

Speech: Queen Elizabeth II 91st Birthday Celebrations in Tanzania

Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, Dr Augustine Mahiga. members of Parliament, officials of the Government of Tanzania, distinguished members of the Diplomatic Corps ladies and gentlemen, karibuni nyumbani kwa Balozzi wa Uingereza, kusherehekea siku ya kuzaliwa kwa Malkia Elizabeth wa pili . Welcome to the British High Commissioner's Residence, to celebrate the official birthday of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

Her Majesty is 91 years old this year. She continues to serve the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth with the same energy, commitment and sense of duty she has shown since her coronation over 60 years ago.

This Queen's Birthday celebration reminds me that I have nearly reached a full year serving as British High Commissioner here in Tanzania.

Over that time, it has been an enormous pleasure to travel this beautiful country and see for myself the breadth and the strength of the UK's partnership with Tanzania.

The UK is Tanzania's largest foreign investor and second largest bilateral donor.

But I have realised in my short time here that there is much more to our partnership beyond these headlines.

In Kagera, I joined HE President Magufuli to lay the foundation stone for the school which UK aid is helping to rebuild after last year's earthquake. Our ability to respond quickly and decisively is what sets us apart in responding to Tanzania's needs.

In Arusha, I joined Filbert Bayi and other legendary athletes as the Queen's Baton Relay visited Tanzania en route to next year's Commonwealth Games. I hope we inspired some of the school children we met to become Tanzania's athletes of the future.

In Tabora, I saw how the UK is supporting newly naturalised citizens and their host communities to build better lives. This is part of the UK's wider commitment to support the refugee population here.

In Mwanza, I visited the National Institute for Medical Research which is conducting world class research on HIV/AIDS, in partnership with the London School of Hygiene & Tropical medicine.

And in Mufindi, I was proud to celebrate the contribution of the many British nationals living and working in Tanzania.

On behalf of Her Majesty the Queen, I presented one of our community, Geoff

Fox, with the Member of the British Empire (or MBE) medal.

This honour was in recognition of his substantial charitable work for the local community. It was inspiring to witness Geoff's passion and drive to change lives for the better.

And I know there are many other British Nationals doing similar work around the country.

I've also been inspired to see the drive and ambition of young Tanzanians throughout the country.

I'm delighted that we are joined tonight by members of the Department for International Development's (DFID) Youth Advisory Panel.

They work with us to ensure that UK development programmes meet the needs of their generation.

And as I've travelled round the country, I have seen for myself how British companies are creating jobs, incomes and livelihoods here.

Their innovation and entrepreneurship is not only contributing to Tanzania's industrialisation but is also providing essential services to ordinary Tanzanians.

I'm keen to encourage more British companies to invest here. So we will continue to support the Government to tackle corruption and create a level playing field. And we will continue to help the Government put in place the infrastructure, the skills and the predictable policy environment needed to attract investment.

So today is a celebration of Her Majesty's Birthday, and also of the strength of the UK-Tanzania partnership.

And this is our chance to say thank you to all of you – our friends in Government, in business and in development – who make that partnership a reality.

This relationship, I hope, will be further strengthened in the months and years to come.

You may have wondered as you came in why we are flying the Commonwealth flag.

Well, next spring, Her Majesty will host the Commonwealth Summit at Buckingham Palace & Windsor Castle in the UK.

Leaders from 52 countries will reaffirm their commitment to working together to solve global challenges, through this unique and precious grouping of friends and allies.

The Summit will focus on improving trade flows, tackling shared security threats and building resilience in the face of climate change.

I know that these are all priority issues for His Excellency President

Magufuli and I very much hope he will be able to join Her Majesty at the Summit.

Finally, I would like to take a moment to thank our sponsors, without whom this event would not have been possible.

Thank you to CMC Automobiles for exhibiting the Best of British here tonight, with 2 vehicles.

We have the Jaguar F Pace and, I'm delighted to say, the first reveal in Tanzania of the All New Land Rover Discovery.

Both vehicles are made in Britain and represent the Best of British engineering.

A big thank you goes to Serengeti Breweries for providing the beer and spirits you are enjoying this evening. The beers are locally made, bringing jobs to Tanzanians.

And thank you to our other sponsors who also represent the Best of British: BG, Deloitte, Ernst & Young, Ophir Energy, Songas, Standard Chartered Bank, Unilever and Vodacom.

Thank you all for helping to make this evening a real celebration.

And for keeping us safe tonight, I'd like to thank Ultimate Security and the Tanzanian Police Force.

So in conclusion, asenteni sana kwa kunisikiliza.

And thank you all for coming.