

Akershus Slott, 19 April 1990

Prime Minister  
Jan P. Syse

Mr. President, Madame Mwinyi, Excellencies, Ladies and  
Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me on behalf of the Norwegian  
Government to welcome you Mr. President and your wife to your  
first visit to Norway as President of the United Republic of  
Tanzania.

There is - Mr. President - a long tradition for cooperation  
between our two countries. Tanzania and Norway have been  
partners in development cooperation since 1962. But our  
relations date further back in history - we do in fact have  
common ancestors. The oldest fossils of our human species were  
found in the Northern parts of today's Tanzania. I mention this  
not to suggest that our bilateral relations date from millions  
of years ago, that would be an exaggeration. But it  
illustrates that as we share a distant past - we also share  
the future.

And - as Edmund Burke, the father of true political  
conservatism - once said: "When bad men combine, the good must  
associate". That is why we are here tonight.

May our common future bring progress and prosperity to your  
people, to your nation and to your continent. The

international community shares a responsibility for making the 1990's into a decade of hope for Africa. The 1980s were sometimes called the lost decade for the Third World in general - and for the people on the African continent in particular. From an already low level, living standards in Sub-Saharan Africa declined by close to one fourth during the 1980's. The reasons for this development are many. Hunger, ecological degradation, armed conflicts, heavy debt burdens and too many authoritarian political regimes were all factors that stood in the way for African progress.

1989 was, however, a year that brought hope and optimism. Dramatic changes took place in Southern Africa. Namibia gained its independence. Serious efforts were made to end the civil wars in Angola and Mozambique. In South Africa the release of Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of opposition groups took the process of dismantling apartheid a great leap forward. If so, we may stand on the threshold of an era when wars and destabilization can be replaced by cooperation and joint efforts to secure sustainable development.

In many parts of the world, 1989 also brought changes towards political liberalization. The countries of Eastern Europe experienced a complete democratic revolution. These changes have also reached Africa. Earlier this year the Namibians proceeded to free elections.

These are encouraging events. Authoritarian rules are coming

down. A basic lesson can be drawn: Genuine democratic rule, a well functioning economy and respect for human rights are essential conditions for securing political stability, welfare and progress.

We have followed with interest the recent debate in your country, Mr. President, on increased political pluralism. This is - in our view - the right way to go.

During the years you have served your country as President, you have shown that liberalization and restructuring of the national economy bring tangible results. Over the last years Tanzania has attained an annual economic growth of 4% - thus exceeding the population growth. I do share your hope that the Economic Revival Programme will contribute to the continuation of this encouraging development.

Continued dedication, steadiness and persistence in the efforts to install a market oriented economy is essential to succeed in the consolidation of your achievements. A well functioning economy is a vital condition for reaching other goals, such as rehabilitating the services in the field of health care, basic education and access to clean water. Development, environment and economic system - these three fields are interconnected. To change the direction of one, the two others must follow. Sustainable development can only be achieved if the problems of poverty and the degradation of national resources are vigorously attacked. But I suppose

that running an economy is just as difficult in your country as it is in mine. We have learned it the hard way: that running an economy is not like regulating a river. It is rather to understand why the river flows at all. That is, to understand the driving forces. And that isn't easy. As the philosopher Søren Kierkegaard said: "Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards"!

Mr. President, the mainland of Tanzania has now been independent for 28 years. During these years you have succeeded in establishing a peaceful and stable society. Your country has been persistent in supporting the freedom struggle of your neighbouring peoples. Thousands of refugees have found shelter and land to cultivate in Tanzania. We admire you for these efforts.

Mr. President, we share a common ambition. The goal of our cooperation is to create sound foundations for self-reliance and prosperity. In this effort Norway will stand by Tanzania. Through our development cooperation we have been involved in your setbacks as well as in your successes. But this is what friendship is all about.

To this friendship, to you Mr. President and Madame Mwinyi and to the people of Tanzania, I wish to propose a toast.