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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 Fifth Session
of the Seventh Parliament**

on

Tuesday, 26th March, 1996

**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
FIFTH SESSION OF THE SEVENTH PARLIAMENT
ON TUESDAY, 26th MARCH, 1996**

MR. SPEAKER,

My first and very pleasant duty this afternoon is to welcome all honourable members to the Fifth Session of our Seventh Parliament. I believe that you have had adequate time to consult and exchange ideas with your constituents and that you are now better prepared to represent their views and aspirations during this session.

As we assemble here today, we do so in the absence of four of our dear colleagues, who have departed from our midst, through the misfortune of death.

These colleagues are the Hon. Paul Ruto Chepkok, the Hon. Amin Sadruddin Walji, the Hon. Patrick Ejore and the Hon. Nicodemus Khaniri.

In honour of these patriotic sons of Kenya, may I request you to rise and observe a minute's silence.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker,

This session of our Parliament convenes at a critical stage when our economy is undergoing remarkable transformation. Members are aware of the reform process which my Government undertook on the economy. The aim of the reform was to stimulate growth and bring about prosperity. I am happy to say today that some of the measures are beginning to bear fruit.

The results from last week's Consultative Group Meeting in Paris are an affirmation that the direction our economy has taken has been the right one. However, this is not to say that "now is the time to party", far from it.

The results from the Paris Club meeting is a signal to lenders, that Kenya is a reliable borrower. In this respect therefore, the burden is still on the shoulders of our people. A lot waits to be done to guarantee that every investment translates into poverty reduction by means of job creation and growth in domestic earnings.

Already, my Government has announced key economic policy measures, the central one being the Presidential Economic Commission, to oversee the implementation of the various policies. That this commission is under my own chairmanship testifies to the seriousness of our commitment to create a strong and vibrant economy which will bring prosperity to the Kenyan people.

Mr. Speaker,

To qualify to be a good borrower is not a guarantee to prosperity. The economy still cries out for investment, especially from overseas investors.

Promotion of foreign investments is another central component of my Government's economic policy. In this connection, members will recall the high level investment missions I personally spearheaded in Britain, Germany, Malaysia and Singapore.

More recently, we hosted in Nairobi an investment symposium directed particularly at American investors and which was addressed by a distinguished member of the Government of United States of America, among other important speakers from the business community.

More such missions will be encouraged both at Government level, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other outlets.

Nearer home, members can recall the efforts we have made to promote regional co-operation with the objective of expanding our market base so as to attract more investments. The efforts of the leaders of the three East African countries culminated in forging of meaningful co-operation and in our successful launching of the East African Co-operation secretariat at Arusha, Tanzania, recently. With this new milestone, the business community both local and foreign, can take advantage of yet another avenue for investment.

Mr. Speaker,

To achieve our objective of attracting investments and building a strong economy, the house-cleaning exercise we have embarked on, will continue to form the basis of our reform programme.

While my Government continues to register tremendous success in the fight against corruption, we should not lose sight of the root of this malignancy. Often, people have tended to highlight corruption to an extent that they ignore its origin in tribalism. Tribalism today stands out as the principal cause of corrupt practises in our country. Until we direct all our energies, as leaders and the custodians of the security and prosperity of Kenyan people, towards this dangerous enemy, Government efforts alone can be rendered desolate and ineffective.

Mr. Speaker,

There are other dangers to social order and stability to which we should direct our attention. In recent weeks, police have had to battle thuggery, robberies and carjackers with

firm resolve, and they have registered remarkable success. This fight apparently, appears to be far from over.

And while I commend police for the manner in which they are tackling this menace, members of the public equally deserve credit for their alertness and promptness in responding to the threats. Public awareness continues to be the number one crime buster in our country, and I call upon leaders to give the necessary support, encouragement and education.

Mr. Speaker,

During this session of the House, members will be called upon to deliberate on a number of Bills which my Government will table. The Bills will be wide ranging and are designed to enhance development and promote sound management of the economy. When debating the Bills, I urge members to place the general interests of our people above party interests and loyalties.

On reading the different manifestos of the parties represented in this House, I recognize that unity is the goal for each one of us. This means that there are more factors which unite rather than divide us.

And because we have responsibility to work for the betterment of the Kenya people, it is time we cultivated those principles which we share, and shun those which drive us apart.

I hope that this Fifth Session of our Seventh Parliament will distinguish itself as the one which laid the foundations for a prosperous Kenya.

With these remarks, I wish honourable members success, and a very rewarding session, which I now have the pleasure to declare officially open.

THANK YOU.