

BUILDING A VISION



President Benjamin W. Mkapa of Tanzania

Q You have been elected Tanzania's third post-independence President. What were the main issues and concerns that were raised in (a) rural and (b) urban areas, during the campaign?

A Corruption was a big issue and I addressed it before it was even raised. Beyond that, in the rural areas, one of the big issues was the purchasing of the crops of the peasantry, the cash crops especially, cotton and coffee in particular, and also tobacco in Tabora. The market has been liberalised. There are individuals who buy the peasants' crops. The Indians are still a very important buyer. Their [the buyers] financial situation has not been very good partly as a result of reforms of the official financial system, the banks and so on. Their access to credit for crop purchasing has not been easy and besides the interest on such credit would be very, very prohibitive. And so, in many places, peasants were complaining about the fact that either they couldn't sell their crops or that they hadn't been paid cash for their crops. That was a major complaint. And I was very fearful that it might affect the result because the tendency is to identify the cooperative unions with the ruling party and therefore any failure on the part of the unions to purchase crops on a cash basis, which was one of our manifesto planks in 1990, could have rebounded adversely upon us, upon my campaign.

Another area is health cost. There is a real complaint. There are charges now for health services in public health institutions. But more often it is a complaint about availability of drugs. This is the second big problem. I was always being urged to remove cost-sharing in health.

The third one is water supplies, particularly in the central and the north-west regions, shortage of water. Someone said to me the other day that the water table generally is going down. It is a very serious problem. I have to commit myself to see whether we can revive the work of the water development and irrigation department of some 30 or 35 years back which was very active.

And then, of course, finally, it is education. It was not only a shortage of teaching materials, desks and so on, but also teachers' salaries were late in coming and there were allowances that hadn't been paid, that were due but hadn't been paid. This was causing a great deal of frustration on the side of the teachers and therefore impacting on the quality of education.

In the urban areas, the cost of living was uppermost because of wages not going up as fast as inflation. That unemployment is a major issue was raised among the youth. But there was also the question of retrenchments which is

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being seen as a direct result of the sale of public enterprises as part of the economic reform programme. Retrenchment and loss of jobs is identified with that process and there is a great deal of complaint about that. Certainly there is an urgent request for greater job creation in urban areas.

Of course the other issue is the shortage of water and electricity. As you know there has been electricity load shedding for months now. Also irregular water supplies, shedding of that too. And I really was amazed as to the extent of this problem because in virtually every regional capital there is a water problem. So that is something we must attend to urgently.

And of course the complaint about the cost-sharing in health is very, very seriously expressed in urban areas too. Finally, because of increased unemployment, youth migration and the cost of living, there is also the increased risk of house-breaking, personal security and so on.

HEALTH

Q Did anyone raise with you the question and its broader impact on society of the fact that in Tanzania only about 20 per cent of garbage is being collected and that the other 80 per cent is lying around rotting, creating a health hazard, a general attitude problem, and undermining Tanzania's commitment to preventative medicine and related measures?

A No, that was not raised. What I can say is that the health problem was perceived more in terms of facilities for cure, for health, for the curing of illness, not prevention.

Q But Tanzania's emphasis during the past 30 years has always been on the preventative, not the curative, so surely that is what people should be emphasising?

A Yes, definitely. It would certainly cut back on the cost of the health services. The party election platform does ask us to put greater emphasis on preventive measures rather than curative measures and I agree this is one of them.

Q I would like to come back at you on an issue raised in both rural and urban areas, the demand by people that health charges be stopped. How bad is the situation, how do you approach it?

A People can understand cost-sharing in terms of education. It is a fundamental right but it is not so very very fundamental. On the other hand, good health is a condition of life. You can be a citizen, an uneducated citizen. But if you are ill and facing death you will not be a citizen. And therefore the right to be

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cured, to receive some medical attention, is seen to be more fundamental than receiving an education. So the notion that someone can report at a hospital and the first question they are asked is "Where is the money?" in a public service hospital, is really seriously repugnant to a people who believe in the right to life. So that is one. But there is no doubt that all the services do cost something and the real challenge is what mechanisms do you devise for realising the funds with which to meet these costs. That is the question. And I don't think in principle the idea of paying, of contributing to medical costs, is repugnant. Its just the way you contribute so that it does not raise the spectre of people dying simply because they do not have money on them. That really is the challenge. Now, how do we do it? Of course in the developed countries you have the health insurance business. But, in a peasant society, what is the meaning of that? And what you should therefore do is to review your priorities in terms of public expenditure and say health is an absolute right and it will have first call, second call, on public revenue. That's one approach. Another one would be to say "Look, we can identify the major illnesses that really threaten the lives of our people" and fund the total cost of that kind of drugs. For instance, curative drugs in that field. You could look at it that way. But one of the things I can assure you is that I will want the review of the method of cost-sharing concluded as quickly as possible so that we make a quick response to the representations that were made to me during the campaign.

Q You will recall looking at medical insurance and pension-fund buildings in Harare in 1980 when such institutions did not exist here because they had been nationalised. Do you foresee the possibility of reviving such private sector institutions in Tanzania?

A We see the necessity and actually we welcome it and request it in our manifesto. Oh yes, we do, we do, we accept that. First, there is a recognition that to sustain the existing network of health services is so very expensive, and that the possibility of expanding it so that it embraces an increasing population is very remote. And then, two, we recognise the contribution that has been provided by, for instance, the churches, by private practitioners. We thank them for it in the manifesto, we ask them to continue playing their part contributing to the state of health in this country. We do.

EDUCATION

Q Turning to education and looking at yourself for a moment. Would you say the opportunities are as good today as when you went to school and university and, if not, how will you try to bring things back to the sort of education you got?

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- A Oh, there are greater opportunities today than there were then, in the sense that the net is wider. A greater per cent of the school-going-age population are going to school. For instance, going to secondary school, getting into university. So the net is wider. There is no doubt about that. But there is a great deal to be done in order to improve the quality of education, the learning environment, laboratories, teaching materials, books, teachers' salaries, practical work, the practical content of education. There is a great deal to be done to improve the product there. We must do more to improve the quality of education. That is the real challenge.

