

**STATEMENT BY H.E. DR. JOHN POMBE JOSEPH MAGUFULI,
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA ON THE
OCCASION OF THE 6TH DICOTA CONVENTION,
HYATT REGENCY HOTEL, DALLAS, TEXAS, USA,
28TH APRIL TO 1ST MAY 2016**

***Dr. Ndaga Mwakabuta; President of DICOTA Organization;
Members of the DICOTA Board and Executive Committee;
Representatives from the US and Tanzania Governments;
Distinguished Sponsors of this Forum;
Distinguished Participants and Guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen;***

Courtesies and Gratitude

Good Morning to you all!

Firstly, let me take this opportunity to express my heartfelt appreciation for inviting me to join you as your Guest of Honor in the 6th DICOTA Convention; and most importantly, meeting you, my countrymen in Diaspora, for the very first time since I was elected as the Fifth President of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Secondly, I would like to commend DICOTA Leadership for a job well done for making this event possible with befitting selected theme of, “*Leveraging the Tanzanian Diaspora Capacity: Linking Growth, Opportunity, and Prosperity*”. The Commitment that has been exhibited by the love you have for your country for supporting its economic development is highly appreciated. It is gratifying to note

that despite the long distance between the two continents, your hearts have remained focused on the development and the well being of your mother country. Please maintain this spirit to match the famous saying that; “*come west, come east, home is the best*”.

Thirdly, while recognizing the tremendous efforts and stewardship of the DICOTA in preparing this year’s conference, I would like to thank all participants from the United States of America and Tanzania for their attendance in this 2016 DICOTA Convention. The large participation witnessed here today, illustrates the efforts by the DICOTA leadership which has continued to grow since the first Convention to the current sixth. The trend should be emulated for the future Diaspora conventions. Last but not the least, I would like to commend the close and excellent working relations shown by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, East African, Regional and International Cooperation in collaboration with our Embassy in Washington, for taking an important task of coordinating this year’s event.

A big clap for them.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

When I looked at various topics on the program, I was delighted to note that all of them focused on the key sectors of the economic growth of our country. Topics such as “natural gas energy the new economic frontier” are of great importance and relevance to the

Government, as it is the best platform for exchanging ideas, expertise and deepen overall knowledge in this new area.

It is my anticipation that this Convention would forge new economic ventures and deepen an overall knowledge to improve Government's decisions and programs entailed towards Diaspora.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Let therefore, this sixth Convention become a “one-stop-shop” business network that can prosper for years to come. With a wide range of participants from different States within America, as well as business institutions from Tanzania, serious dialogue should be formulated so as to open avenues for the hidden treasures of the abundant opportunities available in our country Tanzania. I urge all business communities; in particular, our entrepreneurs present here today, to take advantage of this solemn opportunity and explore partnership in business and establish serious contacts.

Situation in Tanzania

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Allow me to take this opportunity to highlight current political and economic situation in Tanzania. As you might all be aware, we held our General Elections in October 2015, during which I was elected as the Fifth President of the United Republic of Tanzania and H.E Samia Suluhu Hassan, who was my running-mate, became the country's First Female Vice President. I am happy to inform you that,

we had a free, fair and competitive General Election which was conducted peacefully and democratically, with Zanzibar concluding the process last month. This is a clear testimony that Tanzania's democracy continues to grow and mature consistently with the unity, peace and stability of our country. Following these successful elections, I appointed Hon. Majaliwa Kassim Majaliwa as the Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania, to complete the top leadership of our country.

The elections are over, it is time to work, as it was my motto during the election campaigns and now of my administration, *"It's time to Work, Work per se"* (Hapa Kazi Tu!).

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Allow me, to take this opportunity to comment on the situation in Zanzibar after the General Elections in 2015 October, which were annulled by the Zanzibar Electoral Commission. You might have heard that the decision to re-run the elections resulted from the outcome of the gross irregularities especially in Pemba. On 20th March 2016, however, the elections were conducted successfully in a number of polling stations, although one of the opposition parties, specifically the Civic United Front, did not participate. H.E Dr. Mohamed Ali Shein, under Chama cha Mapinduzi won the elections and becomes the President of Zanzibar and Chairman of the Revolutionary Council. Following this democratic exercise, H.E Dr.

