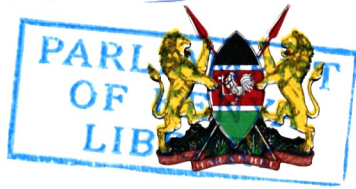


Library



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

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

The State Opening of the First Session
of the Ninth Parliament

on

Tuesday, 18th February, 2003

**HOTUBA YA MHESHIMIWA MWAI KIBAKI, C.G.H.,
M.P., RAIS NA AMIRI JESHI MKUU WA MAJESHI YA
JAMHURI YA KENYA, KATIKA SHEREHE YA
KUFUNGULIWA RASMI KWA BUNGE LA TISA,
MNAME JUMANNE, FEBRUARI 18, 2003**

Bwana SPIKA,

Ni heshima na furaha kubwa kwangu kuwakaribisha Waheshimiwa Wabunge kwa Bunge la Tisa. Nawapongeza kwa kuchaguliwa na kuteuliwa kwenu kwa bunge hili.

Vile vile nakupongeza wewe Bwana Spika, Pamoja na makamu wako, kwa kuchaguliwa kwenu.

Shukrani zetu zaenda kwa Wakenya wote. Kwani ni wananchi wa nchi hii walioenda kwa amani kutupigia kura mnamo Desemba mwaka uliopita. Kwa hivyo yatupasa daima kukumbuka wajibu huu mzito walioweka mabegani mwetu.

Bwana Spika,

Bunge la Tisa laanzisha ukombozi wa pili wa Kenya ambao umesubiriwa kwa muda mrefu. Ni kielelezo cha moyo wa subira na ukakamavu wa watu wa Kenya. Unadhihirisha imani yao katika demokrasia kama njia bora ya kuleta mabadiliko ya kisiasa.

Bwana Spika,

Katika hotuba yangu ya sherehe za kutawazwa, nilikariri baadhi ya ahadi zetu wakati wa kampeni. Kwa hivyo siku hii ya leo ni moja ya hatua ya kutimiza ahadi hizo. Tunakariri kujitolea kwetu kikamilifu kuanzisha desturi ya kutostahimili kamwe ufisadi hapa Kenya. Tunasisitiza kujitolea kwetu kutoa elimu ya msingi ya bure na ambayo ni ya lazima. Tunazingatia kwa dhati ahadi yetu ya kuhakikisha usalama kwa Wakenya wote na mali zao. Tunajikumbusha sisi wenyewe kama viongozi ahadi yetu ya kufufua uchumi wa taifa hili kuregelea mkondo wa ufanisi.

Bwana Spika,

Maongozi mema ndio lengo la Serikali ya NARC. Kwani ni maongozi mema yanayoleta mazingara bora ambayo ni muhimu katika kufungua uwezo wa watu wetu uliofichika. Nguzo ya jambo hili ni kuhakikisha kwamba sheria inazingatiwa hapa Kenya. Kuzingatia jambo hili yapasa kuwa urithi wetu wa kudumu sisi kama Serikali.

Bwana Spika,

Uadilifu pamoja na uendeshaji kikamilifu wa idara zetu kama vile mahakama ni muhimu kwa kufufua nchi yetu. Hizo ndizo funguo za kujenga imani ya umma katika taifa na pia kuimarisha utawala wa sheria. Mambo haya ni muhimu sana katika kuregesha haki na uhuru wa watu wetu. Kwa hivyo tutarekebisha kikamilifu idara ya sheria ili kuhakikisha kwamba uadilifu na uhuru wake umeregeshwa.

Bwana Spika,

Waheshimiwa Wabunge watakubaliana nami kwamba ufisadi umeathiri sana uchumi wetu, siasa na fikira zetu kitaifa. Umeathiri mashirika yetu muhimu na kuchafua heshima yetu kama viongozi wa Kenya. Ni wazi kwamba wakati uliopita baadhi ya wale ambao walishukiwa kuhusika katika mambo ya ufisadi walikaa katika Bunge hili au walishikilia nyadhifa kubwa za umma. Jambo hili litabadilika. Bwana Spika, mimi kama rais, ninakusudia kuongoza mabadiliko haya. Ufisadi, wanasema huanzia juu. Sasa vita dhidi ya ufisadi hapa Kenya vitaanzia juu. Punde tutaanza taratibu ya kutangaza mali zetu kama vile tulivyoahidi.

Bwana Spika,

Ili kutilia uzito kujitolea kwa Serikali yangu kupiga vita ufisadi, nimeunda idara katika afisi yangu inayoongozwa na katibu wa kudumu ya kuimarisha uadilifu na maongozi mema. Isitoshe, tayari tumechapisha mswada katika gazeti rasmi la

Serikali wa kusimamia kanuni za uwajibikaji wa maafisa wa umma, kanuni mpya za ununuzi wa Serikali pamoja na kutilia nguvu taratibu za ukaguzi wa hesabu. Kama vile mnavyofahamu, pia tumechapisha mswada wa kubuni tume ya kupambana na ufisadi iliyo na uwezo wa kuchunguza na kushitaki wanaohusika na ufisadi. Ninawahimiza watu wa Kenya kuniunga mkono katika vita hivi dhidi ya ufisadi. Nawaomba Waheshimiwa Wabunge waongoze katika harakati hizi muhimu.

