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MADARAKA DAY

Message to the Nation



Hotuba ya  
Mheshimiwa Rais  
Mwai Kibaki

1st June, 2006

**HOTUBA YA MHESHIMIWA MWAI KIBAKI, C.G.H.,  
M.P., RAIS NA AMIRI JESHI MKUU WA MAJESHI YA  
KENYA WAKATI WA MAADHIMISHO YA SIKU KUU  
YA MADARAKA, TAREHE MOSI JUNI, 2006**

WAKENYA WENZANGU,  
MABIBI NA MABWANA,

Tunaposheherekea siku kuu ya 43 ya Madaraka, ningependa kuanza kwa kuwasalimu Wakenya wote na marafiki wetu popote walipo.

Tunasheherekea siku kuu hii kwa sababu inaadhimisha hatua muhimu ya kwanza ya kuondolea mbali minyororo ya ukolini na kuchukua jukumu la kusimamia maswala ya taifa letu. Huku tunaposheherekea siku kuu hii, ni muhimu kwa kila mmoja wetu kutambua wajibu wa kulihudumia taifa hili kwa dhati na uaminifu.

Ni muhimu pia kutilia maanani wajibu wetu wa kuijenga Kenya kupitia utekelezaji haki na kazi kwa bidii ambao ndio nguzo ya ufanisi, usalama na furaha kwetu sisi wote.

Wakenya Wenzangu,

Siku kuu kama hii, miaka mitatu iliyopita, nilielezea maono yangu ya kuifanya Kenya kuwa taifa tekelezi kazi. Nilielezea wazi wazi kwamba hali mbaya ya uchumi na umaskini ni mambo ambayo yangeondolewa kwa kuwafanya wananchi kurejelea tena uzalishaji wa mali.

Niliahidi kwamba Serikali yangu itaanzisha maongozi na sheria zifaazo ikiwa ni pamoja na kufufua tena mashirika yaliyoangamia na kuyafanya kutekeleza kazi ipasavyo.

Leo hii ni furaha yangu kuona kwamba viwanda hivyo vimefufuliwa na kuanza uzalishaji wa mali. Wakulima wetu katika sekta muhimu za nafaka, maziwa, majani chai na kahawa wanafurahia mapato ya juu. Katika sekta ya umma, waalimu,

watumishi wa umma na maafisa wa polisi wanapokea mshahara mzuri.

Matunda ya kufanya kazi kwa bidii hivi sasa yanafurahiwa kote nchini. Hata hivyo, wepo miongoni mwa jamii ambao hawajapata manufaa ya matunda ya mafanikio yetu. Umaskini ungali kikwazo kikubwa ilhali ajira kwa vijana ni tatizo linalotukabili. Je ni nini tunachokifanya kutatua maswala hayo muhimu?

Tunafahamu kwamba hatuwezi kudhibiti jitihada zetu za maendeleo wakati ambapo viungo muhimu miongoni mwa jamii havishirikishwi katika jitihada za kuimarisha uchumi. Serikali yangu inafanya kila iwezalo kuhakikisha kwamba Wakenya wengi wanafurahia matunda ya ustawi wa kiuchumi.

Mnano siku kuu hii ya 43 ya madaraka, ningependa kuwafahamisha jinsi Serikali inavyokabiliana na majukumu ya kutoa huduma kwa umma, ikiwa ni pamoja na kudhibiti usalama, kuharakisha ustawi wa uchumi, kutoa ajira zaidi na ushirikiano wa kanda.

Wakenya wenzangu,

Kwa muda wa miaka mitatu iliyopita, Serikali yangu imehakikisha usimamizi bora wa maswala ya kitaifa kwa kuzingatia maongozi yaafayo ya kiuchumi. Tumetilia mkazo kurejeshwa kwa nidhamu katika usimamizi wa raslimali za umma na kuimarisha taasisi za utawala na vita dhidi ya ufiisadi.

Juhudi hizo zimezaa matunda kama ilivyodhihirika na ustawi wa uchumi. Serikali imedumisha kiwango cha kuridhisha cha ustawi wa kiuchumi tangu mwaka wa 2003. Mwaka uliopita, tulifikia kiwango cha ustawi wa uchumi cha aslimia 5.8, ambacho ndicho kikubwa zaidi kufikiwa katika muda wa miaka 20 iliyopita.

