



**SPEECH BY**

**THE SECRETARY FOR DEVELOPMENT  
PLANNING AND COOPERATION,  
MR TED SITIMA-WINA**

**DURING THE OPENING OF THE 15<sup>TH</sup>  
POVERTY  
AND ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP (PEP)  
MEETING**

**ON**

**1<sup>ST</sup> MARCH, 2010**

**AT**

**SUNBIRD CAPITAL HOTEL, LILONGWE**

The Secretary to the Treasury, Mr. Joseph Mwanamvekha;

The UN Resident Coordinator, Mr. Richard Dictus;

The PEI Africa Manager, Mr. David Smith;

Distinguished Representatives of the Cooperating Partners;

Government officials present;

Civil Society Representatives;

Members of the Press;

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

It gives me honour and profound gratitude today to welcome you all to the 15<sup>th</sup> Poverty and Environment Partnership (PEP) meeting here at Sunbird Capital Hotel in Lilongwe.

I have been informed that PEP is an informal network of development agencies, which seeks

to improve the coordination of work on poverty reduction and environment within the framework of internationally, agreed principles and processes for sustainable development. This meeting, therefore, provides an opportunity to local and international experts, Cooperating Partners, Civil Society Organisations and other interested parties to share recent research results, evidence and ideas on critical environmental issues that affect the growth and development of many developing countries such as Malawi.

I have also been informed that we will be here for the next five days to extensively tackle issues of poverty and environment under the theme of "Climate and Environment Mainstreaming and the Green Economy to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals."

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

In line with this theme, I am informed, the meeting will among other things share experience on issues such as Climate Change challenges and African response; National governments' role in mainstreaming climate and environment; Potential contributions of the PEP initiative on scaling up local solutions to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) while mainstreaming climate and environment; Development Partners strategies to assist in combating Climate Change; and a few more.

I am aware that meetings of this nature have previously been conducted in Developed Countries. This is the first time a meeting of this type has been organised and held in a

developing country, in particular Malawi. On our part, we appreciate this positive gesture in considering Malawi as a first developing country to host this important meeting. This augurs well especially now that the Government has prioritized Environment, Natural Resources Management and Climate Change on its development agenda. We also consider this as a commitment and determination of the Donor Community to assist Developing Countries, Malawi in particular, in their effort to mitigate and adapt to the effects of Climate Change.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me, therefore, to thank the organisers for this event which I am certain will strengthen our efforts in mainstreaming Environment and

Natural Resource Management and Climate Change in our policies and planning processes.

Distinguished Guests,

As we begin this informal meeting, allow me to acknowledge and appreciate the work our Cooperating Partners are doing in supporting Malawi and other developing countries in the fight against environmental degradation as well as mitigating the impacts of Climate Change. As Government, we recognise that sustainable environment and natural resources management is critical for the growth and development of this country. In this regard, I would like to urge you to continue supporting us in this agenda.

The Sub-Saharan Africa, is one of the most vulnerable regions in the world when it comes to

impacts of Climate Change. This is due to its low adaptive capacity of its population and compounded by the extreme poverty in the region and its dependence on rain-fed agriculture.

It is therefore important that this meeting should discuss ways of enhancing support for Sub-Saharan Africa to mitigate and adapt to the effects of Climate Change as well as to manage its environment and natural resources sustainably. You will agree with me, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen, that there is need for both Governments and Cooperating Partners to push extra resources into the environmental management for the betterment of our future generation.

Let me also urge our Cooperating Partners to enhance their collaboration in addressing issues of Environment, Natural Resource Management and Climate Change in the framework of the Paris Declaration to Aid Effectiveness.

Distinguished Participants,

As a country, Malawi has relatively moved forward by putting in place a number of initiatives that are aimed at improving the understanding and development of the sector. Amongst them is the National Programme for Managing Climate Change Programme which is currently being implemented with an aim of developing a strategic framework for responding to challenges that climate change poses to sustainable development in the country. We are



also implementing the Poverty and Environment Initiative (PEI) Project, a UNDP-UNEP Initiative which aims at integrating sustainable environmental and natural resources management into national and sectoral policy, planning and budget processes.

I am also aware of a number of other initiatives that the Civil Society Organizations and other Non State Actors are undertaking throughout the country meant to improve the sector and hence attain sustainable development for the country.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As expected, in an economy like ours, there are a lot of challenges which need to be addressed. These challenges range from capacity to implement programmes to coordination of

activities being undertaken in the sector and capacities to adapt to the effects of unsustainable natural resource use, which I am hopeful that this meeting will thoroughly discuss and probably map out solutions to solve them.

In conclusion, Distinguished Delegates Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me to request you all to make this meeting as interactive as possible, so that we learn from each other for the common good of our beloved countries and Mother Earth. Our discussions should be open and focused so that we meet the intended objectives of the meeting.

Special thanks should go to DFID and other donors for generously financing this meeting. To those who have worked tirelessly to make our

stay here possible and comfortable, I also say thank you for all the efforts made.

With these few remarks, it is now my singular honour and privilege to declare the meeting officially opened.

**MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL**