

# The NDA Manifesto 2004

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## 1.0 President's Foreword

In a democracy every General Election becomes a time of decision and a time of choice. The election in 2004 will face the citizens of Malawi with choices that are as sharp as those made in the 1994 General Election. The election will enable us, citizens of this country, to decide whether we and our children wish to continue living under a United Democratic Front (UDF) rule and, therefore, in the pervasive atmosphere of mismanagement, gross incompetence, and irresponsibility. The ugly consequences of such an environment are now there for everyone to see. When the UDF leadership and its cronies peddle their boast — "*Zinthu Zasintha* (Things Have Changed)", they are quite right; things have indeed changed — for worse! The public

interest is now subordinated to private, personal advantage; many companies have closed; our industrial capacity has dwindled; food insecurity is widespread; unemployment is now at a hideous level; prices of basic goods are skyrocketing; corruption and fraud are rampant; the economy is in a deep crisis; many Malawians now live in a sea of poverty while the leadership of the UDF and its cronies have amassed wealth; and citizens of this country do not feel safe to sleep or live in their homes or to walk on the streets. This is how "things have changed", and in many other ways.

Malawi is now a country in which religious leaders are harassed and places of worship are attacked or destroyed; a culture of intolerance is nurtured and fostered; thugs are used to silence those in the opposition; the entrenchment of institutional pluralism in Malawi is threatened by the UDF leadership's campaign of buying opposition members with a view to weakening the opposition; the application of the rule of law is selective; immorality is on the rise; traditional values and norms are disintegrating; the nation's sense of community is fractured; the basic human rights and freedoms are either allowed or disallowed on the whims of those in power, and are routinely violated; violence perpetrated by individuals within the ruling party is accepted as norm; education and health services are almost in complete ruin; public services are run down, and productivity is very low. Who among us are prepared to continue living under such a government?

The election in 2004 will accord us, the citizens of this country, an opportunity to decide on whether we are prepared to have a change for the better. This manifesto shows why Malawi under a National Democratic Alliance (NDA)-led government will change for the better. We in NDA are committed to ensure that a just and democratic society is entrenched in this country — a society that is predicated upon the fundamental spiritual and ethical values nurtured and sustained by the teachings of God. We strongly believe that the practice of God's will as a way of life and the affirmation of spiritual values by individuals and by society as a whole will provide the bastion against corruption, greed and moral decay.

I am a strong believer that political leaders that profess to be democrats should be willing to subject themselves to public scrutiny, without accusing critics of disloyalty or subversion. During the past ten years, the UDF leadership has demonstrably been eager to

expect blind loyalty from Malawians even when it is wrong and has displayed a propensity for disrespecting differences of views. An NDA government shall not only respect, but also use, differences of views to correct mistakes that often arise from human shortcomings. President Muluzi claims to be a democrat who supports political pluralism. This is totally at variance with his deeds. He has, for example, repeatedly issued warnings at public rallies that he will support only those that support him and the UDF. The consequential effect of such warnings is the increasing number of citizens of this country, known or perceived to be unsupportive of those in power, who have been marginalized during the Muluzi administration. Any democrat would find this to be not only unjust but also counterproductive. This manifesto shows how things in Malawi, under an NDA government, will change for the better.

Much of this manifesto deals with the vital social services that affect the personal lives and happiness of us all, the welfare of our families and the future of our children. The starting point is our belief that Malawians must equip themselves to take charge of their own destiny and should not be made to be dependent on handouts. I grieve to see Malawians, once a proud, hardworking nation that was able to export food grains to neighbouring countries, now being conditioned to be dependent on food handouts. The NDA's plans are aimed at rekindling in individual Malawians a culture of hard work and a self-reliant spirit, both of which have now wilted. The NDA's intention is not to perpetuate the indignity of having to queue up for handouts but to restore the dignity of each and every Malawian to be self-reliant.

I find it painful to witness the hideous increase in the number of Malawians that are now unemployed. This speaks volumes for the bad development policies that have been implemented during the past ten years, and for the lack of vision that has caused the UDF government to grope about confusedly in the dark during the period. As this manifesto shows, what is central among the NDA's objectives is the desire to promote economic development that meets the needs of all the people and not just a few; to create opportunities for all inhabitants in order for them to participate in national development by ensuring equitable distribution of resources; to facilitate the eradication of poverty, inequality and deprivation; to build high standards of care for all who need treatment for illness, good grounding in education, pensions in retirement, and fair chances to get on; to improve social well being; and to empower citizens of this country to participate in decisions that affect them. These are some of the goals Vision 2020 was designed to attain, and yet the Muluzi administration has neglected the need to implement the Vision.

The NDA accepts the fact that the criteria for distributive justice should be evolved not by the consideration of charity but by its positive influence on improving the quality of life of the majority of the citizens of Malawi. However, although the moral and economic imperatives of equity and distributive justice are widely recognised, the number of Malawians living under conditions of abject poverty has increased considerably under UDF rule. And yet since 1994 the UDF government has been harping on poverty alleviation as its central goal. Poverty is now seen everywhere – in individual persons, families, communities, villages, towns and cities. The situation is sickening and unbearable.

At individual level, desperation is written all over the faces of individual persons. One's dignity is lost when one is plunged into a destitute situation of having no food for the day or, at best, just one meal a day. There are now Malawians who cannot feed their families. Indeed there are Malawians who are unable to own chickens, goats or let alone

cattle, all of which are symbols of wealth in villages. There are Malawians who now have recourse to second-hand clothes instead of new ones because of poverty. There are Malawians who now end up living in shacks because they are too poor to buy building materials for the construction of decent houses.

At community level, there are now many households that are unable to access clean water, groceries maize mills, schools, and health centres within easy reach while their own leaders demonstrate their changed circumstances, from a state of poverty they were in before becoming politicians to a state of riches, through conspicuous displays of wealth. At national level, employment opportunities are scarce, access to quality education and health facilities is limited, and prices of basic commodities and farm inputs have skyrocketed and continue to do so, thus compelling Malawians to live miserable lives. Malawians deserve better. Under NDA rule, they can be better. The UDF government has run out of ideas. Now is the opportune time for Malawians to replace it with a caring, people-oriented NDA government.

The UDF government has failed to recognise that poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon, which can be tackled only through a multi-pronged approach, encompassing programmes in all sectors. As is evident from this manifesto, an expression of this multidimensionality shall be measures designed to reactivate economic growth and to give the poor access to a variety of services and facilities, including affordable agricultural inputs, adequate income to meet basic needs such as food and decent shelter, high quality education and health facilities, potable water supply, and affordable transport.

Strategies of the NDA government, designed to reduce poverty, shall take into account the spatial distribution of poverty in Malawi, and this shall necessitate poverty programmes to be tailored to, and targeted at, particular vulnerable population groups and geographical areas. There is no denying that targeted poverty programmes are less costly than the universal ones and are likely to be more cost-effective because of their sharper focus on groups and geographical areas.

This manifesto shows that central among the objectives of an NDA government will be the need to improve the quality of education, health and other social services; to ensure that such quality services are accessible to all Malawians; and to expand the economy in order for it to absorb job-seekers. The manifesto further shows that the expansion of the economy will be achieved by promoting rural industrialisation aimed at reducing dependence on the finite land as a source of rural populace's income, restoring macro-economic stability, and putting in place incentives that shall revive and sustain the manufacturing sector and consequently sustain creation of jobs.

I strongly subscribe to the fact that our success as a nation in this endeavour will depend on the quantity and richness of human intellectual resources as expressed through national capability in various developmental spheres, and on our willingness and capacity to harness all classes and sectors of society to achieve excellence in meeting national development objectives. I do believe that the quality and richness of human intellectual resources come from developing the potential of our people through quality education. Quality education is what the UDF government has failed to provide to our children. This manifesto shows that quality education is what an NDA government will provide to our children. The UDF government has failed to recognise the centrality of quality education in all spheres of economic development.

Given that creation of employment opportunities is achieved through the expansion of the economy, the role of quality education is self-evident. The expansion of the economy cannot be created and maintained in the absence of rich and adequate human intellectual resources. True, as the economy expands, our exports and imports will need to be kept in balance. Like any other responsible government, the NDA government will be ready to act on imports in order to safeguard growth of local industries. However, industries will have to be competitive; herein resides the role of quality education. The seminal importance of quality education in efforts to maintain a competitive edge is amply demonstrated by nations in developed countries.

The UDF government has failed to realise that, in order to stay ahead of their competitors in the global market in this scientific and technological age, the well-developed nations are intensifying and accelerating their efforts to compete in the production of goods and services that are better and cheaper because of the scientific and technological knowledge invested in them. The NDA is well aware of this fact. The NDA is also aware that, in order to create and maintain a competitive edge in the global competition, the developed nations are constantly re-examining their educational systems in regard to their capacities to produce the requisite quality scientific and technological skills; develop an adequate infrastructure and intellectual resource capability to handle technology adaptation, innovation and transfer; and create an environment providing necessary motivation for the retention and continued high quality performance of the developed intellectual resource capability.

An NDA government will, as this manifesto shows, improve the quality of education, re-examine the educational system in Malawi with respect to its capacity to produce the requisite scientific and technological skills, and encourage and support university colleges to be innovative and to patent their findings. Generation of technology by the private sector and injection of modern technology into local activities will be promoted in order for the local industries to become competitive. At the same time we, in the NDA, shall put emphasis on the rule of law and human rights because we recognise the primacy of the underpinnings of democracy and good governance in efforts to sustain socio-economic development. Recognition of this fact is underpinned by our pledge recorded in this manifesto that an NDA government will review and repeal all constitutional amendments effected under the UDF leadership with the aim of benefiting those in power; strengthen constitutional legitimacy and democratic systems based on the principle of separation of executive, legislative and judiciary powers; protect and defend the rights and dignity of all the people; and guarantee equal justice for all.

This manifesto shows that an NDA government will see to it that the legitimate aspirations of Malawians become the guiding post in national political and economic endeavours. It is within the personal power of every man and woman with a vote to guarantee the emergence of a strong and prosperous Malawi whose citizens will enjoy the fruits of their labour in peace and in freedom. This cannot be realised if your vote causes Malawi to have more of the mismanagement, the gross incompetence, and the consequential failures and blunders that will be coming our way if the UDF is left in charge. Perhaps it is pertinent here to remind ourselves about the assurances the UDF standard-bearer has repeatedly made at various public fora.

The UDF presidential candidate, Dr. Bingu wa Mutharika, has stated publicly that, if elected into power, he will continue with the policies of the present leadership — policies

that have plunged us into the abyss of destitution we now find ourselves in. President Bakili Muluzu has indeed made it abundantly clear at the last UDF Convention that, in his capacity as national chairman of the UDF, he will see to it that the country continues to be steered on a path he has mapped out. I do not believe that citizens of this country can afford to vote the UDF back into power and continue to be subjected to the failed UDF policies Bingu wa Mutharika has pledged to continue, nor is any Malawian prepared to have more of the mismanagement, the gross incompetence and the consequential failures and blunders that, as stated above, will continue to come our way if the UDF is left in charge.

The election this year will afford us, the citizens of this country, an opportunity to decide on whether we are prepared to have a change for the better; to have an economy that grows through the provision of jobs, food, housing, quality education and quality health services; to have a peaceful and secure environment in which all people are able to live and work without fear; and to transform Malawi as rapidly as possible into a united, non-racial, non-sexist, non-regionalist, non-tribalist and democratic country based on the principles of human rights, accountability, good governance and transparency.

The NDA is the answer to the legitimate aspirations of all Malawians. Malawi does deserve better. The country deserves to have a fresh and virile leadership with plans on how she can be best put on a path to a sustained equitable socio-economic development under an environment of peace, security and entrenched democracy and good governance. The NDA has such a leadership and plans. The NDA is ready, poised to swing its plans into instant operation, and impatient to apply its plans that will end the chaos and sterility that is the hallmark of the UDF rule. Here is NDA's Manifesto, restless with positive remedies for the problems the UDF government has criminally neglected.

Here is our pledge: the first six months of the NDA government will signal the beginning of a vigorous campaign against corruption and fraud, poverty, food insecurity, low standards of education and health services, the debt burden, low productivity in the public sector, and many other manifestations of mismanagement, irresponsibility and gross incompetence that have been the hallmark of the Muluzi administration. The plans we intend to employ in order to achieve our goals are summarised in this manifesto. I ask now for your confidence so that we can translate the manifesto into action.

**Rt. Hon. B. J. Mpinganjira, MP**  
**PRESIDENT**  
**NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE (NDA)**

## **2.0 AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY**

### ***Adequate Food For All Malawians Throughout The Year***

#### **2.1 Current Situation**

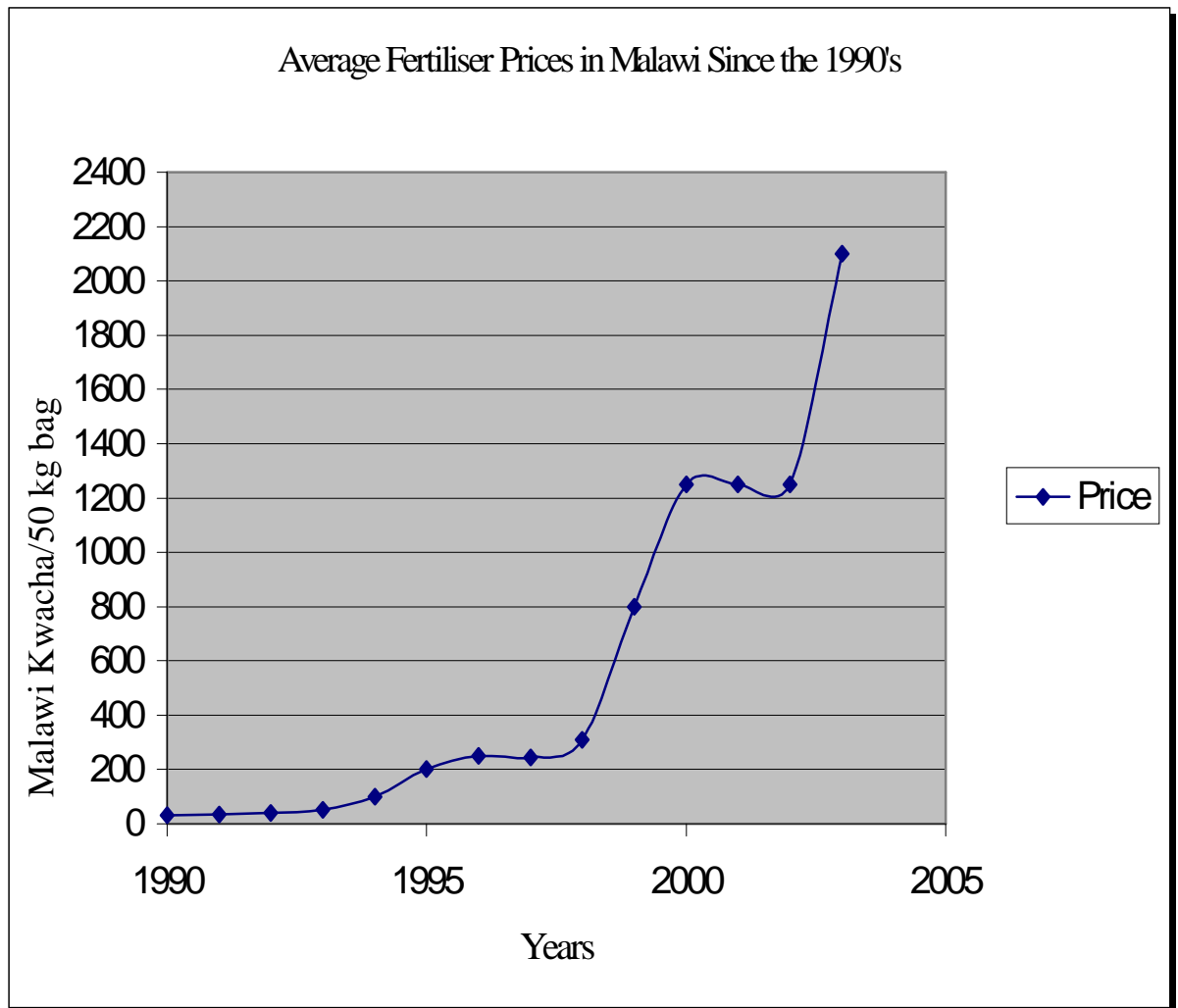
The UDF government has failed to sustain increased per capita food production and to achieve food security. Under the UDF government Malawians have experienced in 2002 a famine that was Malawi's worst ever in living memory. It was worse than that caused by the drought of 1991/92. It was worse even than the 1949 famine. Malawians, once a proud, hardworking nation that was able to export food grains to neighbouring countries, were shown haggard and sickly worldwide in papers and on televisions, either queuing up or waiting for food handouts. Many Malawians tried to avoid starvation by eating maize husks, wild roots or fruits, banana roots, and bush rice (edible grass-seed) but to no avail. Several thousands died.