Ukweli ni kwamba, sekta zote za kiuchumi zilifikia ufanisi mkubwa mwaka uliopita ikilinganishwa na mwaka uliotangulia. Kwa mfano, sekta ya kilimo ilitawi kwa aslimia 6.9 ikilinganishwa na kiwango cha aslimia 1.7 mwaka wa 2004. Mafanikio hayo yalipatikana licha ya hali mbaya ya ukame ulioangamiza mimea na mifugo kote nchini.

Sekta ya utengenezaji wa bidhaa ilitawi kwa kiwango cha aslimia 5.5 mwaka uliopita, ilhali mapato ya utalii yaliongezeka kutoka shilingi bilioni 39 mwaka wa 2004 hadi shilingi bilioni 49 mwaka wa 2005.

Utumizi wa saruji ambao ndio nguzo ya sekta ya ujenzi ilitawi kwa aslimia 11. Kuhusu biashara, mauzo ya bidhaa katika nchi za shirika la COMESA yaliongezeka kwa kiasi kikubwa cha aslimia 20, ilhali mauzo ya bidhaa katika Jumuiya ya Afrika Mashariki yalichangia nusu ya mauzo ya jumla ya bidhaa katika kanda ya Afrika. Je! Wakenya wananufaika kiviipi kutokana na ustawi huo wa uchumi?

Hivi sasa, Serikali inakusanya raslimali zaidi kufadhili miradi kwa wananchi. Kwa mfano, tunagharamia elimu ya shule za msingi bila malipo kwa watoto zaidi ya milioni 7.6; tumezindua tena vituo vya afya na zahanati kote nchini ambazo zilifungwa kutokana na uhaba wa fedha na wahudumu, ilhali tunaendelea kujenga nyingine mpya; tunaendelea kukarabati barabara ambazo ziliachiliwa kuzorota ilhali ujenzi wa barabara mpya unaendelea katika sehemu zote za nchi; tumefufua miradi iliyokwama, nyingi yazo imekamilishwa na hivi sasa inatoa huduma kwa wananchi; tunawaunga mkono wakulima wetu kuongeza uzalishaji wao wa bidhaa kwa kuwalipa ipasavyo; Tumedhibiti kiwango cha riba na kuimarisha mazingira ya biashara na uekezaji. Mambo yanaendelea kuwa sawa sawa na ninawahakikishia nyote kwamba yataendelea kuwa bora zaidi.

Licha ya hatua hizo, Serikali yangu inasambaza raslimali hadi mashinani kufadhili miradi ya kijamii.

Kwa sasa hivi, Serikali inatumia kati ya shilingi milioni 50 na milioni 70 kwa mwaka kwa kila eneo bunge kupitia hazina ya ustawi wa maendeleo ya maeneo bunge ili kufadhili miradi ya maendeleo.

Serikali pia inatoa raslimali zaidi kupitia kwa hazina ya ushuru wa barabara, hazina ya kustawisha mabaraza ya miji na hazina ya kufadhili misaada ya masomo ya maeneo bunge. Hiki ni kiasi kikubwa cha raslimali ambacho kinadhamiriwa kuleta mabadiliko ya maisha ya watu katika sehemu za mashinani.

Isitoshe, Serikali pia imetilia maanani mapendekezo yaliyotolewa na wanaotozwa malipo ya uzeeni kuhusiana na kudidimia kwa mapato kutokana na ongezeko la gharama ya maisha. Hivyo basi, Serikali imeongeza kiwango cha chini cha malipo ya uzeeni kwa watumishi wa Serikali wanaostaafu kutoka shilingi 500 hadi shilingi 2,000 kwa mwezi.

Malipo ya uzeeni pia yatakuwa yakifanyiwa marekebisho katika kila muda wa miaka miwili ikitiliwa maanani kiwango cha gharama ya maisha.

**Wakenya Wenzangu,**

Kubuniwa kwa fursa za utoaji wa bidhaa na udumishaji wa ajira ndio mikakati muhimu ya kuangamiza umaskini.

Kuendelea kukua kwa uchumi ni jambo ambalo linatoa nafasi zaidi za kazi kwa raia wetu. Zaidi ya nafasi za kazi zipatazo milioni 1.4 zimebuniwa katika muda wa miaka mitatu iliyopita, kukiwa na zaidi ya nafasi za kazi 458,000 zikibuniwa mwaka uliopita pekee. Idadi ya nafasi hizo haitoshi kukidhi mahitaji makubwa ya kazi.