Bwana Spika,

Kukamilika kwa shughuli za urekebishaji wa katiba ni kiini cha malengo ya Serikali yangu. Katiba mpya itaweka misingi ya sheria pamoja na mashirika ambayo yatapatia uhai misingi muhimu ya demokrasia—uwajibikaji, uwazi na uhaki wa kijamii. Nina imani kuwa ile nakala iliyotayarishwa na Tume ya Kuchunguza Katiba ya Kenya itasahihishwa katika mkutano ujao wa kitaifa wa katiba. Tutazindua kamati teule ya Bunge juu ya katiba mara moja. Kamati hii itapendekeza kwa Bunge hatua muhimu za kuchukuliwa kukamilisha shughuli hii. Ili kuonyesha wazi kujitolea kwa Serikali yangu kwa mambo ya kurekebisha katiba, mimi nimeanzisha wizara ya kushughulikia mambo haya.

Ningewaomba wanakamati wa Tume ya Kuchunguza Katiba ya Kenya kuzingatia majukumu yao na kutopoteza wakati na mali ya umma kwa kukashifiana. Jukumu lao ni la maana sana na wanapaswa kuzingatia hivyo.

Bwana Spika,

Uwazi na uwajibikaji katika usimamizi wa mali za Serikali ndilo jukumu kubwa linalokabili Serikali yangu. Tumesimama imara kwa jukumu hili. Mwongo uliopita umekuwa ule wa kuendelea kuzorota kwa uchumi wetu. Sababu kubwa za hali hiyo zimekuwa ni ufisadi, ukosefu wa usalama na utawala mbaya. Sera zetu za kiuchumi pia zimekuwa hazizingatii ukuwaji wa haraka ulimwenguni.

Vile vile tunafanya bidii kuimarisha uhusiano wetu na wahisani wetu wa mambo ya maendeleo ili tuweze kufanya kazi pamoja kufikia malengo yetu. Tunakusudia kupunguza kiasi kikubwa cha sasa cha ukopaji humu nchini na hatua hii itaachilia fedha hizo kwa sekta ya kibinafsi. Sekta ya kibinafsi ndiyo injini ya ukuwaji na ufanisi. Ni jukumu letu kama Serikali kuanzisha mazingara bora ya kuiwezesha sekta ya kibinafsi kuleta utajiri na kubuni nafasi za kazi kwa mamilioni ya vijana wetu.

Bwana Spika,

Kuhusiana na jambo la uongozi bora katika mambo ya umma ningependa kusesitiza vile ambavyo tunakusudia kukabiliana na yale mashirika ya Serikali ambayo hayatimizi malengo yanayotarajiwa. Mengi yao yamekuwa yakitegemea kufadhiliwa na Wizara ya Fedha. Hii imekuwa hivyo licha ya kwamba yalikuwa na uwezo wa kupata faida. Ningependa kusema kwamba Serikali yangu haina shughuli za kusaidia mashirika ambayo yanaharibu mali za umma. Shirika lolote ambalo halileti faida inavyotakikana halitabaki katika Serikali yangu.

Bwana Spika,

Urekebishaji kamilifu wa sekta ya huduma za umma utanzishwa hivi karibuni. Tofauti na wakati uliopita, juhudi hizi zina uungwaji mkono kikamilifu kisiasa katika kutoa uamuzi juu ya mambo magumu yatarajiayo kufanywa. Ni muhimu kwamba huduma hii iwavutie wote wenye ujuzi ili kuwe na ongezeko la uzalishaji. Serikali yangu kwa upesi itabuni sera au mwongozo unaokusudia kuimarisha ujira na hali za utendaji kazi za wafanyikazi wa Serikali. Mwongozo huu utatilia mkazo uhusiano kati ya ujira na utendaji.

Bwana Spika,

Wakati wa kampeni yetu tuliahidi kuleta mamilioni ya watoto shuleni ambao walinyimwa elimu kwa sababu ya umaskini. Tungependa kuwashukuru wazazi wote ambao wamechukua nafasi hii ya sera yetu ya elimu ya msingi ya bure. Kutojua

kusoma na kuandika ndicho kizuizi kikubwa katika vita dhidi ya umasikini. Mkenya asiye na elimu hana uwezo wa kuchukuwa nafasi nyingi za maisha. Kuwezesha kila Mkenya kupata elimu, ilikuwa ahadi yetu muhimu sana ya kampeni.

