

Speech by His Excellency Hon. Uhuru Kenyatta, C.G.H., President of The Republic of Kenya and Commander in Chief of The Defence Forces During The 50th Madaraka Day Celebrations on 1st June, 2013.

Fellow Kenyans,

I am pleased to join you today as we celebrate 50 years since our beloved country attained internal self-rule. 50 years ago, we embarked on an important and irreversible journey towards full independence when we began to run our own internal affairs.

Today, half a century later, we remember and salute the thousands of Kenyans who were involved in the struggle against colonialism. We salute the men and women who made huge sacrifices so that we could enjoy freedom and liberty today. We particularly honor those who paid the ultimate price in the liberation of our country.

In recognition of the sacrifices borne by our predecessors, every year, on this date, we have an opportunity to come together to reflect on what we have done with our hard-earned freedom; we have an opportunity to dedicate ourselves afresh to the patriotism; selflessness and diligence that marked the struggle for independence and an opportunity to renew our commitment to the task of building a prosperous nation that is freer, stronger, richer and fairer than the one we inherited.

Fellow Kenyans,

As we celebrate this year's Madaraka Day, therefore, we reflect over the journey we have travelled over the last 50 years. And it is evident we have made tremendous strides over this period. Kenyans now have better access to food, shelter, education, health and security services and, indeed, enjoy a better standard of living than was possible 50 years ago.

In spite of this progress, much remains to be done. As we celebrate the past 50 years, therefore, we must now cast our sights over the next 50 years. We must ask ourselves critical questions: how do we tackle the challenges we now face? What advances will we have made in the next 50 years? What new horizons will we have conquered? What kind of country will we bequeath to our children and future generations?

I cannot tell the future any more than you; but I know for sure that we are blessed with rich natural resources, a strong and growing middle class, improving infrastructure, and a well-educated workforce. I am confident that through our hard work we can transform our country and take our rightful place among the free and prosperous nations of the world.

Fellow Kenyans,

To achieve this vision of a free and prosperous society, our journey must now gain momentum; and Kenyans across the country must play their respective roles in ensuring that Vision 2030 becomes a reality.

Let me hasten to say that national unity is a key prerequisite for the realisation of the Kenya that we all desire. Without unity, we shall neither progress nor stand. As we indicated in our

Manifesto, the Jubilee Government believes in one Kenya; a Kenya where every citizen, wherever they live, will have the opportunity to succeed and prosper, free of discrimination. I assure Kenyans that uniting our people is one of my most passionate goals for our country. I dream of a Kenya where we will not only be proud of our diverse heritage and cultures, but also where we will unite around our common aspirations as Kenyans.

Our shared aim is to end ethnic tensions and rivalry and to unite all our citizens. I am determined to provide leadership towards the attainment of this noble objective. A united Kenya has tremendous potential for growth and development. Indeed, Kenya is not a collection of 42 tribes who have to live together. Kenya is one nation, assembled by divine providence and held together for the last 50 years by our common bond and belief in a brighter future for us and our children.

Hand in hand with the agenda of uniting our country, my Government is determined to ensure the success of the devolved system of government.

Personally, I believe the success of devolution will be the success of the Jubilee agenda for the people of Kenya. Devolution will not only facilitate the delivery of services and ensure equity but will also lead to the emergence of new centers of economic development.

Through enactment of various legislations, the National Government has continued to realign its functions and the process of transfer of functions to the County Governments has started. The National Government will continue to give support to the county governments through capacity building. I pledge to promote the spirit of cooperation and consultation as provided for in the Constitution in order to enhance synergy and cooperation between the two levels of Government for the benefit of all Kenyans.

I also assure Kenyans that in the coming days, we will ensure the conclusion of the restructuring process of the Provincial Administration as required by the Constitution. In this regard, I have directed that Provincial Commissioners and other provincial Heads of Department in the former Provinces be redeployed for other national duties.

