



UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA



SPEECH BY HONOURABLE DR. SHUKURU J. KAWAMBWA (MP) MINISTER FOR LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA AT THE INAUGURAL CEREMONY OF THE 74TH GENERAL SESSION OF THE OIE ON THE 21ST MAY 2006 PARIS FRANCE.

Your Excellency Dr. Abdoulaye Bouna Niang, President of the OIE,
Your Excellency Dr. Bernard Vallat, Director General of the OIE
Your Excellency Dr. Dominique Bussereau, Minister for Agriculture Fisheries for the Republic of France,
Your Excellency Representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization,
Your Excellency, Representative of the World Health Organization,
Your Excellencies Representatives of International Organizations,
Honourable Ministers Responsible for Livestock Development
Country Delegates of the OIE
Invited Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

Your Excellencies,

I feel greatly honoured to have been invited to attend the opening ceremony of the 74th General Session of the OIE. I also feel greatly privileged to be given an opportunity to speak to you and bring my regards and greetings from the Government and people of the United Republic of Tanzania. We in Tanzania have high regard to the noble objectives of the OIE and are proud to be associated with this organization.

Tanzania is a country endowed with a large livestock resource base, capable of producing 1 million metric tons of meat, 3.9 million metric tons of milk and 7.4 billion eggs per year. However, this resource is not being tapped to its full potential because of prevalence of animal diseases. I note with appreciation the initiatives being taken by the OIE in promoting programmes aimed at improving veterinary services in developing countries for the purpose of improving their sanitary status and competitiveness in the international trade of animals and products of animal origin. I am told the OIE is a key partner at technical advisory or advocacy level in the FAO/OIE Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases Programme (GF-TADs) and EC funded Pan African Programme for the Control of Epizootics (PACE) which are examples of existing initiatives and my country is one of the beneficiaries. Tanzania acknowledges these initiatives and I wish to assure you that we are making the best use of them.

An example of the impact of these initiatives in my country is our attainment of OIE recognition of Freedom from Rinderpest Disease through the certificate you awarded us during the 2005 General Session, a milestone that assures the world the improvement of our sanitary standards. I thank you for this recognition and we promise to strive to attain Freedom from Rinderpest Infection.

Your Excellencies,

We have now started giving serious attention to the control of Contagious Bovine Pleuro Pneumonia (CBPP), Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), African Swine Fever, Newcastle Disease, Lumpy Skin Disease, Tick-borne Diseases and Trypanosomosis. However, since the task of combating these diseases is enormous and requires huge resources we would like to appeal for the assistance of your organisation and collaborating partners. The diseases mentioned have a very serious impact on poverty alleviation and exportation and unless concerted effort's are made, we may not be able to achieve our development goals.

Your Excellencies,

As we are holding this meeting, many people throughout the world are losing their means of livelihood or are in the process of incurring big losses due to the occurrence of Avian Influenza. This situation would have been worse if it was not for the efforts made by the OIE and its major technical collaborating partners, the FAO and WHO in providing frequent and up to date information on the disease and spearheading technical and financial support for its containment.

Let me therefore take this opportunity to record my appreciation for the efforts already made on this and request the international community to continue to support developing countries that are infected or at risk of being infected with the disease to avert the pending pandemic. The OIE and Veterinary Authorities the world over have moral obligations to prevent this from happening and thereby avoid eminent socio-economic disruptions that will de-rail efforts on poverty alleviation and attainment of Millennium Development Goals.

Your Excellencies,

I understand that during this assembly you normally come out with a number of useful resolutions that are binding to the OIE member states. I would like to assure you that I shall be following your deliberations with keen interest and assist in their implementation in my country. It is my hope that the decisions you make for improving sanitary standards will not isolate and impose more blocks and be construed as technical barriers to trade for countries like mine to participate in the international trade of animals and products of animal origin.

Furthermore, it is my expectation that you will also advocate and lobby as you are doing in the ALive programme for the development of alternative ways of improving our livestock production systems so that they are able to meet the standards you set.

Your Excellencies,

Let me once again thank you for allowing me to address this General Session and I continue to wish you a happy and successful meeting.

Thank you for your attention.