

PRESIDENTS SPEECH AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE TANZANIA DENTAL ASSOCIATION 31ST SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 23RD NOVEMBER 2016, MOROGORO, TANZANIA

Honorable Guest of Honor, **DR KEBWE STEVEN KEBWE**, THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONER OF MOROGORO REGION, REGIONAL MEDICAL OFFICER, MOROGORO, DR FRANK JACOB

REGIONAL DENTAL OFFICER, MOROGORO, DR SAMSON TARIMO

MUNICIPAL MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH, MOROGORO, DR BARAKA JONAS

Representative, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF ORAL HEALTH, Ministry of Health Community Development, Gender, Seniors and Children, DR MSAFIRI KABULWA,

Dean, School of Dentistry, Dr Elison Simon

TDA President Elect, Dr Frank Mwakatobe

TDA Honorable Secretary, Dr Tumaini Simon

TDA Members,

Stakeholders,

Exhibitors,

Invited Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Honorable Guest of Honor

On behalf of the members of the Tanzania Dental Association and my own accord, I would like to extend a note of sincere appreciation to you for your valuable time and acceptance to officiate this, the 31th Scientific Conference and Annual General Meeting of the Tanzania Dental Association.

Honorable Guest of Honor

We are pleased to inform you that our association has a Patron, Hon Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim and five members of the Board of Trustees, Prof Philemon Sarungi – Chairman, Hon. Halima Mamuya, Mr. Charles Singili, Dr Marina Njelekela and the President of TDA.

Honorable guest of Honor

TDA is a professional association whose mission is to promote research and professionalism so as to enhance the quality of oral health care in Tanzania. The associations objective is to ensure maintain and safeguard the interests, privileges and welfare of her members and to liaise and advice the government and community on oral health matters.

Guest of Honor

This conference is an event that creates an opportunity to gather TDA members, oral health

professionals, stakeholders and other health professionals together to share skills and experiences. Besides gaining scientific content and knowledge, this conference tends to provide participants with an opportunity to enjoy incomparable fellowship with one another in a relaxed atmosphere far away from our work places. Most importantly members will return back to their workplaces committed and united in their pledge to take oral health in Tanzania a step forward.

Honorable Guest of Honor

During our annual general meeting members will be given the opportunity to discuss the various issues pertaining to the profession and to oral health. I hereby extend a humble request to all members to attend the AGM where together we can discuss besides other issues, deliberations and resolutions as these are the building blocks of our association.

Honorable Guest of Honor

The Tanzania Dental Association is affiliated to other associations worldwide, namely the World Dental Federation commonly known as FDI and the Commonwealth Dental Association (CDA). Our membership gives us the opportunity to partake in international activities pertaining to oral health like World Oral Health Day which is commemorated yearly on the 20th of March. On this day TDA members country wide promote oral health in line with the chosen theme and offer free dental checkups to the community at large.

Honorable Guest of Honor

On behalf of TDA members I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your office for all the support extended to TDA during the World oral health day commemoration held in Morogoro on the 20th March this year. We also humbly request the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children together with other stakeholders to join and support us in our quest to achieve good oral health of the community in all the regions of Tanzania.

Honorable Guest of Honor

The theme of our conference this year is “TAKING ORAL HEALTH IN TANZANIA A STEP FORWARD”. We as members of the Tanzania Dental Association make a pledge to join hands with the Government in its efforts towards taking Tanzania from a lower level income to a lower

middle level income by the year 2025. To do this we pledge to improve the quality and good life for all Tanzanians by hosting various oral health education sessions and oral health awareness campaigns. In line with this, oral health professionals have further pledged to enhance their professional knowledge and skills so as to be able to withstand global competition.

Honorable Guest of Honor

Oral health professionals support the government in its commitment to phase down the use of dental amalgam in the country in line with the Governments declaration on the Minamata convention on mercury of 2013. The challenge faced by professionals is that there is no other filling material in the market that is strong enough for the purpose of conserving teeth that are grossly destroyed by dental caries. However, over time we are positive that Tanzania will have phased out the use of dental amalgam if the occurrence of grossly carious teeth reduces. This will be possible only when the community is educated and made aware on the importance of self-use of fluoridated tooth paste at individual level together with regular checkups.

Honorable guest of Honor

Oral health care in Tanzania has a track record guided by series of National plans for oral health since 1979. It has been integrated in a well-structured health care delivery system, with its availability at all referral, regional hospitals and most of district hospitals. However, the uncoordinated efforts of resource mobilization for procurement of dental instruments, materials and supplies has resulted in inadequate public awareness on oral health issues, high tooth decay, gum diseases and predominant tooth extraction as consistently reported by different studies. Also Dental nurses are a cadre that is still nonexistent in Tanzania and needs to be addressed by the Ministry of Health Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children (MoHCDGEC) in liaison with the President's Office, Public Service Management for the establishment of this cadre, Dental nurses.

Honorable Guest of Honor

One of the many challenges facing the Tanzania Dental Association is the attendance of members at organized scientific meetings and continuous professional development programs. Our country is big, thus demanding added resources to facilitate travel and upkeep at the conference venues.

Honorable Guest of Honor,

Attendance to professional meetings should be considered as a necessity and we humbly request for the adoption of a mechanism by the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children that will recognize the importance of professional advancement. The Tanzania Dental Association pledges its collaboration to the Ministry as an overseer of professional development to its members.

Honorable Guest of Honor

This meeting has been possible because of the support extended to us by our partners, namely, Chemi and Cotex Ltd (whitedent), ITV/Radio 1, National Microfinance Bank, Mansoor Daya Chemicals Ltd (MediOral), Anudha Limited, Nuran Developers Limited. TDA acknowledges all your support.

Honorable Guest of Honor

We thank the various exhibitors - Chemi and Cotex Ltd, G&B soap Ltd, GSK, Anudha Limited, Smile dental Laboratory Ltd, Smiles Medic stomatology Co Ltd and Dema Dental Products Co., who have taken time off from their offices to come and display their products to members. Their participation gives our members an opportunity to learn about advances in products and equipment used in dentistry.

Honorable Guest of Honor,

My Sincere appreciation and gratitude is extended towards the presenter of the keynote address Prof Pascal Rugarabamu for sacrificing time to share his knowledge and experience with our members. Furthermore, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the various presenters of the continuing education session, presenters of the scientific sessions, session chairs, rapporteurs and the IT support team.

Honorable Guest of Honor,

Lastly I would like to acknowledge the unreserved support and displayed efforts of the management committee of the TDA and the Morogoro team who assisted in making this meeting a reality. Thank you all.

Honorable Guest of Honor,

Before I welcome you to deliver your opening remarks to the 31st Scientific Conference and Annual General Meeting of the TDA, I would like to wish each and every one an enjoyable and memorable conference.

Karibuni na asanteni sana.