Ninafuraha kusema kwamba kuanzia Januari 6, Serikali ya NARC imezingatia ahadi yake ya kutoa elimu ya bure na ya lazima ya msingi. Nawashukuru mamilioni ya walimu, wazazi na wanafunzi ambao walivumilia baadhi ya matatizo yaliyojitokeza wakati wa kuanzisha mpango huu. Pia ningependa kutoa shukrani za Serikali yangu kwa wale wote ambao wameahidi kutusaidia katika jambo hili muhimu. Tayari Serikali yangu imetoa zaidi ya shillingi milioni mia tano kwa mpango huu. Tutakuwa tunauliza Bunge kuidhinisha kiwango kingine cha shillingi bilioni 2.4 kabla ya kipindi kipya cha makadirio ya fedha. Kwa sababu ya mpango huu watoto milioni 2.1 na zaidi wanatarajiwa kujiunga na shule za msingi kufikia mwisho wa mwaka huu. Serikali yangu yaendelea kujitolea kuzingatia elimu ya msingi ya bure kwa wote. Jambo lingine letu la kuangazia litakuwa katika zile wilaya hapa nchini ambazo hazina hata madarasa. Tunakusudia kujenga madarasa na vifaa vinginevyo vya elimu katika maeneo hayo.

Bwana Spika,

Katika Sekta ya afya yale yaliyo muhimu kwa Serikali ya NARC ni wazi kabisa. Kwanza kabisa ni vita dhidi ya Ukimwi ambao huchangia sana hali ya umaskini.

La pili muhimu katika jambo hili kwa Serikali yangu ni kuwa na huduma za afya zifaazo kwa watu wa Kenya. Tumejitolea kuzingatia kuanzisha bima ya kitaifa ya afya ya jamii na kuzipa mamlaka zaidi bodi za mahospitali.

Bwana Spika,

Ukarabati na upanuzi wa vifaa vya uzalishaji ni muhimu kwa kufufua uchumi wa nchi yetu. Katika sekta ya barabara Serikali yangu imechukuwa hatua haraka kusafisha moja ya sehemu

zilizo oza kabisa katika huduma ya umma. Wakati uliopita, Wakenya wamelipa bei ya juu kwa barabara zisizofaa. Ufisadi na usimamizi mbaya katika sekta ndogo ya barabara umechangia moja kwa moja umaskini hapa nchini. Serikali yangu imeanzisha hivi majuzi kamati ya kuchunguza haraka madeni yote ambayo bado hayajalipwa katika sekta hii. Pia kwa haraka tumeangazia sekta ndogo ya nyumba na kubuni kamati ya kuchunguza ugawaji wa mali za Serikali.

Bwana Spika,

Sekta ambayo ni muhimu sana ya ukulima imekabiliwa na matatizo mengi. Hata ingawa ndio uti wa mgongo wa uchumi wa nchi yetu. Mbinu zetu za ukuaji wa uchumi wetu zinahitaji uchunguzi wa motisha kwa mkulima pamoja na kufanya kilimo kuwa cha kisasa kupitia kutumia teknolojia zifaazo na za bei nafuu.

Serikali itajitahidi kuhakikisha kuweco kwa mwongozo wa kilimo ulio imara na wa kutegemewa. Jambo hili litawawezesha wakulima kufanya mipango yao ya uwekaji rasilimali za muda mrefu. Kanuni au sheria zinazohusu vifaa vya kilimo, uzalishaji na ununuzi kutoka nje pia zitaimarishwa ili kuwalinda wakulima kutokana na wafanyibiashara walaghai. Serikali yangu hasa itaunga sana mkono ufufuzi wa mashirika muhimu katika sekta ya kilimo. Hatua hizi ni muhimu sana katika uzalishaji na uuzaji wa bidhaa za kilimo.

Bwana Spika,

Kuhusiana na kilimo ni swala la ardhi. Kwa sasa, zaidi ya sheria ishirini za nchi hii zinazohusika na mambo ya ardhi zinatatiza uendeshaji wa shughuli za ardhi. Hii ni chanzo cha kukatiza matumaini kwa Wakenya. Kuna umuhimu wa haraka wa kuleta pamoja na kusawazisha sheria hizi ili kuwe na uendeshaji ufaao wa mambo ya ardhi.

Bwana Spika,

Wakati uliopita, ugawaji wa ardhi ya umma usio halali, ulikuwa jambo la kawaida. Ni wazi kwamba, ardhi ilikuwa kifaa muhimu sana cha ufadhili wa kisiasa. Kwa Serikali yangu, ardhi ni rasilimali muhimu ya kiuchumi, kimazingira na kijamii. Serikali yangu ina mpango wa kukabiliana kikamilifu na uendeshaji na usimamizi mbaya wa rasilimali ya ardhi yetu uliopita. Tunakusudia kuleta Bungeni mswada wa sheria unaohusisha mwongozo kamilifu wa ardhi hapa nchini.

Bwana Spika,

Sote tutafahamu kuwa maji ni uhai. Serikali yangu imejitolea kuhakikisha kuwa Wakenya wote wamepata maji safi. Mipango inafanywa kufanya marekebisho katika mashirika ya sekta ya maji. Hatua hizi zitatenganisha majukumu ya kubuni mwongozo, usimamizi na huduma ya kusambaza maji.