Hivyo basi, ili kutoa ajira zaidi, Serikali imebuni maongozi muafaka ya ajira, ambayo yanasubiri kujadiliwa na kuidhinishwa bungeni.

Utaratibu wa maongozi hayo unaelezea mikakati itakayochukuliwa katika sekta muhimu za kiuchumi ambazo zina uwezo mkubwa wa kutoa fursa zaidi za kazi, utoaji wa mapato na uangamizaji wa umaskini.

Tatizo la uhaba wa kazi hasa kwa vijana wetu ni la kutiliwa maanani. Ni dhahiri kwamba, wengi wa wasio na kazi ni vijana walio chini ya umri wa miaka 35. Hivyo basi, Serikali yaangu inatilia maanani utoaji wa nafasi za kazi kwa vijana.

Kuhusiana na hayo, Serikali inafanyia ukarabati vyo vya mafunzo ya kiufundi kwa vijana. Vyo hivyo vitatumiwa kuwafunza vijana maarifa ambayo yatanua nafasi za uajiri. Mbali na hayo, Serikali inabuni hazina ya kibiashara ya vijana ambapo wafanyi biashara chipukizi wataweza kuomba mikopo kupanua biashara zao.

Wakenya Wenzangu,

Mkenya asiye na kitambulisho hawezi kuajiriwa au kutembea huru kuendesha biashara zake. Nilibuni wizara ya uhamiaji na usajili wa watu ili kuhakikisha kwamba utoaji wa vyeti vya kusafiria na vitambulisho vya kitaifa unapewa umuhimu na kipao mbele.

Ni haki ya kila Mkenya kuwa na kitambulisho au pasipoti. Hivyo basi, mtu yeyote anayeomba kupewa pasipoti au kitambulisho sharti apate bila kucheleweshwa. Maafisa wote wa Serikali wanaohusika na jukumu hilo sharti watilie maanani ujumbe huo.

Wakenya Wenzangu,

Kubuniwa kwa mazingira yafaayo ya kustawisha maendeleo ni muhimu, iwapo tutapiga hatua kubwa kuimarisha hali ya maisha ya kila Mkenya. Ujenzi na ukarabati wa barabara unaendelea kubakia nyuma kinyume na matarajio ya umma.

Kwa sababu hiyo, Serikali yangu inatilia maanani ustawi wa miundo msingi.

Hivi majuzi, tulipata vifaa vya ukarabati wa barabara vya thamani ya shilingi bilioni mbili. Vifaa hivyo vitapelekwa katika vituo kumi na sita vya kanda kote nchini ili kukarabati barabara.

Hata hivyo, ni muhimu kubuni mbinu mpya za kufadhili ujenzi na ukarabati wa barabara zetu. Mbali na pesa ambazo tunakusanya kutoka kwa bajeti na ushuru wa mafuta, wakati umewadia kwa Wizara ya Fedha kubuni mikakati mipya ya kukusanya raslimali nchini kufadhili ukarabati wa barabara kwa muda mrefu na miundo msingi mingine muhimu. Hatua hiyo itatoa fursa kwa Wakenya kuweka raslimali zao katika ufadhili wa miundo msingi. Pia itatuwezesha kuharakisha na kupanua ujenzi wa barabara kote nchini.

Sekta nyingine ambayo ni muhimu ni ile ya usambazaji wa umeme. Tunakabiliwa na ongezeko kubwa la mahitaji ya umeme kutokana na kustawi kwa viwanda na mpango wa kusabambaza umeme katika sehemu za mashambani ambao tunautekeleza. Kwa sasa hivi, kuna mipango ipatayo 130 ya usambazaji wa umeme katika sehemu za mashambani ambayo inaendelea kutekelezwa kote nchini ambapo idadi hiyo itaongezwa mara dufu mwisho wa mwaka huu.

Katika sehemu zilizoko mbali na hifadhi ya kitaifa ya umeme, Serikali inatoa nguvu za umeme zinazotokana na miale ya jua katika shule na vituo vya afya. Mbali na miradi ya umeme inayoendelea kama vile mradi wa pili wa Ol Karia unaotoa umeme kutokana na nguvu za mvuke chini ya ardhi na Sondu Miriu, Serikali inashauriana na Serikali ya Ethiopia ili tuweze kuagiza umeme kutoka nchini humo. Tunataka kuhakikisha kwamba Wakenya hawatakaliwa tena na upungufu wa umeme, hata kama tunapanua huduma ya umeme kuwanufaisha jamii inayoishi katika sehemu za mashambani.

