



KEY NOTE ADDRESS

BY

HONOURABLE DR. EMMANUEL FABIANO, M.P.,

**MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION,**

DURING

**A DIASPORA CONSULTATIVE MEETING IN THE REPUBLIC OF
KENYA**

17TH MARCH, 2018

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation,
Lilongwe 3.
March, 2018**

- **Your Excellency, Mrs. Agrina Mussa, High Commissioner of the Republic of Malawi to Kenya;**
- **Leaders of the Malawi Diaspora and the entire Malawi Diaspora family in Kenya;**
- **Representatives from the Private Sector;**
- **Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.**

Good Morning

1. Let me begin by expressing my heartfelt gratitude to Your Excellency, Mrs. Agrina Mussa, High Commissioner of the Republic of Malawi to Kenya, the Diaspora Community here present and all Staff from the Mission for according us a warm welcome here in Nairobi.
2. In cognizance of the potential that Malawian Diaspora have in the development of our country and the challenges that are hindering the full exploitation of their potential, the Government has felt it necessary to holistically address all matters relating to the Diaspora. The approach is formal and amicable.

3. I am particularly inspired by His Excellency Professor Arthur Peter Mutharika, President of the Republic of Malawi who set the ball rolling when he convened a similar Diaspora Consultative Meeting on 24th September, 2017, in New York, USA. Since then, there have been several Malawi Diaspora Engagement activities in various parts of the world. For instance, in December, 2017, a Team of Officers sponsored by the Reserve Bank of Malawi went to South Africa and United States of America to hold similar meetings with your colleagues. The response was overwhelmingly positive, and they indicated their readiness to invest in their homeland. Early, in January, 2018, I also convened a Ministerial Diaspora Consultative Meeting in Mangochi where we discussed ways to facilitate Diaspora investment in Malawi. Towards end of January, 2018, I convened a similar consultative meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

4. The main purpose of these Consultative Meetings is to formally inform you that you have a significant role to play in the socio-economic development of your country, Malawi. I am aware and wish to acknowledge that most of you have been generous to your family relations, orphans and various civic associations back home. This is commendable though most of it was done unnoticed and probably haphazardly because it lacked a formal framework. The Government has

made a commitment to encourage you to escalate these investment efforts and activities in an organized manner.

5. The new approach is being guided and supported by a policy, known as the Malawi Diaspora Engagement Policy which Cabinet approved on 31st August, 2017. The Policy acknowledges the great potential that the Malawi Diaspora has in terms of skills, investment capital, and ideas in the development of Malawian economy. It is for this purpose that the Policy seeks to tap into this resource and essentially put the Malawian Diaspora at the centre of Malawi's development agenda.
6. In terms of its implementation period, the policy has a 5-year life span and was formulated through a comprehensive process which included the Public Sector, Civil Society, Academia and the Malawian Diaspora. As such, the policy has set out initiatives on how Government Ministries and Departments, Civil Society Organizations, the Private Sector and the Diaspora's communities and associations will work together to integrate the Diaspora into Malawi's National Development Strategies.
7. The overall aim of this policy is to establish a mutually beneficial relationship between Malawi and her Diaspora, with the underlying goal of harnessing and empowering Malawians

abroad to efficiently make significant and effective contribution to the sustainable socio-economic development of the country.

8. This policy, therefore, is Diaspora-centred as it anchors Malawi Diaspora and brings them to the center of Malawi's development policies. It ensures that Malawian professionals in various fields use their skills and knowledge to contribute towards the country's development. It outlines strategies that elevate levels of collaboration between experts in different fields, as well as, provide clear guidelines and platforms for such collaboration and circulation of knowledge among experts at home and in the Diaspora. Furthermore, this policy intends to harness the benefits of Diaspora remittances by proposing various strategies of reducing the transaction costs of transferring money to Malawi.
9. You may also wish to note that the Diaspora Policy emphasizes the fact that Diaspora can contribute to defining their home country's value proposition and national brand. Therefore, you have the role to rebrand your country. Moreover, you have the potential to play a crucial role in Foreign Direct Investment and in nurturing the venture capital industry. There is evidence that if the Diaspora could be mainstreamed into the country's economic growth strategies, there would be a boom in economic activities.

Therefore, you have the potential to change the image of Malawi, if the Government and private sector offer you the opportunity and the environment to invest and participate in national development.

10. It is widely known that some countries pioneering in Diaspora engagement are now earning significant remittances and investments from their Diaspora. We have several examples like Ireland, India, Ethiopia, Philippines, Ghana, Rwanda and Kenya just to mention a few.
11. According to World Bank statistics, Diaspora remittances to developing countries are estimated to have reached \$429 billion in 2016 and expected to reach US\$450 in 2017, which is more than double to official development aid remitted to these countries. A large part of these savings is held in bank deposits, which can significantly contribute to developing countries' development.
12. A possible avenue for investing remittances would be Diaspora Bonds. Our representative from Reserve Bank of Malawi present will talk more on this avenue.
13. I therefore, I wish to appeal to you to consider coming up with bankable projects to be implemented in Malawi which will mutually benefit you and the country.

14. Allow me to take this opportunity to invite and encourage you to offer your insights and advice on how together we can ensure the successful implementation of the policy and steer our beloved country towards sustainable socio-economic development.

I thank you for your kind attention!