The UDF government tried to shift blame to donors. The attempt of the UDF to shrink from their responsibility merely underscored the depth of their incompetence and much more. It was an eloquent testimony of their lack of appreciation of the trust the citizens of Malawi reposed in the leadership of the UDF to guarantee their food security. Widespread food shortages are continuing. Citizens of Malawi did not elect donors, but the UDF, into power. The buck, therefore, was and will continue to be squarely in the UDF government's, and not in the donors', corner. The UDF have failed. The NDA is ready to renew the faith of Malawians in the ability of their government to protect them against poverty and hunger.

The majority of Malawians live in the rural areas. Had the earning power of the rural population been enhanced, the impact of the famine would have been minimal. Had the UDF government given adequate support to the most vulnerable when they pushed through the commercialisation of the agricultural sector, the impact of the famine would have been minimal. Had more than 160 000 tonnes of Malawi's strategic grain reserve not been sold off in its entirety, the impact of the famine on the 3.2 million Malawians that were threatened with starvation would have been minimal. Because Malawi was dependent on food imports, Malawians were at the mercy of unscrupulous private traders that were allowed to profiteer by buying maize cheaply and hoarding it until prices rose before



reselling it at obscenely inflated prices to realise exorbitant profits. Had the UDF government prevented private traders from profiteering on the back of the destitute, the impact of the famine would have been minimal.



The farming communities in Malawi are reeling after ten years of increasing poverty. Their capacity to increase food production has been adversely affected by the removal of subsidies on agricultural inputs in an environment of escalating fertiliser prices. In the midst of the food crisis and worsening poverty, the UDF leadership continues to display its lack of concern over the suffering of many Malawians, and tries to misrepresent or distort not only the achievements made by the previous government but also its own achievements. The NDA believes that faith in politics can be nurtured and promoted if politicians do not misrepresent or distort their record of achievements and that of past administrations. The NDA intends to promote this faith by being candid and honest about the last 40 years.

Should there be anything tangible that was done by the UDF during their 10-year tenure of office, the NDA shall not change it. It is where they got things wrong that the NDA will

make necessary changes. The NDA believes that progress and relevance come from building on past strengths and grappling with past weaknesses. The NDA will, therefore, build on the successes achieved during the post-colonial era and shall benefit from the mistakes of the past. Let us see what the UDF government has achieved during the past 10 years.

#### **2.1.1 From 1994 the UDF government:**

- has hitherto failed not only to benefit from past failures and short-term successes but also to flesh out an agricultural development policy worth mentioning here;
- produced in 1995 what was referred to as Agricultural and Livestock Development Strategy and Action Plan (ALDSAP) that achieved nothing but a repetition of a litany of past mistakes;
- failed to recognize that:
  - the effective application of production technologies, either generated locally or imported and adapted to local conditions, is a prerequisite for sustainable increased agricultural development;
  - farmers are businesspersons and that they, like all businesspersons, are ready to invest in the procurement and application of production technologies to produce more when they know that the marginal returns are greater than the marginal costs;
  - what Malawians want are not handouts but the dignity to be self-reliant in meeting the basic needs of their families.

Malawi has been the focus of world attention for reasons most Malawians are not proud of – greed-induced food shortages whose negative impact was accentuated by worsening poverty. Malawi deserves better. Malawians need to make a choice – a choice between continued retrogression under UDF or progress and prosperity. If the latter, then support and vote NDA into power.

#### **2.2 The NDA's priorities**

The NDA recognises the pivotal role played by agriculture in Malawi's economy and social welfare. The NDA knows the root causes of the failures of past and present administrations to guarantee, on a sustainable basis, adequate food for all Malawians throughout the year. The NDA government will take into account:

- the dichotomous nature of the agriculture sector; that is, the fact that there are:
  - high and low potential agricultural areas,
  - capital and labour intensive farmers,
  - large and small-scale farmers,
  - crop and livestock production systems,
  - cash and food crops, and
  - meat and dairy enterprises; and
- the production potential and needs of smallholder farmers in the context of a liberalised economy and a shrinking land resource.



The NDA's priorities in this context will be predicated upon the need to:

- strengthen household food security,
- increase and sustain the production and/or the purchasing power of rural/or urban poor,
- promote better conservation of Malawi's fragile natural resource base,
- support and foster generation of those technologies that are effective in achieving the multiple national objectives of:
  - agricultural growth,
  - balance of payments contribution,
  - employment,
  - income distribution, and
  - conservation of the productive potential of land.

**2.2.1 Increasing and sustaining expanded agricultural production:** The NDA believes that without the use of husbandry practices that are in harmony with nature, sustainable agricultural production cannot be achieved. The NDA will, among other things:

- resuscitate, nurture, promote and maintain a self-reliant, hardworking spirit, which in the past was the hallmark of Malawians, now sadly ebbed under the UDF rule;
- seek out speciality markets for such crops as off-season fruits, vegetables and cut flowers, and diversify Malawi's agricultural production;
- marry the fruits of frontier research in the areas of biotechnology, genetic engineering and informatics with the needs and perception of the ultimate users;
- promote:
  - the continued application of plant genetics and physiology to the development and release of high-yielding and disease resistant crop varieties adapted to various stress conditions;
  - research aimed at establishing maximum economic potentials through the interactions of inputs;
  - research aimed at developing simple methods for processing phosphate rocks for use as phosphate fertiliser;
  - organic agriculture — the integration of arable and pastoral land use in a manner that harnesses natural ecological cycles;
  - use of improved farming practices and efficient utilisation of inputs such as fertilisers, improved crop varieties and water resources;
  - research aimed at establishing the effective post-harvest treatment of agricultural commodities, especially in relation to climatic conditions, and the processing and storage of roots, tubers and fruits;
  - development of sustainable industrial possibilities for agricultural commodities in order to open up new domestic markets for Malawian farm products, generate off-farm jobs, and ensure some prosperity in the rural communities;
- ensure that the ratio of prices for crops to prices for such inputs as improved seed and fertiliser provide profits to the farmers;

- design and establish special credit facilities with affordable conditions aimed at assisting smallholder farmers;
- mount campaigns to encourage private sector involvement in poverty alleviation activities at the grassroots level in recognition of the fact that an economically viable society provides markets for their products;
- provide mutual guarantees as incentives to banks to develop links with small-scale farmers' associations that pool their collateral;
- explore the possibility of officially titling unregistered land and buildings to increase the supply of collateral for small-scale farmers;
- ensure that rural women are active participants in, and beneficiaries of, agricultural and rural development activities, and reduce their workloads;
- improve the condition of rural feeder roads and establish seasonal storage or collection points within the farmers' easy reach in order to encourage them to produce marketable surplus;
- strengthen rural institutions such as farmers' associations, cooperatives and women's groups;

The NDA further believes that as long as soil remains a medium for plant growth, its continued productivity determines sustainable agricultural production. The NDA subscribes to the observation that whereas fertile soils are not always productive, productive soils are always fertile and that high, profitable crop yields are impossible without good soil fertility. Recognition of this fact caused the colonial government to invest in the establishment of well-manned, and well-equipped, soil testing laboratories in order to ensure that:

- categories of indices of soil fertility based on well-calibrated soil tests were established,
- the farmers' use of fertilisers was efficient and economical.

Under the UDF rule, the soil-testing laboratories are now no longer as functional as they used to be. The budget for the procurement of chemicals, laboratory equipment and scientific journals has been reduced drastically. In the laboratories, there is now a paucity of soil scientists trained to PhD degree level. As an agricultural country, Malawi cannot afford such a situation to obtain. With the NDA, Malawi will do better. The NDA will:

- ensure that her asset, the soil, is not mined with respect to its fertility;
- give priority to the execution of research aimed at improving fertiliser use efficiency, especially in the context of cropping systems and integrated nutrient management.
- eliminate the periodic food crises that affect Malawi by promoting and sustaining increased agricultural production.

**2.3 Food Security.** The NDA accepts that food security means ensuring that all members of a society have access to sufficient staple foods throughout the year to enable them lead healthy working lives and to participate in the development of the society in which they live. It recognises the word access in this context to mean:

- not only having available supply of food but also
- the ability of a family to acquire, through either adequate distribution of food or purchasing power, sufficient food to meet its needs.

The NDA ascribes to the recognition of food security as a basic human right that extends to the right to safe food and information about the content of food eaten, and that it is a part of livelihood security at individual, household, community, and national levels. The NDA also recognises that food security, environmental security, and social security are inextricably linked and that they are vital for livelihood and for sustainable socio-economic development. The NDA strongly believes that in any efforts that are geared towards ensuring the maintenance of food security, the national goal is not dependence on food imports but attainment of national self-sufficiency in domestic food production and maintenance of well-managed strategic grain reserve as a buffer stock for difficult periods.

**2.3.1 Household Food Security.** Household food security is generally defined as the ability of households to produce, purchase, or acquire through public or private transfer an adequate amount of food to meet biological requirements (dietary needs) and food preferences at all times for an active and healthy life. During the UDF rule, household food insecurity has continued to be prevalent widely among many Malawians, particularly the smallholders with less than one hectare of land, casual (*ganyu*) labourers, women-headed households, and low-income urban dwellers. Owing to the high prices of agricultural inputs, many of those with less than one hectare of land are unable to use the inputs for their crop production and, as a consequence, obtain very low crop yields. The *ganyu* labourers and low-income urban dwellers are unable to access food because of high prices and most households are consequently food insecure. Limited off-farm employment opportunities and low levels of remuneration contribute to household food insecurity. Losses of food grains in storage also contribute to household insecurity. To the NDA, this is unacceptable.

### **2.3.2 National Food Security**

The NDA recognises that the attainment of self-sufficiency in food production does not guarantee food security at the household level, but that household food security does guarantee national food security. The latter may be taken to mean the physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food by all people to meet their dietary needs and food preferences at all times for an active and healthy life. A country that is able to produce, secure and maintain adequate levels of food supply to meet demand throughout the year, through local production of the food and food imports, is said to have attained national food security. The NDA recognises the following as the key conditions for national secure food systems:

- reliable national capacity to produce and store food, which Malawi, under the UDF rule, has failed to maintain;
- equity in access to food and to productive resources for all the people in the society as determined by entitlement; that is, the ability to buy, exchange, or acquire food and gain access to, or control of, productive resources; a goal which the UDF government has failed to attain;
- sufficiency in food quantity or ability to cope with insufficiency; recently famine is a manifestation of the UDF government's abysmal failure;
- nutritional security at the household level; that is, adequate protein, energy, micronutrients, and safe food for all household members; Malawians under the UDF rule have failed to achieve this goal; and

- low risk and vulnerability to economic and ecological fluctuations; this has not been the case under the UDF government.

### **2.3.3 NDA's Commitment.**

The overall objective of NDA's Food Security Programme shall be not only to increase sustained agricultural production in order to attain Malawi's self-sufficiency in her basic food needs at the household, community and national levels but also to assure equity in access to productive resources and to food for all Malawians. The specific objectives of the programme shall be to:

- satisfy the basic food needs of all citizens of Malawi;
- improve and sustain sufficient food supplies to the people of Malawi irrespective of their specific economic situation or position in society;
- attain national self-sufficiency in food supply in order to reduce dependence on external sources of food supply;
- eliminate the periodic food crises that affect Malawi;
- recognise the fact that in the developed countries, farmers are heavily subsidised to produce and export food and to assist Malawian farmers likewise.

The centrality of the strategies of the NDA-government shall be to ensure that never again should citizens of Malawi suffer from food insecurity. This shall entail improving and maintaining the ability of all citizens of Malawi to buy, exchange, produce or acquire food and gain access to, or control of, productive resources. This will be underpinned by the NDA's efforts to increase and sustain food availability by:

- enhancing and sustaining domestic food production;
- attaining national self-sufficiency in food supply in order to reduce dependence on external sources of food supply;
- reducing post-harvest losses,
- expanding grain storage, and
- sustaining development of non-agricultural employment opportunities in order to ensure that Malawians have physical and economic access to sufficient food.

The major elements of this strategy shall be to:

- mobilise and strengthen initiatives and resources for reversing the spiral of food insecurity;
- reinforce national food production capacity;
- promote the development of sustainable industrial possibilities for agricultural commodities in order to open up new domestic markets for Malawian farm products, generate off-farm jobs, and ensure some prosperity in the rural communities;
- diversify agricultural production;
- encourage and support research focusing on the technical, economic, social and environmental impacts of small, medium and large irrigation schemes;

- develop and maintain national machineries and institutions for agricultural and technological research and development;
- encourage and support endogenous development or adaptation of technologies and practices that increase and sustain agricultural production;
- facilitate reduction of prices of agricultural inputs;
- design and establish special credit facilities with affordable conditions aimed at assisting smallholder farmers;
- address the underlying causes of default rates on loans received;
- integrate the rural poor in the market economy and ensure that they are provided better access to input and output markets;
- improve the condition of rural feeder roads and establish seasonal storage or collection points within the farmers' easy reach in order to encourage them to produce marketable surplus;
- ensure that rural women are active participants in, and beneficiaries of, agricultural and rural development activities, and reduce their workloads.

**2.4 Irrigated Agriculture.** The NDA recognises irrigation as one of the major agricultural inputs that contribute to increased agricultural production. The NDA further recognises that water requirements and time of maximum demand vary with different crops and that for irrigation measures to be economic to the farmer, the water so supplied to the soil must be utilised efficiently by the irrigated crop. Under the UDF rule, attempts to promote irrigated farming are not complemented with agronomic research to establish efficient and sustainable use of irrigation in crop production.

**2.4.1 NDA's Commitment.** With the NDA, Malawi will do better. The NDA will, among other things:

- ensure that the 200 000 hectares estimated to be potentially irrigable in Malawi are increasingly utilised for irrigated agriculture; currently very insignificant proportion of this land area is under formal irrigation;
- widen the existing information about the country's water resources by undertaking surveys nationwide in those areas far from rivers and other water bodies to:
  - delineate aquifer boundaries and to determine other characteristics such as transmissivities, saturated thickness, storage capacity and quality and temperature of groundwater,
  - investigate the chemical, physical and biological processes affecting groundwater,
  - develop monitoring systems and related mathematical models of groundwater systems, which shall:
    - include both quantity and quality factors and
    - cover single as well as conjunctive use of ground water;
- ensure that measures are put in place to prevent silt load in rivers;
- put in place incentives such as credit packages aimed at promoting the development of irrigated agriculture;
- take into account:
  - the quality of water to avoid salinity,

- how irrigable a given soil is to avoid its degradation,
- the extent to which soils curtail water potential,
- how cost-effective selected irrigation systems are;
- how the abstraction of the water is likely to impact on:
  - fish population and its migration,
  - natural ecosystems such as wetlands/marshland if it is undertaken in close proximity to the ecosystems and the likely loss of grazing land,
  - water flow relative, for instance, to the amount of hydropower required to be generated,

when promoting large-scale exploitation of Malawi's irrigation potential,

- support research focusing on the technical, economic, social and environmental impacts of small, medium and large irrigation schemes;
- promote sustainable exploitation of shallow groundwater (treeless wetlands) or, as locally termed, *dambos* for micro-irrigation, using proper safeguards;
- establish a water resources data bank for collection, computerisation and speedy retrieval of all information relevant to the water sector needs;
- facilitate identification of markets for various commodities whose production shall be promoted.

## 2.5 Livestock

### 2.5.1 Current Situation

Under the UDF rule, the development of livestock sub-sector, particularly cattle, has declined with time. At the turn of the twenty-first century, Malawi's livestock populations were estimated at 619 000 cattle, 1 600 000 goats, 102 000 sheep, 313 000 pigs and 10 366 000 chickens, and it was known that the sub-sector contributed only about 7 per cent to total GDP and about 12 per cent of the total value of agricultural production. The sub-sector can and must do better than this. During the UDF rule:

- available improved breeds were inadequate,
- farmers lost their livestock due to theft,
- diseases and parasites caused deaths of livestock,
- livestock markets in the rural areas were frequently non-functional or closed,
- liberalisation of markets was effected without first putting in place efficient support services such as transport systems and rural electrification,
- the cost of feeds were so high that livestock produced locally was much more expensive than the imported one,
- interest rates of credit continued to be high.

