Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation;

Your Excellency Dean of the Diplomatic Corps;

Your Excellencies Heads of Diplomatic Missions and International Organisations;

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Let me first recognise you, Ambassador Bashir Abedain Bashir of Libya, and offer my congratulations to you upon assuming the elevated status of Dean of the Diplomatic Corps. I assure you the usual cooperation and understanding of my government in discharging your new responsibilities.

Your Excellencies:

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the State House and to extend to you all, your families and staff, and through you to your leaders, my sincere and best wishes for the New Year.

I ask you also to convey to your Heads of State and Government, and Heads of Regional and International Organisations, my deep gratitude for their kind messages of congratulations to me, and through you to reciprocate the desire to work closely with
them in pursuit of a better, safer, more prosperous and more just world for all people, and in furtherance of the good bilateral cooperation, friendship and cooperation that Tanzania has traditionally and happily enjoyed with your countries, your successive governments and your organisations.

Local Political Scene

Your Excellencies;

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I should like to thank all those governments and regional and international organisations that helped us in one way or another, through our Electoral Commissions or otherwise, during the entire election process. I thank especially those who supported our capacity building efforts. All the reports filed by local, regional and international election observer missions have recognised tremendous improvements in this important area of good democratic governance. All those who supported us in building the capacity of our Electoral Commissions have the right to claim a share of the praise that Tanzania has been receiving. I thank them.

The election results have disappointed some people, and not just the political parties that performed poorly. Concerns have been expressed – sometimes discreetly, at times openly – whether Tanzania was reverting to at least a de facto one-party state. They need not worry. The democratic dynamics within CCM itself are enough proof that political competition is alive and well. And secondly, as I told Parliament two weeks ago, my Government will protect and entrench the multi-party democratic culture.

But two things are equally important. Observers of the Tanzanian political scene should desist from using the same yardstick for each African country, because our countries have been shaped by different political experiences. Secondly, much work needs to be done within and among the opposition political parties. Their poor
fortunes at the ballot box cannot be explained only by exogenous factors. They need to go back to the drawing board because clearly there are things about them that the majority of the people are not comfortable with.

No political party in the world would go out of its way to strengthen its political competitors: But this much I can promise:

- First, I will enhance inter-party dialogue, consultations and cooperation. What we need is political competition, not political hostility;

- Second, I will offer the authority of my office to promote, assist and facilitate an inter-party, broad dialogue on the best way to reduce the polarisation of politics in Zanzibar; and

- Third, I will continue to ensure the political playing field is as level as it could possibly be.

Your Excellencies:

As I mentioned in my inaugural speech to the new Parliament in Dodoma last week, we shall continue to strengthen multiparty democracy in Tanzania, without endangering national unity, stability and concord. Transparency and accountability will remain our major pre-occupation. In particular, our efforts will be directed towards nurturing people’s participation, the rule of law, integrity, effective leadership and human rights.

Local Economic Scene

Your Excellencies:
I have also to sustain and strengthen the economic growth rate that has been attained by the Third Phase Government, as well as enhance further efficiency in revenue collection and tax administration. In short, as far as the local economic scene is concerned, you should expect the following:

- In terms of policies and strategies, **continuity**, especially with regard to macro-economic stability, improving further the investment and business environment, and constructive dialogue with the private sector.

- In terms of delivery, **more zeal, more vigour, more speed**;

- In terms of regulation and integrity, **tighter but fair and efficient**;

- In terms of participation, **affirmative action to include more citizens in the expanding formal economy**.

Your Excellencies:

In this very hall, my predecessor thanked those of you from our development partners for your firm, and increasingly predictable and sustainable, support to our development efforts. President Karume and I will continue to need and count on your support. I am especially encouraged by your willingness to cede ownership of the development process to us, and your willingness to improve aid coordination and harmonization not only among yourselves, but also coordination and harmonization with Tanzania’s own development priorities. I do hope that we will make further progress in this area in the years ahead.

