues which affect our people and their welfare, and I would like to reiterate my earlier statement on the need for joint and realistic approach amongst Honourable Members towards the improvement of our people's welfare.

Mr. Speaker,

In conclusion, let me emphasize once again the sanctity of our Parliament and the immense expectation of our people have from this institution. There should be seriousness and commitment by Honourable Members regarding parliamentary business. I expect a great deal of decorum during debates, respect for the Standing Orders, attendance, and smooth transaction of parliamentary business throughout the session. This is the least that the electorate expect from their representatives.

Let us all join together in making the welfare of our people even better and our country the best place to live in now and in future. With these remarks, Mr. Speaker, I wish Honourable Members a fruitful session.

THANK YOU.

STATE HOUSE,
NAIROBI
20TH MARCH, 1995.