**2.5.2 The NDA's Commitment:** When voted into power, the NDA will promote the development of the livestock sub-sector. Specifically the NDA will:

- promote the development of markets and marketing of livestock and products,
- ensure that livestock farmers access loans for their livestock production,
- promote formation of functional farmers' organisations and assist them to establish and manage rural abattoirs, egg grading machines, poultry slaughter equipment, mini dairies, and chilling and storage facilities,



- encourage systematic milk collection system from the farm gate to the market, utilising mobile freezer and pasteurising facilities,
- import high-yielding milk cattle suitable for local climatic conditions for distribution to livestock farmers in the rural area in phases in order to enhance the much needed nutritional value to the rural people,
- promote the breeding of high quality stock through such techniques as artificial insemination and embryo transplant,
- encourage formation of functional Dairy Associations in order to increase milk production and quality control ,
- assist farmers improve the quality and production of goats, chickens, and other farm animals through the artificial insemination, embryo transplants, low cost feeding, and good farming methods,
- strengthen disease control measures in order to ensure that Malawi is free from major livestock diseases; the dip tank services will be re-introduced,
- promote increased livestock production for local and external markets.

## 2.6 Fisheries

During the UDF rule, Malawi's fish species have continued to be on the decline mainly due to over-fishing, the presence of water hyacinth and destruction of breeding habitats. And yet fish species supply about 70 per cent of protein in Malawi.

### 2.6.1 The commitment of the NDA. The NDA is committed to:

- create an enabling environment for:
  - sustained exploitation of such under-utilised fish as may be identified,
  - aquaculture development as a means of raising rural farm incomes and increasing the supply of fresh fish in rural areas,
  - the rehabilitation of lake salmon (*Opsaridium microleois*), locally known as *mpasa*, that has dwindled to almost extinction,
  - the dissemination of technologies for sustainable exploitation of the national fish resource.
- improve the fisheries training and research centres in order to ensure continued generation of new technologies, tools, and techniques, and to continue upgrading skills of local people,
- introduce fish extension service, replicate MADELCO in all the three regions to make fish readily available and affordable to all Malawians and for export.

## 3.0 EDUCATION

### *A Drive Towards Quality Education For All*

**3.1 Current Situation:** The people are our greatest natural asset. Our success as a nation will depend on the quantity and richness of human intellectual resources as expressed through national capability in various developmental spheres, and on our willingness and capacity to harness all classes and sectors of society to achieve excellence in meeting national development objectives. But the quality and richness of human intellectual

resources come from developing the potential of our people through quality education. Quality education is what the UDF government has failed abysmally to provide to our children. It is one of NDA's main priorities.

Malawi's education was until a decade ago the envy of many in this region. Now it is no longer the case. True, the free primary education (FPE) has led to growth in enrolments. However, the FPE has led to:

- the improvement in access to primary education being achieved at the expense of quality; primary school leavers demonstrably fail to reach expected standards in literacy and numeracy and yet the three 'r's are the essential building blocks of all learning;
- a proliferation of under-tree classes being attended by pupils some of whom have lost their lives due to falling trees, thus creating an environment that is not conducive to learning.

The type of education offered under the FPE programme is not relevant to those who are unable to continue beyond the primary school level. This raises questions about the FPE's relevance to poverty alleviation. Our secondary schools used to be well equipped in the past. They used to have well equipped libraries and science laboratories. This is no longer the case now. Most of the secondary schools, for instance, have no biology, chemistry or physics laboratories, and yet it is universally recognised that any nation that does not harness genetic technologies (information technologies, biotechnology and new materials) cannot hope to create a competitive advantage in the global market. Because our secondary schools are poorly funded, the quality of education offered is of low standard and today's secondary school leaver is, as a result, an epitome of the rot of the national educational system.

Under the UDF government, the opening of institutions of higher learning is irregular and unpredictable. University students are often left in suspense, not knowing when a new term will start. The funding of university teaching and research has also decreased considerably under the UDF. The tertiary education now has increasingly become the domain of the country's political and economic elite. There is now a very discriminatory practice of student admission. Fees have been hiked way above the financial capacity of the majority of Malawians, thus denying many of our bright students from poor families access to university education. The Student Loans Scheme does not reflect a fair repayment scheme that is linked to salaries in later life, nor is there an assurance that employment opportunities will be available to recipients of the loans. Administration of the Malawi Scholarship Program is highly politicised as evidenced by its being used increasingly for educating the ruling elite and for rewarding political patronage.

**3.2 The NDA's Priority:** One of NDA's priorities is to reverse the decline in the quality of education in Malawi by raising the quality of teaching in our schools, colleges, universities and vocational centres, and ensuring that quality education and training are accessible to all citizens wherever they live in this country.

**3.2.1 Key Priorities:** The key priorities are to:

- make the general public appreciate that good education is the birthright of every child,

- increase the number and quality of teachers training colleges,
- increase funding for books and equipment in schools and university colleges,
- ensure that church schools retain their distinctive religious ethos,
- return some schools to their mission proprietors,
- repair and maintain the dilapidated buildings, and
- avail chances to all adults to improve their skills and get better qualifications.

**3.3 Making the best start:** The NDA recognises that early years education is the essential building block for higher standards and achievement later on, that children are not all of the same ability and that they do not learn at the same speed. To maximise progress for the benefit of high-fliers and slower learners alike, there is need for 'setting' children in classes, focussing on levelling up and not levelling down.

The NDA will:

- nurture and foster an increase in the number of children exposed to quality nursery education;
- build more schools to increase education facilities and to ensure that pupils do not travel long distances to go to school;
- review the education system and national curriculum to ensure that it best serves the learning needs of all our children and not necessarily as a tool for just passing examinations;
- introduce such skills subjects as mechanics, carpentry, and building;
- re-examine the merits and demerits of the recent revision of the religious studies curriculum that brought about the removal of Bible Knowledge as a subject and arrive at a decision that is appropriate and democratic;
- recognise the valuable service performed by teachers, hence introduce an enhanced scheme for salaries, incentives and benefits in consonance with the onerous teaching profession;
- upgrade and increase teacher training colleges to build capacity to train teachers;
- undertake a serious program to rehabilitate schools that have been carelessly ignored and, in partnership with the local communities, sweep away under-tree classes and construct decent school structures;
- revamp the Teaching Service Commission to improve its effectiveness and efficiency in handling the recruitment, transfers and promotions of teachers;
- ensure that only those teachers that are qualified to teach at a particular level are recruited to teach at that level;
- raise the standard of teacher training for all levels of schools and increase the number of trained teachers to meet current demand;
- introduce technical and vocational schools in all the districts of the country to empower the youth with skills in a vast range of areas such as agriculture, engineering, carpentry, metalwork, technical drawing, commerce and others;
- equip all students with the technical expertise and knowledge in computing and information technology to face the challenges of the information age;
- encourage a reading culture in schools by establishing well-equipped libraries.

### **3.4 Increasing Access to Quality and Relevant Education:**

#### **3.4.1 Primary and Junior Certificate of Education** – The NDA will:

- maintain free primary education but ensure availability of adequate teaching materials and requisite well-qualified teachers;
- remove the Junior Certificate of Education as it is proving to be of no use and a liability to the Ministry of Education, Malawi Examination Board, and the nation.

#### **3.4.2** The NDA will

- allocate the education budget in a fair and equitable manner to ensure that all the three levels, namely primary, secondary, and tertiary levels progress well;
- ensure that there are adequate teaching materials, books plus other school materials including laboratory equipment and computers in schools;
- encourage local publication of teaching and learning materials;
- encourage a reading culture in and outside schools by opening more libraries;
- reduce gender disparity in primary, secondary and tertiary education;
- improve the quality of education, strengthen linkages between education and employment;
- introduce strict disciplinary measures in schools and push for the necessary legislation that will guide the Ministry of Education and school authorities to contain the situation of indiscipline in schools;
- establish centres for artisan and apprenticeship training throughout the country to provide employable skills especially for primary school dropouts who fail to gain admission into secondary schools;
- systematically increase the number of institutions of higher learning, so that more qualified students have access to higher education at minimum cost;
- introduce computer sciences to teachers, technical and university college students;
- ensure that there is an expansion in the teaching of foreign languages, especially English, French, and Portuguese.

#### **3.4.5 Tertiary Education**, the NDA will:

- abolish university office to allow constituent colleges to be autonomous;
- create new opportunities for university students to enhance their studies by acquiring knowledge and experience with industry and commerce;
- ensure adequate and regular funding of university teaching and research, and safeguard academic freedom and standards;
- introduce incentives to encourage companies and other employers to invest in education and training of their staff;
- encourage university colleges to be more innovative and to patent their discoveries;
- encourage university colleges to establish business centres through which they can generate income;
- enhance national capacity in the area of science and technology.

### **3.5 A new partnership for schools:** The NDA will

- forge new partnership with parents and the community to ensure that teachers in government schools are provided with good accommodation;
- encourage private entrepreneurs and master craftsmen to run artisan and apprenticeship centres to supplement government's own efforts;
- closely work with industry in streamlining tertiary education to meet needs of the local labour market;
- encourage the involvement of the school community, that is, parents, teachers, old students and the local authority, in the management of secondary schools. While the government will be responsible for providing basic tuition, the school management boards will be responsible for setting boarding fees, raising funds, and providing additional services;
- nurture and promote continued participation of religious organisations and others in the private sector in the establishment and management of primary, secondary and tertiary education within an overall national education framework;
- promote and support the founding of more private schools with the required high standards;
- enforce minimum standards for all private schools to ensure that quality education is maintained.

### **3.6 Extending life-long learning:** The NDA will:

- provide an educational television channel to complement formal education and to encourage life-long continuing education, with the help of public and private educational institutions;
- put in place facilities for furthering adult literacy and enable those denied access to formal education to acquire some education;
- promote flexible learning through the creation of a higher standard credit-based system for all post-primary school courses, including the current A-levels and degree courses;
- foster and support vocational and technical training in the informal sector and promote involvement of the community;
- enhance adult education and skill development programmes targeting women and the poorest segment of the population, including literacy programmes in local languages;
- actively promote after-office-hours learning opportunities at secondary and tertiary levels;
- ensure that skills gained through informal means are nationally recognised and that their upgrading is formally supported;
- activate and formalise the National Council for Skills Development and Training (NCSDT) and ensure that it is entrusted with the statutory function of being the principal policy planning and review authority.

## **4.0 HEALTH**

### ***Delivering Quality Health Care To All***

#### **4.1 Current Situation**

In their Pastoral Letter that was read in all Catholic Churches on 8 March 1992, Malawi's Catholic Bishops have stated that one "cannot claim to uphold the principle of the sanctity of life if provision has not been made for even minimal health care for every person." The NDA ascribes to this observation. There is no denying that the UDF government has failed to provide for a "minimum health care for every person" in Malawi. The overcrowding and lack of personnel the bishops decried in 1992 still persist. Quality health care is available only for cabinet ministers, UDF regional governors or senior government officials. When a cabinet minister or a senior UDF official is ill, he or she is flown out of the country to South Africa or Europe in search for quality health service. When the majority of Malawians are sick, they go to overcrowded health centres where they often fail to be provided with essential drugs such as aspirin or paracetamol. People now die from curable diseases due to lack of medicines and basic medical facilities. Most of the health workers who now do nothing but merely observe patients dying because of lack of drugs and basic health facilities are now demoralised and demotivated. The very poor Malawians are not able to receive medical treatment if they cannot afford to buy a health passbook.

Malawi has only four central hospitals that are severely understaffed and usually run short of essential drugs and equipment. Health services and facilities are inadequate and in a state of decline. And yet the burden of diseases, including malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, are enormous. The Malawi Demographic Health Survey for the 1986-1992 period showed that the maternal mortality rate during this period was 620 maternal deaths per 100 000 live births. However, Malawi Demographic Health Survey conducted for the 1994-2000 period showed that the rate increased to 1 120 maternal deaths per 100 000 live births, which is unacceptable. The NDA upholds the principle of the sanctity of life, and will therefore set, and strive towards realising, goals for the provision of quality health care to all Malawians and not just the few. Malawi with NDA will do better.

#### **4.2 The NDA's Commitment.**

**4.2.1 General.** The NDA recognises the impact that poverty, poor housing, and a polluted environment have on health. An NDA government will reorganise the ministry of health to ensure that the ministry performs effectively its functions of formulating policy, strategic planning, regulating health standards for all operators, be they public or private, and appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that the health system is effectively coordinated with private and traditional operators. The NDA government, in close collaboration with all health-care providers, will:

- improve pre- and post-natal care facilities, nutrition education, and immunisation coverage against the major childhood diseases;



- increase access to reproductive health services for all individuals of appropriate ages;
- improve district health services by expanding training programmes for primary care providers, building district level management capacity, establishing a Disease Control Unit and a reference laboratory, and increasing the participation of women and grassroots organisations in community-level health services;
- support the Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response Strategy that is currently implemented by the World Health Organisation;
- increase the number of safe water supply points and strengthen the capacity of communities to maintain water facilities, improve environmental health, particularly in densely populated urban areas, by providing more waste disposal and sanitation facilities;



- arrest the inordinate rate of brain drain by ensuring that:
  - the terms of service and the remuneration packages of medical doctors, nurses and other health-care workers are reviewed, improved upon and reflected in a career structure for medical doctors, taking into account the length of training they undergo to qualify as medical doctors and nurses, the health-hazard nature of their job, and the duties and responsibilities placed upon them;
  - the complement and grades of posts in the health service for the cadre of health staff are commensurate with their training and the duties and responsibilities placed upon them;
- expand the capacity of our College of Medicine in order to increase the output of medical doctors;
- rehabilitate the training institutions for nurses and provide them with better equipment and well qualified teaching staff in order to improve the standards of training offered to the nurses;

- increase in real terms budgetary allocation to the health sector and ensure that the budgetary allocations are sufficient, regular and predictable;
- review the drug procurement and supply system to ensure:
  - availability of drugs in all hospitals and clinics at all times,
  - accountability at all levels of the supply chain by ensuring that the system is not prone to loss of drugs through pilferage;
- increase budgetary support for Christian Hospitals Association of Malawi;
- essential research on health services is better organised and funded, so that the results of such research are put to use;
- improve primary health care education to prevent occurrence of diseases;
- recognise the contributions made by traditional health care and integrate it into the modern health system;
- build more hospitals and health centres in order to improve access to health services so that people do not travel long distances to receive medical care;
- improve the Zomba Sanatorium and have it well-equipped so that quality health care is provided to patients, and explore the possibility of improving, or establishing additional, sanatoria in the central region and/or northern region;
- strengthen linkages to Medical Aid Schemes;
- encourage city or district assemblies to:
  - build their own medical infrastructures that can be rented to medical practitioners;
  - establish/or expand health services for their residents.

Specifically, an NDA government shall regard the following as some of the areas that warrant urgent attention.

#### **4.2.2 Battle Against HIV/AIDS**

Since a case of AIDS was first reported in 1985, the number of Malawians known to have been infected with HIV has increased so rapidly that Malawi is now in the league of the world's 15 poorest countries with the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rate. Available information shows that by the year 2003:

- about 641,000 citizens of Malawi had died from AIDS,
- approximately 900,000 Malawians were infected with HIV,

and

- that of the 110,000 citizens of Malawi newly infected with HIV in the year 2003, almost 87,000 died from HIV/AIDS-related complications in the year, thus contributing to Malawi's population of 840,000 orphans, 45 per cent (378,000) of whom are victims of the AIDS pandemic.

Available data further show that almost 23 per cent and 12.4 per cent of adults living, respectively, in urban and rural areas were HIV-positive, and that those infected with AIDS were approximately 760,000 adults, 58 per cent (440,000) of whom were women, and 14.4 per cent of the population aged 15-49. The analysis by gender shows that the

females most infected by HIV-related diseases were those in the age group 15-29 and that the males reported to have AIDS were those aged 35 or older. By 2003:

- patients suffering from HIV-related complications occupied more than 50 per cent of hospital beds,
- approximately 75 per cent of tuberculosis (TB) patients were HIV-positive,
- about 75 per cent of the reported AIDS cases were found among adults between the ages of 20 and 40, which is, economically, the most productive segment of the Malawi population, and
- there were 170,000 people that were in need of antiretroviral therapy,

The NDA views the HIV/AIDS epidemic with deep concern, and regards it as a tragedy that threatens the socio-economic development and, therefore, security of Malawi. An NDA government shall therefore create a political environment that will be conducive to ensuring that:

- the spread of HIV infection is prevented,
- the impact of HIV/AIDS on the fabric and socio-economic development of the Malawi nation is mitigated.

