

***Your Excellency, Katalin Novak, President of the Republic of Hungary;  
Excellencies, Heads of State and Government;  
Religious Leaders;  
Distinguished Delegates;  
Ladies and Gentlemen.***

Madam President, please accept my sincere appreciation for the warm reception and hospitality accorded to me and my delegation since our arrival in this beautiful country, and particularly to this historic city of Budapest. I also thank you for according me the opportunity to address the Summit. This September assembly has been convened at an opportune time when the world is yearning for peace and security, for which the fate of the family is at stake.

***Madam President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;***

The demographic situation of our world today depicts two polar sides. One, where birth rates are low and falling, infertility is on the rise, population is aging and, the institution of the traditional multi-generational family is disappearing. The other, is characterised by high population growth rates, relatively strong multi-generational family links and high dependency ratios. As a result of this demographic dichotomy, each side faces a number of critical challenges as well as opportunities. In low fertility rate countries, there is growing labour shortage, distorted meaning of marriage and the family, with the emergence of cohabitation and single mothers as well as liberal abortions. The fundamental role of the family is disappearing. These challenges have led to greater use of automation and Artificial Intelligence in the production processes to increase productivity and cover labour shortages. By contrast, in the part of the world with explosive population growth, there is enormous pressure on the healthcare and education systems as a result of the huge and fast-growing young population. Other challenges relate to food insecurity, rapid urbanization, limited job opportunities for the youth and migration in search of greener pastures. However, the population bulge is also perceived to offer a larger market, room for greater use of labour-intensive technologies and generating high economic growth by harnessing the demographic dividend (working population exceeding the dependent population) and fast-growing urban middle class.

***Madam President, Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates;***

Let me briefly spell out the population characteristics of my country. According to the National population census 2022, Tanzania had a population of 61.7 million people growing at 3.2 percent p.a. 51 percent were female (31.7 million) while males accounted for the remainder 49 percent. 65 percent of the population lives

in rural areas and 35 percent lives in urban and peri-urban areas. About 49 percent of the total population is aged below 18 years and 15 percent are children under 5 years of age. Only 3.8 percentage of the population is aged 65 years and above. At the rate of 3.2 percent annually, the population of Tanzania is expected to double by 2044. The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) is 4.8 children per woman which is twice as much as the world average of 2.3 children per woman. Under-5 mortality is 43 deaths per 1,000 live births. This means that 1 in 23 children in Tanzania die before their 5th birthday

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In Tanzania, the core family is constituted by two married adults (a man and a woman or women) along with their off springs. The family also includes close relatives and dependants (extended family). The family is the first and most important social unit. Its plays a very fundamental role and it has served as the primary unit in which the whole network of social relations is grounded. It provides for emotional and psychological security through love and companionship. It is the nest for rearing and socialization of children as well as caring and supporting its members when they are sick, bereaved or disabled. The family also provides basic needs (food, shelter, clothing and security) for its members especially the young and old. The family serves to promote order and stability in society and also provides a framework for decision making and problem solving as well as financial stability, provision of education and health services for family members and stable upbringing and bonding. The family also serves as an effective cushion against depression and anxiety. It improves happiness and even health metrics.

However, as Pope John Paul II put it, there is "a vast and complex experience with regard to the family, ...it becomes all the more so precisely in those places where the family is suffering from internal crises, or is exposed to adverse cultural, social and economic influences which threaten its inner unity and strengths, and even stand in the way of its very formation". In Tanzania, the major challenges that families face include poverty and instability of income of family members, violence against women and children, unemployment, limited access to basic needs and sometimes discrimination as a result of chronic illnesses such as HIV and mental disorders. Other challenges include rapid social change as a result of globalization, advancement of science and technology especially the rapid spread of television, internet and social media as well as internal migration of the youth from rural to urban areas. Other consequences of a dysfunctional family include increasing school dropouts, street children, alcoholics, drug addicts as well as other social vices. Families are also affected to a large extent by the effects of climate change, particularly extreme weather incidences, that lead to crop failure and food

shortage, loss of pastures and death of livestock. In a number of African countries, wars/conflict and political instability have been major sources of family misery and insecurity. Luckily, Tanzania has remained peaceful and politically stable since its independence in 1961.

***Madam President, Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates;***

Stability and security of families in Tanzania, , still hinge on the strong traditional values that have been inculcated and nurtured in the family setting. Cultural and social values are also enriched by customary practices such as initiation – where young people are taught and prepared to enter into adulthood, including how to handle duties and responsibilities associated with their status as future mothers and fathers. These practices strengthen family bonds such that when a brother passes on, the sibling takes over the responsibility of taking care of the deceased’s children.

Similarly, in preparation for marriage, families have a role to play in guiding young people as to when and who to marry, desirable attributes of the bride and bridegroom’s family such as good conduct, hardworking and free from inheritable diseases. In this sense, families of the married couple together become a defacto extended family. These practices help to bind the couples especially in the rural setting where the majority share same cultural backgrounds. Divorce, cases are also addressed by family elders, side by side with modern judicial processes guided by the law of marriage and guidelines of specific religions.

***Madam President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;***

Aside from traditional cultural practices that keep families together and secure, the Tanzania Government has been taking deliberate steps in that direction. They include establishment of the Tanzania Social Action Fund (TASAF) as a safety net to assist the most vulnerable households through provision of seed money/ grants and employment opportunities. Furthermore, the Government has invested significantly in building economic and social infrastructure particularly water supply, classrooms, rural electrification and rural roads. Other efforts include implementation of the Building a Better Tomorrow Initiative (BBTI) which targets at attracting young people in agribusiness. Similarly, the Government has implemented fee-free education policy, covering early childhood education to Advanced Level Secondary education. In tandem, the Government has improved access to education for girls and boys reaching the enrollment ratio of 1 to 1.

***Madam President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;***

I am pleased to note that so far, Tanzania is not among countries which produce waves of migrants to other continents. However, in order to prevent such crises in

future, we believe that it is imperative to deal with the problem at source. That is, the solution to Africa's unemployment and subsequent migration, rests in growing our economies, improving opportunities for job creation and addressing governance issues in Africa. In this regard, Tanzania appreciates the support and cooperation with the Republic of Hungary in the field of Education and uplifting of skills. My country is committed to deepen relations with Hungary, in skills development for our youth as well as investment, especially in agriculture and agribusiness, value addition, manufacturing, tourism and digital technologies which have high job creation potentials.

Increasing migration, orchestrated by economic factors and conflicts, has been one of the main variables with a bearing on population dynamics in Africa. For instance, Tanzania has been hosting over 400,000 refugees from neighbouring countries, catering for their security and wellbeing. This has put pressure on resources (land, water, social services and infrastructure) and sometimes leading to tension and competition with the host communities/families. Tanzania, therefore, calls for bilateral and international support to carry the refugee burden, improve national and regional security, conflict prevention, peace making and in peace keeping missions as well as in preventing and fighting terrorism.

***Madam President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;***

In conclusion, addressing the demographic crisis facing the world at present, requires putting the institution of the traditional family at the core and making it the focus of development. We need, more than ever before, a global coalition for the wellbeing of the family. Cultural norms and practices as well as religious teachings that nurture family values and safeguard the security and continuity of the family must be promoted/supported worldwide. Similarly, world governments must make and implement policies, programs and laws that guarantee security and sustainability of the family. We also call upon International collaboration and solidarity to support Africa contain the spillovers of its demographic challenges.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!**