

SPEECH OF THE GUEST OF HONOR AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 31ST TANZANIA DENTAL ASSOCIATION SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE, 23RD NOVEMBER 2016, MAGADU OFFICER'S MESS, MOROGORO, TANZANIA

Hon. Dr Kebwe Steven Kebwe, the Regional Commissioner, Morogoro

Morogoro Regional Medical Officer,
Dr Frank Jacob

Morogoro Municipal Medical Officer of Health,
Dr Baraka Jonas

Assistant Director of Oral Health,
Dr Ahadiel Senkoro

TDA President, Dr Lorna Carneiro

TDA Honorable Secretary, Dr Tumaini Simon

TDA Members,

Stakeholders,

Exhibitors,

Invited Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Madam President

My sincere delight and appreciation is voiced to the organizing committee for inviting me to be the Guest of Honor to kick start this important event being hosted by you, the Tanzania Dental Association (TDA). It is a great opportunity for me to meet with Oral Health professionals from all areas within the country and also from other countries.

Madam President

The selection of the conference theme "TAKING ORAL HEALTH IN TANZANIA A STEP FORWARD" is timely and in line with the objectives of the government vision 2025. It is indeed pleasing to know that the oral health fraternity has engaged itself to work together with the government in ensuring oral health in Tanzania is taken step forward. The Government is in full support of your pledge to improve the quality and good life for all Tanzanians by hosting various oral health education sessions and oral health awareness campaigns. In line with this, oral health professionals have also pledged to further their professional knowledge and skills so as to be able to withstand global competition.

Madam President

Tanzania's transition into middle income status will require a pool of higher skilled labour force. It is henceforth important that training of the different dental cadres be streamlined towards obtaining this objective. Availability of quality products and equipment in the provision of oral health will

require a critical assessment by joined forces of all stakeholders.

Madam President

In taking oral health in Tanzania a step forward, the commitment of oral professionals in provision of preventive and curative services is underscored. It is only by creating awareness of the public on oral health diseases and how they can be prevented that quality of life of an individual can be improved.

Madam President

Commitment of your association towards phasing down the use of dental amalgam within the country is noted and in line with the Minimata convention of 2013 in which Tanzania was one of the countries to sign this treaty. The challenge that professionals within your association face in the drive to phase out use of dental amalgam is that there is no other material in the market that is strong enough for the purpose of conserving teeth that are grossly destroyed by dental caries. However, you also mentioned that self-use of fluoridated tooth paste at individual level, oral health education and awareness together with regular checkups can reduce the incidence of grossly carious teeth thereby avoiding the use of dental amalgam.

Madam President

The Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children being the custodian of professional association relies on the Tanzanian Dental Association to play a major role in the improvement of oral health provision across the country. Your conference theme shows your commitment and I am optimistic that the gained scientific knowledge will enable you improve oral health care provision and enhance the oral health of Tanzanians at your workplaces.

Madam President

The collaboration that your association has with other partners like the World Dental Federation (FDI) and Commonwealth Dental Association (CDA) is surely a commendable and shows your commitment in keeping abreast with international standards and requirements. The Government acknowledges your efforts especially during the yearly commemoration of World Oral Health Day on the 20th of March. I am proud that this year you gave the Morogoro region an opportunity to commemorate World Oral Health Day. We prompt you to involve more partners in a multi-sectoral

approach to support this activity and in many more regions as it is the only way we can improve the oral health of the community at large.

Madam President

The efforts made by the Tanzania Dental association in partnership with stakeholders in the oral health education of the community by media coverage using the TV and Radio are also commendable. We encourage you to seek partnership in oral health that will enable you to render dental clinical services to the communities in need.

Madam President

Your efforts in Private Public Partnership have been on the rise and I challenge TDA to explore new venues for further collaboration in oral health. I commend and encourage this support from the manufactures and suppliers of products related to oral health and request them to support activities for the betterment of improving the oral health of Tanzanians.

Madam President

The support rendered to your association by the various stakeholders and exhibitors shows that you have an integrated leadership, with enough courage

to implement the aspirations of the profession. I also request you to look into the possibilities of a multi- sectoral approach in regard to Oral health.

Madam President

The Government would like to acknowledge your partners in oral health, namely NMB, Anudha Ltd, Nuran Developers, Mansoor Daya Chemicals Ltd (MediOral), ITV/Radio, Colgate Palmolive Tz. Ltd, Chemi and Cotex Ltd. The exhibitors, GSK (Sensodyne toothpaste), Bahari Pharmacy LTD,) Dema Dental Product Company, Smiles Medicstomatology and Smile Dental Lab Ltd. are also acknowledged.

Madam President

I take this opportunity to welcome the facilitators, presenters and participants of this conference that will be held from today the 23rd to the 25th November 2016 and wish you all the best.

With these few remarks, I take this opportunity to thank you for your participation and for inviting me to officiate this meeting, I hereby officially declare this meeting open.

Asanteni na Karibuni Sana!