It is in this context that an NDA government shall ensure that, among other things:

- it works closely in partnership with traditional and religious leaders in its efforts to:
  - sensitise Malawians to risks that attend circumcision, ear piercing and tattooing and the need for such practices to be done safely in order to prevent HIV infections,
  - promote and encourage monogamous marriages and fidelity,
  - discourage traditional healers from making baseless claims about AIDS cures, and religious leaders from making unfounded claims of miracle HIV/AIDS cures,
- skilled personnel and adequate facilities for HIV diagnostic testing are available in all health services institutions,
- a campaign aimed at encouraging Malawians to go for voluntary HIV counselling and testing is intensified,
- people living with HIV/AIDS are encouraged to disclose their HIV serostatus to their sexual partners,
- both the provision and delivery of prevention, treatment, care and support services are significantly improved,

- all stakeholders, particularly girls, women, those living with HIV/AIDS, and the vulnerable groups effectively participate in the formulation of HIV/AIDS-related policies and in the design, implementation and evaluation of programmes aimed at combating the epidemic,
- HIV/AIDS is mainstreamed into all sectoral policies, plans and programmes of work,
- sector-specific HIV/AIDS policies are formulated and their implementation is effectively carried out, and is well coordinated,
- both the involvement of the public sector in HIV/AIDS activities and the provision of voluntary services are encouraged and maintained,
- .employment in Malawi shall not be predicated upon results of HIV testing,
- those living with HIV continue working in their employment unless they are medically incapable to do so,
- terminations of employment based on reasons of incapacity are effected in compliance with laws in force,

It is in the foregoing context that an NDA government shall:

- intensify health education activities in order to improve information dissemination on HIV/AIDS, family planning, disease control and reproductive health;
- strengthen preventive measures to reduce the incidence of infectious and parasitic diseases, including HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), malaria, tuberculosis, and polio;
- invest in the training of health HIV/AIDS workers, the creation of counselling networks, the proper treatment of sexually transmitted diseases, and an expansion of HIV testing programme;
- make retroviral drugs available to all, including those who cannot afford them and explore the feasibility of producing such drugs locally;
- ensure that all orphans, including those who lost their parents because of the HIV/AIDS epidemic are well taken care of;
- intensify civic education against discrimination and marginalisation of HIV/AIDS patients.

**4.2.3 Preventing diseases and promoting good public health:** Because the NDA upholds the principle of the sanctity of life, an NDA government will foster a major public health and education campaign to be conducted on disease prevention and public health, focusing on key areas, including:

- the setting of a minimum platform of health rights, namely:
  - equity in access to services,

- child rights to nutrition and health services,
- patients rights to information,
- privacy and humane care,
- reduction of the number of people that are malnourished,
- increasing access to safe water supply and sanitation in all parts of the country, more so in the rural areas,
- emergency medical care,
- healthy living and working environment,
- disabled peoples' rights, respect and equity,
- all of which will be enshrined in statute books;
- review of the legal framework for public health and health care, with a comprehensive Public Health Act providing for core public health standards and mechanisms for their enforcement across all economic and social sectors within the communities.

## **5.0 ECONOMY**

### ***Creating Opportunities For Prosperity***

#### **5.1 Current Situation**

Under globalisation, Malawi faces both opportunities and challenges, and yet the country's economic performance has since 1994 remained unsatisfactory. The citizens of Malawi have witnessed with dismay as indicators have kept worsening inexorably. Under the UDF rule, our level of indebtedness has increased to K55 billion and interest rates soared to 46 per cent per annum by the end of 2003, fuelling high inflation. Unbridled over-expenditure coupled by a bloated cabinet has been the hallmark of the UDF government. During the past three years, per capita growth has been less than 1 per cent per annum with private savings/investment amounting to only 4 per cent of GDP.

Malawi's agriculture has suffered from stagnation in yields, low profitability and bad policies, resulting in a decreased per capita food production. Industrial infrastructure has decayed, thus causing Malawi to become increasingly an importer of not only high technology-content products (manufactured goods) but also low technology-content agricultural products (food grains). While the prices in the international market of primary goods have been fluctuating widely and in some cases dropping considerably, the prices of manufactured goods have been increasing steadily, thus causing the primary commodity trade dependent Malawi to find herself in deep trouble with respect to balance of payments.

Overall economic growth per annum remained below the 6 per cent threshold for poverty reduction. Our per capita income has slumped, and yet there are a few Malawians that have amassed fortunes since 1994 while the majority of their compatriots have been suffering from the burden of poverty. According to the 1998 integrated household survey, 65.3 per cent of Malawi's population was poor and 28.7 per cent of the population were living in extreme poverty. Despite a series of adjustment programmes, Malawi remains one of the poorest countries in the World with a per capita GDP of US\$ 182 compared to Malawi's neighbours namely: Mozambique US\$230, Tanzania US\$270 and Zambia US\$310. What this reflects is

clear to all. The UDF government's fundamental failure to tackle the underlying causes of Malawi's economic ills. The government has failed to:

- build on the well-known attributes or qualities of Malawians – qualities of hard work, inventiveness and creativity;
- invest in education and skills, and in the application of new technologies to national development;
- raise per capita productivity;
- create opportunities for Malawians to find jobs, start new businesses or become self-employed;
- create an environment that is conducive to the expansion of Malawi's industrial base; instead the policies of the UDF government have led to closures of many companies and to insignificant attraction of new companies;
- to establish and maintain a lean and competent cabinet.

Malawi deserves better. The NDA leadership is clear-headed about the country's past and present and has the political will to use past and present mistakes for a better future. The NDA will therefore be better for Malawi. What is central among the NDA's objectives is the desire to improve living standards for the many Malawians and not just for the privileged few. The NDA recognises economic stability as the essential platform for sustained growth and that, in a global economy, the route to growth is not inflation but stability.

## **5.2 The NDA's Priorities**

One of the NDA's priorities will be to restore macro-economic stability, revive the declining manufacturing sector to create jobs, and promote rural industrialisation in order to bring wealth to the rural populace. The NDA government will end the years of economic and social mismanagement, gross incompetence and corruption, all of which have led to:

- economic decline,
- the destitution of ordinary Malawians,
- rising inflation and
- punitive interest rates.

### **5.2.1 Key Priorities:** Key priorities are to:

- ensure that any borrowing, be it local or foreign, is obtained not to finance recurrent spending, devaluation or unbudgeted expenditures but to enhance productivity and to create wealth;
- increase the ability of the economy to absorb new job-seekers in both the formal and the less formal sectors;
- raise and sustain the rate of growth by strengthening our wealth-creating base through nurturing and sustaining increased investment in industry, skills, infrastructure and new technologies;



- integrate into the world economy utilising the growing home base in a manner that sustains a viable and efficient domestic manufacturing capacity, and increases the country's potential to export manufactured products;
- cut wasteful spending that is rampant under the UDF government ;
- work within parliament-approved departmental ceilings for spending, and resist unreasonable demands on the public purse;
- institute expenditure control mechanisms with a view to curbing government over-expenditure, which is the hallmark of the current UDF administration;
- ensure that parastatal organisations including district and city assemblies operate efficiently and economically;
- put in place realistic legal and economic infrastructure to ensure that privatisation of the state sector benefits Malawians;
- ensure that board members of parastatal organisations are appointed on merit based on experience as well as managerial and professional competence;

### **5.3 Investing in small- and medium-enterprises**

The NDA recognises small- and medium-sized businesses and self-employment as the engine of a modern dynamic economy and a vital source of new jobs and growth. The NDA will:

- support small- and medium-sized businesses by encouraging the banks to develop new sources of private finance, including equity finance and mutual guarantee schemes;
- encourage and promote creativity of small, local enterprises and organisations working at the grassroots;
- create an enabling environment that shall serve to foster private sector dynamism in Malawi and make it strong in the long-term development effort;
- encourage the establishment of more financial institutions including insurance and pension funds in the finance services and banking sector to create more competitive facilities for both existing and aspiring entrepreneurs;
- encourage domestic savings through financial institutions in order to strengthen financial resources for entrepreneurs;
- grant such business-supporting institutions as MIPA, MEPC, SEDOM and DEMATT autonomy to operate purely on commercial and professional basis without political manipulation;
- review and strengthen the business-supporting institutions to support small-scale entrepreneurs who may have viable business ideas but lack collateral to support their applications at the traditional banks;
- empower the business-supporting institutions, among other things, with the responsibility of:
  - introducing business development programs to assist small-scale entrepreneurs with funding, equipment and marketing;
  - developing effective links between small/medium scale entrepreneurs in the villages and big producers/large scale distributors;
  - inaugurating programmes of action free of politics to uplift those who labour to make ends meet out of basic living; this will ensure that all

citizens, especially the poor, will be able to reap the benefits of the growing economy;

- create a credit guarantee facility for those wishing to invest in highly beneficial enterprises but need loan security to secure funds from banks;
- create an environment that is conducive for foreign investment by removing disincentives to investment, including bureaucracy, high taxes, security problems, poor lending policies and inappropriate levies, and introducing more attractive incentives;
- review the objectives and functions of Malawi Development Corporation (MDC) and rigorously and systematically support privatisation of maturing holdings as opposed to the current piecemeal spinning-off of holdings, which is haphazard and normally prompted by loss making or selfish interests.

**5.4 Broad-based development.** The UDF government has since 1994 employed inappropriate development policies that have accentuated income distribution inequalities. The NDA aims to achieve broad-based and sustainable economic development in Malawi. The NDA hopes to achieve this by enlarging people's choices that will enable them to live long, healthy and creative lives. The NDA aims to promote economic development that meets the needs of all the people and not just a few; create opportunities for all inhabitants to participate in development by ensuring equitable distribution of resources; facilitate the eradication of poverty, inequality and deprivation; improve social well being; and empower people to participate in decisions that affect them. The NDA Government will, therefore:

- enhance the psycho-social, economic and physical well-being of all citizens of Malawi, with special emphasis on those financially and otherwise disadvantaged;
- ensure equitable distribution of resources such as land, skills capital, and technology;
- decentralise economic activities to districts that will be responsible for creating district economies, promoting industry, agriculture, trade and tourism thereby creating jobs. The district assemblies will be responsible for:
  - promoting district development;
  - introducing district fairs with urban markets and the rest of the country;
  - district infrastructure such as transport, telecommunications and electricity so that local people are empowered to make decisions relating to their economy, culture, and development schemes;
  - facilitating partnership with NGOs unhampered by any unfair restrictions;
  - building capacities at community levels; for example through training and research programmes;
  - promoting a hard work, productive culture and not a begging culture or handout syndrome; and
  - creating an environment conducive to both local and foreign investment.
- recruit experienced, professional managers to district assemblies that will be responsible for the efficient management of the district assemblies; and

- encourage competition amongst district assemblies in order to promote efficiency.

**5.5 Tax Fraud.** Just as we owe it to the Malawi Revenue Authority it should be incumbent upon everyone to help crack down on dishonesty in the declaration of taxable income earned and in the revenue collection system. We will, therefore, take immediate action against fraud of all kinds as that deprives government from realising resources for development.

**5.6 Dealing With the Debt Burden.** The NDA government will initiate negotiations to reschedule external debt, seek debt forgiveness and swap domestic debt for external debt. Swapping domestic for longer-term external debt will give the economy more breathing space and release resources tied into debt servicing for development. The NDA Government will always ensure speedy and timely payment of debts owed to parastatal organisations to enable them operate efficiently and effectively. No government department will be allowed to accumulate debt with these institutions, which is currently in millions accumulated under the UDF administration. The NDA government will make it a point that current debts owed to parastatal institutions are paid without any delay. The government will also ensure that all debts owed by politicians to business-supporting institutions such as SEDOM, DEMATT, ADMARC and MDC are paid back expeditiously.

**5.7 Stabilising the Malawi Kwacha.** The Kwacha has over the past six years fared poorly against major International currencies and as the country is a net importer, the market has been destabilised resulting in high and unbearable cost of living and indeed encouraged capital flight. The NDA government will formulate and deftly implement policy instruments aimed at nurturing and promoting the effective involvement of the private sector in the development effort to promote export culture, discourage all non-essential imports, intensify the "Buy Malawi-campaign", stabilise the local currency, and restore confidence in the money markets. The NDA government will introduce widely consulted stringent fiscal and monetary discipline within the system to ensure that a more stable exchange rate is maintained by the Kwacha.

## **6.0 LABOUR**

### ***Creating Employment Opportunities***

#### **6.1 Current Situation**

The labour market in Malawi is characterised by high unemployment and a poorly developed skills profile. This is not an accident. It is the direct result of the bad policies of the Muluzi administration, which have led to the present hideous level of unemployment.

From 1994 many workers in the public sector have been retrenched. Prior to their retrenchments, none of the workers were offered training aimed at preparing them for self-employment or other means of earning an income. Interest rate hikes have contributed to a sharp investment contraction. An investment contraction meant no creation of new jobs.

During the Muluzi administration many companies have been closed, resulting in loss of jobs. The implementation of the divestiture and privatisation policy has led to the laying off of many workers, with consequential increase in the number of those that are unemployed, and in a decrease in the manufacturing sector's contribution to national income. There is no denying that the UDF government has failed to formulate and implement a labour market policy geared towards:

- maximising quality employment,
- minimising unemployment and underemployment,
- creating an enabling environment for increased local and foreign investments, and
- improving efficiency, equity, growth and social justice.

**6.2 NDA's Commitment.** Malawi can and must do better than this. Under NDA rule, Malawi will do better. The NDA government will halt the current passive labour market approach, and actively pursue employment-intensive growth in both rural and urban areas and a coherent human resource development policy focusing on:

- skill acquisition and adult basic education for the incumbent workforce and others that have had no basic schooling,
- training and capital based assistance for:
  - new self-employment and enterprise creation,
  - employment in existing enterprise employment schemes;
- training, retraining and redeployment programmes for those that are retrenched,

- the provision of an integrated approach to education and training with emphasis on the demand for specific skills in the labour market,
- the implementation of measures aimed at facilitating equal access of men and women to training and education at all levels,
- the provision of vocational and technical training in both urban and rural areas for women and youth in order for them to be self-employed,
- the promotion of:
  - infrastructure investment projects,
  - the establishment of new industries producing goods for domestic and export markets,
  - rural industrialisation,
- the creation and development of small- and medium-scale entrepreneurs.

The NDA government will also support agro-manufacturing sectors that are less capital-intensive and can directly and indirectly create employment. It will, in addition:

- play a proactive role in the:
  - formulation, support and implementation of labour market policy,
  - labour market information and career guidance,
  - provision of statistics that reflect the full extent of the loss of life and health caused at the workplace,
  - revision of safety standards and enforcement of occupational health and safety regulations with a view to reducing occupational accidents and diseases;
- implement a charter of rights for all employees, which will include the right to:
  - compensation for loss of job or disturbance,
  - on-the-job training,
  - retraining for adult workers,
  - full transferability of pension entitlements,
  - trade union representation,
  - proper safeguards against arbitrary dismissal,
  - equal pay for equal work.

## **7.0 THE PUBLIC/CIVIL SERVICE**

### **7.1 Current Situation**

The NDA recognises public/civil servants as the implementers of national development policies and as the ones who are responsible for the functioning of governments. Malawi was, prior to 1994, widely renowned to have a “professionally competent and honest civil service in Africa”, highly motivated in its contribution towards national development. Under the UDF government, the public or civil service is no longer motivated. Its professionalism has been sacrificed at the altar of narrow political interests and nepotism.

Whereas prior to 1994, the leadership of the civil service strove, in harmony with the provisions of the Public Service Act, to ensure that the civil service was “independent, impartial” and therefore “permanent in order that the executive functions of the government should continue irrespective of which political party was in power”, under the UDF government, no such an effort has been made. The civil service has consequently been

politicised, resulting in an increasing number of civil servants being helplessly drawn into the vortex of party politics. Promotions are based not on merit but on such considerations as political party affiliations and nepotism. This has contributed towards the lowering of employee morale and the impeding of productivity.

The UDF leadership has promoted some civil servants at public rallies to senior posts that had never been established and, consequently, that had not been estimated for in the estimates of expenditure. This was in breach of section 5(2) in Part II of the Public Service Act (1994), and this invariably resulted in junior officers superseding those better qualified for the promotion. This has been a source of demoralisation, contributing to low productivity in the civil service.

Inertia accentuated by lack of vision and thrust has caused efficiency and therefore productivity in the civil service to plummet during the UDF rule. The UDF government is groping for a solution to what has now become the unprecedented high unproductivity in the civil service. The contract scheme for the civil service introduced by the UDF government ostensibly with a view to improving productivity is the case in point. In the absence of an effective scheme of performance measurement, those on contract have continued to work through inertia. Because opportunities for contract have tended to be skewed towards those in senior management positions, morale among the many civil servants under the rank of S5/P5 is so low that the introduction of the contract scheme has made things worse than they were before the scheme of contract was introduced. Under the UDF government, those below the rank of principal secretary also watch increasingly with justified anger as those above them are accorded some obscene fringe benefits such as obtaining public vehicles at give away prices.