ENVIRONMENT

- Q **Your general environment today is visually appalling. The state of garbage collection which has an impact on health, of the shortage of clean water or water at all, of deforestation and so on. Will you be doing more about taking the environment seriously other than tagging it onto a Ministry or making it an ineffective department as is the case at the present time?**
- A The environment is a major source for water supplies, the environment is a major source even affecting the clouds that bring in the rains, the forests, the cutting of trees, the usable alternative sources of energy and so on. All those things are a matter of concern to us. The physical disposition of our urban areas, the garbage collection as you say, the sanitation situation, housing and so on, these are all of great concern to me. Our towns are growing unplanned, exacerbating these problems of water.

One of the things I'm going to tell the next Minister responsible for Local Government and Regional Administration to do is to agree with central government about greater controls and empowerment in terms of a resource base for local government. How they can strengthen themselves in terms of human resources that can really manage the developmental work in local government areas and also in terms of resources that can really sustain equitable development consistent with the environmental needs, with population growth and so on. As of now, local government is largely funded by the central government and therefore there is very little decision-making at the local government level because he who pays the piper calls the tune. Clearly we must improve on this situation because local government is an instrument of local development and self-development and while we can be helpful in providing human resources, the decision-making must be backed up by a reliable source of funding for local government activities. So, that is one of the areas I will deal with.

You have local government institutions here that are not self-dependent. There is a dependency syndrome on the central government. And once you have that kind of relationship you can't have actual self-development. No self-confidence and therefore, really, no authority to assert yourself. So I really hope we can get some proper local government in place.

GOVERNANCE

Q What principles did you apply in selecting your new Government, downsized from the previous 29?

A I tried to cut the number back. I wanted to pick certain areas that will be the main focus of governmental direction in terms of improving the people's lives, in addressing their problems. So I looked at the combinations of Ministerial responsibilities first.

In terms of the people chosen, my first condition was to look at their past record in terms of public service, integrity and competence. That was a very important consideration as far as I was concerned. We obviously had to bring in new faces, a reasonable number of new faces so that people felt that there was a possibility of a real change of government, not a continuity of the same government that has been here. I wanted to look at a proper balance in terms of the youth, women and we older ones who are called the Wazee in politics. I looked for that balance in order to cement the sense of national unity obviously. But, they must, they must, engender the feeling in the population that these are people of integrity, they are free of corruption.

Q Did you have a magical figure in mind for the size of your Government?

A Twenty to twenty-two -- myself included.

CORRUPTION

Q The foreign media, indeed your local media, have said that corruption was the main issue of the election which was about electing a "Mr Clean". Was this true and what exactly do people mean when they talk about corruption in Tanzania?

A Corruption featured immensely. I raised the issue at all my meetings. There is a widespread feeling among the population, as well as in the donor community, that it's a serious disease in our society, it's an impediment to justice and fairness, it has reached the point where it's a serious impediment to development.

How is corruption seen here? With the general population, it's a fact that there is a feeling that you can't get anything done without a "consideration" to the person who is obliged by law, or whom you have asked to carry out their

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duties. Without a "consideration" you won't get anything done. I get complaints that policemen can ask for anything from anybody, sometimes to even let you pass some place. That you can't get medical attention without passing something on to the nurse or to the doctor, even, sometimes, the supervisor. You can't get your file in a government ministry if you are trying to get your land registered or whatever. There is a file opened there. Suddenly it disappears and it can't be found again until something is passed on to the registry clerk. You see this is the feeling, this is the perception of corruption in our situation.

But on a larger scale, in terms of Government contracts, tenders, licensing and so on, there is a feeling that favours are granted, proper criteria are put aside and so on. And this is a really serious disease in our society.

Q So people are saying there are two levels. There is petty corruption which you meet on a daily basis and then there is the big level?

A Yes, there is the big one. Corruption now at the political level is perceived as the use of public office for self-enrichment. You know, I get into a party as a simple person, I become a minister, I retire or I'm sacked at the end of four years. And suddenly I have become the owner of large enterprises which could not possibly have been earned by the remuneration which was given to me by virtue of my ministerial office. And the only explanation then is that you used the ministerial authority to influence matters in return for the wealth that you have accumulated.

Q Will you be paying particular attention to trying to recreate the sort of values that used to exist in the civil service?

A Yes, you do want to renew the values that characterise the proper civil service as we were told by the British. It is true that those values are strengthened by having a remuneration system that doesn't tempt one to seek extra revenue by extraordinary means. So, if you have a civil service that has a good pay package, a pension that will really count for something when one retires, that enables one to live legally within one's means, means being provided by the salary, then you have made a beginning, you have reduced the temptations and certainly you can discipline people. That's clearly one thing we must do. Improve civil service training, improve civil service appointments in terms of criteria and certainly pay -- and this will also apply to the public corporations although they are much better off than the civil service.

The other thing we must do is look at public appointments again, the people who are appointed, not elected. If a President has power to appoint chairman of boards, managers of public corporations, heads of departments,

if we are to present a picture that now we are in earnest in looking for the kind of qualities of integrity that I've been speaking about during the campaign, we must begin cultivating the confidence of the people that we mean business in fighting corruption.

Q There is a problem here and that's the void between evidence and perception. People tend to perceive somebody as corrupt when the evidence may be inadequate in a court of law. As President, sworn to uphold the constitution and the law, how are you going to deal with this for it reflects upon how people will view you?

A You must have a relatively efficient formal and, perhaps, informal reporting system about the performance of government, a way in which you can gauge the public's perception of your government's performance. Whether they think its doing well or not, what they think of a particular ministry's performance and so on. There must be a way by which you can be told if there is a crisis somewhere, you must be able to be told of it as quickly as possible, its nature, so that you can do an internal probe. And this is what builds the public perception. But then you must be able to gauge that this perception has reached the point now where the only way where you can really persuade the population that you are in earnest is to dispense with the services of someone even without evidence becoming accumulated. If persistently people say this one is this, is this and this, even when there is no evidence, you must be able to call in someone and say "Look, at this point, the perception is such that you are a liability. You are no longer a positive factor for good governance. So please step aside." That's a question of courage. But I hope that really the reporting system will provide for a fair account of how people are performing. If there is a question of misconduct they will be fair in their investigation and reporting.

