



**THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT**

**OPENING SPEECH BY H.E. DR PHILIP ISDOR MPANGO, VICE PRESIDENT OF
THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA DURING THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF
THE 10TH CONFERENCE OF THE AFRICAN FEDERATION OF THE
INSTITUTES OF INTERNAL AUDITORS (AFIIA)**

**AICC, ARUSHA
17TH APRIL, 2024**

Hon. Saada Salum, Minister of Finance & Planning, RGZ
Mr. Paul Makonda, Arusha Regional Commissioner;
Distinguished Delegates;
Ladies and Gentlemen;
All Protocols observed.

Good Morning!

On behalf of H.E. Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, I wish to extend a proudly Tanzanian welcome to all our guests: **Karibuni sana**. Her Excellency had wished to personally grace the opening of this conference, but could not be here due to other pressing national commitments. Hence, H.E. sent me to stand in for her. I have been briefed that this conference serves as a platform for Internal audit professionals, from across Africa and beyond, to come together to share insights, and learn from fellow practitioners and experts. I am also delighted to note that this Conference, aims at fostering collaboration among the various Institutes of Internal Audit across our continent in line with the AU Charter which advocates for unity and solidarity among African states. I therefore encourage all delegates to harness this opportunity to connect with peers and experts from the Africa region and beyond. Kindly give the organisers, keynote speakers and delegates a round of applause for what looks to me to be a very promising conference.

Distinguished delegates;

Let me confess that I am impressed by the theme of this conference, which is: **Beyond Boundaries: Making the Difference**. This theme resonates quite well with the need for professionals, experts and practitioners in different fields to transcend limitations and effect positive change in our world today and especially in Africa. This theme should therefore inspire all delegates, who are here physically or participating virtually, to push past constraints, explore new horizons and strive to improve outputs /services to society, provided by governments and enterprises (public and private) that they serve, but also advance the noble profession of internal auditors. The theme further points at the evolving role of internal auditors and the imperative to go beyond traditional boundaries to embrace innovation, collaboration, and forward-thinking approaches in your work. In today's interconnected world, where challenges and opportunities extend far beyond geographical divides, internal auditors (and other professionals) must aspire to make a tangible difference in government as well as, public and private sector companies, especially regarding your core mandate of assessing the management of risks and the improvement of internal controls. Through this forum, I would like to appeal to all internal auditors to continuously refine your skillsets, embrace technology, and keep pace with the evolving landscape of emerging risks in order to remain at the frontier.

Distinguished delegates;

I am not an Internal Auditor myself but I have been close to Internal Auditors in all of my public life and my private life as well, considering that my better half was one of you, prior to her forced retrenchment from public service following my appointment to

the VP position. However, she has remained very active in auditing my household effectively. I therefore, beg your indulgence should I slip in my reflections on the IA functions that follow.

To my understanding, the main objective of the Internal Audit function is to evaluate and improve risk management and control processes as well as effectiveness of governance in an organisation. It is therefore expected that Internal Auditors ought to be qualified, skilled and experienced individuals, capable of providing unbiased and objective views to the top management of an organisation. Internal auditors should be independent people who are willing and ready to stand up and be counted, guided by international standards and code of ethics.

Distinguished delegates;

Central Government Ministries and Departments, Local Governments, Public and Private enterprises typically rely on internal auditors to provide assurance and guidance on governance, risk management, and internal controls. In this dynamic world, Internal Auditors are also expected to play a proactive role in advising top management of their respective organisations on emerging issues such as Artificial Intelligence, Cyber Security and Climate Change. This is in addition to the traditional roles of Internal Auditors, namely to promote efficient use of public resources, strengthen accountability and support management to improve performance of the organisation and service delivery. These responsibilities are extremely important but not easy and often encounter opposition from some managers and individuals with vested interests. I therefore encourage all Internal Auditors to always stand firm, be bold and hold managements of your organisations to account.

Distinguished delegates;

In order to effectively execute the IA mandate, it is important that IAs themselves appreciate the role of other professions that equally support management and the need to collaborate with them. I want to emphasise and assure you that Internal Auditors stand a better chance to deliver more effectively when they work in consonance with security personnel, fraud investigators, IT specialists, risk managers, compliance officers, legal professionals etc. I wish also to underline that Internal Auditors need to adjust fast to the winds of change. Reactive and control-based audit approaches and techniques of the past, need to be modified or replaced with a more proactive stance and dynamic evaluation of future risks and opportunities. Another important dimension to keep in mind is that the world is currently driven by use of massive data, digital platforms and processes. Internal Auditors should therefore make concerted efforts to acquaint themselves with requisite data analytics, systems innovations and related challenges or else they risk being left behind in this information age.