The failure of the UDF government to seek funds for a programme of postgraduate training clearly shows that the government is not really disturbed by the inordinate number of well qualified personnel the productive departments of government ministries have lost since 1994 through hierarchical mobility, dismissals, retirements, or death. And this, to those with a thirst for higher education, is a demotivator. Morale and work ethics have as a result ebbed. Late reporting for duty, absenteeism and moonlighting are the order of the day. The civil service infrastructure has collapsed. With NDA, Malawi will do better.

## **7.2 The NDA's Commitment.** When voted into government, the NDA will:

- review the whole public service as a precursor to:
  - the rehabilitation of the public or civil service to its past glory;
  - the establishment of a lean, competent, impartial, transparent, accountable, and merit-based civil service, with strengthened institutional support for anti-corruption measures,
  - the possible establishment of a separate Scientific Service with its own totem pole for scientific achievers;
- depoliticise the civil service to ensure that it is professional, independent and permanent as per statutory requirement;
- introduce a scheme of performance measurement of programmes aimed at improving productivity in the public sector;
- review advance and loan packages to cover a wider base of the civil servants;
- review and increase civil servants salaries in order for them to meet their basic requirements;



- re-introduce overseas specialized training for civil and public servants;
- train new and existing public servants in their respective areas of expertise in order to improve their productivity;
- utilise expertise from retired civil and public servants, as well as other pensioners;
- introduce Medical Aid Schemes for all civil/public servants to expand their welfare package;
- ensure that every civil servant is able to own a house through an affordable housing scheme;
- review periodically pension salaries in contrast to the present situation
- Ensure that workplace is adapted to cater for the needs of the disabled persons.

## **8.0 TRADE UNIONS**

The NDA strongly believes that in a democracy people should be free to form a union. Once a union has been formed, the people are free to join or not to join it and the government should not only recognise it but also ensure that it is functional and, in a responsible way, responsive to the interests of its members. The NDA also regards employers and unions as partners in the enterprise and should therefore avoid unnecessary conflicts. When in government, the NDA will:

- ensure that there are minimum standards for the individual at work, including a minimum wage, within a flexible labour market;
- create a conducive environment for free and fair bargaining between trade unions and employers;
- promote stable and orderly industrial relations;
- ensure that the rights of workers are fully respected;
- ensure that regulations governing safety standards of workers at the workplace are enforced.

## **9.0 COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY**

*Restoring commerce and industry as the engine for economic development*

### **9.1 Current Situation**

What emerges clearly from what has been stated in Section 6 above is the failure of the UDF government to recognise the fact that in a liberalised economy, the role of the public sector is to be that of providing good governance and an enabling

institutional environment for:

- business,
- market-friendly physical infrastructures,
- facilitative policy guidelines,
- an enabling regulatory environment,
- reliable market information,
- efficient extension services, and
- effective partnership with all stakeholders.

*The NDA government shall promote sustained industrial development*

The UDF government has failed to create an enabling environment that should have encouraged private investment by facilitating and maintaining efficient markets. Its bad policies have instead impacted negatively on the investment climate, leading to the flight of investors to other countries within the region. Both the failure of the UDF government to protect local industries and the uncontrolled dumping of second-hand products into Malawi has contributed to closures of local companies. With NDA, Malawi will do better. Increased investments, employment generation, improved trade performance and enhanced productivity are the main objectives of NDA's policy.

**9.2 The NDA's commitment:** On assuming the reins of government, the NDA shall:

- integrate improved productivity and competitiveness into the overall restructuring of the country's economy,
- promote and support programmes designed to realise the exporting potential of small- and medium-sized enterprises that tend to be more labour-absorbing,
- discourage turnkey contracts,
- put in place incentives for the private sector to form design engineering firms and to enhance its competitive edge in producing product lines that not only serve the domestic market but also gain access to the international markets,
- identify areas of industrial development and encourage the adding of maximum value to Malawi's natural resource endowment,
- drive industrialisation towards higher value-added activities,
- encourage manufacturers and service industries to design efficient attractive products and services that are appropriate for local conditions and are able to create important export niches,
- promote the emergence of a dynamic manufacturing sector as a growing source of productive and well-paid employment opportunities and industrial learning,
- encourage the private sector to invest in manufacturing, packaging, marketing and provision of after sales services,
- seek new trade relationships with countries and regional associations,
- introduce anti-dumping measures and other countervailing strategies needed to protect local manufacturers from unfair foreign trade practices,

- raise productivity through, among other things, human resource development, democratisation of the workplace, and technological development,
- promote a greater understanding of the importance of technology in economic growth,
- support the identification and utilisation of technological and design competency,
- put in place export enterprise and industrial zones with regular supplies of electricity, water, and telecommunications services,
- introduce and support tax incentives that comply with the country's investment, industrial, technological, and human resource development as well as social development policies,
- give incentives such as meaningful tax breaks and special credits to companies established in rural areas specialising in agro-manufacturing industry,
- invest first in the rehabilitation and then in the equitable expansion of the national infrastructure, to ensure dependable and efficient transport, energy, water and communications systems.

**9.2.1 Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises,** the key areas that NDA shall support will include:

- access to
  - advice,
  - training,
  - finance,
  - appropriate technology,
  - marketing and procurement; and
- encouragement of inter-firm linkages.

## **10.0 SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

### ***Science And Technology For National Development***

#### **10.1 Current Situation**

Science and technology (S&T) are strategic variables on which developed nations depend to create and maintain competitive advantage. The NDA subscribes to the widely accepted observation that the difference between the rich (developed) and poor (developing) countries lies on the human capital they have created to spearhead their technology-led development, and the market mechanisms they have created to articulate the resultant technological products and services to consumer needs in both the original country and globally.

**10.2 The NDA's Commitment:** The NDA acknowledges that comparative advantage now increasingly resides not in naturally derived factor endowments but in the quantity and richness of human intellectual resources as expressed through:

- national capability in science, technology, entrepreneurship, management, organisation and marketing, and

- the capacity and political will to harness all classes and sectors of society to achieve excellence in meeting national development objectives.

The NDA further acknowledges that S&T are generated as centrally important variables in efforts to increase national standards of living and to stay ahead of one's competitors in the global market. Nations in the well-developed parts of the world are intensifying and accelerating their efforts to compete in the production of goods and services that are better and cheaper because of the scientific and technological knowledge invested in them.

The NDA believes that if developing countries do not embark upon an S&T-led socio-economic development, they will continue to be on the paths to increasing economic marginality and growing scientific and technological dependency on the global core regions. In saying this, the NDA recognises that the lack of a suitable bridge between the laboratory and the achievement of commercial production is one of the major constraints experienced in most developing countries. A window that would provide for risk and venture capital for promising S&T projects based on indigenous research appears to be necessary bridge. The NDA's commitment to putting Malawi on a path to technology-led socio-economic development is predicated upon its conviction that technologies that are developed with a view to creating a competitive edge cannot be transferred to any country free of charge. It is in this context that, on assuming the reins of government, the NDA will, among other things:

- re-examine Malawi's educational system in regard to its capacity to produce the requisite scientific and technological skills;
- develop an adequate infrastructure and intellectual resource capability to handle technology adaptation, innovation and transfer;
- create an environment providing necessary motivation for the retention and continued high quality performance of the developed intellectual resource capability;
- re-activate the Malawi Award for Scientific and Technological Achievement (MASTA);
- resuscitate and activate the national science and technology policy to provide a blue-print for the organisation and operation of the S&T system as a significant contributor to national development;
- strengthen the National Research Council of Malawi (NRCM) as the national S&T policy-making apex body and to have a Department of Science and Technology (DST) as the secretariat of NRCM with expressly stated functions;
- ensure that the NRCM and the National Economic Council work in tandem in order to provide the desired integration of technological considerations in all development planning;
- build upon past, and whenever necessary introduce new, initiatives aimed at integrating technological considerations in the national planning process;
- ensure transfer and utilisation of results of research in the production sectors of the national economy;
- promote and support generation of technologies that are internationally competitive, particularly those with export potential,
- develop an effective information network for science, engineering and technology, having adequate links with international information services, for

- providing R&D workers and other interested agencies speedy access to current knowledge in different S&T fields;
- devise appropriate legal, fiscal and financial instruments for selection, importation, absorption and adaptation of foreign technology, for example, tax incentives to enterprises for:
    - investment in establishment of design engineering units and research and development (R&D) for digestion of imported technology as well as for generation of new technology,
    - purchase of technology licenses and import of technological resources that conform to stated guidelines,
    - for setting up small new production units based on endogenously generated technologies;
  - promote the involvement of the private sector in the technological development by putting in place incentives, including:
    - cost and risk reduction incentives, which will take the form of financial, fiscal, or institutional incentive;
    - post-research and development incentives aimed at assisting commercialisation of, and market development for, research and development (R&D) results, whether new products or processes;
    - statutory incentives such as provisions to allow firms to form research associations;
  - ensure provision of facilities for transfer and productive utilisation of research results through the institutionalisation of engineering design, prototype development and commercialisation of products in the relevant sector corporations and individual units in both public and private enterprises;
  - reduce vulnerability, particularly in strategic and critical areas, making optimal blend of indigenous and imported technological resources;
  - ensure establishment of institutional facilities for relevant knowledge assimilation and skill development for the learning-absorption process for imported technology;
  - promote software development and ensure development of support facilities like information and documentation services, computer service and software package, standardisation and quality control;
  - provide active support to such emerging technologies as biotechnology, genetic engineering, micro-electronics, new and renewable sources of energy;
  - achieve self-reliance in the development and application of software by
    - utilising available, and training more, design engineers and computer programmers, and
    - establishing a National Institute of Electronics and Silicon Technology Development Centre;
  - facilitate development of industrial financing institutions specifically as active financial intermediaries to provide venture capital or risk capital to those willing to utilise newly developed indigenous technologies, or trying to increase substantially domestic content of their products;

- ensure due considerations to matters relating to ecology, environment, energy conservation, employment generation and social justice when importing technology;
- create in Malawi a society that is scientifically and technologically literate;
- recapture such individual and national virtues as self-sacrifice, self-reliance and hard work that have been eroded during the UDF rule.

**10.3 Institutional Framework for Agricultural Research and Development and Technology Dissemination:** The aspiration of the NDA is the attainment, at a sustainable basis, of:

- higher crop production per unit of labour,
- more agricultural produce for the farmer and his/her family,
- larger surplus for the non-agricultural population, and
- higher income for the farmer.

The NDA recognises that such human progress can only come from the expansion and more efficient use of our productive capacity – our human skills, capital, technology and agrarian-dominated resource base. The NDA appreciates that to achieve these goals, strategic directions need to focus on getting the criteria right, with incentives to ensure a research and development (R&D) that is dynamic, responsive and efficient, and an extension system that is focused and efficient. The UDF government failed to appreciate this fact. During the period between 1964 and 1994:

- the human capital for R&D was developed to postgraduate level, reaching a minimum critical mass for most of the research sectoral sectors;
- human resources required for the effective dissemination of agricultural production enhancement technology to farmers were trained generally to university graduate level;
- the institutional infrastructure required for the effective dissemination of agricultural technologies to farmers was developed; and
- funds required for the generation and dissemination of technologies were made available on regular and predictable basis.

Under the UDF rule, however, the scientific human resources lost in the Ministry of Agriculture through brain drain, hierarchical movement to assume administrative duties, retirement, or death have not been replaced; the R&D institutional infrastructure has decayed; and budgetary allocations for operation costs have been not only irregular and unpredictable but also reduced drastically, with the result that a disproportionate part of the budget now goes to staff salaries. This reflects the UDF's lack of recognition of the important role the generation and utilisation of agricultural production enhancement technology is in sustainable agricultural development. Because the NDA recognises the importance of the availability, and the effective transfer to farmers, of agricultural production enhancement technologies, it will, when voted into power:

- rehabilitate the R&D and extension institutional structures that have been degraded during the UDF rule;

- ensure that each research station has a minimum critical mass of research scientists;
- adopt personnel management procedures that are conducive to the retention of a motivated corps of research scientists;
- nurture and foster an innovative, responsive and efficient management of Malawi's R&D organisations;
- promote:
  - the execution of R&D in the production of appropriate agricultural tools and equipment, which can be affordable to small-scale farmers;
  - development of food processing technologies, including the utilisation and processing of agricultural waste and by-products;
  - work on agro-climatology in view of the all-pervading influence of climate on crop and livestock yields;
- reactivate and support research aimed at improving post-harvest technology;
- provide incentives to the private sector to take part in funding or conducting R&D activities.

## **11.0 INFRASTRUCTURE**

### ***Improving and Maintaining a Good Infrastructure***

#### **11.1 Current Situation**

Our transport infrastructure development is being shrouded with shoddy work. The internal rail network is almost collapsing with limited sectors of the network in operation. Train movement is not as regular as they used to be. Regarding the Beira corridor, the line is outgrown with trees and some bridges need repairs. Trains stopped operating on this line during the UDF rule. Most sections of the railway lines are in a state of disrepair.

Transport is an extremely important function in the daily lives of all citizens of Malawi and is also of economic importance. The NDA believes that an efficient transport infrastructure is the one that allows society and economy to assume their preferred form. The NDA strongly believes that policies in the transport sector must be outward looking, shaped by the needs of society in general, of passenger and goods customers in particular, and of the economy that transport has to satisfy. In a country such as Malawi, an improved rural transport infrastructure contributes greatly towards poverty reduction. Agricultural inputs and equipment can readily reach the farming community if a functional rural transport infrastructure is available. For farmers to take their produce to markets, they need good roads. This leads to an acceleration of agricultural growth.

The NDA recognises the fact that an acceleration of agricultural growth enhances the purchasing power of the farmers, resulting in increasing demands for goods and services, and that the goods and services can reach the rural communities only when there is a good road network. Malawi's aspirations of increasing her share of world tourism market can be realised only if tourists know that a good road network is available to enable them travel easily to their destinations, and efficient telecommunications service is available to enable them reach, or be reached by, their loved ones left behind.



**11.2 The NDA's Priorities.** When in power, the NDA will seek effective ways of developing an efficient transport infrastructure in an environment of severe austerity in public fiscal spending. The main aim shall be to build sinews within society, which will respond faithfully to development efforts. In partnership with the private sector, the NDA shall, therefore:

- upgrade and rehabilitate the existing road/rail network;
- ensure that all national roads, including the M 1 and all main roads, are managed efficiently and maintained properly;
- facilitate the maintenance of district roads by the district assemblies under the supervision of the government ministry responsible for roads;
- ensure that the internal rail system is revitalised so that freight and passenger services are reintroduced;
- explore the economic implications of rehabilitating the rail line to Beira port for possible resumption of rail freight from Beira to Malawi;
- expedite the rehabilitation of the Nacala rail line;
- embark on a comprehensive road/rail development and extension;
- strengthen the Lake Service Authority and ensure the lake service provided is efficient and safe;
- improve the service rendered by Air Malawi; and
- foster and support the development and/or improvement of new airports in Mangochi, Mzuzu and Likoma.

### **11.2.1 Communication technology**

The NDA recognises the fact that modern communications involve the extensive use of electronic solid-state components and systems, which are important applications in civilian as well as defence sectors. It is for this reason that the NDA accepts the fact that primary emphasis should be placed on design and development with a strong research and development (R&D) base in solid-state circuitry and devices. There is strong evidence that the UDF government does not recognise the fact that micro-chip technology is bringing about revolutionary changes in industrial production processes and in human lifestyles, and that any country that ignores this field is doing so at its own economic peril.

When in power, the NDA will ensure that Malawi benefits from the technological advances in communication technology by building upon achievements made so far. The NDA will, among other things:

- promote and support efforts aimed at connecting telecommunications services to more people more efficiently;
- foster the extension of television services to all parts of Malawi;
- require cellular license holders to extend provision of phone services to areas that are under-served;
- increase radio coverage with improved reception;
- explore with interested UN agencies the feasibility of initiating an instructional television system so as to complement the NDA's human resources development efforts;
- ensure that TV Malawi offers educational programmes during the day;
- intensify the use of radio as a channel through which to disseminate information to farmers about improved agricultural methods, and as a pivotal element in Malawi's nationwide health campaigns;
- ensure that the communication regulatory body (MACRA) operates to the benefit of all Malawians;
- encourage MACRA to see to it that modern telecommunication systems and equipments are put in place and are made available to all Malawians in rural and urban areas;
- promote competition in order to make pricing competitive and affordable for the users;
- establish a National Institute of Electronics and Silicon Technology Development.