Wakenya Wenzangu,

Taifa letu daima limekuwa likidhamini elimu kuwa nguzo ya maendeleo. Hii ndio sababu Serikali inaendelea kutenga kiasi kikubwa cha raslimali yake kufadhili elimu kwa vijana wetu. Hata hivyo, licha ya kutoa elimu ya shule za msingi bila malipo, wepo wazazi kadhaa ambao wanaendelea kuwanyima watoto wao elimu ambayo ni fursa ya kipekee maishani. Ni wajibu wa wazazi na machifu kuhakikisha kwamba watoto wote waliofikia umri wa kujiunga na shule wanakwenda shuleni.

Katika sekta ya afya, tumefikia ufanisi mkubwa katika kufufua vituo vipya vya afya, kuimarisha hali ya hospitali zetu, utoaji wa madawa na wahudumu wa matibabu.

Magonjwa ya Malaria, kifua kikuu na ukimwi yanaendelea kuwa tisho. Kwa wakati huu tunaendelea kutoa madawa bila malipo kutibu magonjwa ya malaria na kifua kikuu. Nina furaha kutangaza kwamba Serikali imeondolea mbali mara moja malipo ya shilingi mia moja ya kununua dawa za kupunguza makali ya ugonjwa wa ukimwi katika hospitali na vituo vya afya vya Serikali. Huku Serikali inapotoa madawa na maafisa wa matibabu katika kukabiliana na changa moto hizo za afya, suluhisho la muda mrefu ni kupitia kwa hatua za kinga. Hii inahitaji juhudi za pamoja kwetu sisi wote, tukiwa familia na kama jamii na kwa ushirikiano wa maafisa wa matibabu. Kinga daima ni bora kuliko tiba.

Wakenya Wenzangu,

Moja ya changa moto kuu mwaka huu ni kujimudu kutokana na ukame, ambao ulisababisha mateso mengi kwa watu wetu na kupunguza kiwango cha ustawi wa kiuchumi. Watu milioni tatu unusu katika wilaya 25 wamekabiliwa na baa la njaa. Tunaendelea kutoa misaada ya chakula katika sehemu zinazoathirika. Shughulii hiyo ya kutoa misaada ya chakula inakisiwa kugharimu shilingi bilioni 16. Tulimudu kukidhi



mahitaji ya chakula kutoka kwa maghala yetu. Ni furaha yetu kuona kwamba tumepata mvua za kuridhisha msimu huu.

Mbali na shughuli hiyo ya kutoa misaada ya chakula, Serikali inatekeleza miradi ya muda mrefu ya maendeleo ambayo itatoa suluhisho la athari za ukame nyakati za usoni. Hivyo basi, Serikali imetenga kiasi cha shilingi bilioni 10 kuimarisha huduma za utoaji na uhifadhi wa maji. Kwa mfano, Serikali imechimba visima vya maji 200 mwaka huu na kujenga mabwawa 300 na vidimbwi kwa minajili ya kutoa na kuhifadhi huduma ya maji. Jitihada hizo zitadhibitiwa katika muda wa miezi ijayo. Pia, Serikali inafufua mipango ya kunyunyizia maji mashamba na uondoaji wa maji machafu katika sehemu kadhaa nchini.

Ukame pia uliathiri sekta ya mifugo. Na ili kuimarisha hali ya maisha ya jamii ya kuhamahama, Serikali imetoa shilingi milioni 400 kufadhili ununuzi wa mifugo katika wilaya zinazoathirika. Isitoshe, Serikali inatekeleza hatua za kadri na za muda mrefu za kuimarisha ufugaji wa mifugo. Hatua hizo ni pamoja na kuwanunulia jamaa mifugo kubuni hifadhi za malisho ya mifugo, kukarabati maeneo ya kuhifadhi mifugo na kukabiliana na magonjwa ya mifugo kupitia kudhibiti kwa chanjo ya mifugo dhidi ya magonjwa hatari.

Hivi sasa, Serikali imekamilisha kukarabati kiwanda cha Kenya Meat Commission ambacho kinatarajiwa kuanza kazi zake mwezi ujao huku kikiwa na uwezo wa mwanzo wa kuchinja ng'ombe elfu moja kwa siku. Vichinjio vingine vitaanzishwa katika sehemu muafaka ili kuwasaidia wafugaji.