Distinguished delegates;

I have seen from today's program that later on, you will be addressing not just the central theme of this conference (led by the distinguished African scholar Prof PLO Lumumba) but also that you will be guided through the current state of the Internal

Audit profession, as well as the important topics about anticipating and mitigating future fraud as well as identification and assessment of emerging risks. These are juicy subjects that I would have wished to sit back and listen to the submissions had it not been for my packed timetable for the day. Nevertheless, allow me to propose to this August assembly the following five issues for your consideration in your subsequent discourse.

First, at the beginning of my address I underlined the need to guarantee the independence of Internal Auditors. In that regard, I call upon African Governments to institute and legislate the independence of Internal Auditors to enable them to give honest advice. In my opinion, African Governments should have a provision in the Public Audit Act which safeguards or protects Internal Auditors from undue influence or interference. The legal framework could also introduce a dual reporting relationship both functional and administrative for internal auditors in conformity with the International Professional Practice Framework (IPPF), as a remedy to possible intimidation and sanctioning by some CEOs. Internal Auditors should suggestively challenge the current practice and champion best practices while taking into account local circumstances and be a strong catalyst for improvement in the practices of your organisations.

Second, I encourage African Governments and Heads of Public and Private enterprises to set aside reasonably adequate training budgets for purposes of nurturing young talented Internal Auditors and giving them a chance to grow in their professional career to meet emerging audit challenges and find new horizons. I wish also to remind Governments and Corporations that the landscape of internal auditing is changing fast and requires an integrated team of Internal Auditors with multiple set of skills such as Engineers, IT Specialists, Quantity Surveyors, Security Officers, Insurance and Risk Managers, Economists, Lawyers and even Medical Practitioners in addition to Accountants. We also know for a fact that incentives matter, particularly for persons dealing with risky jobs that include internal audit. As such, employers should as much as it can feasibly be done, ensure competitive remuneration for Internal Auditors to bring them at par with similar professions.

Third, the use of artificial intelligence is picking up in almost all aspects of life. Numerous transactions now take place online. As such, fraudsters have also found ways of committing crimes online. This implies that Internal Auditors need to equip themselves with more advanced technological skills to enable them detect, check and control malpractices. More than ever before, Internal Auditors have to match with rapid technological advancement, revisit information management systems, operating models and business strategies in order to catch up with growing cyber insecurity.

Fourth, I would like to urge all Internal Auditors to feel duty-bound to perform their duties using world class standards and regulations. In this regard, I encourage African Governments and Stakeholders to push for accreditation of Internal Auditors, similar to the common practice in other professions.

Fifth, the effects of the global climate crisis have induced severe pressure and disruptions to governments and enterprises alike and the internal audit function has not escaped from the impacts of the climate crisis either, particularly in Africa. Therefore, I urge the internal audit gurus participating in this conference to rise up to this emerging challenge, including assisting governments and corporations to build resilience and managing environment related risks.

Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen;

It would be improper to end my address without expressing my sincere appreciations to all Internal Auditors for carrying out their noble duties diligently, in support of senior management teams across board, in order to safeguard sound governance, risk management and robust internal controls. Please maintain that spirit in service of Africa and her people. Let me assure you that we Leaders of developmental states will continue to value your advice, assurance and insights as guardians of accountability in the deployment of all resources for public good. I thank IIA Tanzania and AFIIA for choosing to hold this conference in Arusha.

My final message and advice to all delegates is that the City of Arusha is the epicentre of tourism in Tanzania, surrounded by unforgettable attractions including Mount Kilimanjaro – the roof top of Africa, tree climbing lions in Lake Manyara National Park, Ngorongoro Crater and Olduvai Gorge – the cradle of mankind, the Serengeti national Park which is world famous for the sensational wildebeest annual migration and the unique Maasai culture as well as pristine beaches all around the spicy island of Zanzibar. Please set aside a few days after this conference to enjoy all these and sample the warm hospitality of the people of Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. I promise you that you will never regret that choice.

With these remarks, I now have the privilege and honour to declare on behalf of H.E. Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the URT that the 10th Conference of the African Federation of the Institutes of Internal Auditors (AFIIA) is now officially opened.

**I wish you a successful conference and thank you for your kind attention.
Asante sana.**