

**THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND EAST AFRICAN
COOPERATION**



**STATEMENT BY DR. STERGOMENA LAWRENCE TAX
(MP), MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND EAST
AFRICAN COOPERATION, AT THE MEETING WITH HEADS
OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS AND INTERNATIONAL
ORGANISATIONS HELD ON 30TH JANUARY, 2023 -
DODOMA**

Ambassador Mbarouk N. Mbarouk, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation;

Ambassador Fatma M. Rajab, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation;

Your Excellency Ahamada El Badaoui Mohamed, Ambassador of the Union of Comoros and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps;

Excellencies, Heads of Diplomatic Missions and International Organizations;

Members of Management, Government Officials

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning,

Nawasalimu kwa Jina la Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania.....

Allow me, to begin by thanking you for honouring our invitation and for attending this briefing. Pardon us for the seemingly late invitation. I thought we should meet as we begin the year to exchange on our cooperation and relations.

It was imperative for the Ministry to convene this briefing urgently, due to the tension created by the security alert, and information that there is civil unrest in Tanzania, which were shared globally and trended widely through media outlets in the past few days. The security alert and information, created unnecessary panic and tension internally and internationally, with negative impacts to our nation, socially and economically. A number of sectors have been impacted negatively, as well as domestic and international businesses.

To put things in perspective, on 25th January, 2023, an Embassy, issued a Security Alert advising its Citizens to be vigilant of possible terrorist attacks in Dar es Salaam, and other areas in Tanzania. This Alert elicited unnecessary panic to the general public, foreigners residing in the country, and those who intended to travel to Tanzania. The effects were negative

and massive. Unfortunately, the security alert was echoed by other Embassies.

The Security Alert was followed by the announcement made by the Royal Dutch Airlines (KLM) of its decision to reschedule its flights to Dar es Salaam, Kilimanjaro and Zanzibar from 27th January up to 30th January, 2023 due to purported “civil unrest” in Tanzania.

The Ministry engaged the respective Embassy and it was clear that there was no security and terror threat in Tanzania. Tanzania is safe and there are no overt, or covert incidents in the country to justify such a security alert. The Government was grossly astonished and shocked that, friendly countries and business partners could spread such allegations. The Ministry of Internal Affairs, through the Police Force had to issue a statement to assure the General Public that Tanzania is safe and Security Agencies remains vigilant. Furthermore, The Ministry of Works and Transport, had to also issue a Public Notice noting with great concern the baseless, alarmist, unfounded, inconsiderate and insensitive publication which caused unnecessary fear, panic to the General Public and the Aviation Industry at large, while assuring that Tanzania is safe and peaceful, and urging the public to ignore the statement.

Excellences, Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

The Government is highly dismayed and does not take these allegations that have caused panic across the country lightly. Tanzania enjoys very good diplomatic relations with all Diplomatic Missions and International Organizations accredited to Tanzania, and KLM is a highly valued Company in the Country.

These publications were contrary to the spirit of international relations and cooperation principles. If one is concerned about security and safety, such information MUST be appropriately shared with the Host Government, instead of issuing alarming statements. It should be noted that public safety and security, including of foreign nationals in our country,

lies solely with the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Diplomacy and international procedures require friendly countries to cooperate and engage through laid down procedures.

Excellences,

To this effect, I called you today for four reasons. **First**, to express our regret and apology for the inconvenience caused by such alarming statements to the diplomatic community and the general public. We have received many calls and messages from inside and outside Tanzania, and within your community asking for clarification regarding the alert. We thought it would be proper to call you as a group and assure you that everything is under control. As a country, we have always been vigilant about your safety and security, as well as the security of our citizens and your citizens residing in Tanzania. Be assured that Tanzania is safe and under control; please continue with your representational duties without fear.

Second, to register our grave disappointment with the Embassies' unilateral issuance of security alerts to the public. This act does not conform to our guiding instrument, the Vienna Convention, nor to the established customs and practice of conducting relations among states. We understand the responsibility of each Embassy in taking care of its citizens, but that cannot warrant any Embassy anywhere in the world to do so at the expense of undermining the host country's authorities and stability. The Government has elaborate systems for consulting, collaborating and sharing of information on matters of mutual interests. It is inappropriate and inconsiderate for one to choose not to use the established channels of communication and engagement.

During my address to you, on the 11th of January, 2023, I emphasized the importance of the Diplomatic Community, to use established diplomatic channels, in line with the Geneva Convention and established diplomatic practice. I once again reiterate the Ministry's and my personal readiness for

consultation with your esteemed Embassies and International Organizations. I said my doors are open and indeed my doors are open.

Third, to thank and appreciate those Embassies, High Commissions, and International Organizations that showed respect and confidence to our authorities and stayed on the lane. In this regard I thank among others the Embassy of Finland for the confidence expressed to our authorities by continuing with the visit of the Minister of Economic Affairs, Hon Mika Lintila, who landed in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Yesterday we also received the Commissioner for Human Rights from African Union, and during the week we received a number of business delegations from various countries. These visits are testimony that the country is safe.

May I also extend our gratitude to all who continued with their operations and planned travels to Tanzania and all aviation stakeholders, and international airlines for not suspending operations.

Fourth, to encourage you to continue consulting and engaging with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation whenever you feel unsafe or privy to any security intelligence you deem valuable and worth sharing. We take this opportunity to renew our commitment to ensure your security and that of your citizens while in Tanzania. Equally, our readiness to cooperate, work and share intelligence information that can help us to make your stay in Tanzania safe and secure. Our collective security depends on all of us working together than working unilaterally.

Excellences;

Tanzania is and will remain to be a peaceful, secure and stable country, and gives due attention to matters of security internally, regionally and internationally. As an active member of the United Nations, the African Union, the East African Community (EAC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), we are bound by established Charters and Treaties to adhere to the principles of promotion and

maintenance of peace and security. Tanzania is the host of the SADC Regional Counter Terrorism Centre (RCTC), which is a bedrock of gathering, analyzing and sharing information on terrorism and acts of terror. While we have received explanations and apologies, the Government does not condone what happened, and we do not expect the same to reoccur.

We appreciate the cooperation by the Embassy of the United States of America, we met, discussed and agreed on how to deal with such matters as we continue to cooperate. We also appreciate the apology by Air France-KLM Country Manager, and the assurance that its flights to Zanzibar have resumed with immediate effect, and flights to Dar es Salaam and Kilimanjaro will resume on 30th January, 2023.

Excellences,

As you are aware, the 6th Phase Government under the exemplary leadership by H.E Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, is committed to improve diplomacy, international relations, and business environment, and a lot has been achieved. While the outcomes of such efforts benefit all of us, damaging statements may reverse the recorded gains and improvements. May I call upon all of us to continue supporting the ongoing efforts and preserve the recorded strides.

I conclude, may I, take this opportunity to thank the Embassy of France and the French Government for its decision to open an Office in Dodoma. I will be gracing and launching the Office on 31st January, 2023. In the same vein, I wish to encourage other Missions which have not done so, to fast-track the process of opening Offices or Embassies in Dodoma, the Capital City of Tanzania.

With these few remarks, I thank you for attending and for your kind attention.

I thank you