



**SPEECH BY**

**THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL  
TRAINING, MALAWI**

***HON ANNA ANDREW NAMATHANGA  
KACHIKHO, M.P.***

**AT THE**

**OPENING OF THE GUIDANCE, COUNSELLING  
AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CENTRE**

**AREA 43,**

**23<sup>RD</sup> JANUARY 2007**

- Your Excellency, Dr. Bingu wa Mutharika, President of the Republic of Malawi;
- Your Excellency Madam Ethel Mutharika, First Lady of the Republic of Malawi;
- Honourable Prof. Geoffrey Lungwanga, M.P, Chairman of the Guidance, Counselling and Youth Development Centre for Africa and Minister of Education in Zambia;
- Honourable Roy Commsy, M.P., Deputy Minister of Education and Vocational Training;
- Honourable Louis Chimango, M.P., Speaker of the National Assembly;
- Hon. Jaffali Mussa, M.P. Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture;

- The Representative of the Director General of UNESCO, Professor Juma Shabani who is also Director of the Harare Cluster Office;
- The Vice President of the Board of Certified Counsellors Based in America, Mr. Ted Cliff
- The Director of the Guidance, Counselling and Youth Development Centre, Mr. Kenneth Hamwaka;
- Mr. Francis Kalonga, Chairperson of the National Youth Council of Malawi;
- Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers present with us here today;
- Distinguished Visitors from Member Countries;

- The Director of School of Total Health Programme International Based in India, Dr. Collin Yarha;
- Members of Political Parties Present Here;
- Your Excellencies Members of the Diplomatic Corps;
- Dr. Terek Sheriff, Representing the African Union Head of Delegate to Malawi;
- Chiefs;
- Distinguished Guests;
- Members of the Press;
- Ladies and Gentlemen

I am pleased to stand before this distinguished gathering to express my joy at the official opening of the Guidance, Counselling and Youth Development Centre for Africa, a very long time after construction of the building is completed.

A ray of light and hope now shines through the fog that enveloped on the Centre through five years of inactivity.

Before I go further, let me take this opportunity to introduce to Your Excellency the Distinguished guests who have graced this auspicious occasion:

1. Honourable Prof. Geoffrey Lungwangwa, Minister of Education of the Republic of Zambia and Chairperson of the Board of Governors, of the Guidance, Counselling and Youth Development Centre for Africa;
2. Honourable A.S. Chigwedere, Minister of Education, Sports and Culture in Zimbabwe;
3. Hon. Dr. S. Ndlovu, Deputy Minister of Higher Education in Zimbabwe;
4. Mr. Dela Sibande, representing the Hon. Minister from Swaziland;

5. Mr. Kenneth Hamwaka, Director of the Guidance, Counselling and Youth Development Centre for Africa in Malawi;
6. Professor Juma Shabani, Representative of the Director General of UNESCO, and also Director of the Harare cluster Office;
7. Dr. Collin Yarha, Director of Social Total Health Programme International, based in India;

As you have already heard, Your Excellency, Honourable Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen, in 1994, African Ministers of Education decided to set up the Guidance, Counselling and Youth

Development Centre in Africa as the focal point for moulding the continent's youth socially and emotionally, especially the girls.

As a truly Pan-African institution, the Centre will be open to all members countries for training programmes in guidance and counseling. We expect that other stakeholders in youth education such as civil society organizations will also participate in both in the activities of the Centre, not only in planning and implementation but also as participants. In the training programmes. This approach will ensure that the Centre benefits from a range of experiences in order to enrich the quality girl and boy child as well as the counsellors and trainers of counselors who pass through its doors.

Your Excellency, Honourable Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen, construction of Phase 1 of the Centre Buildings, by City Building Contractors, started in the year 2000 and was completed in 2002, at a cost of nearly K50 million funded by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation, UNESCO. The opening of the centre has delayed due to a number of logistical problems, which the Governors have resolved should no longer be a part of the future. Phase 2 and phase 3 will involve construction of hostels, cafeteria, conference Hall, playfields and other structures ancillary. Efforts are underway to identify for these important infrastructure developments.

Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen, the opening of the Centre was made possible by the concerted efforts of different stakeholders at both national and international levels.

However, the determination by His Excellency the President, Dr. Bingu wa Mutharika, to turn the Centre into reality towered above all these efforts. As an action-oriented leader who does not believe in failure, His Excellency Dr. Bingu wa Mutharika spared no effort in ensuring that the Centre is opened and becomes functional. I owe it to the President that I am standing here to proudly declare, "**it is done**".

To Your Excellency, who so much wanted the Centre to be open and become functional, I thank you very much for the vision and for the encouragement and motivation that you continue to provide in your leadership. This is a perfect example of what guidance and counselling is all about. I say this Your Excellency because, during the time the Centre was idle, many donors including UNESCO withdrew money which was already earmarked for programmes at the Centre. It was also difficult, if not impossible, to get member countries to honour their annual US\$10,000 contribution to the Centre because they were not convinced that the money would do the work for which it was earmarked. As a result, Malawi and Africa lost tremendously during those sad five years

when there was no political will to get the Centre on its feet. As a result, You have changed all that Your Excellency.

Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen, I also wish to thank Members of the Diplomatic Corps for their dedication and commitment to the Centre. The Ambassadors and High Commissioners have cooperated very well in ensuring that this ceremony becomes truly Pan African.

I also join the Chairperson of the Board of Governors in acknowledging the invaluable support that we have received from various cooperating partners. UNESCO has been a constant friend of the Centre in the planning and sourcing of funds for programmes and

material development for the Centre. Today, Professor Juma Shabani, Director and Representative of UNESCO, Harare Office has come to personify UNESCO's dedication to the Centre.

I also wish to thank the United Nations agencies such as UNICEF, and World Health Organization for their financial and material support. Allow me also to thank the National Board of Certified Counsellors based in America. This is the Board that regulates and moderates counselling as a profession in the world. Some year's back, the Board identified the Centre as a possible point of linking and promoting counselling not only in Africa but also in the world. The Board has been involved in supporting the Centre financially and

materially. It is my hope that as we move into phase II, the Board, UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Health Organisation and other organizations will continue to be part of 'Team Africa' until the Centre structures are fully completed.

I thank the Director; Mr. Kenneth Hamwaka for his hard working spirit and ability to share the vision of guidance and counselling to others. His short stay in Malawi has assisted us in revitalizing the vision of the Centre and promoting its image to the rest of the world. As Minister of Education in Malawi and Secretary to the Board of Governors, I wish him the best of luck as he develops the Centre.

Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to assure my colleagues that my Ministry

will continue to support the Centre in all ways necessary.

Last but not least, I would also like to take this opportunity to express my profound thanks to the officials of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, led by Mr. Anthony Livuza who worked tirelessly day and night to ensure that this dream is realized.

I wish to end my speech by thanking Ministers from various countries for coming to his ceremony in the spirit of true African brotherhood.

Your Excellency, Honourable Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for your attention and may God Bless you All.