## **12.0 SECURITY**

### ***Policing and Tackling Crime***

#### **12.1 Current Situation**

The citizens of Malawi have a right to sleep soundly in their homes without any fear that their houses are mostly likely to be burglarised, their lives snuffed out, their

personal effects stolen and their livestock stolen. Under the UDF government, house burglaries are a common occurrence, so too are armed robberies, resulting in losses of lives and personal property; churches are broken into and their properties stolen; the citizens of Malawi do not walk safely on the streets; vehicles are stolen in most cases at gunpoint; and owners of some of the stolen vehicles are frequently shot dead. Insecurity is everywhere. This has had negative effects on the investment and tourism environment. Service providers in the banking and distribution sectors, among others, have had to withdraw their services from some parts of the country on security grounds. The UDF government has clearly broken its 1999 general election pledge to ensure that people are safe in their homes and on the streets.

In the rural areas, people live in fear. In districts such as Chiradzulu, some women have been killed and their body parts removed. The arrests of suspects the police made have hitherto not led to the persons involved in the macabre affair. Small groceries are broken into by armed robbers, resulting, in some cases, in the death of the owners of the groceries. This has led to closures of some groceries, and to hardships experienced by those in the rural areas to whom groceries are now inaccessible. Herds of livestock and work oxen are frequently stolen. Because of this insecurity, many people in the rural areas are unwilling to invest in the livestock industry. The population of livestock in Malawi has consequently dwindled drastically.

In most parts of Malawi's rural areas, the police cannot be reached by telephone because there are no telephones. The radio equipment the police have in the rural areas is invariably non-functional. The UDF have also broken their pledge to review, as a precursor to improvement, the police's "poor remuneration package, inadequate housing and office facilities, poor advancement prospects, and lack of skills training". The Malawi Police Service is grossly understaffed, poorly trained and poorly funded. The police lack adequate transportation and communications facilities and other basic crime fighting equipment. Telephones at most of police posts are "temporarily out of services" – a pseudonym for telephone has been disconnected due to unsettled telephone bill.

Junior members of the police force continue receiving salaries that are not commensurate with the responsibilities entrusted to them, and their advancement prospects are still poor. Junior police officers continue to live in tiny houses that are often in dire need for maintenance and painting. Most of the junior police officers are demotivated and demoralised. The increasing number of citizens of Malawi who lose their lives while they are under police custody speaks volumes for the extent to which the Malawi police respect civil liberty. There have been cases of supporters of the opposition being beaten up by the UDF-sponsored thugs while the police watch, thus putting in question the impartiality or the professionalism of the Malawi police.

## **12.2 NDA's Commitment:**

Under NDA rule police will be impartial and professional

On attacking crime, the NDA pledges to:

- be tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime; the NDA will attack the root causes of crime and at the same time ensure that individuals are punished for the crime they commit;
- resuscitate a competent, transparent, accountable, well-trained, well-motivated, merit-based police force;
- review and improve conditions of service for police officers to boost morale and eliminate corruption;
- ensure that appointments and promotions of police officers are on merit and not influenced by political and or ethnical considerations;
- review the Bail Guidelines Act to ensure that it is objective and free from abuse; the Act will be incorporated in the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Code (CPEC) as originally proposed by the Law Commission;
- improve the physical working environment of the police staff;
- increase the budgetary allocation to the police to enable police acquire equipment necessary for law enforcement and provide them with necessary training;
- establish an independent Police Commission to create an environment conducive to the execution of police duties according to law and justice, and protect the integrity and autonomy of the police officers; the appointments, transfer, promotion and disciplinary control of police officers will be carried out by a fair and transparent process;
- ensure that, in discharging their duties, the police shall respect civil liberties;
- review the refugee policy to ensure that genuine refugees and not criminals are allowed to come into the country;
- ensure greater consistency and stricter punishment for serious repeat offenders;
- ensure that the rights of citizens of Malawi to protect their lives and properties against burglars are protected;
- provide greater protection for victims of rape and serious sexual offence trials and for those subject to intimidation, including witnesses;
- always recognise that justice delayed is justice denied and to ensure that people who are innocent should not face an excessive wait before justice is meted out;

- see to it that the guilty are held to account for their actions promptly without diminishing the genuine rights of every citizen to a fair trial.

**12.2.1 On prisons,** the NDA is aware that our prisons are probably the worst in the region and that despite criticisms from NGO's and Human Rights groups that have offered recommendations to improve the living conditions of the inmates, the UDF government has done nothing to improve them. While putting emphasis on the reformation of the character of prisoners so that they should become useful citizens in the society, the NDA administration will:

- ensure that prison regimes are constructive and require inmates to face up to their offending behaviour;
- ensure that professionalism in the management of the prison services is upgraded;
- establish additional prison farms where prisoners will be exposed to more modern agricultural methods and other skills in order to equip and provide them with income generating expertise;
- encourage non-custodial community service sentence where appropriate;
- take care of the welfare of offending juveniles by renovating and upgrading the Mpemba Reformatory and establishing a new centre for juveniles in the Central and Northern Regions;
- separate and protect the youth from adult offenders and seek the assistance of benevolent and religious groups to reform and integrate the offending youth into their communities;
- ensure that basic dietary standards are complied with in our prisons;
- train prison warders so as to equip them with professionalism instead of being instruments of torture and human rights abuses.

## **13.0 DEFENCE**

### ***A Modernised and Professional Malawi Defence Force***

#### **13.1 Current Situation**

Both the training system and operational equipment have been left to collapse and deteriorate during the past 10 years of UDF rule. To date most of the equipment being used is outdated and beyond repair. Due to lack of transparency in procurement carried by the government, some of the equipment purchased for our armed forces was substandard and inappropriate.

**13.2 The NDA's Commitment:** The NDA is committed to maintain a modernised, well-equipped professional army, free of political interference and manipulation. The NDA administration will ensure that: -

- recruitment of men and women into the Malawi Armed Forces is done fairly and objectively based on qualification;
- budgetary allocations are regularly reviewed with emphasis on capital replacement and overall improvement of the working conditions;

- the overall professionalism of Malawi Armed Forces is improved through appropriate local and overseas training;
- the Malawi Armed Forces continue to participate in peacekeeping missions around the world;
- the Malawi Armed Forces are left to operate within the mandate of the constitution, free from political manipulation;
- good housing facilities are provided to the armed personnel;
- appropriate and adequate food rations are regularly provided to the armed forces.

## **14.0 INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

### ***Cultivating and maintaining cordial and vibrant international relations***

#### **14.1 Current Situation**

The UDF government has admittedly maintained bilateral and multilateral relations established by the previous regime. The NDA believes, however, that maintenance of such relations should reflect cognisance of such developments as increasing globalisation, coalescing of nations into regional grouping and stratification of the international economy, increasing concern for democratisation and good governance, and increasing adoption of exogenously fleshed out stabilisation and structural adjustment measures. For Malawi to maximise benefits accrued from foreign missions under such developments, there is need for the government to be selective of countries in which to establish the missions, and to see to it that the personnel assigned to foreign missions are of a high calibre. This, however, is not what has hitherto been observed during the UDF rule.

Those who are affiliated to the UDF or are family members of the UDF cadre, irrespective of their being semi-literate, are the ones that are appointed and sent to serve at foreign missions. Malawi can and must do better. With NDA, Malawi will do better. The NDA strongly believes that the number of foreign missions maintained should to a large extent be predicated upon Malawi's ability to make each of them functional. This has not been the case during the UDF rule. Embassies have suffered the embarrassment of, for instance, having electricity supply disconnected because of their failure to pay for bills. This is a national embarrassment.

#### **14.2 The NDA's commitment.** On assuming the reins of power, the NDA will:

- maintain:
  - a certain number of foreign missions determined on the basis of enlightened self-interest,
 and strengthen bilateral and multilateral relations with the proviso that the right of Malawians to:

*International relations shall be strengthened*

- determine their own development path,
- flesh out their own development policies and strategies required to realise their development goals, and
- design, implement, monitor and evaluate projects is respected;
- aim at obtaining foreign aid that is so designed that it does not insure aid dependency but creates endogenous conditions for local capacities, sustainable institutions and sustained and self-sustaining economic growth;
- restore good relations with the Nordic countries;
- seek the possibility of developing economic cooperation and trade with the nations of the South while maintaining economic cooperation and trade with the nations of the industrialised North;
- ensure that no external assistance is sought to address problems that lend themselves to solutions based on local efforts;
- promote foreign investment to reduce the inflow of foreign loans;
- ensure that Malawi's diplomatic service is professional through merit-based recruitments;
- maintain peaceful relations with all countries in the world and actively participate in peacekeeping activities;
- participate actively in bilateral, regional and international organisations, including SADC, COMESA, African Union, the Commonwealth and the United Nations in order to maximise benefits that accrue from membership of such organisation.

## **15.0 DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE**

### **Entrenching Democracy and Good Governance**

#### **15.1 Current Situation.**

**15.1.1 Justice and the Rule of Law .** Prior to 1993, democracy and good governance did not reign in Malawi. People suffered. The basic rights of Malawians were abused and they were not free to either express



themselves or to be members of any association other than the Malawi Congress Party (MCP). There was no government accountability and there was no transparency. In voting the UDF into power, Malawians expected a change for the better. They expected a UDF administration to honour the bond of trust the UDF leadership had set out in the UDF manifesto and verbally at public meetings. Malawians were then promised that, if voted into power, a UDF government would ensure that open debate, freedoms of speech and association, free press, institutional pluralism, the rule of law, and the independence of the judiciary would be respected.

Malawians were pleased when they heard President Muluzi stating in his address to parliament on 39 June 1994 that his government would “perform duties and make decisions in accordance with the laws and subject to the laws”. This was a mere rhetoric. President Muluzi:

- terminated services of public servants in a manner that was totally at variance with the provisions of:
  - sections 27 and 29 of the Public Service Act 1994, and
  - section 29 of the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi;
- denied citizens of Malawi their constitutional right to exercise the freedom of association and the freedom of assembling peacefully;
- violated his oath of office and sought to tweak the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi in favour of his ardent desire to run for the third term.

This is an abuse of power.

In his address to parliament referred to above, President Muluzi went on to state that nobody “should be above the law or beyond the reach of the law; the rule of law must prevail at all times with equality and without prejudice or favour”. President Muluzi either did not mean what he said or merely read what was written for him without understanding the import of what it conveyed. It has been observed that President Muluzi has the propensity for publicly accusing individuals, particularly those who differ with him politically, of being guilty of certain crimes even after courts of law have found them to be not guilty of the alleged crimes. Closed cases of politicians remain closed as long as the politicians are in President Muluzi’s favour. Once they fall out with the President, their cases are re-opened. Displayed by President Muluzi in this respect are attributes of not a democrat but a dictator.

It has also been observed during the UDF rule that after two senior UDF politicians have been accused of an alleged commission of a similar offence, their cases remain dormant as long as the two politicians are in President Muluzi’s favour. However,

- once any of the politicians has fallen out with the President, the latter starts castigating him/her publicly,

- a case is often opened against the castigated politician, leaving the other politician accused of committing a similar alleged offence, who continues to be in the President's favours, scot-free.

In its 1999 manifesto, the UDF pledged that a UDF government would "sustain and enhance the separation of powers, checks and balances within the three branches of government, and uphold the Constitution". Yet the UDF government has made several attempts to have judges impeached simply because of their desire to exercise their impartiality and independence in all cases including those involving the government. It has further violated other underpinnings of democracy as evidenced by the fact that:

- the entrenchment of institutional pluralism in Malawi has been threatened by the UDF leadership's campaign of buying opposition members, geared towards weakening the opposition;
- those in the public sector suspected to be supportive of an opposition party have lost their jobs;

An NDA National Executive Committee Member savagely brutalised

- those exercising the right to association by attending opposition rallies, particularly the NDA rallies, have been dispersed by armed police and invariably disrupted violently by the so-called Young Democrats of the UDF, causing bodily injuries to targeted opposition leaders and supporters, and

- the electronic and print media freedom has been infringed and owners of the media have been harassed and intimidated;

**15.1.2 Human Rights.** Enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi are individual human rights and freedoms, which President Muluzi swore publicly to protect. The human rights and freedoms have, however, been violated frequently during the UDF government. This fact can be adduced by several incidences, including those cited under Sub-section 3.1.1 above and those given below.

- Section 34 of the Constitution provides that “every person shall have the right to freedom of opinion, including the right to hold opinions without interference to hold, receive and impart opinions” and yet when:
  - those in the opposition express their opinions on how certain national issues ought to be best addressed by the government, they are harassed and castigated publicly in personal terms, often using words that unsuitable to be used by a credible national leader or any cultured person; this denies:
  - the opposition its freedom to discharge its duties as a channel of the people’s discontent, and
  - the people an opportunity to benefit from an open debate and to assess the extent to which the opposition may be regarded as a credible alternative to the government of the day;
  - the religious clergy comment on issues that impact on the citizens of this country, they are savagely castigated and harassed, thus revealing the undemocratic tendencies of the UDF because any democrat recognises and accepts the church as the conscience of the nation, and encourages it to speak out against any injustice suffered by the people;
- Section 38 provides that “every person shall have the right to assemble and demonstrate with others peacefully and unarmed”. The banning of peaceful demonstrations was therefore unconstitutional. The savage manner in which thugs were employed to prevent the anti-third term demonstrations mimicked manifestly what obtained during the dictatorship era.
- The UDF government has terminated arbitrarily services of public servants without furnishing them with reasons in writing for the administrative action taken thus violating the provisions of:
  - section 43 of the Constitution regarding Administrative Justice,
  - section 29 of the Constitution that “every person shall have the right freely to engage in economic activity, to work and to pursue a livelihood anywhere in Malawi”.
- Businessman perceived to be leaning towards the opposition has been blacklisted never to secure business with a public-funded organisation, which is contrary to section 29 of the constitution quoted above.

Such pillars of democracy as the Human Rights Commission, the Ombudsman, the police, and courts have invariably experienced some political interference, which clearly violates the need for independence of such bodies.

**15.2 The NDA's Commitment:** Malawians opted for multiparty democracy and good governance because they knew that democracy and good governance, as well as peace and security, were essential for sustainable socio-economic development. The NDA recognises the primacy of the underpins of democracy and good governance in efforts to sustain socio-economic development. It is in this context that the NDA wishes to declare its commitment to the rule of law and human rights. When in power the NDA will:

- review and repeal all constitutional amendments effected under the UDF leadership with the aim of benefiting those in power;
- strengthen constitutional legitimacy and democratic systems based on the principle of separation of executive, legislative and judiciary powers;
- establish an Ethics Commission;
- nurture and support the independence and the impartiality of the judiciary and ensure that it is adequately funded to ensure fair and effective enforcement of the law;
- ensure that judges are exemplary in upholding the rule of law in concert with their oath of office;
- strengthen institutions that are essential components of good governance and democracy;
- enhance accountability, transparency and efficiency in public administration;
- promote a culture of tolerance;
- promote respect for human rights and the rule of law;
- facilitate community-based organisations and women's groups, and forge a genuine partnership between civil society organisations and government institutions involved in socio-economic development;
- promote social justice by encouraging equitable development across geographic areas;
- provide the courts with the necessary funds and facilities to enable them have efficient administration of justice;
- ensure that justice is meted out to offenders as expeditiously as possible.

Regarding human rights, the NDA government will:

- ensure that human rights and freedom as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi are respected and protected by the national executive, legislature, judiciary and all organs of the government and its agencies;
- nurture, foster and protect the independence of all pillars of democracy, including human rights and ombudsman institutions, and promote civic education, with particular focus on human rights education;

- provide adequate budgetary allocations to the offices of the Ombudsman that will help in capacity building to enable the office operate efficiently and effectively for the benefit of all Malawians;
- establish a truth and reconciliation commission to expose past abuse of office and perpetrators of atrocities in order to heal past wounds and establish genuine reconciliation.

## **16.0 CORRUPTION**

### **16.1 Current Situation**

The Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) of today has been reduced to a farce. The ACB has been deprived of its independence to inquire into complaints without interference to government. To many Malawians, the ACB is perceived to be a tool used by the UDF government for suppression and political machinations. The NDA government is committed to eradicate corruption by ensuring that the ACB operates impartially and independently without political interference. Massive civic education will be conducted throughout the country to ensure that Malawians are educated and advised on the ills of corrupt practices and their consequences.

### **16.2 The NDA's Commitment.** The NDA government will:

- nurture and promote the independence of the ACB;
- ensure that the ACB:
  - is answerable to Parliament,
  - prosecutes cases without first seeking consent or approval from the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP),
  - is professional when discharging its duties and is not perceived to persecute for some political expediency but to genuinely prosecute individuals for alleged commissions of offence;
  - is provided with the relevant facilities and support services to eradicate bribery and corruption from political structures, government and/or its agencies, and all other spheres of life in Malawi.
- encourage and support the ACB to educate and train the citizens of Malawi about the evils of bribery and corruption,
- vigorously fight corruption and ensure that there is significant progress within the first year of the NDA administration.