**Wakenya Wenzangu,**

Ardhi ni moja ya raslimali muhimu kwa watu wetu ambapo kucheleweshwa kwa utatuzi wa mizozo ya ardhi, upimaji na utoaji wa hati za kumiliki mashamba ni kikwazo kikubwa cha maendeleo katika baadhi ya sehemu za mashambani. Katika

Mkoa wa Pwani, na hasa Wakaazi wake wamesubiri kwa muda mrefu sana kupatikana kwa suluhisho la matatizo ya ardhi. Kamwe hawapaswi kuendelea kusubiri zaidi ya hapo. Nimemwagiza Waziri wa Ardhi kuanzisha mpango wa dharura kuhakikisha kwamba mipango inayoendelea ya upimaji wa mashamba wa makao katika sehemu hiyo inakamilishwa na kutolewa kwa hati zote za kumiliki mashamba kwa wakaazi hao ifikapo mwisho wa mwaka huu.

Mbali na hayo, mnamo mwaka wa 2004 nilitangaza mpango kabambe wa ufufuzi wa kiuchumi kwa Mkoa wa Kaskazini Mashariki na wilaya za Isiolo, Marsabit na Moyale. Mpango huo unaendelea kutekelezwa kwa ufanisi. Mpango sawa na huo utatekelezwa katika Wilaya za Marakwet, Turkana, Pokot Magharibi na Pokot Mashariki. Pia, tunasambaza mpango huo wa ufufuzi wa kiuchumi kushirikisha wilaya zote za Mkoa wa Pwani.

**Wakenya Wenzangu,**

Ni haki ya kila Mkenya kuishi kwa amani na huru bila vitisho vya kutokuwepo kwa usalama. Katika muda wa miaka mitatu iliyopita, Serikali imetumia raslimali nyingi kuimarisha usalama kote nchini. Kikosi cha Polisi na cha Polisi wa Utawala vyapaswa kupongezwa mno kutokana na kazi nzuri vinavyofanya ya kupambana na uhalifu. Mafanikio makubwa yatafikiwa huku tunapoimarisha vikosi vyetu vya polisi, kuimarisha huduma yao ya usafiri na vifaa vya mawasiliano. Nawapongeza wananchi kwa kuunga mkono kikamilifu maongozi ya kushirikiana na polisi kuangamiza uhalifu. Ushirikiano huo baina ya polisi na jamii utahakikisha kwamba wahalifu hawana mahali pa kujificha.

Katika sehemu zinazokabiliwa na visa vya mashambulizi ya majambazi na wizi wa mifugo, tunaongeza idadi ya vituo vya polisi na kujenga barabara ili kudhibiti doria za polisi. Pia, tumeimarisha na kudhibiti doria za mipakani ili kuwalinda raia

wetu kutokana na mashambulizi ya majambazi kutoka ng'ambo ya mipaka. Mbali na juhudi hizo, tunawapokonya silaha watu wanaomiliki silaha kinyume cha sheria ambazo zinatumiwa kuiba mifugo na uhalifu mwingine. Natoa wito kwa wananchi kushirikiana na Serikali katika shughuli hiyo muhimu ili kuona kwamba wananchi wetu wanaendesha shughuli zao katika mazingira ya amani.

Wakenya Wenzangu,

Kuhusu uhusiano wa kigeni, maongozi yetu ya kigeni yanazingatia udumishaji wa ushirikiano madhubuti na majirani zetu wa Jumuiya ya Afrika Mashariki na Shirika la IGAD. Nikiwa mwenyekiti wa sasa wa mashirika hayo mawili ya kanda, ningependa kuona uhusiano baina ya nchi zetu ukiimarishwa na kupatikana kwa amani ya kudumu katika baadhi ya majirani wetu ambao wamekabiliwa na mizozo ya miaka mingi.

Kwa sababu ipo Serikali iliyobuniwa baada ya mashauriano ya kina miongoni mwa koo zote nchini Somalia, msaada wowote kwa Somalia wapaswa kutolewa kupitia kwa Serikali ya Kitaifa ya Mpito ya Somalia. Nahimiza jamii ya kimataifa kuunga mkono juhudi za Serikali ya Somalia za kurejesha amani nchini humo na kudhibiti maridhiano na ukarabati wa kitaifa.

