



**REPUBLIC OF MALAWI**

**NEW YEAR ADDRESS**

**BY**

**HIS EXCELLENCY**

**DR. LAZARUS McCARTHY CHAKWERA,  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI**

**KAMUZU PALACE, LILONGWE**

**1<sup>st</sup> JANUARY 2023**

**Fellow Malawians,**

**As you may recall, two months ago I announced that I would be making changes to my Cabinet. Today, I wish to inform you that the new configuration is at an advanced stage, and so as was the case with the last reshuffle last January, my office will be announcing a new configuration of Cabinet this January. What you can expect to see when the announcement is made is a leaner Cabinet, one that is focused on maximizing our nation's limited resources on improving public service delivery, fast-tracking public works projects under construction, and unlocking the sectors of our economy that have the greatest potential for inclusive growth and shared prosperity, especially agriculture, tourism, and mining. In short, what you will see is a Cabinet focused on delivery. This is because I believe that giving our energies and resources a renewed focus on delivery is necessary for us**

**as a nation this year in order to sustain and expedite our progress on the path of economic recovery that we embarked on a year ago.**

**As you know, the year 2022 was a difficult year for the economies of the world. The sharp rise in the cost of living that was triggered by supply chain disruptions and high inflation on imported commodities emanating from two years of Covid-19 pandemic and one year of war in Europe has spared no nation and no continent. Here at home, the impact of these shocks was compounded by historical challenges like unsustainable public debt, unacceptable corruption in the public sector, and unforeseen climate change events like drought and tropical storms that destroyed the food crops and livelihoods of millions and a third of our power generation.**

**These phenomena created an environment last year in which economic growth and opportunities were limited. In fact, as an Administration, we had to accept that the finances we had as a nation were simply not enough to end the pains many of you suffered as a result, pains such as the high cost of food and fertilizer, the shortage of forex and fuel, the rationing of electricity, the stagnation and loss of incomes, and the slowing down of business in several sectors.**

**In this context of multiple economic woes and limited resources, the only path forward was to prioritize. And our key priorities last year included addressing the short term shortage of forex and fuel; securing fertilizer for millions of farmers after addressing the procurement failures of our agricultural agencies; fixing the damaged power plant at Kapichira, which is progressing well despite delays in its completion**

**due to changes in design that were made to prevent the works from damaging the environment around the plant; funding critical public services in health and education; hunting for private sector and foreign investments to stimulate the economy this year; and maintaining our resolve to continue fighting against corruption and upholding the rule of law despite opposition and political sensitivities that threatened to stand in our way.**

**Although much of the economic pain exacted on us last year remains, the efforts we made, such as putting in place austerity measures; securing hundreds of millions of dollars from abroad through compacts, grants, and credit facilities; conducting public works projects across the country; rescuing our farmers from fertilizer predators; have all succeeded in stopping our economy from collapsing and laying a runway from which it can start to rise this year.**

**But I must say that it is you as citizens who deserve credit for your understanding of the fact that these pains that are common to all nations have to be endured for a season as we strive for a brighter tomorrow. And so in readiness for that brighter tomorrow, I have directed the Secretary to the President and Cabinet to announce this week the names of those I have appointed to serve as members of the Presidential Private Sector Council, which is a group of respected private sector leaders I will be interacting with directly and regularly to appreciate the effectiveness of our economic policies in creating jobs and wealth in this New Year for Malawians who struggled last year.**

**Even so, I believe that if we are going to succeed, it is not enough to have good policies and good people in Government. We also need good citizens to be vigilant against the threats that**

**have the potential to compromise the security of our resources and our country. Chief among the threats you must all be vigilant against is the public health situation we are currently facing through the spread of Cholera, which has infected over 16,000 people and claimed over 550 lives. Another threat you must watch out for is corruption, and once I am done reviewing the report to be submitted by the Commission of Inquiry into the irregular arrest of the Director-General of the Anti-Corruption Bureau last month, I will make further orders to keep us on the winning side of this threat. Similarly, I urge you to be vigilant against the rising cases of human trafficking and illegal migration, the abuse of agricultural services like the Affordable Inputs Programme, and the smuggling of maize to neighboring countries.**

**These are all threats that are spread by citizens that are either careless or criminals, and it is the**

**responsibility of every good citizen to watch out against these threats and take appropriate action to stop them from spreading and from destroying the good work we are trying to do as your servants. As your servant, I will give you a detailed progress report on the work we have done over the past year and our plan of action this year when I deliver my State of the Nation Address before your representatives in Parliament next month.**

**But today I wanted to assure and remind you that your participation and input as citizens who love Malawi is indispensable, and so my Administration will be creating even more opportunities for you to participate in Government matters going forward. After all, this is YOUR Government. I believe that combining our own efforts to serve you as your Government with opportunities for you to participate in public affairs will lead to the**

**harvest of national prosperity and unity we all want to see in 2023 and the years beyond.**

**With these few remarks, I wish you and your family a very Happy and Prosperous New Year.**

**God bless Malawi.**