Bwana Spika,

Uimarishaji wa huduma ya rasilimali ya maji wategemea usimamizi wa uendeshaji wa mazingara yetu. Waheshimiwa Wabunge wanafahamu kwamba nchi hii inakumbwa na hali mbaya ya uharibifu wa mazingira. Jambo hili linasababishwa na kuharibiwa bila kujali kwa misitu yetu na maeneo ya kunasia maji. Serikali yangu inaahidi kuingilia haraka jambo hili—itaweka hatua za kukarabati na kulinda mazingara yetu. Ninataka kutangaza kwamba, kuanzia sasa na kuendelea, mtu ye yote atakayepatikana akiharibu misitu na maeneo ya kunasia maji atakabiliana na sheria ipasavyo.

Bwana Spika,

Sekta yetu ya utalii hubuni kwa njia mbali mbali karibu nusu ya nafasi za kazi kwa Wakenya. Inatuletea shilingi bilioni 24 kila mwaka. Sekta hii imekabiliwa na hali mbaya ya kutangazwa wakati uliopita. Jambo hili lilisababishwa na mambo mengi kama vile ghasia za kisiasa pale pwani mwaka wa 1997. Serikali

yangu ina mipango ya kufufua sekta hii muhimu. Kwanza kabisa itanufaika na mazingara yaliyoletwa na Serikali ya NARC. Hata hivyo tunatarajia kuuza Kenya kwa njia kamilifu kama kituo muhimu cha kutalii duniani. Tutazindua sheria za usimamizi wa sekta hii. Vile vile tutaimarisha utalii wa kimazingira. Bunge hili litaombwa lipitishie fedha za kuinua hali ya vifaa vya uzalishaji katika sehemu za utalii. Kuna mpango wa kupandisha ngazi Chuo cha Utalii.

Bwana Spika,

Serikali yangu inapanga kuanzisha tume kamilifu ya jinsia ya kuhusisha maswala ya jinsia katika maendeleo ya kitaifa. Mswada wa sheria utaletwa Bungeni juu ya kushughulikia maswala ya ghasia katika jamii ambako kuweco kwake hakukubaliki.

Bw. Spika,

Serikali yangu pia ina mpango wa kushughulikia mambo ya michezo kikamilifu. Si tu kwamba ni muhimu kwa kujipumzisha bali Wakenya ni wazuri sana kimichezo. Ufanisi katika michezo unabadilisha maisha ya Wakenya wengi kila mwaka. Unatupatia kitu cha kujivunia kama taifa. Unaimarisha afya yetu. Serikali yangu ina mpango wa kupambana na ufisadi pamoja na usimamizi mbaya katika sekta hii. Mienendo kama hii huathiri sana wanamichezo wetu. Imeathiri kiwango cha michezo muhimu kama kandanda.

Bwana Spika,

Ushirika huzalisha asilimia thelathini na moja ya kitaifa. Sekta hii imetekeleza jukumu la maana katika uzaji wa bidhaa kubwa za kilimo. Hata hivyo nyakati zilizopita za hivi karibuni, mashirika hayo hayakutekeleza ipaswavyo. Sababu ya hali hiyo ni kule kuwa na sheria isiyofaa, usimamizi mbaya na ufisadi. Tunakusudia kurekebisha na kusawazisha shughuli za sekta ya ushirika. Sheria ya Ushirika itarekebisha kuruhusu vyama na mashirika ya uwekaji akiba na mikopo, kuweza kushughulikia

kwa makini zaidi mambo ya kuendesha na kusimamia uwekaji akiba.

Bwana Spika,

Sekta ya Jua Kali na biashara zingine ndogo ndogo zinatarajiwa kutekeleza jukumu muhimu katika kubuni kazi hapa nchini. Hata hivyo tunatambua kuwa ukuaji wa sekta hii unatatizwa na mambo mbali mbali. Baadhi yao ni ukosefu wa masoko, ukosefu wa mikopo na mazingara mabaya ya kimwongozo. Serikali yangu hivi karibuni itawasilisha Bungeni mwongozo juu ya kuimarisha biashara ndogo ndogo kwa minajili ya kupunguza umaskini na kubuni nafasi za kazi.

Bwana Spika,

Serikali yangu ina ahidi kugeuza mwenendo wa sasa wa kuzorota kwa uchumi. Kufikia lengo hili, tutaanza kwa kubuni Baraza la Taifa la Kiuchumi na Jamii. Baraza hili litatoa ushauri juu ya jinsi ya kusimamia na kuendesha uchumi wetu. Ni lengo letu kuwa na kiwango cha ukuaji cha asili mia saba kwa mwaka ili tuweze kubuni nafasi 500,000 za kazi kila mwaka. Hii itaweza kuondoa umaskini kupitia uzalishaji utajiri. Tumeanzisha na tutatekeleza mpango wa kufufua uchumi ambao lengo lake ni kubuni nafasi za kazi.