Q There seems to be a contradiction. On the one hand people are demanding a clean Government. On the other, they voted into Parliament, from which you must choose your Government, people who are perceived to be corrupt. How did they expect you to choose a clean Government when some of the people they sent you are corrupt?

A Again its the gulf between perception and evidence.

Q How will you set an example personally of the sort of Government that you want, of the sort of behaviour that you want, of the work ethic that you demand?

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- A Well, work hard, be as open as possible, meet the people, listen to them, not just lecture them, meet the press fairly regularly. As I said, speak and listen to the population, invite people informally to meet one-on-one and talk, participate in forums, not just opening them, but participating. If there was an economic forum I would certainly sit for a whole day. I've done that as Minister. Some people were surprised that I could find time. But that's what I hope to encourage others to do. But really work hard and be as open as possible consistent with Government regulations.
- Q Will you declare your personal assets, will you demand that the leaders you appoint declare their personal assets, will you be seeking an effective leadership code?**
- A We have a leadership code by law which was passed last April. I shall make sure that all my appointees adhere to it. I myself have already told the people that the minute I am sworn in I shall give an account of such assets as I have and how I acquired them. I am not going to demand that of all my appointees, but I hope they will see the standards to which I am going to hold them.
- Q Why don't you demand that of all your appointees?**
- A Well, this is a gradual process. The inculcation of such a culture really takes a little while.
- Q Don't the public expect you to demand it?**
- A I don't think so yet. But of course they will use that act of mine to appraise the appointments I make and whether those appointees will have the courage to do what I have done.
- Q And if they don't, what mechanism do you have?**
- A Oh, there is the reporting system. There is the anti-corruption squad that is in existence, you can ask them, there is the general intelligence service who can tell you who is who, the CID people can tell you whether there are any elements of fraud or something like that. So there are various people.
- Q When did your anti-corruption squad last bring anybody of consequence to trial?**
- A I don't remember.
- Q So what faith should I as a member of the public then have in that squad?**
- A Ask me one year down the road.

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POVERTY

Q Another issue one hears much about – and sees – is the general poverty of your people. Trying to prioritize things is very difficult. How will you begin to address this in a manner so the public sees that you are serious, doing something?

A There are three basic needs first. Water, health and education because that really spans the life of most of the people of this country. If you could assure them of clean water and then a degree of education for their children, basic health care, that in itself would not raise the level of wealth but, certainly, it would reduce the level of poverty because the quality of life would be so much better, and that is more important than the cash itself. And so I really want to target on these areas in terms of improving the quality of life of the population. That is the major task ahead. As I said in my campaign speeches, we have the network and now what we want to do is to build the capacity to sustain the provision of this quality of life. We have been able to sustain this network because we have had a large infusion of assistance from friendly countries, in building the network as well as servicing it. Now, more and more, we must take upon ourselves the task of servicing it. And that really means a little more cost sharing if you like, as a government and also as recipients of these social services.

I have said, in consequence, we are going to improve our tax administration so that we can increase government revenues, I have said that we will create an environment that encourages economic growth whether its in the form of new industries or agricultural production, or of livestock development that increases the GDP, so that Government revenues can also accrue from this growth and therefore Government can have the capacity to sustain the quality of life that I'm talking about. But I'm also going to urge cost-development in the sense of self-development

STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT

Q Structural adjustment programmes, certainly in the short term, have made the lot of the poor even harder. How can you ameliorate that burden?

A There is a big outcry, resentment about the fact of retrenchment as part of structural adjustment. But really it is pushing us to recognise that we over-extended ourselves as far as job creation in the Government was concerned. But that extension was because there was this notion that you just keep on hiring people, hiring people, regardless of whether there was work to be done and whether you had the funds with which to remunerate them. Now they are

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telling us, No, they aren't there, so please cut back. That's what retrenchment is about. But you don't need someone outside to tell you this, to recognise that its imprudent to hire more people than you can pay. And so the next challenge then is to have economic growth.

Now, the strategy previously, was growth through the expansion of public enterprise or through the public sector. But we have reached the limit of that and that is why we have opened up to the private sector.

Q Have you reached or exceeded?

A We have exceeded actually if you like. That's why we can't sustain it and that's why we are having to sell some of the enterprises.

Q Another impact of structural adjustment is that local industries cannot compete with imported goods. They fold, jobs are lost, political and social instability created. Even so, free marketeers continue to argue against protectionism. Will you practice a policy of protecting local industries whilst demanding greater efficiency and giving them the wherewithall to achieve specified goals, or leave Tanzania at the mercy of unprotected market forces?

A I think we just have to be frank and say there is no national market system for the economy even in world trade. The Japanese and the Americans are still fighting over it. So, simply because we are a small country does not mean we have to succumb, to surrender altogether to these notions of free trade. No. We are engaged in trying to build the basis of a national economy. There must be something that constitutes a national economy in Tanzania over which you have a say which helps you to sustain the economic life of this country. So, if you have invested already, clearly you don't just wish it away. You are under an obligation to try as far as possible to keep that investment productive and to continue strengthening your national economy.

What you need is a balance. Clearly, at present, there is considerable non-payment of customs dues and so on, for many of these things you will have seen on the roadside. We will have to crack down on that because its not part of free trade. Free trade does not mean that regulations should not be observed. But over and above that we must look at some of the industries and say these are so central to the life of this country that they need to be helped and be protected. You have a sugar industry here. How can you import sugar to the extent that you have to close down your own sugar factory? Why? Its imprudent. So really we have to treat our industries on a case-by-case basis.

VALUES

Q This country has been very much moulded by certain landmarks in its history. I suppose that foremost among these landmarks is the 1967 Arusha Declaration. You, in Dodoma in July this year, very much committed yourself to the Arusha Declaration which, in many ways, Mwalimu Nyerere would argue has been lapsed. There will obviously be good and bad aspects of the Arusha Declaration in the light of today's realities. What aspects of the Arusha Declaration would you want to take forward and which ones would you want to discard?

A The kind of socialist values that are so clearly part of this manifesto. African life history and African life tradition, the caring for each other, the caring for the aged, the caring for the children, the brotherhood, unity and so on. These are the values that really must remain with us because they are deeply rooted in our history.

