



SPEECH

BY

**HONOURABLE ATUPELE MULUZI, MP, MINISTER OF LANDS, HOUSING
AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

on

THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE MALAWI SECOND LAND SYMPOSIUM

**UNDER THE THEME *INITIAL STEPS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
MALAWI LAND ACTS: IMPLICATIONS ON AGRICULTURE
DEVELOPMENT***

at

GOLDEN PEACOCK HOTEL

on

10TH MAY 2017

- The Principal Secretary, Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, Mr. Charles Msosa;
- The Principal Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development, Mrs. Erica Maganga;
- Senior Government Officials;
- Chief of Party for New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support Project (NAPAS – Malawi);
- Senior Officials from Development Partners;
- Senior Officials from Civil Society Partners;
- Officials from African Union Land Policy Initiative (LPI);
- Members of the Academia;
- Members of the Press;
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

It gives me great pleasure this morning to welcome you to this the second Malawi Land Symposium, under the title “**Initial Steps in the**

Implementation of the Malawi Land Acts: Implications on Commercial Agriculture”. On behalf of my Ministry and I, welcome, and I urge you all to actively engage such that we can all benefit from the discussion. Malawi has an agrarian economy, this Land Symposium highlights the importance of land and the management of this precious resource in the development of our economy.

As you all are more than aware, we have now passed a number of key legislation that fundamentally change the framework that governs land. These will be gazetted in the coming weeks meaning that we then will face the challenge of effective implementation.

My team and I are confident that these reforms are going to have a positive impact on how we identify, allocate and manage all types of land, particularly agricultural land. As a first step my team will be reviewing the master plan of land use for Malawi. This will allow us to establish a detailed picture of how our land is currently being used, establish a clear baseline of where key infrastructure such as irrigation, wells and other water sources are, determine what land is idle and of course establish land boundaries to include the conservation areas such as the national parks.

This baseline will offer the whole of Government a clear understanding as to how land is being used and what opportunities are available for further investment whether that be commercial, industrial or agricultural.

His Excellency, the President has urged the Government to be more proactive on curbing corruption which is costing the nation positive development. Therefore, my Ministry is looking at a range of solutions for the implementation of a modern digitized land administration system. This will mean that all Malawians will be able to access land data and will address some of the issues we currently have with fraudulent land deeds and other corrupt practices. Further interventions are in the design stage now and will be announced in the coming weeks.

To support these initiatives we will be making better use of open source technologies and data. A recent land conference chaired by the World Bank in the United States of America highlighted the significant progress that has been made in this area. Ethiopia, Rwanda and Uganda have all recently undertaken significant land reforms, donor partners such as the FAO, USAID and World Bank have developed a range of best practices and we are looking to integrate these into our planning.

The objective of this symposium is to discuss what the new Land Laws mean to agricultural development in Malawi. I ask that this discussion look to make best use of the broad range of expertise in the room. Some of our biggest challenges will not be that of land registration, but of community engagement, particularly as we define the boundaries of individual parcels of land.

My Ministry cannot implement the new legislation alone. We need to work together with communities, land owners, technical experts

and colleagues from across Government to ensure we establish consent and support for the programme. My PS and I will be meeting our donor partners over the coming days to discuss this further.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we have a very full agenda ahead of us so I will not take up any more of your time. Please be assured of my ministry's commitment to ensuring that we implement the reform programme as quickly as possible. My team are looking at starting the first pilot studies within six months and as such I hope you will all start to see the benefits very soon.

At this juncture, let me thank the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support Project (NAPAS – Malawi) under the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development and the EU funded Land Governance Project (LGP) who are all supporting my Ministry, for sponsoring this year's land symposium.

With these remarks, I now hereby declare this second land symposium officially opened.

I thank you very much for your attention and may God Bless us all.