Bwana Spika,

Pale hofu hutawala roho za watu, hakuna aina yoyote ya maendeleo halisi inayoweza kufanyika. Hata kama ni hofu ya uhalifu au uharibifu, hofu ya vyombo vya Serikali, matokeo yake ni moja. Wajibu wa kuweka mtu huru kutokana na hofu ni jukumu muhimu sana kwa Serikali yoyote inayowajibika. Kwa bahati mbaya leo Wakenya wengi wanaishi katika hali ya hofu.

Bwana Spika,

Serikali yangu imejitolea kubadilisha hali hii. Kila Mkenya ana haki ya kuishi na kumiliki mali. La kuhuzunisha ni kwamba kuna baadhi ya Wakenya ambao wamechagua kuwa na tabia ya

kuharibu maisha ya Wakenya wengine. Ujumbe wangu kwao ni wazi “Acha njia zako mbaya na uheshimu jirani yako”.

Serikali yangu haitaruhusu yeyote kuharibu haki hizi muhimu. Kwa wakati huu tunakabiliana na tatizo la vikundi vya wahalifu vilivyo zalishwa na hali ya umaskini. Tumesumbuliwa na ukosefu wa usalama katika shughuli za Matatu. Wamiliki wa Matatu wana haki ya kufanya biashara zao kwa njia ya amani, haki ya kuajiri madereva na makondakta, haki ya kuchagua barabara ya kuendeshea biashara zao na haki ya kulipisha bei ifaayo na kulingana na sheria. Serikali yangu italinda biashara hii kutokana na usumbufu wa kila aina.

Pia Serikali yangu inatarajia kurekebisha malipo na hali ya uajiri wa Jeshi la Polisi na huduma zingine za usalama. Vile vile watapewa mafunzo upya na vifaa vya kazi.

Bwana Spika,

Ni muhimu kutangaza mkazo ambao Serikali yangu itakuwa inatilia maendeleo katika Mkoa wa Kaskazini Mashariki na wilaya zingine ambazo zimesahauliwa wakati uliopita. Mkoa huu na wilaya hizo zingine zimepuuzwa na tawala zilizopita. Sisi tunatambua umuhimu ufugaji unaotekeleza katika uchumi wa taifa. Tunatarajia kukabiliana na maswala ya maendeleo ya maeneo haya moja kwa moja. Usalama, afya, maji, mawasiliano na elimu ni mambo yaliyo muhimu sana ambayo Serikali yangu inapanga kutatua.

Bwana Spika,

Kenya ni mwanachama wa Jamii ya Kimataifa. Serikali yangu itazingatia kuwa na uhusiano mwema wa nchi za nje ulio na misingi ya amani, ujirani mwema na kuheshimu mipaka ya nchi zingine. Tufanye kazi pamoja na mataifa mengine kupitia IGAD, Jumuiya ya Afrika Mashariki, Jumuiya ya Afrika na Umoja wa Mataifa katika kutatua mizozo Barani Afrika.

Bwana Spika,

Pia tutaongeza juhudi zetu kukamilisha uundwaji halisi wa Jumuiya ya Afrika Mashariki. Isitoshe, sisi tutaendelea kutekeleza wajibu wetu katika kuzingatia kwa undani zaidi ushirikiano wetu katika COMESA na mipango yoyote iliyoko ya ulimwengu na hata baina ya taifa na taifa. Vile vile, Kenya itaendelea kuzingatia utatuuji wa mizozo kwa njia ya amani nchini Sudan na Somalia.

Bwana Spika,

Ushambulizi wa kigaidi na kupotea kwa maisha ya wasiokuwa na hatia ulishangaza ulimwengu mzima. Kenya inazingatia Azimio 1373 la Baraza la Usalama la Umoja wa Mataifa. Tunaungana na mataifa yote yanayopenda amani kupambana na ugaidi. Serikali yangu inakusudia kuanzisha taratibu za kuunganisha shughuli za Kenya za kukabiliana na ugaidi ulimwenguni.

Bwana Spika,

Kabla sijakamilisha hotuba yangu ya leo, niruhusu kwa kifupi nitaje kuwa Kikao cha Kwanza cha Bunge letu la Tisa kitapaswa kuweka kasi ya kipindi cha miaka mitano ijayo. Kitapaswa kujadili miswada na mambo mengine kwa makini. Itawapasa Waheshimiwa Wabunge wawajibike kutoa uongozi mwema. Yatupasa tuwasaidie na kuwatia moyo Wakenya kujihusisha kikamilifu katika maendeleo ya nchi yao. Miswada kadha itawasilishwa kujadiliwa katika kikao hiki. Ile muhimu ni kama *Public Officer Ethics Bill, The Anti-Corruption na Economic Crimes Bill* pamoja na *The Constitution of Kenya (Amendment) Bill*.

