



REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

REMARKS

BY

HIS EXCELLENCY

DR LAZARUS MCCARTHY CHAKWERA

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

AT THE MALAWI SCOTLAND PARTNERSHIP

VIRTUAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SATURDAY, 9TH OCTOBER 2021

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It gives me joy to join you on this day for this interaction for further strengthening the ties between our two countries. I am particularly encouraged by the enthusiasm with which you received my three challenges to you last year, and I must register my thanks to you for taking that appeal to heart.

Your report on the progress you have made on those three challenges has given me great encouragement and will no doubt add great value to the preparations we are making for the upcoming COP26 in Glasgow in three weeks. Aside from all the great work we are looking forward to achieve together at that conference and at related side events that we are lining up with your help, I am relishing the chance to see you face to face.

Face to face encounters like COP26 are important in the partnership between countries whose relationship is as unique and special as the one between Malawi and

Scotland. One example of that uniqueness is that this bilateral relationship goes beyond government to government links. The countless civic, people-to-people links between our nations are an integral part of our partnership. There are as many as 1,200 of such links, working together in various ways across churches, schools, hospitals, universities, businesses, tourism, diaspora, community groups, and many more. The more the peoples of our countries interact in these sectors, the stronger our partnership becomes, which is why all three of my challenges to you last year were aimed at increasing and intensifying such interactions at all levels of our mutual engagement.

At our last interaction, I accepted the designation of Honorary Co-Patron of the Scotland Malawi Partnership, and so in that capacity, I wish to thank the Scottish Government for always honouring the fact that the bond between our two countries extends wider than the framework of partnership between our governments. I find great encouragement in the Scottish Government's efforts to go beyond supporting direct projects operating in Malawi, by also continuing to support and fund the

Scotland Malawi Partnership in Scotland and the Malawi Scotland Partnership in Malawi. This support ensures that the civic links between our countries goes from strength to strength. In turn, the SMP is able to continue its work of supporting all the different links between our countries, which includes ensuring that all efforts are coordinated and, crucially, that Scotland's efforts in Malawi are always led by Malawi's priorities, not its own.

This is why the Scotland-Malawi Partnership Principles, which underpin all the work we do together, not only have my full endorsement, but are also worthy of emulation in bilateral relations between nations in the Global North and nations in the Global South. Those principles are the offspring of hours, days, weeks, and months of listening to each other respectfully, enabling us all to really understand what makes an effective and equitable partnership. It is partnerships like ours that are strong enough to overcome the global challenges of Climate Change, Covid-19 pandemic, and economic inequality. As such, Scotland and Malawi must approach

COP26 not as followers, but as leading examples of the kind of partnerships the world needs to address its ills.

It is therefore in the spirit of the principles of our partnership that I wish to say a few words to those Scots working with Malawians and those Malawians working with Scots, not only within our two nations, but anywhere in the world: I know that the last 19 months have been uniquely difficult, with almost no travel between our two countries. Even so, I truly believe that the progress report on what we have achieved together in the midst of this pandemic is a testament to how resilient our relationship is. I believe that our ties are so deep that adversity of the sort the pandemic has been only brings the best out of us.

But without red-blooded Scots and red-blooded Malawians working side by side on things that matter to both countries, the relationship between our countries would only exist on paper and in meetings that have no bearing on the development of our peoples. It is you who work side by side in schools, churches, hospitals, projects, and businesses that are the beating heart of our

partnership. I want you to know that whatever challenges you are facing in those efforts are worth it, because by suffering losses together and registering victories together in your joint quest to make Malawi and Scotland closer than brothers, you make the world a better place. Seeing some of you at COP26 will therefore be a great honour for me, because if this conference was happening in another country, it would be a mere conference. But since it is happening in Scotland, it will be a homecoming.

I thank you for listening.