Nikitamatisha, Wakenya Wenzangu, Mabibi na Mabwana, nakariri kwamba, siku kuu ya Madaraka yapaswa kutukumbusha wote jukumu tulilonalo la ujenzi wa taifa hili. Moyo wa Taifa Tekelezi Kazi umetuwezesha kuafikia mafanikio makubwa katika muda mfupi na hatuna budi kujivunia kutokana na mafanikio hayo. Chochote tunachofanya, sharti tuweke mbele maslahi ya taifa hili kuliko yale ya kibinafsi kwa manufaa ya Wakenya wote. Tumejaliwa kuwa na nchi bora yenye ufanisi na imara yenye hali nzuri siku za usoni. Najivunia kuwa Mkenya. Bila shaka wote twapaswa kujivunia kuwa Wakenya.

*AHSANTENI NA MWENYEZI MUNGU AWABARIKI NYOTE.*

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY  
HON. MWAI KIBAKI, C.G.H., M.P., PRESIDENT AND  
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA ON THE OCCASION OF  
MADARAKA DAY CELEBRATIONS, 1ST JUNE, 2006**

FELLOW KENYANS,  
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

On this occasion of the 43rd Anniversary of Madaraka Day, I wish to begin by conveying my greetings to all Kenyans and our well-wishers wherever they are.

We commemorate this day because it marks the first important step in removing the yoke of colonialism and taking over the responsibility of managing the affairs of our nation. As we celebrate this occasion, let each one of us remember the solemn responsibility that rests upon us of serving this country loyally and selflessly. Let us also bear in mind our duty to build Kenya through honest hard work which is the key to prosperity, security and happiness for all of us.

Fellow Kenyans,

On this occasion, three years ago, I outlined my vision of making Kenya a Working Nation. I pointed out that the poor economic performance and high poverty levels could only be reversed by getting our people back into production. I pledged that my Government would create the necessary enabling policy and legal environment as well as re-invent those institutions that had collapsed and make them work more efficiently.

Today, I am happy that our factories are back into production. Our farmers in some of the key sub-sectors including cereals, dairy, tea and coffee are enjoying positive returns once again. In the public sector, teachers, civil servants and the police are receiving improved pay packages.

The results of hard work are being felt throughout the country. However, some sections of our society are yet to feel the impact of the gains we are making. Poverty remains a serious challenge. Opportunities for employment amongst our youth remain inadequate. What are we doing about these important issues?

We are fully aware that we cannot increase the momentum of our development when critical and substantial segments of our society are excluded from economic participation. My Government is, therefore, doing everything possible to ensure that as many Kenyans as possible enjoy the benefits of the economic gains we are attaining.

On this occasion of our 43rd Madaraka Day, therefore, I want to focus on how the Government is responding to the challenges of delivering public services, including security, speeding up economic growth, expanding employment opportunities and regional co-operation.

Fellow Kenyans,

My Government has, over the last three years, ensured proper management of our national affairs by pursuing sound economic policies. We have paid particular attention to the restoration of discipline in the management of public resources and strengthening of the institutions of governance and the fight against corruption.

These efforts are paying dividends as demonstrated by the performance of the economy. The Government has sustained positive economic growth rates since 2003. Last year, we attained a growth rate of 5.8 per cent, which is the highest in the last twenty years. Indeed, all the sectors of the economy registered better performance last year, relative to the previous year.

For example, the agricultural sector grew by 6.9 per cent compared to 1.7 per cent in 2004. This was despite the harsh drought that destroyed crops and livestock across the country. The manufacturing sector grew by 5.5 per cent last year, while tourism earnings increased from 39 billion shillings in 2004 to 49 billion shillings in 2005. Cement consumption, which supports the building and construction sector, grew by 11 per cent. On trade, exports to COMESA rose remarkably by 20 per cent, while exports to the East African Community accounted for more than half of total exports to the African region. How are Kenyans benefiting from this improved economic growth?

The Government is now able to raise more resources to fund programmes for Wananchi. For instance, we are providing free primary education to well over 7.6 million children; we have re-opened health centres and dispensaries throughout the country that had closed down due to lack of funds and personnel, while new ones are being built; we are reclaiming dilapidated roads that had been neglected due to lack of maintenance, while construction of new roads is taking place in every part of the country; we have revived stalled projects, many of which have been completed and are now providing services to Wananchi; we are supporting our farmers to increase production through better returns from their investments; we have stabilized interest rates and improved the business and investment climate. Things are getting better and I want to assure you all, that they will continue to get even better.

