



**THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT**

**SPEECH BY DR. PHILIP ISDOR MPANGO, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED
REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE 79TH
GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND CONGRESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL
MILITARY SPORTS COUNCIL (CISM)**

**DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA
14TH MAY 2024**

- ***H.E. Hemed Suleiman Abdullah, Second Vice President – RGZ;***
- ***Col. Nilton Rolim, CISM President;***
- ***Hon. Dr. Stergomena Tax, Minister of Defence and National Service;***
- ***Hon. Ministers;***
- ***Gen. Jacob John Mkunda, Chief of Defence Forces;***
- ***Hon. Albert Chalamila, Dar Es Salaam Regional Commissioner;***
- ***Formation Commanders;***
- ***Chiefs from Defence Forces' Headquarters;***
- ***Maj. Gen. Maikano Abdullahi, CISM Vice President- Africa;***
- ***Brig. Gen. Rashid Al Dosari, CISM Vice President- Asia;***
- ***Brig. Gen. Dalio Colon, CISM Vice President-America;***
- ***CISM Board of Directors;***
- ***Navy Captain Robert Recchia, CISM General Secretary;***
- ***Col. Dirk Schwede, CISM Vice President Europe ;***
- ***Col. Dorah Mamby Koita, CISM Ambassador Guinea;***
- ***Chiefs of Delegations and Distinguished Delegates;***
- ***Members of the Press;***
- ***Invited Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen.***

I feel honored for the opportunity to officiate the opening of the 79th General Assembly and Congress of the International Military Sports Council (*Conseil International du Sport Militaire (CISM)*) here in Dar es Salaam. On behalf of H.E. Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania and Commander-In-Chief, I wish to welcome all representatives of CISM member nations to Tanzania. I am indeed delighted to see you in your colorful military uniforms.

Distinguished Delegates;

Thirty three years ago, Tanzania had an opportunity to host this esteemed assembly in Arusha, marking a significant milestone in the recounts of the International Military Sports Council (CISM). Tanzania has been a member of the CISM family since 1973 and has from that time remained committed to the motto "*Friendship Through Sports*". We are delighted to have been selected, for the second time, to host this auspicious sports event in the world. As we convene here, it is worth to reflect on the 46th CISM General Assembly and Congress that was held in May 1991 in Arusha, under the theme of solidarity. That theme resonated quite well with the global need for reconciliation amidst the turbulence of the Gulf War. Moreover, members from the armies of the Warsaw treaty alliance and a number of countries from Africa and Asia were invited. This gesture bolstered inclusivity and friendship within the global community as many nations joined CISM thereafter. The membership has subsequently grown from 80 nations in 1991, to 140 at present. I commend the CISM leadership for this remarkable growth and for the opportunity accorded to Tanzania to be part of this growth story.

Moreover, the 46th CISM General Assembly, demonstrated its commitment to solidarity, by advocating for the continued participation of member states that were at the time facing economic difficulties. This marked a defining moment in the shared journey towards peace and cooperation through sports diplomacy. Therefore, hosting the 79th CISM General Assembly and Congress this year in Tanzania, is another opportunity, to take to the next level, international military sports as a tool for global peace, but also, to

scale up implementation of the CISM shared values of solidarity, friendship, respect, equality, integrity and determination.

Distinguished Delegates;

Sports have for a long time been recognized to be a very effective means of communication between the peoples of the world. As the former South African President Nelson Mandela (Nobel Peace Prize Winner), once said, I quote: "*Sports have the power to change the world. They have the power to inspire, the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand. Sports can create hope, where there was once only despair. They are more powerful than governments in breaking down racial barriers. They laugh in the face of all types of discrimination!*"

Sports, is of particular importance to the armed forces all over the world, appreciating the fact that physical fitness is an essential requirement not only for optimal health, but also for better performance and quality of life of men and women in uniform. Physical fitness and mental wellbeing of servicemen and women are critical for a strong and resilient military. Sports enables the soldiers to be ready to perform under a wide range of geographical and environmental conditions as well as coping with the stress of sustained operations. For this reason, Tanzania continues to advocate for integration of sports into military training programs, recognizing the benefits they provide to our servicemen and women.

Distinguished Delegates;

Allow me to conclude my short remarks by suggesting the following issues to this 79th General Assembly and Congress of the CISM.

First, the experience garnered by Tanzania in contributing to international peacekeeping missions, underscores the vital role of military sports in promoting global peace through sports, recognizing its transformative power in bridging cultures and promoting mutual respect and understanding. Cognizant of that, Tanzania considers Military sports to be a powerful diplomatic tool, transcending boundaries and strengthening relationships between nations. I urge CISM to take on the promotion of global peace as a standing agenda of international military sports.

The **second** issue is a gender perspective. I am of the view that this is crucial for the progress of the CISM. We ought to prioritize women's involvement both in the participation and representation within this international organization, ensuring that their voices are heard and their contributions valued. The presence of only a few female delegates here should, I think, motivate us to commit ourselves to promoting greater participation of women in all aspects of military sports, recognizing their invaluable contributions to our armed forces. On that note, I call upon CISM Board of Directors and especially CISM Women Commission to strategize on ways and means to uplift women involvement in this event going forward.

Third, is a proposal to bolster the **hosting the CISM games and championships**. I think there is need to encourage CISM member states to host these games and championships. I suggest that where resources and infrastructure pose challenges, member states should also be encouraged to join hands in hosting the Military World Games and Championships. The fact that, East Africa has agreed to co-host co-host the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) tournaments, indicates that it is also possible for countries to co-host the CISM games. Tanzania reaffirms its readiness to collaborate and partner with other countries on this aspect in future.

The **fourth** point relates to **nurturing talents**. CISM ought to set clear plans for nurturing young talents among soldiers and co-opting civilians through a number of initiatives including the establishment of Sports Academies. I encourage the CISM leadership, through the responsible commission, to devise strategies for development of talents.

Finally, please consider using military sports to champion the fight against Global Environmental crisis and the **upsurge of non-communicable diseases globally**. In this regard, CISM games and tournaments could be used to promote physical fitness and healthy diet in our military to educate the general public on the pivotal role of sports in preventing non-communicable diseases. It is also my sincere hope that the Military Sports Council will remain at the fore front in the anti-doping drive worldwide.

Distinguished Delegates;

On a special note, I wish to extend my profound appreciation to the sponsors of this event, namely NMB, CRDB, PBZ, NGOME SACCOS, Zara Travel tours, Azam Media and Skyline Travels. Likewise, I sincerely appreciate the outstanding work done by the Local Organizing Committee, under the patronage of the Tanzania Ministry of Defence and National Service.

Distinguished Delegates;

It will be a remiss of me to leave the podium without urging you to spare time after this event to sample Tanzanian hospitality, and experience our rich culture and breathtaking natural wonders, which include the mighty Serengeti National Park – which is world famous for spectacular wildebeest migration, Ngorongoro Crater – where the big five animals can be found in one place, Mount Kilimanjaro – the roof top of Africa and the spicy island of Zanzibar with its pristine beaches and many others.

Having said that, on behalf of H.E. Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, the President of the United Republic of Tanzania and Commander-In-Chief, **I now have the honor to declare the 79th CISM General Assembly & Congress officially opened.**

Thank You / Merci / Asante Sana.