As we roll out the devolved system of government, I call upon governors and other leaders at the county level to focus critically on growing county economies in order for us to create opportunities and wealth for our people. I also urge leaders to enlighten Kenyans that even as we implement devolution, Kenya remains one indivisible nation.

Fellow Kenyans,

When I took office about two months ago, I promised that we will radically change the way the Government operates so that it is able to deliver efficient and effective services to the people. That journey has begun with our restructuring of Government ministries and the naming of Cabinet Secretaries. These secretaries have been tasked with the responsibility of implementing our development agenda across all sectors of our economy.

I have full confidence in them and I call upon Kenyans to support their efforts.

As an immediate step towards making the transformation of the Public Service a reality, I am directing the ministry of Devolution and Planning to move forward with the strategy for

implementation of integrated service delivery “one stop shop” Citizen Service Delivery Centers; initiate modalities for rationalization of the public service in order to make it effective and efficient, and, institute measures and standards for improved performance management in service delivery.

As I also indicated during my inauguration, the Government will address those critical challenges which, if unresolved, will greatly hinder our development efforts. In this regard, our most urgent tasks are to grow our economy, ensure food security, provide quality education and health services, create jobs for our young people; battle insecurity; and firmly crackdown on corruption and impunity.

Improving the economic welfare of our people is our most challenging task. We have to create ladders of opportunity that will enable our brothers and sisters living in poverty to move to the middle class. To do this, the Government will work in partnership with the private sector and our development partners to reinvigorate inclusive growth through strategies such as modernizing agriculture, diversifying exports, improving infrastructure, sealing leakages in our revenue collection system and expanding the tax base.

In addition to these measures, I would like to reiterate that my Government is keen on transforming the structure of our economy so as to create sustainable employment opportunities to our growing young population. This is important because the only sure way to fight poverty is to create wealth and the best way to do that is by rapid industrialisation.

We are committed to sparking an industrial revolution that will ensure we are able to manufacture the necessary tools and equipment for economic activities as well as to carry out value addition of our raw materials and primary commodities.

It is for this reason that I formed the Ministry of Industrialisation and Enterprise Development. This Ministry will be the heartbeat of our industrial revolution and export diversification agenda.

It will ensure the full implementation of the Sessional Paper No. 9 of 2012 on the National Industrialisation Policy Framework for Kenya (2012-2030) which is aimed at transforming Kenya into a globally competitive regional industrial hub in line with Kenya Vision 2030.

The key projects that will drive this process include the development of integrated steel mills, development of SME parks; promotion of the One Village, One Product programme; and productivity improvement for SMEs. It is our conviction that these initiatives will play a critical role in attaining our objective of creating one million jobs per year for the next five years.

To further increase investments and generate employment opportunities, we will continue to strengthen cooperatives to better enable them play the crucial roles of mobilising savings, marketing products and value addition to our products. The mobilization of savings is particularly key to the realisation of Vision 2030 in respect to increasing national savings from the current 17 percent to 30 percent of national income. I am encouraged that currently, members' deposits in SACCOs amount to approximately Kshs.378 billion. We must strengthen and harness the potential of this sector in order to increase the pool of

investible resources.

With respect to value addition, we want to see more cooperatives venture not only into value addition, but also packaging, branding and marketing of high quality products. I call upon cooperatives to emulate the success stories of co-operatives such as New KCC which through value addition now produces finished products including powdered milk. This is one of the best ways in which we shall be able to generate employment and create wealth.

Fellow Kenyans,

To further facilitate the growth of our economy, we will continue to expand the generation, transmission and distribution of electricity. Our primary aim is to bring down the cost of electricity and at the same time ensure it is reliably and widely available. I am aware that a reliance on hydro-generated power makes our power supply unreliable, while thermal electricity is costly and pollutes the environment. In view of this, my Government will continue to put more emphasis on green energy development with a special focus on geothermal and wind.