Mwisho, Bwana Spika, hebu niwakumbushe Waheshimiwa Wabunge kwamba wanabeba wajibu mkubwa katika mabega yao. Wakenya wanatutarajia kurudisha hadhi ya taifa hili kubwa. Mimi nina hakika kwamba pamoja tutashinda. Wakati wetu wa kihistoria umefika. Kwa ajili ya watu wa Kenya tusiuharibu.

Vita vya kuleta maisha bora kwa watu wetu havitashindwa kwa siku 100. Lakini najivunia kusema kwamba tumeanza katika mguu mzuri. Safari ya kuelekea kupata ufanifisi wa taifa letu tulipendalo imeanza.

Kwa hotuba hii Bwana Spika, sasa natangaza Bunge la Tisa kufunguliwa rasmi.

AHSANTENI.

**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 DURING THE STATE OPENING OF THE
NINTH PARLIAMENT, TUESDAY,
18TH FEBRUARY, 2003**

MR. SPEAKER,

It is with great honour that I welcome honourable members to the Ninth Parliament. I congratulate you for being elected and nominated to this august House.

I also congratulate you Mr. Speaker, and your deputy, upon your election.

Our most heartfelt gratitude goes to Kenyans. It is the citizens of this country who went peacefully to polls in December last year and elected us to this House. Let us be forever mindful of the great responsibility they have placed on our shoulders.

Mr. Speaker,

The Ninth Parliament heralds Kenya's long awaited second liberation. It is a testament to the patience and resilience of the Kenyan people. It demonstrates their faith in democracy as the preferred method of bringing about political change.

Mr. Speaker,

I reiterated some of our campaign promises during my inauguration speech. Today marks yet another step towards fulfilling these pledges. We reiterate our commitment towards creating a culture of zero tolerance to corruption in Kenya. We restate our commitment towards the provision of free and compulsory primary education. We reaffirm our promise to ensure the security of Kenyans and their property. We remind ourselves as leaders of our promise to put this nation's economy back on its track.

Mr. Speaker,

Good governance is the key objective of the NARC Government. For only good governance creates the enabling environment necessary to unlock the latent potential of our people. A pillar of this is to ensure that the rule of law is upheld in Kenya. Ensuring this should be our most enduring legacy as a government.

Mr. Speaker,

The integrity and effectiveness of key institutions like the Judiciary are essential to Kenya's recovery. They are key to rebuilding public confidence in the State and in enhancing the rule of law. They are critical to the restoration of the rights and freedoms of our people. We shall therefore fundamentally reform the judiciary to ensure that its integrity and independence is once again guaranteed.

Mr. Speaker,

Honourable Members will agree with me that corruption has undermined our economy, our politics and our national psyche. It has undermined our most important institutions and tarnished our reputations as Kenyan leaders. Indeed, in the past some of those widely perceived as most responsible for the vice of corruption sat in this very House or occupied other positions of public trust. This is going to change. As the president, Mr. Speaker, I intend to lead this change. Corruption, they say, starts at the top. Now the fight against corruption in Kenya will start at the top. Presently we shall embark on the process of declaring our wealth as we promised.

Mr. Speaker,

To lend weight to my Government's commitment to fight corruption I have established a department in my office headed by a Permanent Secretary for the promotion of good governance and ethics. In addition, we have already gazetted legislation to

establish code of conduct for public officials; new rules for public procurement and the strengthening of the audit system. As you know we have also published legislation to establish an Anti-corruption Commission with effective powers to investigate and prosecute cases of corruption. I call upon the people of Kenya to join me in this fight against corruption. I call upon you, Honourable Members to lead the way in this noble struggle.

Mr. Speaker,

The completion of the constitutional review process is central to all my Government's objectives. The new constitution will create the legal framework and institutions that will give life to the principles of democracy—accountability, transparency and social justice. I am confident that the draft prepared by the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission will be further improved during the forthcoming National Constitution Conference. We shall re-establish the parliamentary select committee on the constitution immediately. This committee will propose to the National Assembly the necessary steps to conclude the review process. To demonstrate the commitment of my Government to the constitutional reform, I have established a Ministry responsible for these matters.

I would appeal to the members of the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission to focus on their primary tasks and not to waste time and public resources on personal attacks. Theirs is a solemn duty and they should be mindful of this.

Mr. Speaker,

The transparent and accountable management of national resources is the greatest challenge facing my Government. We are true to this challenge. The last decade has been one of steady economic decline. The major contributing factors for this have been corruption, insecurity and mismanagement. Our economic

policies have also not been relevant to a rapidly globalizing world.

We are also working to improve relations with our development partners in order to work together towards commonly acknowledged goals. We intend to reduce the currently high levels of domestic borrowing as well. This will free up credit for the private sector. The private sector is the engine of growth and prosperity. It is our responsibility as a government to create the enabling environment for the private sector to create wealth and generate employment for millions of our youth.