But, in terms of moving into the modern economy now, because its not just traditions that you want, how do you realise those values in a modernizing situation? We said at that time that we needed to develop the economy and therefore we said the best way is through public sector growth. So we embarked on the construction of a large public sector economy. At the time the prospects of such growth being achieved at the pace of private sector investment then were very low. And, therefore, one can argue that if you wanted growth at that time in the economy it had to be via the public sector way. And that's what has happened. We may have over-reached ourselves in expanding, which is why we are having to sell off some of these public enterprises. But that was the perception then and I think it was right then.

Now, people will tell you now that for that reason we actually fought against or deliberately prevented private-sector growth. I don't think that is so, I don't think so. We did not deliberately, legally or practically bar private sector growth. You may say the climate did not induce external people, external investment, into the country. Fine. But actual war, if you like, against the private sector was not there. We were, if you like, waging a struggle to build a large public sector economy. That's it. We learned there that government has a role in promoting economic growth. So that is a lesson because now the pressure is to say that Government has no role, it should be a free for all. To swing from one extreme of the pendulum to the other. That's nonsense. I don't accept that. There must be a role, but re-defined or moderated, and if we were extremists then you don't have to be extremists now on the other side of the pendulum.

But for me, the area we should have worked on more was this business of self-development, self-reliance. We could have done more. And now,

because of the world economic climate and donor fatigue, the pre-occupation of the donor countries with their own internal problems, with problems closer to their continents than ours, its dawning on us that really we must drop the bucket where we are, we must develop by our own bootstraps. This was the message of the Arusha Declaration. Work and work. We have the land, we have the people, we have to work on it. So that's what we are going back to now.

The other aspect was the Leadership Code. Unfortunately most people spend more time talking about the leadership code in the Arusha Declaration, thinking it was the pillar. In fact its only an annex. The Arusha Declaration talks about the socialist values as well as the self-reliance economy and it says that to do this you need a kind of leadership that can promote this kind of an environment and this kind of vision. And in those circumstances we said you need to have the following attributes of leadership and we enumerated those. Now, they were restrictive in terms of personal wealth and this is what is so much attacked as having now been abandoned in the new circumstances. Well, I feel that you do need a Leadership Code for people in public office -- and fortunately we passed legislation to that effect last April. The goal must be to restrict corruption in some way if it is a temptation for people to acquire wealth by the back door. You do need a Code that clearly spells out the responsibility of public office and certainly prohibits the use of public office for self aggrandisement, or favouritism or nepotism and things like that, and plugs all the loopholes for that kind of thing. I think that was a useful thing from the Arusha Declaration.

Q The arguments that prevailed at the time of Arusha of, self-reliance, of the fact that you weren't getting foreign investment at a rapid enough pace to justify that route, prevail more today than they did at the time of Arusha. You've already mentioned donor fatigue, looking at their own development, shortage of money in their own system. If you look beyond that at one other factor here, that your infrastructure has virtually collapsed or barely exists, which is a basic investor conditionality, then the message of self-reliance from Arusha would seem to me to prevail more today rather than less than it did at the time of Arusha?

A The difference is that now I don't think you can mobilise internal resources to embark upon the public sector growth which we could do in 1967. So now we have to make an enabling environment, try to improve the roads, try to see whether by changing ownership, or by inviting partnerships, you can improve the other infrastructures that can attract external investment in this place. I agree with you. Who'll come here to invest if for a whole week they can't get through on the telephone?

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Q You can't even telephone across Dar es Salaam...

A Exactly. But I'm saying this is really a problem not so much of policy. Sometimes it is just simple incompetence because there is no doubt that you need communications infrastructure in this country. Whatever there is here were built by public sector enterprises. But, sometimes, simply because you give them incompetent management, really through nepotism or through things like that, not enough auditing, or you weren't alert to misconduct, and things like that, the result is poor communications. But you needed the infrastructure to bring about development whether internally or externally used. Its a truism, its a truism.

SELF-RELIANCE

Q We seem to keep coming back to a point, that you seem to be talking about a social revolution in Tanzania. That you're talking about re-educating the people who over the year' have become used to depending upon central Government providing all, as opposed to the people doing it themselves. And here you run into a problem of politicians who don't like to see power devolving for they believe this reduces their power base. So you have to re-orientate political thinking at the centre and the people in the countryside. How do you begin to tackle that problem?

A Well, first by personal example, by soliciting as much participation as possible yourself rather than imposing, talking down, prescribing. I think then there will be a turnaround. They will say "Wait a minute, we do have something to contribute. We can determine." And then you come to the realisation that its not only determining, that we can actually accomplish it ourselves. I'll give you an example. As a Member of Parliament I visited one of the villages in my constituency and they had a water pumping machine. It was provided by the Government. And the diesel was provided for by the local Government. The local Government had no funds, they had run out of funds. And the pump stopped and people went back to look at the wells they used to use. So I passed by and said what is the problem here? They explained. So I said fine, now the choice is where are we going to get the money if we wish to buy the diesel and run the machine so people can get water only 200 metres from their houses? They said, "But we don't have money." I said, "No, its you people who are drinking the water and if the District Council runs out of money then you have to find the money." They said, "But where do we find the money?" So I asked them how many households they had there. They said 250. So I said "Fine, what is the price of a chicken?" We got around to about TShs 500 each. So I said, "Can't 250 households provide one chicken each per month so that you

make sure that this deisel is bought, the pump is working and the women are relieved of their burden of looking for water." They looked around and said, "You know, damn right. We could actually." I said, "Right, fine, please do that. Meanwhile, I'll give you enough money to run the pump for the next month. But I want to be sure that you start cost sharing now. It is your water, it is your machine, it is your village water supply." And they did it and it worked. But you see you had to educate them to take the kind of decision that constitutes self-development. Unfortunately, two years later, someone came round in a pick-up and went to the village chairman and said the annual Uhuru Torch race is on and the torch will spend a night in the next but three division headquarters and we need to have a power supply there. So we're borrowing this pump. We'll return it after the torch race is through. And the villagers, without any evidence, any proof, any notice at all, surrendered the machine and never saw it again.

Anyway, the message is really that you have to encourage people to think about their problems themselves, to feel that they are capable of thinking them out, of devising solutions, of seeking assistance, but also making a beginning in solving those problems themselves.