**Regional Scene:**

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen:
Tanzania’s commitment to the East African Community (EAC), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the African Union (AU) is unquestionable. We will continue to be active members.

The Fourth Phase Government will continue to make the search for durable peace, security, stability and development in the Great Lakes Region a key aspect of its Foreign Policy. As we assume the Presidency of the United Nations Security Council for this month, we shall underscore the importance of conflict resolution and peace building in the Great Lakes Region.

I am pleased with the achievements in Burundi, although the FNL is yet to get on board the peace train. The DRC electoral process is on track following the recently concluded referendum on the constitution. We now look forward to the General Elections as scheduled. The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region provides a viable framework for achieving common goals for peace, stability and development, and I will do whatever I can to advance the process forward.

I thank the Group of Friends of the Great Lakes for their support, materially and financially, to the International Conference. I will continue to need their moral, diplomatic, financial and technical support.

**International Scene**

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Let me assure you that there will not be any major shift in our Foreign Policy. My predecessors laid down a concrete foundation of our international relations defined by principles of good neighbourliness, freedom and unity, defence of our borders, providing asylum to refugees, justice and advocating the rights of the oppressed, among others. I shall continue to embrace these principles while ensuring
implementation of the new Foreign Policy that emphasizes furtherance of Tanzania’s economic interests abroad.

The just concluded Hong Kong WTO ministerial meeting did not meet all of our expectations; but it has opened up a new beginning in meeting the agreed targets for a fair trading regime in agricultural commodities and market access for our products. My government will be calling for the set targets to be met if the outcome of Hong Kong is to have any meaning.

Your Excellencies:

Our frustrations with the Doha round of trade negotiations emanates from the realisation that Africans and other poor people in the world need help and a better environment to trade their way out of poverty. To me, the choices were clear. Do we want a genuine development round or not. If we do, we now know what works and what does not; we know what facilitates and what obstructs the efforts of the poor to trade their way out of poverty. We also know that no choices are painless. We must have the political will and courage to make painful choices.

I do hope that more can be done to revive the concept and the mechanisms for South-South Cooperation. We in the developing world must invest more in each other’s countries. We must trade more with each other. The rich countries should help us address the infrastructural obstacles to South-South investment and trade.

I have not asked him, but I do hope that my predecessor, Former President Benjamin William Mkapa, will agree to lend his weight to needed action on this front. With his work ahead as Co-Chair of the Investment Climate Facility for Africa, and his background as Co-Chair of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, and Member of the Commission for Africa, I think he is uniquely qualified to energise South-South Cooperation, and refocus world attention on North-South imperatives for a more just and a more broadly prosperous world.
Your Excellencies:

We shall continue to effectively participate in the United Nations and its affiliated institutions. Our good relations with the Bretton Woods Institutions will be sustained and advanced for the benefit of our people, with focus on promoting much faster growth as a basis for building national capacity to reduce poverty faster, and with a view to meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

I am grateful to President Mkapa, the G8 countries, and the Boards of the IMF and World Bank, that I am privileged to begin my work without the unbearable debt burden my predecessor had to carry with him for ten years. I do hope all governments and institutions will support this decision. I want to assure you that the Fourth Phase Government will use the debt relief to add impetus to the implementation of the Growth and Poverty Reduction agenda and strategy that we have already agreed upon.

Your Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Let me conclude by restating my ardent hope that 2006 will evince a new momentum to continue with the good work done by the Third Phase Government in fighting poverty and promoting inclusive development, nationally and internationally. I sense a mood of optimism and hope, a new confidence founded on achievements, and what is clearly doable. We have cause for satisfaction, and every reason to shoulder on.

Once again, on behalf of the Government and people of the United Republic of Tanzania, I thank you all for your invaluable support, and I look forward to enhanced co-operation and friendship, and please accept my best wishes for the New Year.
I thank you for your kind attention.