Mr. Speaker,

Related to the issue of good governance in public affairs I would like to emphasize the seriousness with which we intend to deal with non-performing parastatals. Most of these have in the past relied on the Treasury for funding. This was even when they were capable of making a profit. I want to reiterate that my Government has no business in supporting institutions that are a drain on public resources. Any parastatal that is not making a profit as required will not be retained by my Government.

Mr. Speaker,

Comprehensive reform of the public service sector will soon be underway. Unlike in the past, this critical effort has all the political will necessary to make the difficult decisions that will need to be made. It is critical that the service attract competent personnel for enhanced productivity. My Government will urgently develop a policy aimed at improving the terms and conditions of employment for civil servants. This policy will put an emphasis on the relationship between pay and performance.

Mr. Speaker,

During our campaign we promised to bring into schools the millions of children who had been denied an education as a

result of poverty. We would like to thank Kenyan parents who have taken advantage of our free primary education policy. Ignorance is the biggest obstacle to the fight against poverty. A Kenyan without education is not empowered to take advantage of life's opportunities. Access to education for all Kenyans was therefore one of our most important campaign pledges.

I am happy to say that since the 6th January, the NARC Government has kept its promise of providing free and compulsory primary education. I thank the millions of teachers, parents, and pupils who have had to endure some inconvenience as the programme got underway. I would also like to express my Government's appreciation to all those who have pledged to support this worthy cause. My Government has already distributed over 500 million shillings for this programme. We shall be asking the House to approve another 2.4 billion shillings before the new financial year. Because of this programme an extra 2.1 million Kenyan children will enrol in primary schools by the end of this year. My Government remains committed to universal primary education.

Our next area of focus shall be on those many districts in Kenya that have no classrooms to speak of. We intend to invest in building classrooms and other education facilities in these areas.

Mr. Speaker,

In the health sector the priorities of the NARC Government are very clear. First and foremost is the fight against HIV/AIDS. It contributes greatly to poverty.

A second priority in this area for my Government is the provision of affordable healthcare to the Kenyan people. We are committed to the introduction of a national social health insurance scheme and the empowerment of hospital boards.

Mr. Speaker,

The rehabilitation and expansion of our infrastructure is vital to Kenya's recovery. In the road sector my Government has moved with urgency to clean up one of the most rotten corners of our public service. In the past, Kenyans have paid astronomical prices for low quality roads. Corruption and mismanagement in the roads sub-sector has contributed directly to poverty in Kenya. My Government has recently formed a committee to urgently review all pending bills in this sector. Similarly in the housing sub-sector we have moved with this dispatch and formed a committee to review the allocation of Government properties.

Mr. Speaker,

The all-important agricultural sector is faced with many problems. Yet it is the mainstay of Kenya's economy. Our economic growth strategy demands a review of farmer's incentives and modernization of agriculture through affordable and appropriate technologies.

The Government will endeavour to ensure stability and consistency in agricultural policy. This will enable farmers to make long-term investment decisions. The regulations governing agricultural inputs, production and imports will be enforced to protect farmers from unscrupulous traders. My Government will particularly support the revival of key institutions in the agricultural sector. These are essential to production and marketing of agricultural produce.

Mr. Speaker,

Related to agriculture are land issues. Currently, over twenty Acts of Parliament dealing with land matters complicate the administration of land. This is a source of great frustration to Kenyans. There is an urgent need to consolidate and harmonize these Acts for more coherent administration.

Mr. Speaker,

In the past, irregular allocations of public land became commonplace. Indeed, land became the most critical tool of political patronage. For my Government, land is first and foremost a vital economic, environmental and social resource. My Government plans to energetically deal with past mismanagement of our land resources. We intend to bring to the House a Bill comprising a comprehensive land policy for Kenya.

Mr. Speaker,

We all know that water is life. My Government is committed to ensuring that Kenyans have access to clean water. Plans are underway to carry out institutional reforms within the water sector. These will separate powers of policy formulation, regulation and water service delivery.

Mr. Speaker,

Sustainable development of water resources is dependent on prudent management of our environment. Hon. Members know that this country is faced with serious environmental degradation. This is due to the reckless destruction of our forests and water catchment areas. My Government promises to move fast. It will put in place measures to rehabilitate and protect our environment. I want to declare that from now on, anyone caught destroying forests and water catchment areas will face the law.

Mr. Speaker,

Our tourism sector directly and indirectly generates almost half a million jobs for Kenyans. It earns us 24 billion shillings every year. The sector has been plagued by poor publicity in the past. This was due to many factors, including political clashes at the coast in 1997. My Government plans to revamp this important sector. It shall benefit first from the changed climate brought about by the NARC Government. However, we plan to market Kenya more effectively as a global destination. We shall

revamp the regulatory framework for the sector. We shall also promote eco-tourism. This House will be requested to provide funds to upgrade infrastructure in the tourist areas. It is planned to upgrade the Utalii College.

