

STATEMENT BY HON. PROF. PETER M. MSOLLA (MP) MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ON THE OCCASION OF COMMEMORATING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE WORLD POST DAY.

My statement today aims at inspiring positive environmental action and reduced environmental impact by the postal sector. This is in line with the theme of this year's anniversary i.e. **“A postal service committed to green growth”**.

At the outset let me seize this opportunity to commend the Universal Postal Union (UPU) for celebrating the World Post Day. The theme picked for the year's celebrations brings challenges not only to the UPU as international body but to Tanzania as a member of the Union.

The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania has been vigorously pursuing regional and international collaboration with other international bodies and is pleased to join the international community to commemorate this important day. Tanzania has developed a culture of marking the World Post day through organisation of various activities as a show case to support the spirit of global cooperation through the post which makes it a single territory, a process that unites all countries by allowing free movement of mails.

While climate change may seem undefeatable, the solutions do not necessarily have to involve radical changes to our lives,

but rather, are achievable by working smarter and using our resources more efficiently. I am aware that the postal sector is known for its concern to the environment but it may need to do more especially in ensuring that it brings more influence to other cooperating partners. Various actions to address climate change can be justified economically in their own right and can also help in solving other environmental problems. Long and medium term mitigation actions, development of advanced energy technologies for the long term, and adaptation to the potential impacts of climate change are needed to meet this challenge.

Tanzania is concerned on climate change and would like to achieve more to help our environment. It is from this basis that I call upon all postal operators to observe all resolutions regarding anti-pollution measures and work with the Government. I am convinced that we have the basic resources to build the United Republic of Tanzania and the lives of our citizens and to conserve the astonishing biological richness and diversity of our country. Individual postal companies need to take action and I believe small changes to individual behaviour add up to big savings for the environment. Every little bit helps to bring about a change. Environmental specialists are telling us that, recycling just one aluminum tin can save enough energy to run a television set for three hours and that planting a single tree can result in the absorption of

over one tone of carbon dioxide throughout the life of the tree. So it is a simple logic that to have trees planted around our post office premises will greatly offset the emissions of green house gases from cars etc.

In the postal operation we can do a lot to keep the environment cleaner. We can control the emissions of carbon dioxide by our operation vans through proper maintenance of the vehicles and disposing off at the appropriate time. The nature of the postal operations require substantial amount of mail bags which are made of various materials including those that pose negative impact to the environment. Reducing the use of plastic bags is an important step in the progression towards a sustainable green growth.

Africa is extremely vulnerable to global warming because of its dependence on rain-fed agriculture and lack of financial resources and technologies to offset any resulting damage. Air pollution is on the rise in a continent which has the highest rate of urbanisation in the world. For Tanzania in particular, we have been witnessing the destruction of our natural ecosystem like the melting of the snow of the Mount Kilimanjaro and severe draught in most of areas. Experts expect significant extinction of plants and animals over coming decades if global warming grows unchecked.

The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania is committed to the mission of the UPU and is working hard to ensure that the postal service meets the expectations of the majority of our vast communities. Many of you know that since 1994 the communication sector in Tanzania has been partially liberalized for the purpose of bringing to the consumers a wider range of choice of not only services but also quality mode of services. Liberalisation has brought in the market more than fifty private companies. The Government would like to see these companies committing themselves to green growth.

Furthermore, the Government supports the UPU's idea of the universal postal service, that is, all postal users enjoy the right to a universal postal service involving the permanent provision of quality basic postal services at all points in their territory and, at affordable prices. The National Postal Policy of 2003 is very clear on this long term objective. The Government would like to have efficient and effective basic postal services that reach all locations and people throughout the United Republic of Tanzania so as to meet the growing socio-economic and cultural requirements of the country as it works towards poverty alleviation and develops to a middle income economy by the year 2025.

In view of the above, the Government has established the Universal Communications Access Fund (UCAF) which is a special fund for the development of communications service including the postal services in the rural and underserved areas. It is my sincere hope that this Fund will be managed in a balanced way so that the universal postal service will have proper consideration.

In the implementation of the National Postal Policy, my Ministry is coordinating 'Addressing and Postal Code Project' that aims at providing address to every household and location in the country. In this project the Government would like to develop physical address system that is, individuals and businesses will be defined by their place of residence and a postcode. In order to achieve this goal all major stakeholders have been involved in the Project planning and implementation. Consultative meetings and workshop have been organised to officials from the Government Ministries and departments, business community, National Parliament, House of Representatives Zanzibar, Permanent Secretaries (United Republic and Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar) and several Municipal Councils. Implementation has started in Arusha Municipality by fixing street signs and house numbering is in progress. Execution of the Project is going on in Dodoma.

Reverting to our World Post Day theme, the Regulator, Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority is urged to include in the plans the implementation of the green growth and monitor the Postal sector by:

- (i) Ensuring that necessary and timely action should be taken to deal with climate change within the communications sector;
- (ii) Vigorously monitor compliance with performance standards and codes of conduct in respect of postal services;
- (iii) Issue new suitable regulations regarding safeguarding of our environment or green growth.

In its own part, the Ministry of Communications, Science and Technology will take the necessary steps required to understand and address climate change which will be environmentally, socially and economically most effective by ensuring that they are based on relevant scientific, technical and economic considerations and continually re-evaluated in the light of new findings in these areas. In this, all postal sector stakeholders must be involved.

Lastly, may I commend the postal services operators in Tanzania for being a catalyst to the socio-economic development of the country and the fulfilment of the aspirations of the nation.