Regarding infrastructure, we will prioritize road construction and maintenance in the next five years under the 2nd Medium Term Plan of Vision 2030 which spans from this year to 2017. Among the key projects earmarked for implementation is the LAPSSET project comprising of a new road, rail and pipeline network connecting Kenya to South Sudan and Ethiopia; the Northern Corridor Transport project and the Kenya Transport Sector Support Project which involves the rehabilitation of targeted regional and national roads connecting Kenya to her East African neighbours as well as enhancing inter-county roads connectivity. We shall also secure adequate funding to begin immediate construction of the standard gauge railway line from Mombasa to Kisumu.

With respect to information and telecommunications infrastructure, I am happy our country has been recognised globally as a leading ICT hub and has, indeed, received three global awards for facilitating the development of ICT infrastructure, use of e-applications in public services, and the famous mobile money transaction technology - Mpesa.

In the coming years, the Government will address challenges identified in the Jubilee manifesto concerning ICT through improved ICT education in schools, training of teachers and the progressive rolling out of WI-FI in major towns within the next five years.

To create employment opportunities, my Government plans to position Kenya as a Business Process Outsourcing Hub through establishment of Konza Techno City. This will provide employment opportunities specifically to the youth who will work in software development, light electronic manufacturing industries and IT-enabled services, among others. We will also establish incubation hubs for ICT start-ups through the New Biashara Kenya Agency.

Fellow Kenyans,

Turning to the pledges we made in our manifesto, we have made good progress in regard to laying the framework for delivery. Shortly - in the near term - we shall commence the journey of delivering on these pledges, transforming our economy and improving the living standards of our people.

We shall achieve this by focusing on a few but high impact strategic areas that will reduce the cost of living, while at the same time unleashing the latent potential of our people and economy.

For this reason, my Government has prioritised, among others:

- Transport and logistics to reduce cost of transport and make our economy competitive;
- Agricultural transformation and food security aimed at making food available to Kenyans at affordable prices;
- Security to ensure the safety of our people and facilitate investment;
- Affordable, adequate and accessible water and energy for households and investors;
- Quality and equitable education for all school going children;
- Free maternal health and free access to quality healthcare throughout the country; and
- Affordable and accessible credit to our youth, women and persons with disability.

With respect to health, my Government has made adequate budgetary arrangements to enable all pregnant mothers to access free maternity services in all public health facilities, with effect from 1st June, 2013.

Consequently, I direct that no charges of whatever nature shall be imposed by Government health institutions to access maternity services.

In addition, the user fees of Ksh. 10 and Ksh. 20 that have hitherto been charged in dispensaries and health centres respectively will equally cease with effect from 1st June, 2013. These measures are expected to increase access to required services by all pregnant mothers. They will also increase access to primary healthcare services in Government health centers and dispensaries by all Kenyans.

With respect to other priorities, and starting with the next fiscal year's budget of 2013/14, my Government has made provisions for adequate funding.

In this regard, we have, for example proposed to set aside Kshs.17.8 billion in FY 2013/14 towards food security. This allocation will be committed to on-going irrigation projects countrywide as well as initiating the One million acres irrigation programme.

To enable our youth and women access credit for starting or expanding small businesses, Kshs.6 billion is proposed for distribution to all constituencies in the country as a Revolving Fund. A framework for its delivery has been formulated. In addition, and in line with my Government's commitment to the youth and women of this country, we will establish the National Gender and Development Council and further remodel the National Youth Council as institutions that will transform the mainstreaming approach into tangible and practical solutions.

In education, we shall make provision for the purchase of laptops in schools. We will also set aside resources for; building the capacity of teachers in lower primary schools, for content development, for the deployment of computer labs in ten schools per constituency, and for the connection of power to schools identified for provision of laptops but which do not have power.

I expect the ministries and Government agencies concerned, to implement these programs expeditiously in order to transform our economy into a prosperous middle income country in which our citizens live with pride and dignity.

I wish to assure Kenyans at this point that beyond our efforts to empower the youth through education and provision of affordable loans, my Government is committed to protecting the youth from injurious influences and lifestyles that compromise their health and future. We must invest in the health and well-being of our youth in whom the future of our country is embodied.