In addition to these measures, my Government is channelling resources right down to the grassroots level to finance community-based projects. Currently, the Government is spending between 50 and 70 million shillings annually per constituency through the Constituency Development Fund to support development projects.

The Government is also channelling additional resources through the Roads Maintenance Levy Fund, the Local Authorities Transfer Fund and the Constituency Bursary Fund. All these are substantial resources that are intended to make a difference in the lives of the people at the grassroots level.

Further, the Government has also considered representations made by pensioners about their dwindling incomes due to the rising cost of living. Consequently, the Government has increased the minimum pension for retired public servants from 500 shillings per month to 2000 shillings per month. Pensions will also be adjusted every two years taking into account the rate of inflation.

Fellow Kenyans,

The creation of productive and sustainable employment opportunities remains the most effective strategy in poverty eradication. The growing economy is creating more employment opportunities for our citizens. Over 1.4 million jobs have been recorded over the last three years, with over 458,000 being created last year alone. These figures are still not sufficient to meet the high demand for employment.

Therefore, in order to generate more employment, the Government has developed a comprehensive employment policy, which is awaiting debate and approval by Parliament. The policy framework outlines the strategic interventions to be made in the key sectors of the economy that have high potential for employment creation, income generation and poverty reduction.

The problem of unemployment is especially critical among our young people. Indeed, majority of those who are unemployed are young people below the age of 35 years. My Government is, therefore, according high priority to the creation of employment opportunities for the youth. In this regard, the

Government is revamping youth polytechnics. These centres will be used to equip the youth with appropriate skills that will expand their options for employment. In addition to this, the Government is establishing a Youth Enterprise Fund from which enterprising young people can access affordable capital to establish or expand their businesses.

Fellow Kenyans,

A Kenyan without identification documents cannot secure employment or be able to move freely to transact business. I established a Ministry of State for Immigration and Registration of Persons to ensure that issuance of passports and national identity cards is accorded the necessary priority and urgency. It is the right of every Kenyan to have an identity card or a passport. Therefore, anybody applying for a passport or an identity card should have it without delay. This message should be very clear to all the Government officers who are entrusted with this responsibility.

Fellow Kenyans,

The creation of an enabling environment for development is essential, if we are to speed up the improvement of the life of every Kenyan. Road construction and maintenance continues to lag behind public expectations. For this reason, my Government is giving high priority to infrastructural development projects. We have recently acquired road maintenance equipment worth 2 billion shillings. These will be located in 16 regional centres countrywide for continuous maintenance of the road network.

However, it is imperative that we develop new ways of financing the construction and maintenance of our roads. In addition to the money we are raising from the budget and from the fuel levy, time has come for the Treasury to develop new instruments for mobilizing domestic resources for long-term financing of road construction and other major infrastructural



projects. This will provide opportunities to Kenyans to invest in the financing of our infrastructure. It will also enable us to speed up and expand construction of roads across the country.

Another area that is critical is power supply. We are experiencing a remarkable increase in the demand for power due to the growth of industry and the rural electrification programme that we are implementing. Currently, there are 130 rural electrification projects being implemented throughout the country, and this number will be doubled by the end of this year.

In areas that are far from the national grid, the Government is investing in solar power for schools and health centres. In addition to ongoing power projects such as Ol Karia II Geothermal Power Plant and Sondu Miriu, the Government is discussing with the Ethiopian Government so that we can import power from that country. We want to ensure that Kenyans never have to experience power rationing again, even as we are continuously extending the national power supply to our rural communities.

Fellow Kenyans,

Our country has always believed that education is the key to development. This is the reason why the Government continues to allocate a huge proportion of its resources for the education of our young people. However, despite the Free Primary Education programme, there are a number of parents who continue to deny their children this lifetime opportunity. It is the responsibility of parents and chiefs to ensure that all children of school going age are in school.

In the health sector, we have made substantial progress in terms of opening new health centres, improving the conditions of our hospitals, provision of drugs and availability of medical personnel. The threat posed by malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, remains serious. We are currently providing free

drugs for the treatment of malaria and TB. I am pleased to announce that the Government has waived, with immediate effect, the 100 shillings being charged on anti-retroviral drugs in Government hospitals and health centres.

