

2013 ECAMA CONFERENCE: NKOPOLA LODGE, MANGOCHI

5 September 2013

1. Salutations

2. On behalf of the Economics Association of Malawi (ECAMA) please allow me to thank you Your Excellency for accepting to officially open our 2013 Annual Economic Conference.
3. You did the same last year. We do not take this granted. Like I said last year, your presence at our function raises the status of the Association. We feel privileged to have you in our midst.
4. Above all, your presence at this gathering of Economists and Decision makers sends a very strong and clear message out there; that your Government has keen interest in the development of this Economy.
5. We want you and your team to feel very welcome to this function.
6. Please allow me Your Excellency to introduce to you

(a) **Trustees** of ECAMA present here:

- Chairman Charles Chuka, Governor of the Central Bank
- Patron Thom Mpinganjira, CEO of FDH Holdings
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(b) **Executive Members and Staff** of ECAMA:

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7. Please also allow me to say a big thank you to our Sponsors this year. Without there finances it would have been tough if not impossible to have this function this colourful today.

- TNM
- Press Trust
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8. The Economics Association of Malawi supports market based reforms. We support good Economics and sound Economic reforms. As Governor Chuka always says: 'good Economics always works.' The Ex Governor (a Professor) said at one of the functions that Economists

should commend you for taking a bold decision to implement tough Economic reforms without backing off amidst loud outcry and opposition.

9. Not an easy decision to implement tough and biting economic reforms with a few months to general elections. This is where a lesson should be drawn, that good policies should always be paramount to political gains. So whoever comes to power must strive to pursue sound economic policies as opposed to political policies.
10. Has the economy fully recovered? Certainly not. Is it showing signs of recovery? Certainly yes. Although we are seeing signs of recovery, but these are only signs. As a Nation, let us agree here that we still have work cut out for us if we are to attain significant recovery, significant recovery that will translate into improved welfare of our brothers and sister trapped in poverty out there.
11. **Our Theme this year is 'Achieving Efficiency in the Economy: The role of the public sector.** Your Excellency we sat down in one of our regular meetings with our Trustees. In the meeting, we had a general consensus that one of the challenges to achieving full economic recovery is to do with Efficiency. **Implementation efficiency** Your Excellency. Hence the theme.
12. We reviewed all the past Programs i.e. Vision 2020, MGDS,,,,,,ERP. These are excellent documents by the way. Well written, well researched. One thing is common though: lack of implementation efficiency.
13. We agreed to focus on this area during this year's conference. The Public sector was put on the spotlight. Why Your Excellency the Public Sector? Because these programs are largely implemented by the Public Sector. The efficiency must start there if we are to attain significant and sustainable economic reforms. The Public Sector has to be efficient Your Excellency if Malawi is to achieve sustainable Economic growth.
14. Therefore Your Excellency, in the next two days the Economics Association of Malawi (ECAMA) will focus on the review of the Efficiency of the Public Sector and suggest way forward. We have drawn facilitators from cross section of the society to lead in this discussion.
15. We want to thank all our Presenters for accepting to prepare and present at this great conference.
16. In a special way, allow me to thank Professor Anastanse from Rwanda for accepting to come all the way from Rwanda to share with us the experience of Rwanda. Those of you who know Rwanda today will understand why we had to settle for a speaker from Rwanda. The reforms that have taken place in Rwanda are worth emulating.
17. Your Excellency, like we did last year, we will draw up a Communique at the end of this conference and submit a copy to you. We stand ready to be invited to discuss with you the contents of the Communique at your time.

18. Once again, thank you Your Excellency for accepting to Grace this occasion, and thank you all for choosing to come to attend this great Lakeshore conference.

19. May God Bless you All.

20. I thank you.

Edward Chilima

President