



Republic of Malawi

**ACCEPTANCE SPEECH**

**BY**

HIS EXCELLENCY NGWAZI DR BINGU  
WA MUTHARIKA

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
MALAWI

**AT**

**THE MEDAL OF GLORY AWARD  
PRESENTATION CEREMONY**

**MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA  
USA**

**18<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2009**

- **Mr. Fred Oladeinde,  
President, The Foundation  
for Democracy in Africa;**
- **The Board Members of the  
Foundation for Democracy  
in Africa;**
- **Honourable Prof. Eta Banda,  
M.P., Minister of Foreign  
Affairs of the Republic of  
Malawi and other Cabinet  
Ministers;**
- **Excellency Mrs. Hawa  
Ndilowe, Malawi Ambassador  
to the United States of  
America;**
- **The Honourable Dennis C.  
Moss, Chairman, Board of**

**County Commissioners,  
Miami Dade County;**

- **Honourable Vick Hoddleston,  
Deputy Assistant Secretary  
for Africa, Office of the  
Secretary of Defense, US  
Department of Defense;**
- **Honourable Lynda Bell,  
Mayor of the City of  
Homestead, Miami Dade  
County;**
- **Mr. Jaap Donath, Vice  
President, Research &  
Strategic Planning, Beacon  
Council;**
- **Mr. John A. Adams, Jr.,  
President & CEO, Enterprise  
Florida, Inc.;**

- **Ambassador Chike Alex Anigbo, Permanent Secretary, Office of the Secretary, Government of Nigeria, National Volunteer Service;**
- **Honourable Bright Rwamirama, Minister of State for Animal Industry, the Republic of Uganda;**
- **Distinguished Invited Guests;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen.**

I was very thrilled to receive your letter informing me that the Foundation for Democracy in Africa has decided that the “**2009 Medal of Glory Award**” be bestowed upon me. I have come personally to receive this prestigious award and to thank the Foundation for Democracy in Africa for this award.

It is encouraging that the FDA has recognized the improved political, economic and social development that Malawi has achieved under my leadership and in particular, for the bold reforms in the agriculture sector.

I accept this award on behalf of the people of Malawi who continue to support me personally and the policies of my Government.

**MR PRESIDENT  
INVITED GUESTS  
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

Malawi's success story is not only in food security but also in democracy. These have come about through diligent planning and prioritization of development goals, through the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy, which is an overarching policy road-map for

social and economic development of Malawi.

Today Malawi is the second fastest growing economy after Qatar. Malawi has attained an annual average growth rate of 7.5 percent in the past five years.

Malawi has a very large number of people accessing safe drinking water; Malawi has reduced the incidences of new HIV infections and today more than 250,000 people living with HIV receive free Antiretroviral (ARVs); Malawi has in the past five years distributed close to six

(6) million bed nets for combating Malaria; Malawi has reduced child and maternal mortality quite significantly; Malawi has significantly improved the health and education systems.

During the past five years, Malawi has greatly improved the democracy, rule of law and good governance. For instance, there are no political prisoners in Malawi and nobody has been detained without trial. There is freedom of press and freedom of expression. We have improved participatory democracy reaching the rural poor.

Malawi has greatly advanced the full participation of women in high decision making bodies. We have five Cabinet Ministers and six Deputy Ministers. The Attorney General, Clerk of Parliament, Director of Human Rights Commission and Deputy Speaker of Parliament are all women.

We have four Ambassadors and five Deputy Ambassadors. The head of HIV and AIDS, and Nutrition Department is a woman and so is the head of the National Disaster and Relief Agency. There are now 45 women Parliamentarians.

## **MR PRESIDENT**

Recent surveys have shown that the health indicators in Malawi have been improving since 2004. We are implementing a Sector Wide Approach Programme, ensuring that all Malawians have access to improved health facilities, as well as medical drugs and equipment.

We are training more doctors and nurses every year. Each year, we build new hospitals and rehabilitate existing ones.

We are implementing an Essential Health Package which is a costed package of key interventions aimed at addressing major health problems experienced by the majority of Malawians.

We have also intensified nutritional programs, particularly in schools. In addition, we have ensured that all children under the age of 5 are immunized. We also continue to provide support to people living with HIV/AIDS.

In the education sector, we continue to build more schools,

train teachers and provide the requisite materials. Our focus is on girls' education because we realize that the future of Malawi is in the hands of an educated mother. To that end we built 42 girls boarding hostels in the past five years

## **MR PRESIDENT**

Again in just 5 years, we have proved that Malawi's democracy can grow and be consolidated just like any other country in the world. My being re-elected as President in the Presidential and Parliamentary Elections that took place in May

this year has given me a fresh mandate and an impetus to continue to promote democracy and good governance.

**MR PRESIDENT  
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

I will leave you tonight with my definition of democracy that has resulted in spectacular growth of the Malawi country. I define democracy as the system of governance where the decision of the majority is carried out while safeguarding the legitimate interest of the minority.

In Malawi we have been successful in ensuring that although the ruling Democratic Progressive Party has absolute majority in Parliament; we still protect the interests of the minority opposition parties represented in Parliament.

It is my strong belief that democracy is not a “game of numbers” as some would say. To me democracy deals with real people and real issues. It cannot be a game.

Once again, I am happy to accept this award with a new determination to continue on the

path towards democratization and economic reforms of Malawi.

I thank the President, Board of Directors and staff of the Foundation for Democracy in Africa for honouring me in this way.

To the organizing committee of the 2009 FDA Medal of Glory Award ceremony, I say bravo for a job well done.

Thank You.

**God bless you all.**