

SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT MZEE  
JOMO KENYAITA, C.G.H., M.P. ON JAMHURI DAY, 12th  
DECEMBER 1976

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. . .

Over the last thirteen years, planning of the national economy has become increasingly difficult and the conduct of public affairs more complex. We have had to struggle with problems not of our own making.

Let me say at the outset that whereas many challenges have hampered the growth of Kenya's economy, they have made us more aware of the need to develop our own resources fully in order to be more self-reliant.

Perhaps the most critical problem has sprung from the dramatic increase in the price of crude oil which has affected every aspect of production and trade, both domestically and internationally.

It is reported that the oil producing countries intend to raise prices yet again in January. They claim they have no wish to harm the world economy, but it is a fact that this must follow automatically.

The other primary influence has been that of worldwide inflation, and one of its alarming effects in Kenya has been the need to export more and more primary products in order to pay for the same volume of imported industrial supplies..

In this whole situation, my government has sought to promote and expand exports by every means, while discouraging all non-essential imports to conserve our holdings of foreign exchange. At the same time, we have been directing the provision of credit and other services towards productive sectors of agriculture and manufacturing industries. A detailed sessional paper on Kenya's economic recovery has now been prepared, and will shortly be presented to Parliament, in accordance with my invariable policy of keeping the people fully informed.

In all our striving, and determination to overcome challenge in the cause of social justice, nothing has been more important than the close and unbreakable links between Government and people. It is to maintain and strengthen these bonds that, week after week, I have gladly massive delegations from all parts of our Republic, to explain and to discuss with them the requirements and problems of nation-building. We have been creating in rural areas new patterns of contentment and human respect. And out of such patterns has grown recognition that, in our nation-building task, everyone matters, and every contribution is of value.

Indeed, continuing development and confidence within Kenya have been due to a very significant extent, to dedication and sacrifice on a countrywide scale. Measured as the total of cash, labour and material, the people themselves have contributed about a hundred million shillings this year towards Harambee projects, which now account for nearly forty per cent of capital development in all the rural areas. While the greatest single emphasis has been on Harambee schools, this whole effort has also embraced health facilities and housing schemes, water projects, local roads and bridges, and many other undertakings. Kenya now leads the world in this vigorous kind of grass-roots development, which supports so magnificently the efforts of my government in halting the drift of younger people to the major towns and cities. All this Harambee activity represents a major impulse in creation of employment, with about twenty thousand artisans, plus thousands of teachers and other personnel, employed at any given time.

The Government itself will be constructing some fourteen thousand kilometres of new rural access roads over the next five years, providing better communications for many small-scale farmers, while also increasing cash employment opportunities for landless people. At the same time, we are extending training

activities within the National Youth Service, especially in such directions as road construction, motor mechanics and rural crafts.

Education both at primary and secondary school level has expanded many since the first Jamhuri Day. During this period, we have increasingly felt the need to change the system to suit our present day Kenya.

Over the years since the first Jamhuri, general provisions and programmes for the basic training of teachers have been supplemented by more specialized undertakings. Today, we have a Kenya Technical Teachers College, which has just admitted its first intake, and will be training teachers for a variety of industrial and business courses, as well as for the growing number of village polytechnics.

Thinking in terms of what is called a prime mover, major external resources are still being directed to the search for oil in Kenya, while other overseas companies have been licensed to explore for coal and chromite.

But we must and will never lose sight of the values and rewards of development rather closer to the grass-roots level. Thus, to encourage more direct participation by the people in a productive economy, the five existing industrial estates will be followed during the present plan period by four others. At the same time, we are proposing to set up about twenty rural industrial development centres throughout the Republic.

As I have pointed out to you on so many occasions, Kenya's greatest national asset is the land, which many will remember as a burning issue throughout decades which led up to Jamhuri. One of our guiding principles since then has related to the more equitable distribution of the land resource, but always in association with the proper harnessing of our human resources,

to make sure that the question of ownership did not depress the whole flow of production. And in this context, one of the most satisfactory outcomes of Independence, in practical terms, has been the understanding and response of the people. Over these past twelve years, and mainly through development of tea, coffee and pyrethrum, the contribution of small-scale farmers to Kenya's national product has been trebled.

It has not been easy, through ordinary commercial channels, to reach and service an ever-increasing number of these small farming units. We are therefore working now on final details of a new project, whereby multi-purpose rural co-operatives will become the principal instruments for distribution of farm inputs. This will make urgent requirements more readily available to the individual producer, who will also have a stake in the policy and efficiency of the co-operative concerned.

Our national impulse towards social justice, in terms of the effective ownership of land, was pursued first through the million-acre resettlement programme. Since this was completed, a number of other schemes or techniques have emerged. What is often called the Shirika settlement project has been successfully developed within the past five years, with nearly ten thousand families already settled on farms that were formerly in European ownership. This system is, in effect, a co-operative farming enterprise.

The progress of our Republic embodies ever-increasing human and livestock populations, and the persistent expansion of agricultural or industrial development. Under such circumstances water supplies can quickly become depleted, or in many cases be rendered unusable. My government has thus commissioned a firm of consultants to draw up a national master plan for water. In effect, this will be a resource study to relate all available supplies of surface and ground water to foreseeable levels of current and future demand. There is little doubt that, if crisis is to be avoided

at some future demand, due care and appropriate technology must be applied to the management of our limited water resources.

Beyond soils and forests and water, the other great natural asset in Kenya is wildlife. This is still the principal key to a continuing expansion of tourism in Kenya, so vital in terms of foreign exchange and of employment opportunities. Further tourist offices have now been opened in the United States and Europe, while our general promotional activities have been extended to the Middle East and Japan.

At the outset of this address, I made reference to the factor of self-reliance, within a country challenged by external economic pressures. But at the same time, Kenya is and must be outward looking. We are part of the world. Through provision of conference facilities, and by making contributions to all global we reap some material benefit. But far more importantly, our deliberate endeavours are helping to swell the worldwide fund of human understanding and goodwill. Only through consensus based on mutual respect can there be any really potent prospect, on a global of prosperity and social justice, and thus, in conclusion, I would urge the entire human family to consider the example of Kenya, and then fashion new approaches to the problems of mankind upon the living spirit of our motto: Harambee.

HARAMBEE!

STATE HOUSE, NAIROBI.

7th 1976.