## **17.0 ELECTIONS**

It is not uncommon in Malawi for leaders to be imposed on the people and to hold elections in a climate of violence and intimidation that guarantees the re-election of the ruling party. The NDA believes that elections are a fundamental tenet for democracy, stability, and development. People must be free to express their preferences or choices in a free and fair manner, to select their representatives in such bodies as political party structures, associations, and national assembly. The use of threats, intimidations, corruption and violence denies the people their right to free choice and does not confer legitimacy upon.

**17.1 NDA's commitment:** The NDA is committed to ensuring that elections are held in a truly free and fair manner.

The provision enshrined in the constitution of the NDA that elections at the NDA national conventions as well as regional, zone, district, sub-district constituency, ward, area, and branch committee levels must be held in a free and fair manner adduces this fact. In pursuit of its commitment to the holding of free and fair elections, the NDA government will ensure that:

- the appointment of the Chairman of the Electoral Commission is approved by parliament and the chairperson will be answerable to a special parliamentary committee,
- national presidential and parliamentary elections are held in a truly free and fair manner, devoid of violence, harassment, intimidation and threats

## **18.0 SENATE**

The NDA administration shall reintroduce the senate, which was abolished by the UDF administration. The senate will be established in order to restore its fundamental role of providing checks and balances of the legislative arm of government. The responsibility of the senate shall be to scrutinize all bills passed by parliament and when necessary act as a check for government activities to include the impeachment of a reigning President and his Deputies where necessary. The senate will also be responsible for the arbitration on matters of senior public appointments between the Executive Branch of Government and the Legislature.

## **19.0 CHIEFTAINCY**

### **19.2 Current Situation**

Chiefs in Malawi are leaders of their communities as well as custodians of our cultural heritage. Although chiefs were recognised during the MCP rule, they were not really respected and as a result they lost their leadership role. Under the UDF administrations, the chieftaincy has been politicised. Some of the chiefs are being used to advance UDF's political agendas. They have consequently lost their effectiveness as non-partisan traditional leaders. They have been induced to develop a culture of begging and waiting for handouts as opposed to advancing self-help and development programmes for their communities.

*Under NDA rule chiefs shall be encouraged to be non-partisan*

**19.1 NDA's Commitment:** The NDA will restore the dignity, hierarchy and non-partisan leadership role to our chiefs. The indispensable role of chiefs in local government will be recognised and rewarded commensurate with successful development programmes within their areas.

## **20.0 RELIGION**

### **20.1 Current Situation**

It cannot be disputed that certain religious leaders in the Christian and some sects of the Moslem communities have been savagely harassed during the Muluzi administration for exercising their roles as the conscience of the nation. This will not be condoned under the NDA government. The NDA strongly believes that the practice of God's will, as a way of life and the affirmation of spiritual values, in individuals and in society as a whole, will provide the bastion against injustice, bad governance, corruption, greed and moral decay. The NDA government will, therefore:

- ensure that the fundamental spiritual and ethical values that are part of the teachings of God constitute the bedrock of a democratic society in Malawi;
- uphold the freedom of worship and the rights of religious groups to spread the word of God without fear or hindrance;
- encourage and support religious organisations involved in national development programmes
- foster the relationship between the church and state as effective partners in development;



- ensure that laws and executive actions do not in any way belittle or discriminate against any religion.

## **21.0 ENVIRONMENT PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT**

### **21.1 Current Situation**

The NDA believes that it is morally right for our present generation to hand down to the next generations our natural resource endowments in qualities and quantities that are sufficient to allow a continuing improvement in the quality of life. However, it is widely observed that extraction of firewood, poles and other forest products; forest and brush fires; browsing and overgrazing; selective logging, particularly of high grade indigenous hardwoods; urban expansion; road construction and other infrastructural development have contributed to the denudation of Malawi's forest resource and to the loss of Malawi's biodiversity.

The NDA is aware that the exposure of fragile mountain slopes has led to landslides and flash floods that have caused the destruction of property and infrastructure, as well as loss of life in some parts of Malawi. The opening up of catchments that sustain watercourses has led to the drying up of some rivers that were once perennial and to the decrease in the water levels of Shire River and Lake Malawi. The expansion of agricultural production into marginal areas, the destruction of forests and trees, the opening up of stream banks, and the grazing of reed-beds have led to the siltation of rivers and dams.

A change in flow regimes has been caused by siltation. Siltation has put the long-term productivity of fish stocks at risk. As a matter of fact, the population of lake salmon (*Opsaridium microleois*), locally known as *mpasa*, has dwindled to extinction in all areas but Bua river because siltation has seriously affected its spawning grounds. No effort is now being made to sensitise the populace to this fact. The siltation of dams has caused frequent breakdowns of hydroelectric power, thus interrupting industrial and other activities. The opening up of steep land for cultivation has been conducive to the loss of topsoil.

The loss of the topsoil has contributed to a decline in land productivity because the topsoil is generally more fertile than the subsoil. Continued cropping of a piece of land without replenishing the plant nutrients taken up by the plants is analogous to the mining of the soils; it is this practice that leads to the reduction of the land's natural fertility and capacity to produce. The cost of rehabilitating degraded soil fertility is very high and yet no effort is now being made to prevent further degradation. Environmental sustainability does not appear to be of any concern to the UDF government.

Industrial activities can lead to environmental damage. In most cases such damage is caused by greed and indifference. That the UDF government shows indifference to the negative impact the use of agrochemicals may have on the environment is evident from the continued use in Malawi of the agrochemicals universally known as the dirty dozen that have been banned in all industrialised countries. The unmitigated replication of some of industrial models of the developed countries can also lead to the pollution of our water bodies and our air. Because Malawi has no laws to regulate vehicle emissions, vehicles that produce high volumes of smoke continue to ply on our roads, polluting our air with the thick smoke they discharge into the atmosphere. Most of the vehicles that populate our roads produce high volumes of exhaust gases that pollute our air. Investigations conducted elsewhere have

shown that when acted upon by the sunlight, substances such as carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxide from car exhaust gases form smog and oxidants that have harmful effects on human health.

*Environmental damage wreaked under UDF government*

With so many vehicles producing increasing volumes of exhaust gases on our roads, the UDF government does not appear to be concerned about the possible health hazards such emissions present to the citizens of Malawi, particularly those resident in our major

cities. The NDA does not wish to wait until photochemical smog presents a health problem in Malawi.

**21.2 NDA's Priority:** The NDA believes that sustainable environment cannot be considered in isolation from poverty. The NDA accepts that it is poverty that pushes smallholders to continuously clear forested areas for fuel wood and agricultural production, open up marginal soils for crop production, mine soils with respect to their fertility, and over-fish waters. It is poverty that causes people to put survival ahead of environmental protection. It is in recognition of these facts that the NDA's strategic directions shall be aimed at addressing the nexus between poverty and environment, with a focus on how the burden of poverty suffered by many Malawians, especially in rural areas, can be best addressed.

**21.3 Forest and wildlife reserves and national parks:** Forest and wildlife reserves and national parks have been established in Malawi since 1910. Some of these areas were established to protect local communities against the destructive effects of landslides and flash floods, to protect mega-fauna and its habitats, and conserve water catchments. Other areas were established to protect animate and inanimate objects of scientific and aesthetic interest. These are the areas in which the nation's heritage of biodiversity is concentrated. However, because of an increase in human population, the areas have experienced encroachments. Demands for the excision of the areas have increased with an increase in population growth. The solutions offered to these environmental problems have so far been puny or insignificant.

The NDA believes that local communities can get involved in the protection of the natural resource endowments that abound in the protected areas if they see the resources as the land's product that contributes tangible and financial benefits for the improvement of the quality of their lives. The NDA, therefore, will:

- empower the local communities to manage their natural resource endowments that abound in the forest and wildlife and national parks;
- ensure that benefits that accrue from the development of conservation-related industry, both in and outside the protected areas, flow to the local communities;
- enable local communities to maximise the economic and social benefits they enjoy from their natural resources in a sustainable way;
- increase the productivity of forests through research and development;
- promote more productive use of existing arable land and identify alternatives for the people on the margins of the protected areas to unsustainable utilisation of natural resources;
- promote the reforestation of degraded land and agroforestry;
- intensify afforestation and both conservation and management of water catchments and water resources;
- encourage industry and commerce, through tax incentives and other appropriate means, to contribute to a new environmental restoration fund to be established to help repair damage already done to the environment in order to restore ecological balance;

- promote re-planting of shrubs and trees to protect stream and riverbanks, as well as water catchments so as to prevent water degradation and soil erosion;
- promote game farming;
- solicit the people's participation to protect and preserve the forests in the mountains and in and around the villages;
- enhance the preservation and protection of heritage sites and ancient buildings;
- establish an appropriate institutional framework in order that community participation becomes an inviolate and integral component of development and distribution of benefits;
- reduce dependence on woodfuel by promoting the use of biogas, solar and wind energy.

#### **21.4 Industrial and other pollutions:** The NDA will:

- promote the assessment and monitoring of air, soil and water pollution;
- promote and encourage the clean-up of the streams and rivers in our cities and towns;
- ensure that toilet facilities are provided at strategic points in all urban and other areas;
- ensure that the poor in urban areas are provided with potable water;
- pass an anti-littering legislation;
- enforce regulations governing the management and disposal of hazardous industrial waste;
- promote the use of environmentally-friendly agrochemicals in place of the banned dirty dozen;
- pass legislation to control car exhaust gases.

## **22.0 TOURISM**

### **22.1 Current Situation**

The NDA is well aware that tourism industry has grown rapidly worldwide during the past fifteen years. Technological advances and the opening of some closed societies such as the Former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and the Communist China are the contributory factors. People have been able to travel to destinations faster than before because of the technological advances in transport. After reaching their destinations, people do not feel cut off from the world they know because of the technological advances in telecommunications. Higher living standards in the industrialised world provide increased spending money and more leisure time.

The urge to get away from 'concrete jungles' to areas where a completely different experience awaits is a significant contributory factor to the expansion of the tourism industry. Ecotourism, or the attraction of visitors to pristinely conserved environments is now a major component of the tourism industry. With its big game animals, wild scenery and national parks, Africa is an obvious choice for people seeking an ecotourism experience. Kenya has benefited considerably from ecotourism, while Malawi's share of the world ecotourism market has been very insignificant. The NDA strongly believes that Malawi's share of the world market can be increased considerably. Sadly, however, conditions created in Malawi during

the UDF rule are not conducive to increased development of ecotourism industry in the country.

The increase in crime in Malawi is inimical to the development of the industry. Tourists normally shy away from going to a country in which insecurity is known to be widespread. The road network, which the UDF government inherited barely a decade ago, has now been degraded. Barely a decade ago, it was pleasing to see air carriers such as Air Malawi, Zambian Airways, Zimbabwe Airline, Tanzania Airways, South African Airways, Ethiopian Airways, Kenya Airways, the British Airways, the Dutch Airline, and Air France landing at, and taking off from, Malawi's international airports. The Dutch Airline and Air France now no longer fly direct to Malawi, which has impacted negatively on the development of ecotourism industry in Malawi. The announcement by the British Airways that the airline will soon also stop flying to Malawi is bad news for the development of tourism in this country. Malawi can, and must, do better than this. With the NDA, Malawi will do much better.

**22.1 NDA's Commitment.** The NDA believes that development of ecotourism must be seen as one of the means of contributing to the upliftment of the quality of life, especially in the rural areas.

The NDA is, therefore, committed to create enabling environment for Malawi's ability to increase her share of the world ecotourism industry. In its efforts to increase Malawi's ecotourism industry, the NDA will:

- give strong support to the police in the fight against crime and disorder while at the same time attacking the root causes of the crime;
- promote and support the improvement of transportation by air, luxury bus and car;
- improve health and telecommunication facilities in all potential ecotourism areas;
- make sure that any decisions made regarding the development of an area of potential ecotourism should account for the needs, attitudes and aspirations of the people who are an integral component of the natural endowment that makes the area to be a potential for eco-tourism;
- in partnership with the local communities, identify opportunities for the local resource base;
- encourage the private sector to develop satellite small industry jobs on the fringes of the protected areas to service the needs of the hospitality trade;
- give incentives aimed at promoting in the peripheral areas:
  - the development of small- and medium-scale industries and entrepreneurial capabilities,
  - the establishment or improvement of efficient telecommunications services, and the environmentally-friendly construction of lodges, hotels and road network in all tourist attraction areas,
- ensure that service levels are improved and hotel tariffs are not prohibitive;
- create a hospitality regulatory body to set and enforce standards for players in the tourism industry;
- improve visibility of Malawi on the international scene by:
  - intensively and extensively promoting Malawi using Malawi Diplomatic Missions and International Tourist Agencies,
- promote the development of the distributive sector to deal with the packaging of multi-destination and national tours.

## **23.0 HOUSING**

*Good houses — a right for all Malawians*

### **23.1 Current Situation**

The stock of houses in Malawi is currently much less than the total number of houses required. In urban areas applications for houses remain on the waiting lists of the Malawi Housing Corporation (MHC) for many years. Politicisation, overstaffing and corruption number among many factors that have impacted negatively upon the efficiency of the MHC. As a consequence donors are not forthcoming to support housing projects. Construction of houses by private owners has slowed down due to lack of serviced plots.

The pledge made by the UDF in its 1999 manifesto to break, as they put it, “monopoly” by encouraging the establishment of more housing financial institutions, has not been fulfilled. Malawians deserve better. The NDA strongly believes that there is an urgent need for a careful planning to provide the requisite number of low-cost settlements in order to avoid congestion, pollution and urban degradation which is likely to have undesirable concomitants of all major housing expansion in the country. The creation of extensive slums in and around urban centres and the unplanned growth of large villages without necessary amenities are likely to result in unmitigated misery to the people and irreversible degradation of the environment. The NDA is committed to ensuring that people increasingly live and own decent, environment-friendly houses, and are safer in their homes.

*Many Malawians still live in shabby houses with poor sanitation*

**23.2 The NDA commitment** The NDA will:

- promote the building of more houses that are decent and of modern design in partnership between the public sector and private sector for rent and purchase in the urban and peri-urban areas;
- begin the phased release of capital receipts from past sales of council houses and allow the money to be used for the construction of new houses;
- encourage the building of low cost houses affordable by Malawians by the private sector and local authorities;
- transform the MHC into a housing trust which will enable Malawians, through a special housing scheme, to purchase houses in their districts of residence;
- ensure that all, and not only senior, civil servants benefit from the housing scheme;



- increase provision of security services by the police and other agents to ensure that people live in their houses without fear.

In support of these measures, the NDA will support research and utilisation of the technology so developed in the following major areas:

- development of cheap and durable building materials,
- low-cost housing, water supply and sanitation systems with necessary quality control,
- rationalisation of architectural and structural designs to suit local conditions,
- improved building technology for mass construction of housing and other building structures,
- provision of necessary assistance to the common person — through preparation of manuals incorporating detailed specifications, type-designs and technology — for construction of small housing units in urban as well as rural areas, on self-help basis,
- indigenous development of equipment and machinery for construction; and
- formation of efficient inexpensive ecologically safe and socially acceptable land-use concepts for rural and urban areas.

## **24.0 ENERGY**

It is generally agreed that if a country is to achieve industrialisation and its developmental goals, it has to increase its installed electrical capacity and its per capita energy consumption. The Malawian economy functions in a framework of a very narrowly based energy system. The modern economic sector is heavily dependent on oil, representing about 80 per cent of commercial energy consumption. The balance is supplied by hydropower. The NDA strongly believes that the overall development of Malawi calls for a decentralised energy system that involves a judicious mixture of technologies and a variety of energy resources. It is for this reason that, while accepting the fact that large-scale centralised systems are essential if sufficient power is to be provided to the industrial sector, the NDA opines that small-scale decentralised systems, involving low or simple technologies should complement rural electrification efforts that are urgently required to improve the quality of life in rural areas.

### **24.1 Petroleum**

**24.1.1 Current Situation.** Petroleum contributes about 3.5 per cent of the total energy demand. Malawi imports 97 per cent of petroleum products as refined products. These include leaded petrol, diesel, paraffin, aviation gasoline, aviation kerosene and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). Small amounts (3 per cent) of fuel grade ethanol is produced locally and blended with petrol in a 20:80 ratio is from ethanol which is produced locally and blended with petrol in the ratio of 20:80 of ethanol:petrol. The dependence on imported oil makes the country vulnerable to oil price changes that now keep on escalating. The importation of oil also heavily drains the country's

foreign exchange reserves. The seismic survey carried out in 1981 on Lake Malawi showed thick sediment layers with hydrocarbon potential. Studies so far conducted over Lake Malawi have not led to fossil fuel discoveries that are attractive enough for investors to be interested in their exploitation.

