

ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT
MZEE JOMO KENYA ON THE OCCASION OF
MADARAKA DAY: 1st JUNE 1974

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

This ceremony today represents the moment at which we first undertook the heavy responsibility of self-government. No rights are obtained without certain obligations, and it is on the vital subject of responsibility that I wish to address you today.

You know already that my government has declared a general election to be conducted in Kenya very soon. As a first step, a new countrywide registration of voters has been carried out, requiring extensions to the deadline originally set, so that people had every chance to claim their democratic rights. The completed registers will be open for public inspection, and any person having a genuine question or grievance may be sure of being heard. At the same time, officers of the Government will investigate any improper or illegal practices during the registration exercise. Where any of these reports are found to have substance, action will be taken through independent courts and in accordance with the law,

During the election itself, I expect the Kanu organization in every district of the Republic to assist all appointed officials, in ensuring that the operation is peaceful and fully effective. We are anxious to see the highest poll, reflecting the wish and mandate of the people. I urge you all to judge such candidates in terms of character and honesty, and to ignore such vote-catching techniques as wild promises or reckless hospitality. Under our Constitution, we shall need much strength and wisdom not only on the Government Benches, but in every seat that will be lawfully occupied by newly Elected Members of our National Assembly.

There is significance also in the fact that we are currently starting the new 1974 to 1978 Development Plan. This is a context, beyond the procedures and entitlements of politics, in which the theme of responsibility is no less critical.

Similar to other individual States, we are having to adapt our whole economy and prospect in accordance with the realities and dangers of world inflation, which shows no sign as yet of being brought under sensible control. In such a situation, it is the hard work and responsibility of our farmers which will make the greatest single contribution to the entire national interest. It is always a vital defensive weapon in the battle against inflationary trends to be self-sufficient in basic foods. The difficulties we experience in our balance of payments spring from the fact that we are part of the world and can only progress and develop through trade. Once again, it is the whole effort of agriculture that can assist effectively by reducing the need for costly imports and increasing the scale of export earnings.

I urge all producers to responsibly avail themselves of the guaranteed minimum return system, as well as the many revolving credit schemes in support of farming enterprises.

The cornerstone of our national policy is in the fullest development of our rural areas, the purpose and objective of which is the most paramount responsibility of my government. We shall continue to improve water supplies and road and rail communications during the new Development Plan period. The training of local manpower in all aspects of 'the tourist industry will be pursued diligently, so that the opportunities and benefits of tourism may be widely spread.

Any Government with a responsible approach to the evolving national interest must always pay attention to the future of the country's younger people. We have looked upon education as a fundamental human right, while recognizing the need to prepare young people for the day when burdens of responsibility will be theirs to carry. Today, there are three million children enrolled in Kenya's Primary Schools, and following my earlier announcement most of these children are provided with education by my government.

Working always for constructive progress and for social justice, let us remember as well that responsibility is not only an internal matter. The Republic of Kenya finds itself now with a role of ever increasing importance in Pan-African and international affairs. In the whole spirit of Madaraka, I look forward to the time when all nations and

communities of men will be guided by the inspiration of our motto:
HARAMBEE.

STATE HOUSE,

NAIROBI.

17th May 1974.