

**SPEECH BY HER EXCELLENCY MAMA SALMA KIKWETE  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE DIPLOMATIC PARTY TO  
WELCOME THE NEW YEAR 2015, STATE HOUSE,  
10th JANUARY 2015**

*Chairperson of the Association of Diplomatic Spouses;  
Diplomatic Spouses;  
WAMA Board Members;  
Invited Guests;  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*Good evening!*

I warmly welcome you all to the State House and to this Year's Sherry Party to welcome and celebrate the year 2015. I thank you for accepting my invitation to join me at the annual get together for diplomatic spouses. For those of you who are attending for the first time, I say welcome to Tanzania and to our annual event. I hope you will find your stay in Tanzania enjoyable and rewarding.

*Invited Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen*

Our gathering this evening provides us with an opportunity to reflect on the past year and think about the future. You may recall that during last year's Sherry Party,

I shared with you my *vision* on expanding educational opportunities for girls, improving maternal and child health and women economic empowerment.

I am pleased to inform you that we have made significant progress in pursuit of this vision. WAMA Foundation is grateful for the support and cooperation it receives from our partners and stakeholders. Fortunately, some of them are present at this occasion. We thank you so much all for your support. Please continue to assist us.

We commend the Government of United Republic of Tanzania for giving due attention to maternal and child health including women's rights and welfare in Tanzania. We will continue to complement government efforts by supporting the women who have not yet been reached. We will remain seized with education, health and economic empowerment programs.

### *Ladies and Gentlemen*

Increased access to quality education for the girl child is one of the core objectives of the WAMA Foundation. Subsequently we have built WAMA Nakayama Secondary Schools for girls.

Currently the school has more than 400 students who are either orphans or come from economically deprived families. This year, ninety (90) new students will soon join the school.

The growing number of students and staff at school has made it necessary to expand the administration block, build a new computer laboratory and new classrooms for advanced level students. We also plan to construct new staff houses to cater for the growing number of teaching and none teaching staff.

I am glad to inform you that we have completed the construction of the WAMA Sharaf Secondary School in Lindi Municipality. The school will help to increase the number of girls who benefit from our education initiatives.

*Invited Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

In health care, we have continued to support improving maternal and child health in order to reduce mortality of mothers and their children.

We are also deeply involved in efforts to prevent teenage pregnancies and Mother to Child Transmission of HIV. Likewise, we have become actively involved in the fight against cervical and breast cancer, which cause many deaths to many women in our country.

As the Vice- President of the Organization of African First Ladies Against AIDS (OAFILA) for the Eastern Region, I have continued to conduct advocacy campaigns aimed at achieving the national and African Union goal of Zero Transmission, Zero Deaths and Zero Stigma in relation to HIV&AIDS. We have undertaken a number of high impact activities that involve communities and other stakeholders.

Last year we partnered with the Pink Ribbon Red Ribbon Initiative, Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation (BMSF), Secure the Future Program of U.S. and other local partners to conduct major campaigns to increase awareness and encourage women to do screening for cervical and breast cancers. More than fourteen thousands (14,000) women were screened in Mwanza, Tabora and Dodoma Regions.

Those suspected to have problems are being assisted to go for further investigation and get treatment if confirmed. Indeed, many such women are at different stages of treatment.

### *Ladies and gentlemen*

In collaboration with Engenderhealth Tanzania, WAMA has participated in a campaign on the prevention of adolescent early pregnancies in secondary schools in Lindi, Mtwara and Dar es Salaam Regions. The campaign aims at increasing sexual reproductive health knowledge and life skills among girl students. The campaign also supports teachers on how to guide and counsel their students.

We have expanded our scope of activities to include Autism. In this regard, we have been in touch with Autism Speaks of U.S. to work with us, to increase awareness on Autism in the country and develop strategies for getting solutions.

In this year, we expect to continue working with Engender health and ACQUIRE Tanzania Project (ATP) in advocacy on Prevention of Adolescent Early Pregnancies in secondary schools. We will continue to work with the Government and other Non Governmental Organizations such as MEWATA, T-MARC & TAYOA in the implementation of the Pink Ribbon Red Ribbon initiative on the prevention of Cervical Cancer in Mwanza, Mbeya and Iringa Regions.

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

Women Economic Empowerment has continued to be our key activity in the past year. We have supported the formation of women groups and provided training on entrepreneurial skills to women in Dar es Salaam, Coast and Lindi Regions. We have successfully reached more than 15,000 people and mobilized over five hundred and ninety three million shillings. Loans worth more than seven hundred and twenty nine million shillings have been extended to women under the *Mwanamke Mwezeshe* Project. We have also, trained three hundreds (300) women in business development and marketing in Lindi and Dar es Salaam Regions.

*Invited Guests,*

As we celebrate the achievements that I have mentioned today and those that I have not mentioned for shortage of time, I wish to express my optimism about the year ahead of us. I would like to thank those who have supported the WAMA Foundation, the Government and people of Tanzania. I look forward to your usual cooperation this year.

Once again I wish you, your countries and organizations all the best in this year 2015. Let it be the year of hope, prosperity and fulfillment.

***ON THAT NOTE, I WISH YOU A HAPPY AND  
PROSPEROUS 2015***

***THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR KIND ATTENTION.***