Mr. Speaker,

My Government plans to establish a fully-fledged gender commission to mainstream gender issues in national development. A Bill shall also be brought to the House to directly address issues of domestic violence whose prevalence is unacceptable. Mr. Speaker, my Government also plans to take sport more seriously. Not only is it an important pastime but Kenyans are good at it. Success in sport changes the lives of many young Kenyans every year. It gives us something to be proud of as a nation. It promotes healthy lifestyles. My Government plans to deal with the corruption and mismanagement in this sector. These trends negatively affect our athletes. They have undermined the standard of key sports like soccer.

Mr. Speaker,

Co-operatives mobilize about 31 per cent of the national savings. The sector played a crucial role in the marketing of major agricultural commodities. In the recent past, however, co-operative societies have under-performed. This is due to restrictive legislation, poor management and corruption. We intend to review and harmonize the activities of the co-operative sector. The Co-operative Act will be amended to allow savings and credit co-operative societies and unions to be more responsive in mobilizing and managing savings.

Mr. Speaker,

The *jua kali* sector and other micro enterprises are expected to play a crucial role in the creation of jobs in Kenya. However, we recognize that the sector's growth potential is inhibited by

several constraints. These include poor access to markets, lack of credit and a poor policy environment. My Government will soon be presenting to the House a sessional paper on the development of micro and small enterprises for poverty reduction and employment creation.

Mr. Speaker,

My Government promises to reverse the current negative economic trends. To this end we shall start by creating a national economic and social council. This will advise on proper management of our economy. It is our intention to grow at 7 per cent per annum in order to create 500,000 jobs per year. This will progressively eradicate poverty through wealth creation. We have initiated and will implement an economic recovery plan aimed at creating employment.

Mr. Speaker,

When fear rules the hearts of a people, no form of real development can take place. Whether it is fear of crime and vandalism or fear of the organs of the State, the effect is the same. Provision of freedom from fear for life is one of the cardinal duties of any responsible government. Unfortunately, today many Kenyans live in a state of fear. Mr. Speaker, my Government is committed to changing this.

Every Kenyan has a right to life and ownership of property. Sadly, there are some Kenyans who have chosen to make it a habit to disrupt the lives of other Kenyans. The message to them is clear: "Lay down your wicked ways and respect your neighbours."

Mr. Speaker,

My Government will not allow anyone to interfere with these important rights. We are currently dealing with the problem of informal criminal groups that have been bred by endemic poverty.

We have been disturbed by the insecurity afflicting the *matatu* industry. *Matatu* owners have a right to operate their businesses peacefully; the right to employ drivers and conductors; the right to choose their routes and the right to charge legal and appropriate fares. My Government will protect this industry from any kind of harassment.

My Government also plans an overhaul to the terms and conditions of employment of the police force and other security services. They shall also be retrained and re-equipped.

Mr. Speaker,

It is important to declare the considerable emphasis my Government shall be placing to development in North-Eastern Province and other districts which have been marginalized in the past. This province and other districts have been neglected by previous administrations. We recognize the importance pastoralism plays in the national economy. We plan to address the development issues of these areas directly. Security, health, water, communication and education are top on the list of priorities that my Government plans to address.

Mr. Speaker,

Kenya is a proud member of the global community of nations. My Government will pursue foreign relations based on the principles of peace, good neighbourliness and respect for the territorial integrity of other nations. We shall work with other states through IGAD, the East African Community, the African Union and the United Nations to help resolve conflicts on the African continent.

Mr. Speaker,

We shall also accelerate our efforts to complete the establishment of a truly intergrated East African Community. In addition to this, we shall continue to play our role in deepening co-operation within COMESA and other multi-lateral and

bilateral arrangements. Kenya will also continue to pursue the peaceful resolution of conflicts in the Sudan and Somalia.

Mr. Speaker,

Recent terrorists attacks and loss of innocent lives have shocked the world. Kenya complies with Resolution 1373 of the UN Security Council. We join all peace-loving states in the fight against terrorism. My Government plans to establish mechanism to co-ordinate Kenya's response to global terrorism.

Mr. Speaker,

Before I conclude my remarks today, let me briefly mention that the first session of our Ninth Parliament will need to set the pace for the next five years. It should debate various Bills and other matters purposefully. Honourable Members will have to address themselves to the important question of providing leadership. We should support and encourage Kenyans to participate meaningfully in the development of their country. Several Bills will be tabled for discussion during this session. Important ones include the Public Officer Ethics Bill, the Anti-Corruption and the Economic Crimes Bill and the Constitution of Kenya (Amendment) Bill.

Finally Mr. Speaker, let me remind Honourable Members that they bear a great responsibility on their shoulders. Kenyans expect us to restore the glory of this great nation. I have every confidence that together we shall prevail. Our moment in history has arrived. For the sake of the Kenyan people let us not squander it. The fight to better the lives of our people will not be won in 100 days. But I am proud to say we have started on the right foot. The journey towards renewal and prosperity for our beloved nation has began.

With those remarks Mr. Speaker, I now declare the Ninth Parliament officially open.

THANK YOU.