

SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT
Mzee JOMO KENYATTA, C.G.H., M.P., ON THE
OCCASION OF KENYATTA DAY CELEBRATIONS

20TH OCTOBER 1975

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

Kenyatta Day has become far more significant to our national life than just a state occasion. Unique to our Republic, it is the moment when we manage to forge together all aspirations and interests and ideals, linking a whole people through the memories and the purposes of human dignity in freedom.

In many past Octobers, I have told you that the keynote of this day is national unity, and I have pointed to political stability as the vital foundation here of human progress and fulfilment. Of course, with each year that passes, those who were children when Kenyatta Day was first declared have come to make their contribution to our public life and economic striving. But while they can hardly recall the emotions and the sacrifices of twenty-three years ago, they have become attuned to the strength of unity and the message of stability as part of their gathering experience. No human population is ever static. As generations grow up and move on, there is the constant injection of fresh ideas or new ambitions, within a world scene so prolific in the output both of opportunity and crisis. But because we have welded such a sense of nationhood in Kenya, or the particular African feeling which we describe as African Socialism; so, I can, year after year, develop in terms only slightly updated the simple theme which gives real life to whole nationwide remembrance.

Springing from that one reflection, the first real point that I wish to emphasize today is the need for faith in the ideals and the principles which have carried us so far. So much has been won, and so much has been created, in less than two decades. There can be a tendency at times to take mechanics and milestones for granted, and

to measure human destiny in purely material terms. But I can tell you know that, without the great moral force of ideals, and without the continuing impulse of our social principles, it would never have been possible to meet the challenges of Independence and endure all the slogging tasks of nation-building. Man is endowed with almost unlimited physical capacities. But to harness all potential effort, there must be food as well for his imagination and for his sense of what is right. And thus, it is that we must all keep faith with the unchanging ideals of human dignity in freedom, and with the principles of social justice which alone can inspire widespread and diverse peoples into single national endeavour.

Basically, this has always been the purpose of Kenyatta Day. Linked in spirit, and by the convenience of mass communications, we have set out to re-dedicate ourselves to the aspirations and the tasks which underlie our nationhood. I call upon you all today for fresh re-dedication. We hear from time to time the empty voices of some who are dissatisfied, or who find merit in confusion. But these are men of little faith, whose weakness of intellect seeks in vain to overcome the strength of reason. They are no longer in touch with the people's understanding of the goals of justice, and of what stage has been reached along a road demanding character and dedication. But just as no human population is static, so it is equally true that it cannot be without flaw. And even this discordancy is useful, since it enables the people to see and measure for themselves the force of ideals against the fluttering of attitudes, and the weight of principles against the mockery of pretence.

When we use such words as freedom and independence, they must always be given clear meaning. In this Republic, we have

translated many concepts into something which goes far deeper than possession of an Anthem and a Flag. We have created here a human

society in which, to each man and woman, dignity is a simple right and opportunity is nowhere denied. For purposes of Government, we have maintained, and we shall always maintain the constitutional process of free elections, so that those called upon to preside over public affairs must spring from the genuine refreshment of popular mandate. And as a further essential for any ordered and civilized society, we have entrenched the rule of law, to which all are equally responsible, and by which all are 'equally safeguarded.

I do not propose, on this occasion, to embark on any detailed review of national development, since this is more appropriate on anniversaries of Madaraka or Jamhuri. But in pursuit of this whole keynote theme, let me just mention a few of the things that have been achieved from the fundamental bedrock of political stability. Although beset increasingly by world inflation, and at times by adverse climatic factors, we have succeeded by working together in raising the living standards of ordinary people in all corners of our country, and in banishing so much of the drudgery which at one time seemed immovable. We have worked at and completed perhaps the largest-ever programme of land transfer and family resettlement. We have injected millions of pounds into all services connected with agriculture, as part of the drive to revitalize rural areas in which the majority of our people live. We have developed, almost from nothing, education and health services not only freed from discrimination, but also on a scale which would have been thought unbelievable ten years ago. We have created those essential elements of power supplies and communications needed by a modern state in world society, not only for a growing industrial sector of the economy but serving in addition the tourism and conference centre which Nairobi has become.

All this progress has sprung from independence, although it is far more meaningful to say that it has sprung from the ideals which led us into independence and from principles guiding the nature and scale of development. We must go on now, jealously guarding the

stability and the national unity which have carried us from oppression and poverty into the pride of nationhood and the gathering momentum of economic strength.

Ladies and gentlemen, in conclusion, I ask you for re-dedication to the bonds between our government and people, to achieve yet further progress as the living outcome of our Motto:

HARAMEBE!

Thank you.

State House, Nairobi.
15th October 1975.