In this regard, I wish to put on notice those who sell drugs, alcohol and other substances to our youth. We shall not allow you to ruin these young lives and deny our country the bright future we are working for. We are resolved to deal with these merchants of destruction.

Fellow Kenyans,

My Government recognises that security is a prerequisite to sustainable economic growth. Security of the individual and of property is embedded in our Vision 2030 as one of the foundations for socio-economic transformation. We are, therefore, determined to improve security across the country in order to attract investments, lower the cost of doing business, and provide Kenyans with a more secure living and working environment.

Several parts of our country have suffered incidents of insecurity in the recent past. Criminals have taken innocent lives and stolen or damaged property. The Government has moved fast to stem this rising tide of criminal activities. We have deployed more security officers to vulnerable areas and equipped them to deal with emerging threats.

My Government has nominated a Cabinet Secretary and sent the name to Parliament. I wish to request Parliament to expeditiously deal with his vetting. In the meantime, my government has taken measures to ensure that there is no vacuum in the management of security institutions. I have therefore directed all security organs to step-up the operations and to secure the nation.

The ongoing police reforms are also bearing fruit and it is our intention to ensure that we have an efficient, well equipped, motivated and responsive police service that will serve the nation impartially and deal firmly with criminals. I call upon the general public to partner with the police by providing information that may lead to the arrest and prosecution of criminals.

To further enhance security, my Government has set aside Kshs. 4 billion for the procurement of modern security equipment each year for the next five years. We have also proposed to allocate Kshs.4.5 billion for enhanced security operations; Kshs.1.5 billion for crime research and investigation; and Kshs. 3 billion for financing the leasing of motor vehicles and fuelling them for operations.

I assure all Kenyan that I will not rest until every Kenyan feels safe and secure. To the students; teachers and parents in Bungoma, to my fellow citizens in Mathare, to Kenyans in Tana-River, and to citizens across the land – we will defend you and ensure your safety and freedom.

Fellow Kenyans,

Corruption and impunity are a major hindrance to our progress. For many years now, some public servants, business people, professionals, and even average Kenyans, have engaged in corruption on such a regular basis that it seems to have become acceptable. This must stop.

Corruption not only degrades the moral fabric of our society but it also causes immense suffering to our people. Most importantly, corruption compromises the ability of Government to provide effective and efficient services to its people and jeopardizes our nation's future.

I call upon all Kenyans to join hands in this fight by obeying the law at all times and practicing integrity in all your endeavours. This battle will be won only when we all do that which is morally right. Let us also report corruption when we witness it and hold our leaders accountable in regard to the use of resources.

Fellow Kenyans,

As I conclude, I would like to affirm Kenya's commitment to regional, continental and international cooperation. When we attained our independence, Kenya embarked on a foreign policy approach that sought to establish its place as an active and responsible member of the international community. Over the years, our nation has maintained its place as an acknowledged pillar of peace as well as a respected leader in regional development and integration.

In order to build on these achievements, my Government seeks to implement a more proactive and innovative approach in pursuing our political and socio-economic interests globally. We will be guided by our strategic objectives of securing and growing a vibrant modern economy, promoting regional peace and security, and enhancing Kenya's role as a respected regional and global leader.

To this end, appropriate legislative and policy frameworks will be put in place to centralise and focus Kenya's Foreign Service on economic diplomacy and to facilitate further engagement of the Kenyan Diaspora in the social, political, and economic development of our country.

Finally, ladies and gentlemen, I call upon us all to rededicate ourselves to the development of our beloved motherland. Let us also embrace the ideals of patriotism, hard work and selflessness that underpinned the struggle for self-rule; and as we cast our eyes towards the horizon of possibility and promise, let us all believe in ourselves, and let us all have faith that we can make Kenya a prosperous, free, and wealthy country.

Thank you and God bless you all.

