

SPEECH BY DEPUTY MINISTER FOR PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND LOCAL AUTHORITY (PMORALG) OF
THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA, HON. AGGREY MWANRI

AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY
PRACTITIONERS CONFERENCE

DAR ES SALAAM

27th August, 2013

H.E. Ambassador of Switzerland,
Policy Forum Chairperson,
Distinguished Foreign and Local Delegates,
Invited Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

At the outset, please allow me to express my heartfelt appreciation for being accorded this opportunity of being your Chief Guest at this opening ceremony of the Social Accountability Practitioners Conference.

I am also pleased to learn that this conference brings over 140 delegates from all over Tanzania and also from neighboring countries. Let me join the Chairperson of the Board of Policy Forum to welcome foreign delegates to Tanzania and to this friendly City of Dar es Salaam.

Ladies and Gentlemen, May I, at this juncture congratulate the Policy Forum, Actionaid Tanzania, Forum Syd, Public Service Accountability Monitor of South Africa, MS-TCDC and the Swiss Development Cooperation for jointly organizing this conference. Gatherings of this nature are crucial in providing space for Social Accountability practitioners to share information and to dialogue on the best ways of monitoring public resources for the interest of their communities.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Prime Minister's Office - Regional Administration and Local Government is particularly interested in the work of civil society organisations that monitor public resources because like them, we are equally committed to the promotion of social justice at all levels of society and are unwavering in our belief that all human beings have equal dignity and an equal claim to the resources they need to exercise their fundamental human rights. To this end, the Government of Tanzania supports civic organisations' right to monitor whether these rights are being delivered to communities by duty-bearers.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is our understanding that most of you here monitor the use of public resources at the local government level in great detail. One of the areas you investigate is the link between our stated policy priorities and the budget allocations we make as government. You analyze to see whether there is consistency in our strategic planning and determine whether we are responsive or addressing the most pressing social economic needs of society. The Government of Tanzania has been increasingly keen to study these analyses so that we can improve our planning and budgeting in Local Government Authorities.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the outcome of your tracking work as civil society organisations can also help us in evaluating our expenditure management and the impact this has on service delivery. This tracking also goes hand in hand with monitoring service providers' performance at the local level to determine if they are implementing the objectives and activities contained in their strategic plans.

Ladies and Gentlemen, as a country, we must enhance integrity and firm up our disciplinary structures. The government takes seriously cases of the abuse and/or misuse of public resources and we commend civil society organisations for the advocacy they have done to highlight the impact corruption and mismanagement of funds have on service delivery. The Prime Minister's Office - Regional Administration and Local Government has worked closely with civil society and other actors to ensure that the message that is clear that local government authorities need to enhance their capacity to respond appropriately to instances of financial mismanagement.

Ladies and Gentlemen, you will all know that we as the executive are accountable to constitutional oversight bodies such as Full Councils and the parliament. Civil society organisations such as yours have constantly emphasized that we fully implement recommendations or resolutions issued by such bodies. Our Local Government Authorities are keenly making use of the Controllers and Auditor-General's audit reports.

Ladies and Gentlemen, to undertake all the above actions, civil society organisations require budget-related information. We acknowledge this as government and that is why the Prime Minister's Office - Regional Administration and Local Government has worked together with Policy Forum to release a circular on 4th October 2012 to all LGAs informing them to make accessible 21 documents to enable Social Accountability Monitoring.

Ladies and Gentlemen, let me conclude my speech by wishing you fruitful deliberations. I believe that at the end of your three-day discussions, you will

come up with valuable conclusions and resolutions that will go a long way towards developing further your profession and assisting your countries to realize the right to social accountability.

With these few remarks, I now have the pleasure to declare your Conference officially opened.

Thank you.