While the Government is providing both drugs and medical personnel to effectively deal with these health challenges, the long-term solutions lie in preventive measures. This calls for concerted action by all of us, as families and communities in partnership with the medical personnel. Prevention is always better than cure.

Fellow Kenyans,

One of the key challenges for this year is to recover fully from the drought, which brought a lot of suffering to our people and slowed down our economic growth. Three and a half million people in 25 districts have been affected by the famine. We are continuing to provide relief supplies to the affected areas. The ongoing food relief operation is estimated to cost 16 billion shillings. Fortunately, we were able to meet the food requirements from our own food reserves. We are encouraged by the fact that this season, the rains have been good.

Besides the relief operations, the Government is implementing long-term development projects that will mitigate the effects of drought in future. Towards this end, the Government has invested 10 billion shillings in improving water provision and storage. For example, the Government has drilled 200 boreholes this year and constructed 300 dams and pans for water supply and storage. These efforts will be intensified in the coming months. The Government is also revitalizing irrigation and drainage development in various parts of the country.

The drought also had a devastating effect on our livestock sector. In order to build the livelihoods of pastoral communities, the Government released 400 million shillings to fund livestock

emergency interventions in the affected districts. In addition, the Government is undertaking medium and long-term measures to improve livestock farming. These measures include restocking, establishing strategic livestock feed conservation, rehabilitating strategic livestock holding grounds and livestock disease control through enhancing vaccinations against major diseases.

The Government has now rehabilitated the Kenya Meat Commission which is scheduled to be operational in the next one month with an initial slaughtering capacity of 1000 cattle per day. Other slaughterhouses are being set up in strategic areas to assist livestock keepers.

Fellow Kenyans,

Land is one of the most important resources for our people and delays in the settlement of land disputes, adjudication and issuance of title deeds are a major hindrance to the development of some of our rural areas. In the Coast Province, in particular, residents have waited for too long for resolution of their land problems. They should not be kept waiting any further. I have directed the Minister for Lands to embark on a crash programme to ensure that the ongoing land adjudication schemes in the area are completed and all title deeds owed to residents issued to them by the end of this year.

Furthermore, in 2004, I announced an economic recovery programme for the North Eastern Province and the Districts of Isiolo, Marsabit and Moyale. The programme is being implemented successfully. A similar programme is underway in Marakwet, Turkana, West and East Pokot. We are now extending this economic recovery programme to cover all districts of the Coast Province.

Fellow Kenyans,

It is the right of every Kenyan to live in peace and free from threats of insecurity. Over the last three years, the Government has invested extensively to improve security throughout the country. The Kenya Police Force and the Administration Police deserve praise for the good work they are doing in fighting crime. More progress will be achieved as we expand our police forces, improve their mobility and communication equipment. I commend Wananchi for responding positively to Community Policing. This partnership between the police and communities will ensure that criminals have no places to hide.

In the areas prone to banditry and cattle rustling, we are increasing the number of police stations and opening access roads to improve police patrols. We have also intensified and strengthened border patrols to protect our citizens from cross-border banditry. Further, we are disarming people who are holding illegal arms which are being used for cattle rustling and other banditry activities. I call upon Wananchi to co-operate with the Government in this important exercise so that our people can go on with their businesses under a secure environment.

Fellow Kenyans,

On external relations, our foreign policy is anchored on close co-operation with our neighbours in the East African Community and IGAD. As current chairman of both regional bodies, I want to see the relations between our countries strengthened and lasting peace restored to some of our neighbours who have experienced many years of conflict. Now that there is a Government set up after wide consultations among all clans in Somalia, any support to Somalia should be channelled through the Transitional National Government of Somalia. I urge the international community to support the efforts of the Government of Somalia to restore peace to the

country, and to consolidate national reconciliation and reconstruction.

In conclusion, Fellow Kenyans, Ladies and Gentlemen, let me reiterate that Madaraka Day should remind us all of the task we have of building this country. The spirit of a Working Nation has enabled us to achieve much within a short time and we need to be proud of our achievements. Whatever we do, we should place the interests of the nation above personal interests for the common good of all Kenyans. We are blessed to be in a beautiful, successful and strong country with a very bright future. I am proud to be a Kenyan. Indeed, we should all be proud of being Kenyans.

*THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU ALL.*