

SPEECH

BY

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DURING

THE KABALEGA INDEPENDENCE WEEK

HOIMA CITY

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It is with great honor that I join you today for this momentous occasion as we celebrate the life, leadership, and legacy of one of Uganda's greatest sons—Omukama Chwa II Kabalega. This is not only a celebration of history, but a reaffirmation of identity, a commemoration of courage, and a moment of reflection for our future as a people.

I thank the organizers of Kabalega Week for their commendable job in bringing together people from across the country to reflect, to celebrate, and to honor the great works and legacy of the Omukama Chwa II Kabalega

This commemoration is a recognition of the achievements of our ancestors in the struggle to set up centralized administration, a pre-requisite for better organization of production and welfare of society.

It was of great significance that in the interlacustrine Bantu area, the Kingdoms of Buganda, Bunyoro, Ankole and Toro as well as the chiefdoms of Busoga, the Kings and Chiefs had managed to unite scores of Clans under single administrations. Uniting the Clans meant making them work together; stopping them from fighting among themselves; regulating relationships between them and among individuals. If there had been no such unity, then all the clans would have been acting independently and most likely against one another. It is, therefore, very important to commemorate the fact that our ancestors had attained this level of development in terms of political integration.

It is important to note that the tasks that faced our ancestors, are the very ones that face us today. In the same way our ancestors in Bunyoro and other Kingdoms used all creative means to weave unity among the Clans, we should use similar creative measures to unite the different peoples

of Uganda and the different Religious groups in order to achieve similar goals (to those of our ancestors) of wider unity that enables us to gain access to greater human and natural resources. I therefore encourage our young people to learn from Kabalega, not just as a figure in history, but as a model of leadership, resilience, and service to one's people

The NRM government greatly promotes Pan-Africanism. This is because we consider the economic and political integration of Africa as a matter of survival for the African nations. This is why *Principle Number Two of the NRM Ideology is Pan-Africanism.*

Among the ten strategic bottlenecks that the NRM identified is *Limited Market Access for the African Nations*. This is on account of the fragmented nature of the African markets.

For instance, Uganda has a market of only 45 million people. What is 45 million people in comparison to a country like China which boasts of a market of 1.3 billion people? What about India with a market of 1.2 billion people? The European Union market comes third after China and India with a market of 446 million people. What would be the status of the individual European countries if they were not part of the European Union and remained as small markets? Obviously, they would not be as prosperous and as secure as they are today.

Now that the NRM has awakened Ugandans to realize their potential to produce large quantities of numerous commodities, they will need a huge collective market. As we move towards mass production, we will need to build the capacity for absorption of the greater supply of goods produced by Uganda's industries.

However, economic prosperity alone may not immunize the African people against aggression by bigger powers. As long as we remain small separate states, we remain at the risk of being conquered once again.

This is why we must work for the political integration of Africa to further the efforts of our ancestors who united the many clans of Africa to form Kingdoms and Chiefdoms.

Finally, the NRM Government has continued to keep peace and stability; infrastructure like the roads, schools, hospitals and enough power supply to lower the costs of doing business in Uganda to attract more investment. This is why Uganda has become an attractive investment destination in the world. The necessary catalysts for development have been put in place.

Therefore, our efforts are now stretched towards addressing poverty at the household level. I urge Bunyoro Kingdom to guide our people in the selection of profitable enterprises in the four sectors of commercial agriculture; industries (big or small); services (hotels, transport, professional services, shops, etc.); and ICT (Business Process Outsourcing) and to rightfully utilize the government funds and programs that are targeting poverty eradication.

I wish happy celebrations.

I thank you all.