

THE MWALIMU NYERERE FOUNDATION



WELCOMING REMARKS

BY

DR. SALIM AHMED SALIM

**TO THE PUBLIC ADDRESS OF H.E. DR. JOHANNES RAU,
PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY**

23RD MARCH 2004:
KARIMJEE HALL
DAR ES SALAAM

Your Excellency Dr. Johannes Rau,
President of the Federal Republic of German, and Madam Rau,
Your Excellency Retired President Ali Hassan Mwinyi,
Honorable Ministers,
Hon. Leaders of Political Parties,
Honourable Members of Parliament,
Your Worship, the Mayor of Dar es Salaam,
Your Excellencies High Commissioners and Ambassadors,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are deeply honoured to have in our midst this morning, an eminent statesman and a personality who has not only a wealth of knowledge and experience in a variety of fields but who has above all used that wealth in the service of his nation and the world community at large. In welcoming, the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Dr. Johannes Rau we welcome a Head of State, who over the years has distinguished himself in the service of his country in many areas of responsibilities encompassing political, civic, legislative and governmental.

Mr. President, on behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation and on behalf of all those present here, I wish to extend to Your Excellency and Madam Christina Rau as well as the distinguished delegation accompanying you, a very warm welcome. KARIBU SANA.

The President of our country, His Excellency Benjamin William Mkapa has already conveyed in very eloquent terms, the sentiments of our people towards your country and the significance he and all of us attach to your current visit to Tanzania. I therefore need not belabour the point. Suffice it to say that your visit and that of President Mkapa to Germany last year is a testimony to the strong ties of friendship and cooperation that bind our two countries and peoples. Furthermore, your visit comes at a time when our government and people are engaged in extensive economic and social reforms and consolidating the process of good governance. These are monumental challenges which our people are determined to overcome and whose success will be much facilitated by the understanding, support and contribution of our friends-prominent among whom, we are happy, to acknowledge and count on the Federal Republic of Germany.

Mr. President,

We are conscious of the fact that your current visit to Tanzania is part of a visit to two other brotherly African countries namely Nigeria and Djibouti. This visit together with the recent visit of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder to Kenya, South Africa and Ghana demonstrates the importance that your country, the Federal Republic of Germany attaches to Africa. We warmly welcome this.

Some eight years ago – in January 1996 to be precise – in my then capacity as Secretary general of the Organization of African Unity, I had the honour of welcoming one of your distinguished predecessors, to address the African Community at AFRICA HALL, in Addis Ababa. On that occasion, I stated *inter alia*:

"The relations between Africa and Germany have had a significant place in international relations and world history... The contemporary experience of Africa-Germany relations should provide the necessary impetus in consolidating cooperation between Africa and Germany and in initiating a new path to meet the common challenges.

We in Africa recognize and appreciate the role being played by the Federal Republic of Germany in supporting the African Continent as it faces the daunting challenges of managing the political and economic transition. It is encouraging to note that even during this period of her own transition after unification; the Federal Republic of Germany has avoided the pitfall of isolationism. Notwithstanding its domestic needs and challenges, Germany has continued to provide technical and financial assistance to Africa in support of the Continent's efforts at economic transformation and development. In the same spirit we look forward to Germany playing an important role together with her partners in the European Union in support of enhanced all round cooperation between Africa and Europe."

Mr. President,

A lot of water has passed under the bridge in these eight years. We have had our moments of trials and tribulations. But we have also had our great moments of triumphs. Despite difficulties and formidable obstacles and challenges, Africa is on the march. Clearly therefore, the promotion of Africa-Germany relations continues to be important today as it was some years ago. Indeed, I dare say, even more important. This is particularly so considering the current international situation including the threats and challenges that humanity at large is now confronted with.

It is therefore with particular pleasure that I welcome you at Karimjee Hall to address this distinguished gathering of a fairly cross-section of the Tanzania society and more specifically its leadership. Before you, Mr. President, are Government Ministers, Parliamentarians, Leaders of different Political Parties, Religious leaders, Government officials, academics, civil society representatives, and members of the media as well as members of the diplomatic corps accredited to Tanzania.