Q I have heard people here referring to their country as Bongoland, a somewhat pejorative word meaning you must use your brains to survive, cut corners. But the case you have just given me provides a positive example of what people can legally do for themselves. How do you inculcate that sort of action nationally?

A Yes, they can use their brains without cutting corners to their own self service.

TAX COLLECTION

Q A complaint that donors make against Tanzania is that your tax net is highly inefficient, haphazard and partial. Do you agree with this criticism and if so what do you plan to do about it?

A I agree with the criticism. We have already passed legislation to establish the tax authority very much like the Ugandans have done. It has not got off the ground yet but we are going to make sure that it gets off the ground quickly because certainly its a very effective way of tax collection. The Ugandans have shown it. We will expedite the process, we must do that. But also I hope one of the things we will do, is have a proper register of people who have tax liabilities, who have tax obligations to this country, and we don't really know all of them because they don't pay... And I want to insist on the penalties being applied when those who have defaulted or whatever it is have been found out. I'm going to insist no mercy, more penalties, and if necessary we'll look at

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those penalties again and see if by strengthening them we can encourage more people to pay their taxes.

Q There are several areas where you might ask Parliament to strengthen the laws, corruption, non-payment of tax and so on. Do you think Parliament, where your opposition may exist as much on the CCM benches as those of the actual Opposition, will be willing to tighten things or whether they will defy what is obviously the public will?

A I think the mood of the country will ensure that they come along. They will come along. Parliament would certainly pass legislation. There is a real sense of outrage here, really. And the notion that the better off are the ones who are evading taxes, this is resented.

Q What short term measures can you take to effect an increase in Government revenue?

A Tax collection is obviously one which we have already talked about. Beyond that the mining sector, this is a sector which I think we need to give urgent attention to because I think more wealth is being created there than is taxed and we could increase Government revenue there. Their market is very very hazy. We don't know who is producing what, who is buying where and so forth. That is not good enough. But its a very thriving sector just now. But the revenues emerging from there are not adequate. We have to address that urgently. Tourism is another. Someone has also suggested that incomes on agricultural production are not very well taxed. I don't know. I'm ready to look at that too. Also the so-called informal sector where there are conspicuous incomes.

Q How do you feel about recruiting outside expertise to come and work with you in Tanzania, such as fishermen from Canada or Britain where their industries are going through a period of recession?

A Well, I would like to sit with the leaders and practitioners in our institutions first before I decide whether or not they need help or advice. But I wouldn't exclude it frankly and if it was just a question of national sensitivity, those kind of ego trip things don't influence me very much. What I want are results and if they are fair ones, not by intimidation or anything like that, I would like to have those results achieved.

Q How can you begin to balance your country's finances moving from monthly budgets based on collections, which inhibit longterm planning, to an annual budget and proper planning?

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- A The first objective must be to improve tax collection because when the targets are met then we can allocate the funds for Government expenditure on a monthly basis and then later on move onto a quarterly basis which was the usual practice. Tax collection has now improved but external assistance has virtually been halted and therefore revenues aren't coming in adequately for us to be able to balance the books on a monthly basis, at least in terms of recurrent expenditure. So the key is to demonstrate that we are making great strides in our own efforts at tax collection so that we can renew the assistance that was forthcoming to supplement our own revenue generation, that was forthcoming from donors and international financial institutions. That is the real key. But, in the long run, the answer of course is economic growth. The effort to increase revenue must also go hand-in-hand with more stringency in expenditure control. I think there is no doubt that controls are not as good as they should be. Supervision of Government expenditure can also be tightened more than it is, and that is what we would like to do.
- Q What short-term measures can you effect to increase Government revenue?**
- A The short-term measure is to first identify those that are in arrears and press them to clear their arrears, to stiffen the penalties against those who for no good reason withhold payments. I hope we can have a transparent or identifiable proper legend as to who the taxpayers in this country really are. I think we can compile such a list and computerise it quickly enough so those taxes which are due will be paid. That's another thing that we can try to do. We'll try to broaden the tax base. I think there is no doubt that there is a very large informal sector that could contribute more to Government revenues than it is paying now. I am told we could collect more by way of arrears, especially in import support. But this is something I will have to look at when its properly placed on my desk. But that's another area where it is suggested we could collect more.
- Q Is there any validity in pursuing the argument of telling those who in the past did not pay their taxes that in future, by paying taxes and not bribes, they may not be paying anymore at the end of the day but will be contributing to national development as opposed to some individual's development?**
- A That is a message that I will try to put across to the business community, through the Chambers of Commerce and so on. All round, and overall, it is in their individual business interest, as well as in the economic interest of the country, that rules be obeyed, procedures be followed and due payments be

made in time rather than seeking these short-cuts that not only erode moral authority but deny us due revenues. And certainly, by being extremely ardent in our prosecution and strengthening the penalties, I hope they'll be persuaded that this sort of slippery conduct is not remunerative.

DEBT

Q Two questions on donors here. One is that you have a large foreign debt which you won't be able to pay if you are going to be able to do the things you want to in your society to restructure it. Will you (a) be seeking a moratorium from the donors on this foreign debt and (b) how do you deal with the huge gap between donor pledges and realisation which makes planning extremely difficult?

A Well, definitely we will have to ask for a moratorium, for an expanded one because we are in a very tight financial squeeze as far as Government revenues and Government obligations of expenditure are concerned. So we have to ask. How they will respond I can't foresee but I hope they will respond positively towards us. The real problem of the gap between promises of assistance or loans and actual delivery, is all these have conditionalities attached to them and meeting those conditionalities depends very much upon our own earnestness. Once we are agreed that these are achievable it does require a great deal of earnestness on our side for implementation. The complaint of the donors has been that we haven't been as earnest as we could be. Its debatable whether that is a fair judgement of our performance. But one thing I can assure you is that I will do everything I can to demonstrate to them that we really are in earnest about meeting conditions that we have agreed upon, both sides have agreed upon. We will do that. But our complaint has been that even where we have met those conditionalities new ones have arisen, mid-stream. And that is really unfair, that is really unfair. But I will see when I get into the real business of Government where the shortcomings are and how they can be remedied.

Q Do you have any idea yet as to the duration of the extension you must seek?

A At the very least it could not be less than a year. In terms of debt payments that are due now, in this current budget, at least a year. I would hope that we could do up to at least three years. But we will see how we can talk them out of pressing us.

