

**Remarks by Dr Salim Ahmed Salim:**  
**"REFLECTIONS ON MWALIMU JULIUS NYERERE AS A MAN OF IDEAS AND SCHOLARSHIP" at the**  
**launching of Mwalimu Nyerere Chair in Development, Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2011**

**Ndugu Acting Vice Chancellor, Professor Yunus Mgaya,**

**Ndugu Principal of the College of Arts and Social Sciences Professor Bentram Mapunda,**

**Mwalimu Nyerere Professorial Chair in Development, Professor Delphin Rwegasira,**

**Excellency Ambassadors of Sweden and the European Union,**

**Distinguished members of the faculty and students,  
Invited guests,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen.**

I am honoured to be here to take part in the celebrations marking the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the University of Dar es salaam. I wish to thank you Ndugu Vice Chancellor and the organizing committee for having kindly invited me to this occasion. I wish the College of Arts and Social Sciences (CASS) together with entire University, greater success in the consolidation of the gains made so far and the attainment of greater achievements.

Let me at the very outset extend my sincere congratulations to Professor Rwegasira on his assumption of the Mwalimu Nyerere Professorial Chair in Development. I have known Professor Delfin Rwegasira for number of years now. I had come to appreciate his talents and commitment when he was at the African Development Bank at the time when I was the Secretary General of OAU. He was well respected both in the African Development Bank as well as in the then OAU circles.

Five days ago on September 24<sup>th</sup>, to be precise, the Citizen on Saturday had an article by Robert Zoellick, President of the World Bank and former Deputy Secretary of State of the United States. The article entitled "Global Monetary order must change" makes very interesting reading. Of particular attention to me was the concluding paragraph of that article. With your indulgence let me quote it;

***"When countries that produce almost 50 percent of their electricity from coal tell poorer countries with no energy alternatives that they cannot use coal – what are they really saying? "Do what I say, not what I do." When countries with large fiscal deficits preach fiscal discipline to poor countries – what are they really saying? "Do what I say, not what I do." When countries pay***

***homage to free trade but hold back developing countries with barriers, what are they really saying? "Do what I say, not what I do." When countries advocate debt sustainability for the poorest, yet have debt levels at historic heights, what are they really saying? "Do what I say, not what I do." A "do what I say, not what I do" world economy will fracture, to the detriment of all. The old ways can and must change."***

Pushback some thirty years ago. As Minister of Foreign Affairs of my country, I accompanied Mwalimu Nyerere to the historic North South Summit held in Cancun, Mexico in 1981. In the course of the deliberations of the summit there occurred what I would characterize as an interesting, frank and not all together amiable exchange of views between President Ronald Reagan and President Nyerere on the topical issues affecting the world economy with particular reference to the inequities of the International Economic System and the double standards applied by some of the developed countries with respect to the issues at stake.

In his characteristic blunt, logical but polite form, Mwalimu effectively challenged Reagan's argument of opposition to subsidies being carried out in developing countries. President Nyerere reminded President Reagan that while the developed countries including the United States were subsidising their farmers yet they oppose subsidies being given to farmers in our countries. He also openly told President Reagan that whereas he recognized the role of the private sector, it was inconceivable for the private sector to be a solution to all our ills. He asked for example, would the private sector build the infrastructures in our countries? Would they build roads? Would they build hospitals etc? He also stressed the plight of developing countries whose prices of commodities are at the mercy of the developed world. Mwalimu also made reference to the debt issue as well as the tariff and non tariff barriers imposed on the products of developing countries.

It was a heated exchange and you could see that President Reagan was uncomfortable and quite taken aback. In parenthesis, Mwalimu turn to me and said,

***"Salim, there goes any chance of being the Secretary General of the UN"***. It will be recalled that it was the time when I was Africa's candidate supported by Third World and many other countries for the post of Secretary General of the United Nations. The elections were due in a few weeks time and the United States exercised their Veto against my candidature.

In my view, Robert Zoellick's article is a vindication of Mwalimu's arguments at Cancun and beyond. Moreover it's a demonstration of the relevance and importance of being firm and consistent on issues of principles.

From Cancun onwards, Mwalimu continued to be one of the most articulate, inspirational and defender of the struggle of the developing countries for a more just and equitable economic order. He did so with the same energy, zeal and commitment that he displayed with respect to the struggle against colonialism, apartheid and all forms of indignities. In this context, Mwalimu was one of the pioneers and the Chairperson of the South Commission and later the Chairperson of the South Center, an intergovernmental policy think tank for the South.

It is in the same spirit Mwalimu talked about people centered development. He defined development in various forms including the following; "development is the development of man and not things", "things are tools for development" and "man is the purpose of development". While impressive statistics on GDP growth are important for among other things they provide an indicator of macroeconomic context, such numbers per se do not necessarily reflect the true level of development.

He invariably stressed that development a priori involves the development of society as a whole AND NOT JUST A SECTION OF THE COMMUNITY. Above all, such development must be grounded on the people and their empowerment. This process of empowerment can be made inter alia by facilitating people through education and health, to acquire capacity for self-reliance through use of their mental and physical endowments, as well as by exploitation of their national resources. Mwalimu believed and rightly so that unless society as a whole is a beneficiary, and has a stake in the development process, such development can NOT be sustainable.

Indeed Mwalimu considered development processes both at the national and international levels as an integral part of the liberation struggle. For him Independence, crucial as that was as the first step, will have little meaning if the people see no difference in their daily lives. He advocated and stood firm on securing development that do not compromise our independence nor our strengths.

Mwalimu was an original thinker in multiple disciplines. His ideas were situated on the realities of Tanzania and on wider African experiences. He was an eloquent and lucid communicator with an incredible capacity to explain complex problems in simple terms. He was at home with the most educated, the less educated and the uneducated. Most importantly he was able to explain to and clearly be understood by the broad masses.

Mwalimu was a man who valued reading. He was invariably up to date with world events. I learnt this very quickly when I served as his Minister of Foreign Affairs. In that position I was frequently at Msasani, either at Mwalimu's call or at my own initiative. Whenever I was called I tried my best to ensure that I was fairly up-to-date with the African and world developments of that particular day. For, more often than not, Mwalimu would start the discussion by inquiring on what is happening in Africa and the world. In a situation of that nature, **hakuna kumangamanga**.

**Ndugu Acting Vice Chancellor,  
Ndugu Principal,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

THE 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM as well as the 50 YEARS OF TANZANIA MAINLAND INDEPENDENCE is the right occasion for somber reflection on where we are coming from, where we are and where our country is going as well as how close or far we are from the ideas of Mwalimu. Currently our country is facing formidable economic and social problems and challenges. Admittedly many of these problems are not exclusively Tanzanian but as the Swahili adage goes, "in the times of crises, everyone tends to relate to his or her own predicament".

We should ask ourselves what happened to the commitment to build a just and equitable society and the spirit of self reliance as propounded by Mwalimu and articulated in the Arusha Declaration.

In confronting the challenges facing our country, academic institutions should reflect on what contribution they have made so far and what further measures they can embark on in order to enable the country overcome them. This University is particularly challenged. For, Mwalimu viewed, and wanted the University of Dar es salaam to be a centre and source of both inspiration, research and advice on education for self-reliance and its implementation.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is time to work assiduously for a better Tanzania. A Tanzania that is democratic, peaceful, united, prosperous and self-reliant. We should aim at making effective use of and consolidating our achievements so far and minimizing the problems with the objective of finally ending those serious short comings.

**Thank you for your attention.**