

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT,  
HON. DANIEL T. ARAP MOI, C.G.H., M.P., ON THE  
OCCASION OF MOI DAY, ON MONDAY,  
10th OCTOBER, 1994**

**MY DEAR KENYANS,  
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,  
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

I send warm and brotherly greetings today to all Kenyans wherever they may be, celebrating this year's Moi Day. It has been my desire that Moi Day be a day of "Being Mindful of each other's welfare": A day of thanksgiving and giving service to others.

My greetings also go to our friends and well-wishers all over the world, especially those who have sent messages of greetings and goodwill.

I have said before, this day should not be a day for lavish celebrations, but a day during which we remind ourselves of one noble tradition in our society, namely: compassion. I am pleased that Kenyans have taken heed of my call to appreciate the values of compassion. Indeed, many of them have been involved in the build-up activities to mark this important day. I am delighted that school groups, social workers, health workers and educators, to name but a few, have been involved in giving service. This service has included visiting the sick in hospital, children and destitute homes. I am also aware that our health workers have given free medical service and that various people have had the opportunity, one way or the other to serve others.

This effort should strengthen our basic traditions and the practice of compassion as exemplified in the biblical parable of the good samaritan. The spirit should not be confined to Moi Day but should grow from these humble beginnings to form part of our very lives.

More than ever before, it is incumbent upon us all to uphold and perpetuate this practice in Kenya, particularly during these times of economic difficulties. The poor, the unemployed, women and children in our society have increasingly become vulnerable to various hardships especially during the implementation of Structural Adjustment Programmes. The Government

recognizes that the Structural Adjustment Programmes in Kenya, as elsewhere in the developing countries, have demanded short-term sacrifices that has resulted in a decline in our people's welfare.

The cost of living, education and medical services has risen beyond the ability of a large section of the Kenyan population. Many people have also been forced out of employment as a result of the structural adjustment policies which brought about a reduction in jobs leading to early retirement of certain cadres. The Government is, however, concerned and committed to ensure that the welfare of all Kenyans is protected. Indeed, in the 1994/95 Annual Budget, my Government provided six billion shillings for food security, bursaries for children whose parents may not afford to pay school fees and other programmes that address social dimension. My Government is also working out more programmes that will be spread across many sectors of the economy including programmes to enable the Government to provide drugs and materials to rural health clinics, as well as site and service house improvement for the urban poor and safety nets for those retiring early from the public sector. These programmes will be implemented in such a manner as not to jeopardise our current objective of achieving a balanced budget without imposing heavy taxes on the already over burdened tax-payers.

Despite the fact that the shilling compared to the dollar and other currencies has gained strength considerably, it is unfortunate that some people and firms have already taken unfair advantage of current market liberalization to impose or maintain unwarranted price increases on their goods and services. Initially, the Government expected that the liberalization process would stimulate agricultural and industrial production as prices of some essential goods and services would be based on the dictates of market forces. However, some monopolistic industries, have continued to charge unnecessarily high prices. I urge such industries to be mindful of other people's welfare by reviewing the prices of their products downward in order for them to be affordable to the ordinary people. It is, however, our policy to discourage such monopolies and monopolistic tendencies by industries.

To address these issues, the Government came up with strategies expounded in Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1986 and also in Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1994. These strategies formed the linchpin of the economic reform aimed at stimulating the economy to generate national wealth for a better standard of living for all Kenyans.

Similarly, the Government through the Kenya Bureau of Standards is implementing about 1,500 standards to protect the consumer from getting sub-standard products. Similar measures will be taken against dumping of sub-standard goods and services from abroad. This should enhance consumer confidence by maintaining constant surveillance on prices and quality of goods and thereby minimizing the adverse effects of price liberalization on our people.

Fellow Kenyans,

It is also against this background, that I urge you to guard against the dangers of being self-centred. Despite the changing and sometimes vicious socio-economic circumstances; compassion, caring for each other and upholding of our cultural values and objectives of African socialism must remain central in everything we do or say.

For this reason, I wish to remind all Kenyans and particularly religious groups in our country to revisit their social responsibilities and address more seriously social problems afflicting our people today. For instance, Christianity, Islam and other religions must be in the forefront in preaching good moral practices and social accountability in their followers. They must desist from politicizing social issues and short-comings with the sole aim of catching media headlines. In our society today, immorality has almost become a social norm while incidences of disease, drug abuse, and corruption have not received the serious attention they deserve. At the same time the plight of the disabled, school drop-outs and street children have been left to a few charitable institutions and individuals. Sooner or later, we shall have a more complex problem of "street families" from the current crop of street children.

My Government continues to support efforts to eradicate the plight of these needy and disadvantaged members of our society.

Already funds have been set aside for this worthy cause. I must thank charitable organizations and the many able members of our country for their generous donations, financial and material, to the National Fund for the Disabled, the Presidential Bursary Fund for Bright Children from Poor Families and the recently launched Presidential Fund for Street Children. I would like to thank them all on behalf of the beneficiaries of these funds and I urge them to continue to support the less fortunate in our society.

I wish to refer also to the little known issues of special education which also deserves equal and urgent attention. Whereas the Government is committed to the realization of universal basic education for all Kenyans, enrolment in special education has remained static. Currently there are 95 special schools with an enrolment of 10,454 and 14 rehabilitation centres. Each special school for the handicapped has a vocational component which aims at imparting some craft skills to the handicapped children. Enrolment especially at the pre-primary level is hampered by lack of adequate information to parents and traditional stigmas associated with handicapped people in some communities.

To alleviate this situation and in order to increase access to education for children with special needs, my Government has initiated programmes aimed at sensitizing parents on the needs and capabilities of their handicapped children. Efforts have also been made to enhance special units in normal schools so that less handicapped children can be integrated in these schools. In order to ensure adequate provision of teachers, the Kenya Institute of Special Education is being expanded. In addition, the Government continues to support the National Fund for the Disabled, whose efforts together with those of various Non-Governmental Organizations and donor agencies offer crucial support in the training and rehabilitation of disabled persons.

In this connection, I have called for a leaders' conference on Wednesday, 12th October, 1994, to discuss with donors, Non-Governmental Organizations, industrialists, and religious groups the plight of the poor vulnerable Kenyans. We intend to identify some practical and cost effective ways to assist the disadvantaged in our society.

The progress we have made in political and economic reforms, I feel should give Kenyans legitimate reasons to feel proud for

what we have accomplished, together. I thank Kenyans for their patience and understanding which has enabled the Government to carry out the reforms with remarkable success.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is therefore appropriate that we celebrate this occasion with sincere humility, concern for our fellow men and service to the disadvantaged in our society. We should not forget to thank the Almighty God for the blessings He has bestowed upon us. Indeed, there is hope in God, and therein lies the future of this nation.

The re-introduction of multi-party politics on this land, has been accompanied by political and social mistrust which threatened to tear our nation apart. But we held on together as a nation in spite of the agitations to cause chaos and rock the stability of our country. With God's protection and guidance we were able to defeat agents of disunity and hate, and economic saboteurs. Kenyans in their wisdom and love for their motherland resisted all attempts to divide them along the narrow tribal, social and religious lines. Irrespective of their social standing, Kenyans of goodwill stood firm in love, peace and unity.

I salute all Kenyans who stood firmly for national unity. I appeal to all Kenyans to subordinate their individual interests to those of the nation and remain steadfast in their unity while rejecting divisive and petty politics in order to build a strong and a prosperous nation for the welfare of this generation and the generations to come.

*THANK YOU AND MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL.*