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Q Is this something you will do personally?

A Well I don't know who my Minister of Finance will be I must tell you as of now. But I will supplement his efforts with all the eloquence at my command.

LAND

Q You talked earlier about health, education and water. But we haven't talked so much about the patchwork quilt that holds the country together, the land and the livestock at the heart of the whole rural economy. How will you underpin this and harness it for national development?

A The last Administration or the Second Phase Government reached a decision to conclude a land policy. It has yet to be further enriched by substantial public discussion and then Parliamentary approval. So that's the first thing I've got to do. It essentially aims at making the land user more committed to that land so that it becomes an asset in terms of investment opportunities. That's the first thing. It will recognise the land user's attitude, perhaps not so much towards ownership, but towards land use. Make it more permanent, more recognisable, more legal and so on so that it becomes an asset in terms of borrowing conditionalities. Also, it makes it an asset in terms of the livestock industry, an asset that could turn livestock into a source of real annual income just as the use of land for cash crops are a source of recognisable annual income for the peasantry. The other thing of course is to see how our land can be used as part of shareholding in industrial enterprises that are going to be established here. So all those changes are being envisaged. But they still require public discussion and Parliamentary approval. But I really do place a great deal of importance on the development of the cooperatives that have so far been confined to cooperatives in crop production rather than in livestock production. I hope we can extend the cooperative movement into the livestock industry and I certainly look forward to lending Government weight to the development of a livestock and dairy industry in this country. Its ironical and sad that we are supposed to be the third or fourth country on the continent in terms of the size of our national herd, yet we don't have such an industry.

Q People being the way they are the world over tend not to respect things that are not theirs, transport, indeed anything. How do you really expect them to care deeply about the land when they're not the owners, perhaps when they're not even environmentally conscious of that land? Is there not need for change and education on an enormous scale here?

- A Well I don't think the real obstacle has been the consciousness of ownership of land. I think it is the lack of example of how it can develop and transform the individual lives of the land user. That really is the key. That transformation hasn't taken place simply because they don't have a title deed of total ownership in the sense of freehold ownership. I don't think that has been the obstacle really. But a practical demonstration that better land use and an environment of agricultural credit, of cooperative endeavour, real cooperative development not communisation, can transform that land into asset that really can transform the quality of life of the land users there. That is really the real obstacle, its not the title. But I am prepared to observe and, as the expression goes in this country, move with the times.

TRADE UNIONS

- Q Inevitably you face a crisis of expectation with the trade unions who will demand higher wages, threaten strike action. How do you persuade them that salary increases will only increase inflation and that their members won't be any better off at the end of the day if they persist in that course?**
- A In terms of public employees we are going to be a very open Government indeed. We will treat the unions' concerns, whether they are in local Government or in health or education and so on, very honestly indeed. We will put the facts before them, which revenues are available. We'll be open to suggestions about how those revenues can be increased, we will discuss as to how we can best allocate monies so we discharge our obligations to improve education and health services as well as how to improve the individual lot of the workers, or groups of workers within the Government. We will be completely honest about that because really you can't pay salaries from what you can't earn. If you can't earn, if the revenues are not forthcoming, I can't increase salaries. No one can increase salaries. This is not just in the private sector. Its also true of Government. So we'll be very honest and frank with them and, as I said, we'll be open to suggestions as to how we can improve our revenue forecast so we can meet them wherever we can.

Inssofar as the private sector is concerned, we will encourage them to again be as open as the private sector can possibly be with its employees. But certainly we will look at our legislation and provide the leverage for negotiations that produce wage profiles, that acknowledge the needs of the worker and also recognise that salaries must be a reflection also of productivity.

WOMEN

Q Just over 50 per cent of the registered voters in this country are women. Not just here, but generally, it does appear that a lot of policies are male enunciated and not followed through. Ministries of Women's Affairs tend to be rather powerless, tend to be peripheral Ministries. Do you recognise this and do you intend to strengthen the role of the Womens Affairs Ministry in particular and that of women generally?

A Yes, I have very earnest intentions of making our Government very responsive to the fact that women are a little over 50 per cent of our population, that they carry a very large burden in the production of the wealth of this country, that their participation in decision-making in respect of wealth, the creation of that wealth, and certainly the disposal of wealth, is not adequate and must be improved. I already told the women's conference just after my nomination that this will be a goal of my Administration, to increase their participation in decision-making, both in terms of their voice and also their numbers at all levels of Government. One of the major inhibitions to that participation is educational opportunities. It is true we are a very egalitarian society indeed, generally speaking. But there are still remnants of law and certainly there is still a lot of traditional practice that doesn't encourage women to be up front in participation or in articulating views and suggestions and advice and so on. We want to see the institutional bottlenecks to that and correct them. We are going to look at the legal obstacles to that, if there are any bad laws or laws that are blatantly discriminatory, which inhibit participation, we are going to look at those and improve them. And finally, I think we may have no option, certainly in the medium term, except to give a special allowance of preference for educational opportunities in certain fields for women.

I am glad in this respect we have started the Open University of Tanzania because one of the things we have realised is that a remarkable proportion of students in the Open University are women who simply because of either tradition or otherwise, or who had to marry early, had to drop out of colleges and so on, now, having fulfilled their family obligations, are ready to resume their studies. But either they're employed or otherwise engaged and they want to continue their educational advancement through the Open University. I don't think that is adequate in itself. There are special fields where I think we may have to give preference to women. But we will start there.

Q Of the 184 seats on mainland Tanzania women have only been elected in eight. In 1990 the number was two. You have a system where a block of seats in Parliament are reserved for women. Is this a situation you will wish to perpetuate?

