

SPEECH BY HER EXCELLENCY MAMA SALMA KIKWETE AT
THE DIPLOMATIC PARTY TO WELCOME THE NEW YEAR 2011
HELD AT THE STATE HOUSE JANUARY, 14th 2011.

Chairperson of the Association of Diplomatic Spouses

Diplomatic Spouses,

WAMA Board Members,

Invited Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Evening,

I thank you for accepting my invitation and thank you for coming to our annual get together. You are warmly welcome.

Like our sherry party last year, while celebrating the New Year 2011, this is an opportunity to thank you for your partnership and for your cooperation.

Our gathering this evening also provides us with an opportunity to reflect on the past year and ponder about the future - a future that is full of hope and brighter for all of us

I wish to extend a warm welcome to all and in particular a special welcome to the new arrivals who are gathering with us for the first time, I say **Karibuni Sana**. It is my sincere hope that you will enjoy your time here in Tanzania like others, because Tanzania has been blessed with abundant natural attractions some of which have been declared to be World wonders and others listed as World Heritage, for example, The Serengeti National Park, Ngorongoro crater, Mount Kilimanjaro, Zanzibar Islands and many historical sites. I also hope that you will spare some of your time to learn our culture and language and enjoy the Tanzanian Hospitality.

Invited Guests,

As you may recall during last year's party, I had an opportunity to share with you my *vision* which amongst other things included several activities ranging from increasing education opportunities to the girl child; contributing to the reduction of maternal mortality by improving Maternal and Child health; Contributing to the women's economic empowerment and assisting orphans and other vulnerable children. I am pleased to inform you that we have made significant strides towards realizing this vision. Please allow me to share with you some of the achievements.

Education

In the education front we have recorded encouraging progress. Last year, the WAMA Nakayama sec school enrolled its first batch of Form one students. Most of the students enrolled are orphans and others are coming from very vulnerable backgrounds from all the regions of our country. All the students have been provided with uniforms, books, stationeries and all other basic needs. In the coming few weeks, we are expecting to enroll 90 new students who will start form one. Indeed, this is encouraging progress.

Friends, Invited Guests,

We have also recorded a good progress in our Girl Child Education Scholarship Programme. Last year, 240 girls from all regions of Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar benefited from the four-year secondary school scholarships. The priority for scholarship awards has been given to orphans and children coming from poor background. Our intention is to expand this program during this year.

Invited Guests,

Health

HIV/AIDS

As a player in the campaign initiative against HIV/AIDS by the Organization of African First ladies Against AIDS (OAFLA), I have stepped up our campaign against HIV infection among youth in Tanzania. We have used various ways including mass media to educate youth and communities to embrace our ideals and ethics to protect our children from AIDS, by using our slogan, *“Treat Every Child as Your Own, Protect him/her from AIDS”* During my regional tours I had the opportunity to speak and encourage Students, teachers and community members to take seriously their roles in preventing HIV and pregnancy among youth especially students. We have partnered with Engender health to train students and teachers in 20 schools in Lindi and Mtwara in efforts to build capacity of students prevent HIV infections and early pregnancies.

Last year we also expanded our horizon in the area of advocacy by rolling out our PMTCT program through a special campaign named *“Save the Unborn Child”*. We are now partnering with Colombia University’s ICAP Project, and Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS foundation (EGPAF) to implement a major community advocacy program for the Prevention of Mother to Child HIV infections.

Maternal and Infant Mortality

We have continued with our efforts to address the problem of maternal and infant mortality. Last year I conducted advocacy meeting in various villages throughout the country to mobilize communities to actively participate in preventing Maternal and infant mortality. We have provided maternal and child health service equipments to 66 health centers and dispensaries around the country in order to improve availability and quality of services.

Invited Guests,

Women economic Empowerment

During the last year we have been able to provide financial support to 88 women economic groups including SACOS and VICOBA. We have also trained 1334 women on entrepreneurship, farming, poultry, microfinance and animal husbandry.

Friends, Invited Guests,

The accomplishments I have mentioned could not have be achieved, without a strong and committed team of board of Directors and staff of WAMA as well as generous support from well-wishers like yourselves. My heart is full of thanks for the good work by WAMA staff and my heart is full of gratitude for those who made it possible

for us to deliver to our vision. We are grateful to all the individuals and organizations that supported our work. We also thank all our local and international partners for working with us to realize our vision.

Invited Guests,

Despite the achievements we have made, I must admit that the needs within our communities are still immense. Your invaluable support and cooperation is still needed. It is only through our joint strength, we will be able to create opportunities to enable women and girls to fully and equitably participate in development of their communities. I believe, your skills, experiences and positions are an important resource which when combined will change many lives of the needy.

Conclusion

I look forward to further strengthening of our cooperation for the common good of our society. Finally, I wish to extend to each and every one of you, and your families, my personal best wishes for a bright and prosperous 2011.

Thank you for Listening.