

**SPEECH BY H.E. THE HIGH COMMISSIONER ON THE OCCASION OF
JAMHURI DAY 10TH DECEMBER 2008**

Excellencies

My Lords

Invited Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good afternoon,

Let me just thank you all, on behalf of myself, my wife, Cecilia and the staff of the High Commission for sparing time to respond to our invitation and join us in celebrating Kenya's 45th Independence Anniversary.

I know you all have busy schedules and it is really therefore an honour to us for you to have come.

This year, 2008, started with an unusual time of some violence arising out of 2007 December General Elections.

However, our Political Leaders, led by our President His Excellency, Mwai Kibaki and Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga hammered out a National Accord which led to the formation of a Grand Coalition Government in April 2008.

I would like at this point to express our Government's thanks and appreciation to the Prime Minister, Rt. Hon. Gordon Brown and Her Majesty's Government for the support they extended to us during the period leading up to the formation of the Grand Coalition Government. I know the Prime Minister spoke to the parties concerned directly. This was of great help.

Our relations with UK remain friendly and focussed on areas we can work together for our mutual benefits. We shall continue to co-operate in strengthening these relations.

We can therefore state proudly that as the year 2008 ends, peace and stability has returned to our Nation.

We can also say with confidence that this stability is sustainable because the people of Kenya do not want to go through anything, like that experience. We want to move onward and develop the Nation.

To underpin this national development, the Grand Coalition Government has published and adopted the Kenya Vision 2030 whose aim is “to transform our country into a modern, globally competitive, middle income country, offering a high quality of life for all citizens by the year 2030.”

Within the 2030 Vision, we have a “5 year Strategic Plan” going to 2012.

In this medium term plan, we have outlined the many projects which we want to undertake covering all sectors of the economy. These include:

Agriculture, Manufacturing, Mining, Energy, - Power electricity
Telecommunications, Transport, Infrastructure (Roads, water etc.)
Hotels, Retail/Wholesale , ICT, Housing, Financial Services, Health, Water etc.

We are looking for investors to develop many projects in all these sectors.

We believe we have established the proper environment for foreign direct investment (FDI). The Kenya Investment Authority has published information responding to many queries on investment opportunities in Kenya. These are available at our Mission.

There are many advantages for business start ups and growth.

For instance:

- Plenty of Labour, and skilled labour at that
- Well educated people
- Regional economic hub, with easy communications.
- Plans to join EAC, COMESA, SADC, as one Trading Block.
- A large market (EAC alone has over 100 million)

In addition, Kenya’s proximity to Southern Sudan and Ethiopia and the Eastern DRC means access to large resource rich countries in Central, East Africa waiting for investors.

Within Kenya itself, there is a major programme to build roads to connect all provinces and major towns.

For connections to our neighbours, major Road Projects are on hand:

- (i) The Great North Road from South Africa North to Tanzania, Kenya, Sudan, Ethiopia.
- (ii) The Northern Corridor highway connecting Mombasa (Kenya) to Kampala, Kigali and to DRC ports.

Ports

The Mombasa Ports Container Terminal is under construction as the Kenya economy and the East Africa economies grow and need more of these facilities. But Mombasa's capacity requires to be supplemented and for this reason, Kenya has sought out for investors to put up a brand new port at Lamu, North of Mombasa.

H.E. Mwai Kibaki has just signed a \$3.6 billion Lamu Port Development Project with the State of Qatar. The project will include a Rail and Road network through Northern Kenya. When completed, Kenya will connect easily with our neighbouring Ethiopia and Sudan via that network.

The opportunities as I said earlier are clearly vast for any investor wishing to put their money in Kenya.

Conclusion

Of course I have only covered but a portion of what Vision 2030 and the Medium Plan provides. The Mission will be glad to speak to you on these matters.

We have put a Plastic Glass case at the Entrance of this Hall and we would appreciate if you could drop your card there we shall get in touch.

May I now request you to join me in a toast to the good health and well being of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Kenya and the people of Kenya on this auspicious occasion.

Finally, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a happy 2009!

Thank you

God bless you.