- A Short of a remarkable and demonstrable uplift in civic awareness of the population and a real show of fairness of opportunities for women, we may have no option but to have these kind of special seats. And I wouldn't feel that this is a break in the evolution of democracy in my country. It would demonstrate that we are not maturing democratically as fast as we should. But I wouldn't feel ashamed retaining a clause that provides for special representation for women if the pace of civic education is as slow as it is.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

- Q Historically, much of your personal political work has been concerned with foreign affairs. What policies as President will you pursue regionally and internationally?**

- A Regionally I'm going to increase efforts in giving expression to good neighbourliness. Of course good neighbourliness as a basis of stability in the region. Obviously good neighbourliness based on principle. But when you are good neighbours you have time to look at practical problems rather than be diverted. I think there has been a perception that the good neighbourliness relationship has been loosening somewhat over the last few years. Well, problems of refugees and so on. But I will certainly take this matter up with some vigour. Economic integration; we are members of several economic institutions. We'll continue and I hope we will put emphasis more, not so much on treaty writing and treaty adoption, but the building of trust and confidence and the internal stability that encourages cross-border trade, cross-border investment, a crucible of multilateral institutions. The kind of trust and confidence that does that both in terms of public investments as well as the private sectors ones.

I hope to revitalise relations between political parties in this region. They could also be an engine of trust and confidence- building. Certainly our party has had very traditional and historic relations, very important relations, sometimes with ruling parties, sometimes with non-ruling parties, in this whole region. I don't say those relations have lapsed but I think I want to strengthen them very vigorously.

Internationally I would hope to put a little more assertiveness on the independence of our country in the community of nations. I think the breakdown of the bi-polar world has left some of our Third World countries somewhat intimidated by the uni-polar syndrome. I hope that, at least in terms of articulation, we can be a little more assertive than we have been. I want to advance the South-South cooperation agenda which is very important. On the United Nations Security Council I will certainly argue that it must be reformed with better representation.

ETHNIC/RELIGIOUS DIVISIONS

- Q One of the prices of the multi-party State is that it spawns tribal and religious divisions. In Tanzania you have been remarkably spared these during your elections compared to other countries in the region and elsewhere in the world. Nevertheless there have been some cases of it, Kilimanjaro in particular. The Chaga would appear to have voted themselves out of Government because under the constitution you cannot appoint a Minister who is not a member of Parliament. How do you deal with this?**
- A** You don't budget them out of consideration. That's the first thing. It is necessary that they feel, despite the fact that they did not elect a CCM Member of Parliament, that it does not mean their development budget will be excised. I think that is extremely key. I don't think its just a question of being represented in Cabinet. No. We can show that this is still their Government and the Government feels that they are part of the population of this country that needs attention and assistance like everyone else. That, certainly, will be my approach. Because of the phenomenon of multi-parties, and the search for power under the umbrella of multi-parties, obviously sources of power or pillars of political power will emerge, tribal, religious, and so on. What you try to do is to inculcate the national values, ensure that political parties truly do have a national character and are devoid of any tribal or religious proselytising. Once you do that you work hard to demonstrate that a sense of nationhood underpins the unity that you must foster.
- Q So Pemba and Kilimanjaro are going to require special effort from you. How do you plan to go about this?**
- A** Well, as a Government, as far as I am concerned, Pemba and Kilimanjaro are part of the territory of the United Republic of Tanzania. The people there have problems like any other part of the United Republic whether it is in the field of health services, of communications, of energy and so on and we will try to be as equitable in our sharing of the resources as possible without any discrimination.
- Q What about the Pemba peculiarity within the Zanzibar context?**
- A** I think that is a reflection of the great division between the two major political forces on the island. Going back into history there are those who trace their history to the Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP) on the one hand, which was predominantly powerful in Unguja, and those who trace their history of the Zanzibar Nationalist Party (ZNP), which was predominantly powerful in

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Pemba. It really means that the task is of breaking down, if you like, political barriers because I don't think it is a question of tribalism there. The task of bridging political barriers there has not been very successful. People still look back into the past for the main factors in their political relationship today.

Q What about the religious factor? There is slight evidence of some religious pattern.

A I suppose there might be. But let's face it there was a real fear that it would be more pronounced than these figures suggest.

ZANZIBAR

Q There are those who suggest you should personally intervene to try to bridge the major differences between the main Zanzibar islands, Unguja and Pemba. What are the limits of your powers to be able to do anything?

A There are clearly legal and constitutional limits of power. But the limits are further afield when it comes to attempts at persuasion, at education, at discussion, at negotiation, initiative building, community spirit, engendering confidence and so on. That you can do within the constitutional framework of course. Counsel can sometimes change the direction of leadership. I don't know that there is such a very deep cleavage between the population of Pemba and Unguja. I think if you look at it socially, they inter-marry and they have been one State, one country, one community, a sharing of history and all that. There has been a lot of power playing between them because that's what politics and that's what elections are all about, a search for power, simple power. I think it is surely possible to heal the wounds and promote the understanding. There has always been a feeling in Pemba that enough has not been done to help them move out of their state of underdevelopment, that more could be done. I don't know. But that's one area in which certainly the Union Government and the Zanzibar Government can reach an understanding and can put their heads as well as their resources together.

Q There has been considerable argument about one Government, two Governments or three Governments in the United Republic of Tanzania. What position do you take over the Union and this debate?

A I am very clear. My party manifesto, which I helped to write, and which now I shall be asked to implement for the next five years, calls for the continuation of the two Government system, a Union Government and a Government of Zanzibar. That's what I believe in and that's what I will implement.

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Q There are those that find the Union's mathematics very odd, 50 seats in Parliament for a tiny handful of people from Zanzibar and only 184 for the vast majority of the population from the mainland. Doesn't this seem quite disproportionate to you?

A If you appraise the spirit of give and take in numerical terms, population size, you will find a big disparity. But there was more to the give and take than just the consideration of numbers. And I think the "gives and takes" that dictated this structure are still very much relevant today.

THE PRESIDENT

Q I've seen journalists using a whole lot of words to describe you. But how do you describe yourself?

A I don't know, I really don't know. I am a nationalist, I am an internationalist, I am a social democrat, I believe in good governance, I like the extensions of freedom but an equal expansion of a sense of duty and responsibility, both insofar as the community, national and international duties are concerned. I am me.

THE LEGACY

Q Finally, looking forward five, maybe ten, years, how would you like to be remembered by history?

A I would like it to be remembered that I led an Administration that demonstrably fought corruption and strengthened the kind of leadership, public service, values and responsibilities that promote good governance. That I led an effort in my Administration to strengthen discipline in the process of governance, discipline in the sense of law, order and regulations but consistent with fundamental freedoms. And therefore the promotion of fundamental freedoms and developmental imperatives, but in the context of law and order and, therefore, discipline. That I promoted the multi-party agenda, the multi-party system, without damage but rather with conspicuous strengthening of the sense of nationhood of this United Republic of Tanzania. I will hope that it will be said that I endeavoured to achieve these results without the pretentiousness that is generally associated with the highest office in the land, but rather on the contrary, with a great deal of dignity and humility.

