

**SPEAKING POINTS OF THE HEAD OF DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION TO TANZANIA
AND THE EAC, AMBASSADOR ROELAND VAN DE GEER
ON THE
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE AFRICAN CHILD
Dar es Salaam, 16/06/2016**

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Honourable and Dearest Children, Waheshimiwa na Wapendwa Watoto
Representative from the Ministry of Information, Sports, Artists & Culture,
Government Representatives present today,
Representatives of International Organizations
Representatives of Civil Society Organizations,
Members of the Press
Dear Colleagues
Ladies and Gentlemen,

HAMJAMBO WATOTO WAZURI? [How are you children?]

LEO NI SIKU YENU.

NI SIKU YA KUFURAHU NA KUTUKUMBUSHA KUWA NYIE NI MUHIMU SANA KWA
DUNIA YETU.

SEMENI MIMI NI MUHIMU!

(Today is your day. It is your day to be happy and to remind us of your importance in our world. Say, I am important) [

- I'm happy to be here with you today and I'm happy to see so many people united to stand for the African Child Day.
- I am sure someone is wondering: why celebrating a day for the "African child", and not one for the Asian, the Australian or the European child?
- Well... "International days" are there to make us remember important things we tend to forget in our busy life of everyday. The reply is that children in the world often have a hard time in general but, according to figures in the books, children in Africa have it harder than others, as many more are poor and live in war.
- To me, children rights - your rights - are the most important of all "human rights". We tend to forget that the rights of children's are for today and the future. The same way we sometimes forget that today you are children, but tomorrow you will be teachers, doctors, taxi drivers, cooks, masons. One child of today will certainly be a President tomorrow!
- **WATOTO WA LEO NI MABIBI NA MABWANA WA KESHO [Children of today are ladies and gentlemen of tomorrow]**
- Caring for children means building the future. All adults share this duty: I and all of us who are grown-ups.

- But rights cannot be touched and seen. It is difficult to explain them. Would you, children, be able to list some rights that are important to you?
- WATOTO MNAZIJUA HAKI ZENU? WANGAPI WANAJUA HAKI ZAO WANYOOSHE MIKONO?
(Children, do you know your rights? For those that do, raise your hands)
- The Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Child, has ten key rights of children.
 - For example, you have the right to go to school and get good education.
 - You have the right to feel good and healthy and strong.
 - You have the right to drink water that does not make your tummy hurt.
 - You have the right to eat good food that makes you grow up strong.
 - You have the right to feel safe and protected and nobody should hurt you.
 - You have the right to play. YES!
 - And all, boys AND girls, have these rights.
- WATOTO WOTE NI SAWA, WAKIKE KWA WAKIUME. WOTE WAPEWE FURSA SAWA KATIKA MAISHA, NA MUDA SAWA WA KUCHEZA.
(All Children are equal, boys and girls. They should be provided equal opportunities in life and equal time to play)
- **KILA MTOTO NI MUHIMU** (EVERY CHILD COUNTS)
- To the adults here today, I want to tell you that around the world, the European Union works together with UNICEF and many others to promote the right to protection, the right to survival and development and the right to participation for children.
- In Tanzania and the East African region, children are facing many challenges but they also can count upon the support of many grown-ups.
- Starting from the **National authorities**, who adopted progressive laws back in 2010 (The Law of the Child Act on the mainland and the Children's Act in Zanzibar) and launched a ***National Plan of Action on the Prevention and response to Violence against Children***, in 2013.
- **I wish to praise the local authorities** that are also committed and very much involved: Children DESKs have been set up and are operational in six regions (Dodoma, Iringa, Kilimanjaro, Mara, Mbeya and Dar es Salaam) and have been trained by UNICEF to handle cases of violence against children and raise awareness on how and where to report cases.
- This is part of a broader effort to set up effective 'protection system' in many districts such as Kibaha, Kisarawe, Shinyanga, Kahama but also in Zanzibar, from which children, parents and communities can get support.

- In all these districts and hopefully in more soon, people agreed that children should not be living in fear and should be granted full protection: **WATOTO WALINDWE [Children should be protected]**
- Many International and national NGOs are also committed and work together to advance children rights in Tanzania. They are all very much involved in the day to day work to support the authorities' efforts and the children themselves. I am happy to see here today our partners UNICEF, Plan International, Save the Children, CCBRT, and of course our biggest partner, the government of Tanzania. Together with more partners we have worked on the protection of children against different forms of violence such as trafficking, child marriage and FGM, on improving the justice system, road safety for children, mother and child healthcare, etc.
- Today we are happy to be part of the exhibitions; sharing our space with Alliance Française, Plan International and the Embassy of Germany in Tanzania. We hope you have had a chance to get a glimpse at the work the EU and its partners are doing and we always welcome you at the EU Info point which is at the Alliance Française.
- You've heard there is now a **National Child Help LINE – 116**. HII NI NAMBA YA SIMU YA KITAIFA YA KUTOA TAARIFA KUMSAIDIA MTOTO -- MOJA MOJA SITA 116
- Everybody – including any child – can use this number. The EU is happy to also promote the helpline because we believe it is important that everyone is aware of it, and uses it.
- In case of doubt, call. Better safe than sorry!
- The European Union is very proud and happy to support these efforts, via several projects funded through UNICEF, IOM, PLAN international, Save the children etc. and I personally hope that we will be able to support even more in the coming years.
- I thank C-Sema for organising this event and for inviting the European Union. I commend you for the enormous task you have managing the child helpline. I am happy we meet again to provide the best for the children, since we met last in February at the EU-UNICEF Child Rights Toolkit Seminar.
- I wish to reaffirm that the European Union is fully committed to support Tanzania's efforts to strengthen the Rule of Law, respect Children Rights and promote their access to Justice.
- And I invite YOU Children to remind us grown up people that we are responsible for your rights, as you should be able to count on all of us to protect you.

WATOTO, KUMBUKENI MNAYO HAKI YA KUPENDWA NA KUHESHIMIWA. MSIACHE KUWA NA UPENDO, MUWAHESHIMU WATU WOTE, MFANYE VIZURI SHULENI NA MJENGE TAIFA LENU. *(Children, always remember you have the right to be respected and loved. And you should continue being loving children, respect everyone, do your best in school and you will build a great nation).*

ASANTENI SANA