Mohamed Ali Shein has named his new cabinet and as of now the situation is normal. For the sake of peace and tranquility, we will continue to engage all political factions in Zanzibar so as to ensure peace in the Isles. The peaceful situation in Tanzania is too precious to be interfered.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

The Tanzanian economy has continued to perform strongly, recording growth of 7% over the last decade. This growth is projected to remain above 7 percent, while ably supported by public investments in infrastructure, particularly in the transport and energy sectors. I therefore, take this opportunity to register my gratitude to my predecessor, H.E. Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, for handing over to me a very stable country both, economically and politically.

Despite achievements recorded in all socio-economic sectors, we are still facing major hindrances on our way to achieving our destination as a prosperous middle-income country. Poverty, unemployment and corruption have remained to be among the major challenges confronting us. You might have heard from your brothers and sisters at home or through media that, since we came into Office, we have been taking serious measures on various issues to overcome these challenges; including; reducing bureaucratic red-tape, cutting unnecessary Government expenditures and fighting corruption and

tax evasion. We are also making efforts to promote discipline, accountability and transparency in the Government and the public sector. Furthermore, the Government is making sturdy efforts to collect revenues so as to enable the country to become a middle-income nation by 2025.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

The world is increasingly becoming a global economy integrated in terms of markets, social norms and financial systems. This is yet another opportunity for the Diaspora to better integrate Tanzania in the global market. And it can be achieved through feeding Tanzania's ever-growing supply chain demand with inputs from the USA, improving distribution of Tanzanian products into other markets and marketing our country as a highly preferred tourist and investment destination. It is worth noting, that Tanzania has effectively become East Africa's largest tourist destination in terms of football and we believe, with more concerted efforts in conjunction with the Diaspora, we can be Africa's top tourist destination.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I wish to take this opportunity to strongly affirm the commitment by my Government in recognizing and engaging Diaspora as an important partner for the country's development. The Government recognizes the Diaspora contribution, small or large, in terms of financial remittances, skills and knowledge transfers towards the

country's economic development. The Government cannot afford to disregard the important contribution made by the Tanzania Diaspora in the US which has benefitted medical sectors such as the donation of screening machine for breast cancer in Lugalo Hospital worth **USD 200,000** and other medical facilities and medication worth USD **300,000** which donated to Mwananyamala Hospital in Daar es Salaam and Mnazi Mmoja Hospital in Zanzibar year 2015. Apart from remittances, the Diaspora has increasingly become an important source of unique skill sets and experiences that are much needed in capitalizing on Tanzania's 'new' economy. The Diaspora has also been a market for Tanzanian products ranging from agricultural produce to entertainment products which provide an alternative source of income to our growing entertainment sector.

Closing Remarks

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Before I conclude, I want to take this opportunity once again and extend my congratulations to all participants and the sponsors who made this Convention possible. My singular wish for this 2016 Convention is for it to be successful and I am sure the days ahead will be productive in securing many and available opportunities Tanzania has to offer.

On a special note, I want to recognize the role and participants of US Agencies, the World Bank, US Business, Honorary Consults and

Friends of Tanzania, among others, in forging partnerships with the Tanzania Diaspora and working closely with them to build bridges for trade, investment, tourism, education and culture between Tanzania and the United States.

My Countrymen in Diaspora;

I wish to take this opportunity again to encourage you to remain goodwill ambassadors of your country and promote Tanzania's many wonders of tourism, oil and gas, agriculture, infrastructure and the likes.

In addition, I would like to remind you not to forget your families at home, any amount of the money you send back home can greatly transform the lives of your brothers and sisters at home, through better education, housing and health care.

Last but not least, is my gratitude to the Hyatt Regence Management and Staff for availing us their excellent facilities, expertise and facilitation for the success of the 2016 DICOTA Convention.

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING.