

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY H.E. BENJAMIN WILLIAM MKAPA, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA AND PATRON OF THE AFRICAN LEADERSHIP FORUM (ALF) AT THE SIXTH ALF, HELD ON 29<sup>TH</sup> & 30<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2019 AT THE STATE HOUSE, DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA, UNDER THE THEME: PROMOTING GOOD NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION IN AFRICA**

The topic for this year's African Leadership Forum touches the growth prospects of many African countries, if not all of them, and the lives of all their citizens. As the program shows, it has three sub titles, namely Conservation, Land Management, and Climate Change. This is no accident, because the three interface and impact one another.

Conservation is generally understood as coverage and protection of national parks, forests and wetland reserves. It is perceived as the backbone of tourism, and in the face of a small domestic tourism scale, it is reckoned to cater to foreigners, and to have little economic impact on ordinary national citizens. But this is a misperception. Absence of a Conservation policy and accompanying programs can have a disastrous impact on the nation's ecosystems and weather prospects. Both can accrue from the nation's land use policy, thus affect the sustainability of its land management system.

To achieve vibrant economic growth, it is necessary to have sustainable land management in place. The United Nations defines sustainable land management as "the use of land resources, including soils, water, animals and plants for the production of goods to meet changing human needs". It envisages the adoption of land use systems that through appropriate management practices enable land users to maximize the economic and social benefits from the land while maintaining or enhancing the ecological support functions of the land resources.

Sustainable land management involves a holistic approach to achieving productive and healthy ecosystems by integrating social, economic, physical and biological needs and values contributing to sustainable and rural development. The realization of such a land management paradigm calls for involvement and partnership of land users, technical experts and policy makers in government and political parties.

The destruction and diminution of the ecological and social environment can be attributed to two causes, namely human activities and the interface of nature. Sub-

Sahara Africa is endowed with great population, ecological climate and cultural diversity. The population of Sub-Sahara Africa is set to cross the 1 billion mark this year.

Increased food production in countries where there is a minimum of industrialization – that is to say much of Africa - means population pressure on the land. Basic agricultural transformation means wading into forest land and excessive land use. The result is poor land management and agricultural practices, landslides and over flooding. While we must put more hoes and tractors to the land it is necessary to bear in mind that the land is finite, and so are land related assets.

Such human activities, especially those using and producing fossil fuels for industrial production, electricity generation and motor cars affect the weather. Gases produced by such activities are building up in the atmosphere, trapping too much of the sun's heat and raising the earth's temperature – a process known as global warming. As the earth heats up, it alters rainfall and other weather and climate conditions. Africa, the poorest and least developed of the world's regions will be especially had pressed to adjust.

I dare to suggest that much of the present and planned growth is not taking enough consideration of the region's human and natural resources base. Increasing demands are placed for land and other natural resources and effecting on nature and wildlife reserves. In this way Development is made to pit people and nature/wildlife reserves in competition. Under this strategy land becomes degraded and less productive, tourism resources become decimated, people are impoverished, the heritage of national and animal history are consigned to electronic archives. Ultimately both people and wildlife will suffer.

Africa's natural capital must be preserved and enriched. Poorly planned agricultural settlements, infrastructure development, and resource extraction must not drive the degradation of forests, rivers and grasslands. For the resulting habitat loss and fragmentation threaten ecosystem goods and services upon which people and wildlife both depend. One sure way of slowing down deforestation is afforestation – planting new trees. There can be a serious and concerted program of planting new trees.

A few months ago, volunteers started the Kilimanjaro Tree Project. They recalled that at Tanganyika's independence a torch was lit at the top of Mount Kilimanjaro, to light the way for the freedom fighters to light the way for the freedom fighters of colonial southern Africa and racist minority ruled South Africa. There has been much tree felling around the mountain. Some people say this may explain the reduction of the snows at the top of the mountain. While the tree planting has started in Kilimanjaro they hope it will extend throughout the country. When I turned 80 last November Sebastian Kolowa Memorial University (SEKOMU) their birthday present to me was to plant 80 trees!!

In September 2006 the UNFCCC Secretariat convened a conference on Climate Change adaptation attended by 33 African Governments and a number of international agencies and civil society groups. The meeting highlighted the need for greater monitoring and early warning of climate changes and severe weather events like droughts and floods, and called for integration of long-term adaptation strategies into development and disaster – preparedness programmes. As Sierra Leonean climate scientist, Oguniade Davidson, has observed, “Africa never enjoyed the financial benefits generated by putting greenhouse gases up there through the industrial revolution of the developed countries in the first place it never accumulated the wealth to be able to bear the shocks. So now they have “to cope with the effects of a situation they did not create with resources they do not have” and global warming is a “double loser for countries in Africa.”