Benjamin William Mkapa

Benjamin William Mkapa was born on 12 November 1938, in Ndanda, Masasi district, Mtwara region of what is now southern Tanzania, the fourth and last child of Mwalimu William Matwani and Stephania Nambanga Mkapa. He is married to Anna Shauri Joseph Mkapa and they have two sons.

Education

Mkapa attended primary school at Lupaso in his home area 1945-48, and got his secondary education at Kigonsera Seminary, Ndanda, and St Francis College, Pugu, 1949-56. At Pugu, on the outskirts of Dar es Salaam, one of his teachers was Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, then a relatively unknown man who was to play the central role in gaining independence for his country and, as President, in shaping the post-independence thinking of its people.

In 1957, Mkapa won a place at the prestigious Makerere University in Uganda and graduated with a BA (Hons) degree in English Literature. This was one of the formative periods of his life, and he retains his passion for reading and literature. He received a Diploma in International Relations from Columbia University, New York, USA, 1962-63. He completed six-months basic training in the national service, Tekeleza company, Ruvu, 1971.

Career in Government

Mkapa's first job, in April 1962 was a District Administrative Officer in Dodoma, now Tanzania's capital. He joined the Foreign Ministry four months later, and spent the following school year 1962-63 at Columbia University on a special study programme in international relations for young foreign service officers from newly independent countries.

Following a short attachment with the Scottish Daily Mirror, he became Managing Editor of *The Nationalist* and *Uhuru* (Freedom), the English- and Swahili-language party newspapers of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), 1966-72. He was Managing Editor of the English-language government newspapers, the *Daily News* and *Sunday News*, 1972-74.

In July 1974, he became Press Secretary to President Nyerere, a post he held for two years. This was another formative period. President Nyerere was deeply committed to the liberation of southern Africa, and this period saw the independence of Angola and Mozambique, as well as a flurry of international activity on then Rhodesia and Namibia, including two visits to the region by US Secretary of State, Dr Henry Kissinger. Next Mkapa moved to establish the government news agency, and was first Director of the Tanzania News Agency, Shihata, for a brief period in 1976, before his appointment as High Commissioner to Nigeria in November. This was another difficult assignment calling for quiet diplomacy to repair relations strained during the civil war in Nigeria when Tanzania and a number of other African countries had recognized the secessionist Biafra.

Mission accomplished, he returned home in February 1977 to a new appointment as Minister of Foreign Affairs, a recognition of his diplomatic and intellectual skills, and a post he held until the general elections in 1980. This was a period which put these skills to the most rigorous test. Ugandan dictator Idi Amin invaded Tanzania in 1978, provoking a response which finally drove the Ugandan despot into exile and exposed Libya's cynical support for Amin in the name of Islamic solidarity. 1970-80 was also the period of delicate negotiations, transition and independence of Zimbabwe, in which the Tanzanian government was deeply involved.

From 1970-77, Mkapa was also a parliamentarian, representing Tanzania in the East African Legislative Assembly (Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda).

In 1980, he was selected a national Member of Parliament as a candidate of the cooperative movement, and was re-appointed to Cabinet as Minister of Information and Broadcasting. In February 1982, following a Central Committee disagreement with Nyerere over agricultural policy, Mkapa was posted to Canada as Tanzania's High Commissioner, and resigned his parliamentary seat. In 1983, he moved to Washington DC, as Ambassador to the USA.

In April 1984, the year before Nyerere retired, Mkapa was recalled and again appointed Foreign Minister, a post he held for six and a half years, through the first term of President Ali Hassan Mwinyi. During this period Mkapa reinforced Tanzania's respected international stature, serving on international bodies such as the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers on Southern Africa (CFMSA) committee, which played a central role in international pressure to end apartheid in South Africa. He also chaired the committee that prepared the African Priority Programme for Economic Recovery, which was subsequently adopted by the United Nations. During his two terms as Foreign Minister, Mkapa chaired the informal grouping of foreign ministers of the Frontline States, until Nyerere retired in 1985 and the chair passed to Zambia.

Mkapa was appointed Member of Parliament after his return to Cabinet in 1984, until the general elections in 1985, when he won a parliamentary seat for Nanyumbu constituency, in his home district of Masasi, a remote area in the far south of Tanzania, historically one of the most inaccessible and least developed parts of the country.

In general elections in 1990, he increased his majority by 700 percent in a campaign where emphasis was placed on electing literate leaders. Literacy, particularly in rural areas such as Masasi, had become a critical issue. At independence in 1961, the area boasted 73 percent literacy, the highest in the country. But during the late 1980s, the literacy rate fell dramatically and not a single person from the district won a place at university.

Mkapa was re-appointed to Cabinet after the 1990 elections, again as Minister of Information and Broadcasting, and he introduced greater press freedom, leading to the plethora of newspapers, magazines and television stations which exists today. In May 1992, he became Minister of Science, Technology and Higher Education, a post he held until the October 1995 elections. Soon after this ministerial appointment, he was elected by his colleagues to chair the Council of Ministers of the Third World Institute of Science and Technology, the most influential institute of its kind. He is also vice-president of the Council of Ministers of Science and Technology of the South Commission.

Positions in TANU and CCM

Mkapa was a member of the Central Committee of the Youth League of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), the predecessor to Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), 1968-71. He became a member of the Central Committee of CCM in 1980, and was a member of the party secretariat as Director of the Department of International Relations, 1980-91. He was appointed to the National Executive of CCM 1987-92, after which he was elected to the National Executive and Central Committee of the party, positions he held at the time of his nomination as the party's presidential candidate.

After 16 years in Parliament and Cabinet, Mkapa agreed to stand for nomination in July 1995 as his party's candidate for President, more out of national duty than personal ambition. Initially, he faced 16 challengers, including three former Prime Ministers. Gradually, the list was reduced to six and then three contenders, with Mkapa finally winning the nomination.

SARDC/Profile by David Martin