Climate change manifests itself and is felt in different ways. It is occasioned by global warming and excessive depletion of renewable natural resources – land fertility, deforestation, inland waters recession.

Tanzania is a good example. 70% of the population – peasant farmers and livestock keepers – relies on climate change and global warming. As the economy – and population – grows, renewable natural resources are declining. Over harvesting. Land degradation and unsustainable use of renewable natural resources see to increase in the damage.

It is estimated that 8,770 square kilometers disappear every year. If this trend continues by 2075 there will be no forests in Tanzania!! In the last 15 years some 130,000 km<sup>2</sup> of land has been deforested; reforesting the, is possible by tree planting is possible because their soils are not yet badly degraded. Uganda, on the other hand, is listed as at risk of losing all its forest because of unsustainable deforestation in 40 years. Forests and woodlands are estimated to cover about 15% of its land surface.

Forests provide many economic and environmental benefits. They prevent soil erosion and help maintain water resources. Forestry related activities can offer opportunities for jobs and skills development, for youth and women. We can protect natural forests and plant new forests we can create jobs as answer to our growing population.

Reforestation is possible. In Kenya Wangari Maathais's Green Belt Movement planted over 50 million trees around Nairobi in about 10 years. Ethiopia, has since May, planted 2.6 billion trees as part of a campaign to fight desertification. The target is to plant 4 billion trees by the second half of this year, averaging of all 40 trees per each of Ethiopia's 100 million people.

At the 39<sup>th</sup> Summit of the SADC held here in Dar es Salaam two weeks ago, the outgoing Chairman, President Hage Geigob of Namibia pointed out the immense

damage which was caused by weather changes in the region this year alone. ***“Climate Change is real and our region can attest to this fact. Between January and April 2019, the region faced several weather related phenomenon, namely, Tropical Cyclone Desmond, Enawo, Idai and Kenneth. AS a result of these events, we witnessed extensive flooding in Comoros, Mozambique, Tanzania, Madagascar, Malawi and Zimbabwe. Heavy rains also affected Kwazulu Natal, in South Africa.***

***The Cyclones killed over 1,000 people; injured an estimated 3,000 people, damaged economic infrastructure, education and health facilities and destroyed over 800,000 hectares of cropland as well as crops and seed stocks. Over 3.3 million people were affected and required immediate humanitarian assistance, including food, shelter, clothing, potable water, sanitation and medical support.***

***In addition, below average rainfall and prolonged dry spells resulted in reduced agricultural production, thus negatively affected pasture and livestock, as well as water supply for human, and other uses. Member States affected by severe drought conditions include Angola, Botswana, Lesotho and Namibia have declared States of Emergency and have started implementing response plans.***

***In response to these national disasters, the following measures were undertaken:***

- i. Contingency funds amounting to US\$500,000 were released towards emergency relief efforts of Tropical Cyclone Idai to complement efforts y Member State, national and international partners;***
- ii. A Regional Floods Appeal was launched in response to Tropical Cyclone Idai which sought US\$323 million to support victims with immediate needs and resilience building actions;***
- iii. Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) was conducted in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe for reconstruction and rebuilding following the Tropical Cyclone Idai.”***

UN agencies and other partner institutions, civil society organizations, the private sector and individuals supported our affected Member States during these challenging times. As a result of the National and Regional Humanitarian Appeals, a total of US\$4203 million, translating to 41.3% of the required US\$491 million has been mobilized.

Record low temperatures in temperate and cold parts of world in the northern and southern hemisphere have been accompanied by frequent natural disasters. On our continent we have seen typhoons and floods on unprecedented scales. With electronic media we have witnessed rains and winds decapitate towns and hamlets,

displace populations, destroy food crops in flooded farms, and take lives of hundreds of people.

A writer in the Journal Science states that planting billions of trees across the world is by far the cheapest and most efficient way to tackle climate change. As trees grow, they absorb and store the carbon dioxide emissions that are driving global heating. New research estimates that worldwide tree planting programme could remove two thirds of all the emissions that have been pumped into the atmosphere by human activities, a "mind bowing" figure according to the scientists.

"The July analytical review in Science calculated how many additional trees could be planted globally without encroaching on crop land or urban areas. It found that there are 1.7 billion hectares of treeless land on which 1.2 trillion native tree saplings would naturally grow. Using the most efficient methods, 1 trillion trees could be restored for as little as \$300 billion!! The chief drawback of reforestation as a solution to the climate crisis is that trees grow slowly – hence a projection of 50 to 100 years to reach full carbon sequestering potential.

All this appears too tall an order. But there is no alternative. We must arouse an inflated interest by government, the general public and environmental activists on the worsening climate impacts and remedial measures.

Biodiversity has a galvanizing effect on human health and well being. Last May 20<sup>th</sup> observing International Day for Biodiversity preservation, UN Secretary – General Antonio Guterres Observed that "the quality of water we drink, the food we eat the air we breathe all depend on keeping the natural world healthy." He underlined that biodiversity and protection of ecosystems are essential to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and to address climate change. Mr. Guterres urged all governments, business and civil society to "take urgent action to protect and sustainably manage the fragile and vital web of life on our one and only planet."

The UN Secretary General has called a special climate summit to be held in New York this coming September 23. This will be followed by COP 25 in Santiago Chile, and COP 26 in the UK. Next year. The UN Convention on the Laws of the Sea will meet to negotiate a new global oceans treaty. It may be possible to reach an Agreement emphasizing sustainable farming and fishing on the one hand and a limit to deforestation on the other. Africa must be represented at these gatherings.

I am advocating the proclamation of renewal of our commitment to preserve national parks, nature reserves and wild lands as a national and world heritage. They can contribute to national income and job creation. Encroachment should not be entertained or accommodated. But also, flora and fauna are important factors to realizing national development aspirations.

Communities must be incorporated in the programmes for sustainable management of forests, and carbon credits there-from should devolve to their benefit. The UN Programme for Deforestation and Forest Degradation should devolve incentives to them for adaption to Land Use in financial terms.

Government and communities must collaborate always in the introduction of climate sensitive agriculture and sustainable energy solutions.

Communities must be sensitized and empowered to secure their water resources. Water user associations must be encouraged; so also, must be rain water harvesting.

The population must be conscientized to the reality that Development is not someone else's concern. That is the meaning of self-reliance and self-development.

African countries should put in place, by policy and practice, a Land Use policy. This should spell out with a minimum of equivocation rights of occupancy and an adjudication system of resolution of land disputes. These should spell out clear guidelines and procedures for determination and enforcement. Simultaneously they should adopt an ecosystem-based adaptation for rural resilience.

There should be continuing public and citizen education on the imperative of respecting and protecting designated national forests, national parks and national wildlife and wild lands. They must be made to appreciate the true socio-economic, biological and scientific importance of wetlands, and assisted to change from a harvesting to a management approach. The citizenry must be orientated towards the search for alternative clean fuel use just as governments consider and promote wind and solar energy.

Countries must embark on programmes of Reforestation and educate the populace on the importance of reversing land degradation and renewing degraded ecosystems. There must be devised a National Biodiversity and Action Plan.

Allow me to say a word about the African Wildlife Foundation, of which I am Vice-Chairman of the Board. Nearly 60 years old it is one of Africa's Largest and oldest NGOs. It believes first and foremost in a future where human development includes thriving wildlife and extensive wild lands as cultural and economic assets for Africa's future generations.

A recent landmark UN report revealed that one million species are at risk of extinction with alarming implications for human survival, yet we have the tools and knowledge to respond.

Now, more than ever, public and private interventions are needed. Our top priorities are to reduce poaching and human wildlife conflict, tackle the illegal wildlife trade,

protect wildlife in its natural habitat and restore ecosystems, and support Africans to prioritize wildlife and wild lands as essential to development.

“When we protect wild animals and wide lands, we protect Africa's future”.

The world today is characterized by rapidly advancing disorientation and dysfunction. Big power alliances are coming apart. Small power integration is proceeding at snail's pace. International Cooperation is less professed and may stand out not in profession but in malpractice. Development aid is increasingly questioned because it is seen as a dirty world. Africa is seen much more as a source of minerals and its migrants are not only resented in Europe, but are left to die as they strive to cross the Mediterranean.

In such a chaotic world environment Africa must review its development perspective and strengthen its capacity for self-reliance.

Let me conclude with a story.

A surgeon, a field Marshal and a politician had had a very liquid lunch together and were now in deep argument.

“A surgeon's job is the oldest profession in the world”. Said the Surgeon.

“What makes you say that?” Asked the Field Marshall.

“Well”, replied the surgeon, “When woman was created she was made from one of Adam's ribs, and surely only a surgeon would do something like that.”

“Nonsense!” snorted the Field Marshal. “Even before Adam and Eve there was a world and it is said order was created out of chaos. Who else could do that but a soldier of the highest rank?”

“Ah” said the politician. “But who do you think created the chaos to be sorted out?”

It is to Africa's politicians that we must look for the sorting of our land degradation and climate challenge chaos!

Thank you for your attention.