**24.1.2 The NDA's Commitment.** An NDA government shall:

- undertake long-term projections for Malawi's energy requirements to sustain household and economic activities,
- develop the domestic capacity for assessing different energy technologies, including the capacity to negotiate projects and technology transfer with foreign suppliers, and the general management of the energy sector,
- promote and encourage fossil fuel exploration in the country,
- encourage oil users to implement specific energy efficiency measures and to reduce energy/output ratios in target industries,
- put in place oil conservation measures,
- review Malawi's procurement and pricing mechanisms with a view to establishing how unit costs of petroleum products in the country can be best reduced,
- explore the possibilities of introducing a variety of conventional energy commodities in the modern economic sector in order to reduce dependence on oil.

**24.2 Coal.**

**24.2.1 Current Situation.** Coal contributes about 1 per cent of Malawi's total energy demand. It has been estimated that there are about 807 million tonnes of coal reserves in Malawi, and yet by the end of the year 2003, only 46,273 tonnes per annum were produced, thus necessitating imports of coal from Zimbabwe and Mozambique to meet local demand. The NDA recognises the fact that there is an urgent need for Malawi to establish how much of her known coal reserves can be exploited viably. A number of methods for coal gasification and liquefaction, which produce liquid fuel and at the same time conserve the gas generated, have not been adopted or adapted for use in Malawi.

**24.2.2 The NDA Commitment.** The NDA recognises coal as an important fossil fuel for commercial energy production and, when not used properly, as an environmental pollutant. Taking into account the latter, an NDA government shall:

- develop human resources required for the promotion of efficient use of Malawi's coal resources,
- intensify detailed feasibility studies aimed at establishing the total quantity of coal resources that can be exploited viably,
- expand Malawi's mining capacity in order to ensure that the nation benefits from the exploitation and utilisation of the coal resources while minimising coal's contribution to environmental pollution,

- promote the adaptation of the methods for coal gasification and liquefaction to local conditions.

## **24.3 Electricity**

**24.3.1 Current Situation.** Electricity contributes about 2.3 per cent of Malawi's total energy demand. The Electricity Supply Commission of Malawi (ESCOM) has a generation capacity of 304 MW, about 93.7 per cent (285 MW) of which is hydroelectricity and about 6.3 per cent (19 MW) of which is thermal-diesel. There is an additional private generation of about 51 MW, most of which is thermal-diesel and bagasse. About 3 GWh is exported to Zambia while the frequent power cuts that are now experienced in Malawi are having a negative impact on industrial output and on domestic services. By the year 2000, an insignificant segment (about 4 per cent) of the population in Malawi was connected to electricity. Malawians deserve better than this.

Two of the major problems that call for urgent attention are the inadequacy of the capacity that is available to meet our national demands and the very low efficiency levels at which Malawi's thermal stations are run. The problems are made worse by the fact that the availability of the current capacity is not only inadequate, as stated above, but also irregular and unpredictable. The latter is mainly due to such factors as lack of trained human capital to maintain and service the aging generating plants, the age of the generating machines, a poor spares inventor, and sedimentation at Nkula Falls.

**24.3.2 The NDA's Commitment.** An NDA government will enhance the energy generation capacity by:

- developing domestic technological capacity required for the efficient installations and maintenance of hydropower generating plants;
- promoting the standardisation of the power plants procured in order to facilitate easy procurements of spare parts;
- ensuring that the two modules, the capacity of each of which is 64 MW, are installed at Kapichira in order to complete the Kapichira project;
- promoting the development of such potential sites for:
  - hydropower generation as at Matope and Zalewa,
  - micro or mini hydropower low head generation as in the foothill of our mountains and in highland areas where such schemes are feasible; and
- expanding the installation of hydropower generation facilities in other sites where the balance of environmental and economic considerations is favourable.

The NDA shall encourage ESCOM to ensure that its diesel generating sets and the two Jet Engines in Blantyre are maintained in a state of repair in order to assure back-up power in times of crisis as currently experienced.

Regarding the inefficiency of our thermal stations, an NDA government shall:

- promote and encourage methods that improve the efficiency of thermal installations and reduce the transmission losses,
- ensure that the hydropower generation facilities are constantly serviced and that a good spares inventory is maintained,
- in consultations with farmers and the ESCOM, facilitate provision of incentives aimed at encouraging farmers to construct soil conservation measures required to stop soil erosion in the upper reaches of rivers that feed the dams in order to prevent siltation or sedimentation of the dams,
- increase awareness of the economic and other benefits of energy efficiency.

#### **24.4 Fuelwood and Charcoal**

**24.4.1 Current Situation.** The national forest resources are being rapidly depleted due to heavy reliance on fuelwood and charcoal as sources of energy by the majority of the rural people and the urban middle and low-income groups. The consequences of deforestation have been spelt out above under forests. Methods such as earth kilns employed to produce charcoal are very inefficient and waste a lot of wood.

**24.4.2 The NDA Commitment.** An NDA government shall, among other things:

- maintain a domestic technological capacity required for sustaining the economic and social benefits that accrue from sustainable utilisation of national forests;
- ensure that the actual area under forest in Malawi is established, preferably by satellite resources evaluation technique;
- enable the nation to maximise the economic and social benefits enjoyed from forests in a sustainable way;
- tackle causes of deforestation;
- ensure that the efficiency of producing charcoal from wood is increased;
- promote studies aimed at assessing the effects of replacing indigenous forests with other types of forests on the environmental and ecological balance;
- intensify afforestation and re-afforestation programmes;
- promote the planting of fast-growing species of plants, and of those with improved biomass yields and high calorific value;
- ensure availability of tree seedlings on a continuous basis as opposed to one special day in a year, by encouraging farmers and/or traditional leaders as additional suppliers of the tree seedlings;
- promote and encourage increasing manufacture of charcoal briquettes from sawdust and other organic wastes;

- promote the more productive use of existing agricultural land and the identification of alternatives for people on the margins of forests to unsustainable exploitation of forest resources.

### **24.3 Other Energy Resources**

**24.3.1 Current Situation.** The non-conventional forms of energy for which technologies are available in the world include solar energy, biogas, wind, wave, tide, alcohol and nuclear energy. Solar photovoltaic systems, solar thermal systems, and biogas are some of the technologies used but to a very limited extent. The Uranium deposits known to abound at Kayerekera in Chitipa District have not yet been exploited for power production.

It has been established that the national mean radiation for Malawi is 5.86 kilowatts hours per square metre per day and assessment of the most favourable and least favourable zones for solar photovoltaic and photo-thermal devices has been made. However, Malawi uses a small and very insignificant part of the total solar energy, and no concerted effort has been made to support the adaptation to local conditions and use of technologies for biogas. The NDA strongly believes that improvements in renewable energy technologies, whether in devices for conversion or utilisation, can lead to great benefit to more of the predominantly rural populations.

**24.3.2 The NDA Commitment.** An NDA government shall:

- develop local technological capacity and institutional infrastructure required for the promotion of efficient utilisation of technologies for renewable energies;
- undertake a detailed survey of wind and solar regimes, quantifying and assessing them for their potential as a source of local energy and how best to utilise them;
- encourage the improvement in the design of solar-powered systems and the greater use of local materials in order to reduce costs;
- encourage and support the development of anaerobic microbiology for enhancing biogas systems with indigenous feedstock, examining the effective use of local bacteria and their particular environment.

## **25.0 LAND** *Our birthright*

### **25.1 The NDA commitment**

The NDA recognises land as one of Malawi's most important natural assets. On assuming the reins of government, therefore, the NDA will:

- review the current land policy as a precursor to:
  - ensuring that the utilisation of such an important asset is in consonance with the NDA's desire that it be utilised for the benefit of all present and future citizens of this country,

- ascertaining if the land policy presently in force guarantees the long-term interests of indigenous Malawians and caters for the landless;
- encourage those who have large tracts of land to sell unused land to government for allocation to needy Malawians;
- investigate to establish the extent to which land allocation in the urban areas, particularly in prime areas, and elsewhere has been above board;
- weigh the merits and demerits of repealing laws that do not accommodate the transfer of titles;
- ensure that utilisation of land is efficient and sustainable;
- utilise the provision under section 28(2) of the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi as a basis to negotiate for the repossession, with a fair compensation, land that is left idle;
- reallocate transparently and equitably the repossessed land to all needy Malawians irrespective of their political affiliation;
- encourage and support the Malawians to whom the land has been relocated to maximise the economic utilisation of the land on a sustainable basis;
- ensure that land applications are processed expeditiously for approval.

## **25.0 SOCIAL WELFARE**

### ***Caring Community***

**25.1 Current Situation.** In 1999 the UDF pledged that all vulnerable groups in our society, including the aged, the orphans, the destitute, those with disabilities, and those in poor health, would be given opportunities to be productive and self-reliant. They have not delivered on this pledge. The UDF pledged further that they would increase access of the vulnerable groups to health services, encourage their participation in decision-making, and promote the welfare of the aged by providing them with financial assistance to start income generating activities. The UDF have failed also to deliver on this pledge.

There are orphans and others that are destitute who go about in our cities begging. The UDF government has done nothing to assist them. There are Malawians who, after serving their nation loyally, are now suffering, in their retirement, from the burden of abject poverty. The UDF government is oblivious to their plight. The government does not appear to subscribe to the fact that the provision of adequate pensions in old age, particularly in an environment of ever skyrocketing prices of goods, is morally right for governments to consider. The UDF government has in this respect created poverty, growing inequality and widespread insecurity.

The NDA believes that the welfare of state pensioners should be considered any time the wages or salaries of civil servants are revised upwards in line with prevailing prices. Pensioners deserve decency and respect.

### **25.2 The NDA commitment:**

#### **25.2.1 Children:** The NDA will:

- support organised centres dealing with disadvantaged children to ensure that they provide adequate, safe and secure premises

as well as appropriate training for the children, and monitor them to ensure that all programmes have the aim of developing the children into useful adults;

- implement the terms of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

**25.2.2 *People With Disabilities.*** The NDA supports the right of people with disabilities to live, work or study in an environment free from discrimination and in an atmosphere that is conducive to realisation of their full potential. It is in this context that an NDA government will:

- act to provide an accessible, supportive learning and work environment for people with disabilities;
- make provision, within limits of available resources, for the special needs of people with disability;
- encourage and assist Malawians to develop skills to help meet the social and learning needs of people with disabilities;
- respect people's rights of confidentiality with respect to their disability;
- employ trained social welfare personnel to be stationed in all strategic centres within the district assemblies, in order to monitor and provide social needs for the aged, orphans, and people with learning disabilities;
- establish a comprehensive policy for the people with learning disabilities and shall establish the number of such people and their whereabouts; and
- provide increased support to NGOs that are involved in the care of people with disabilities, emphasising capacity building;

**25.2.3 *Pensioners:*** We, in the NDA, appreciate the fact that pensioners, like the rest of us, have suffered from the inflation and the depreciation of the Malawi Kwacha experienced during the past 10 years. An NDA government will, therefore, assist pensioners by:

- increasing the basic state pension at least in line with inflation;
- encouraging those employed to save for retirement;
- providing training to pensioners in entrepreneurship so that they may be self-employed and, therefore, self-reliant;

**25.2.4 *Retrenched Personnel:*** The NDA will restructure and empower National Employment Councils to implement training, retraining and redeployment programmes for those retrenched, and to provide training and capital based assistance for new self-employment, enterprise creation, and for employment in existing enterprise employment schemes.



**25.2.5 Orphans and The Aged:** An NDA government will employ trained social welfare personnel to be stationed in all strategic centres within the district assemblies, in order to monitor and provide social needs for the aged and orphans. Within limits of available resources and in partnership with the private sector, the NDA government shall develop services for the aged, especially those designed to help:

- old people to continue living in their own homes,
- those who can no longer do so with the provision of accommodation that offers comfort and a homely atmosphere.

An NDA government shall also ensure that:

- all orphans,
  - grow up in a healthy family without being subjected to ill-treatment;
  - irrespective of their gender, age or ability to pay, are able to access education, be it primary or otherwise,
- child-headed households are supported,
- the orphans' right to their inherited property is protected until they reach adulthood,
- extended families and communities caring for orphans are supported and empowered with skills and services.

**25.3 General:** An NDA government will take positive steps to encourage all people to live freely and to seek employment opportunities regardless of impairment or disability, and will endeavour to ensure their access to any benefit provided by the government. The aim of the NDA government will be to provide a more effective safety net for the disadvantaged and to widen opportunities. The NDA will:

- initiate a comprehensive review of the welfare system to build a new framework for welfare and opportunity;
- establish a caring community of Malawians in which vulnerable people shall receive humane attention and the spirit of self-help shall be rekindled.

## **26.0 THE YOUTH**

**Theme:** *Youth development to create future leaders*

### **26.1 Current Situation**

The UDF has failed to create employment opportunities. This has led, among other things, to too many of our young people being unemployed, living with no hope for their future. Because of the paucity of employment opportunities, many youths are forced to be dependent on their parents for their basic needs. School-leavers end up, at best, as street vendors and, at worst, as thieves or Young Democrats that are used as tools for the perpetration of terror, violence and political harassment.

## 26.2 NDA's Commitment:

NDA is committed to empower the youth to play more constructive roles in socio-economic development instead of being tools for perpetration of terror violence and political harassment.

NDA will:

- enlist young, unemployed people to undertake work assignments in various fields, including agricultural sciences, computing, electronics, motor vehicle mechanics, carpentry, welding and fabrication, bricklaying, secretarial training, art, and sports as part of a national reconstruction programme;
- offer young people high-quality education and training;
- foster establishments of Youth in Development Associations through which the potential of our young people shall be tapped for socio-economic development;
- put in place a national reconstruction programme that shall enable young, unemployed Malawians to undertake work assignments for a specific period;
- give graduates from the vocational centres some financial support to start enterprises;
- establish a loan scheme for the youth to develop agro-business industry;
- encourage the micro-economic lending institutions to offer assistance to those interested in trade or self-employment;
- ensure that courses and programmes are provided in educational institutions to inculcate disciplined behaviour into the youth so that they do not become a menace to society;
- ensure that any youth in a job will have the right to study on an approved course for qualifications at an approved college;
- encourage local assemblies to provide more recreational parks, youth centres, and other facilities in order to keep the youth meaningfully

occupied and away from mischievous behaviour that deters them from developing into responsible citizens;

- ensure that young people learn their rights and responsibilities, with citizenship classes in every school and parenting classes for young adults;
- ensure that the youth are represented in appropriate decision-making structures;
- ensure that young people are represented on bodies that especially concern them;
- inculcate into the youth a high spirit of patriotism, self-reliance and sportsmanship.

## **27.0 GENDER**

**Theme:** *Greater role for women in decision-making and development*

### **27.1 Current Situation**

Women represent 51 per cent of Malawi's human population. They play significant roles in all spheres of economic and social life and make vital contributions to household welfare. And yet the women's voice has not been sufficiently recognised in government and legislation. Currently women constitute only 12.1 per cent of cabinet ministers, 8.3 per cent of members of parliament and 8.8 per cent of councillors. To the NDA, this is unacceptable. In the light of their important contributions to national development, the women should not suffer lack of access to productive assets and essential social services.

*NDA will uplift the status of women*

**27.2 NDA's Commitment:** On assuming the reins of power, therefore, the NDA will:

- ensure that all gender perspectives are mainstreamed in all development policies and programmes;
- promote gender equality, increase the representation of women in government decision-making structures from current levels, and strengthen their participation in socio-economic activities;
- work in close association with women's groups and associations to promote the well-being of women both in rural and urban areas;
- ensure that the department of women affairs in government is allocated adequate financial and material resources in order to ensure that all special needs of the women are adequately catered for across all sectors;
- ensure that in efforts to promote industrial development,
  - female-owned enterprises receive expanded access to credit,
  - female entrepreneurial initiatives are supported, and
  - women with sound investment proposals are assisted to venture into business and/or self-employment;
- provide loans to women for income generating activities without discrimination;
- expand girls' access to educational and security institutions

## **28.0 PROMOTING ARTS, CULTURE AND SPORTS**

The NDA believes that the arts, culture and sport are central to the task of recreating the sense of community, identity and civic pride that defines any country. When well developed, art, sport and leisure are vital to a quality of life and to economic development. Past administrations attached no importance to the role played by arts and culture in helping to create a civic society and contribute to national economic development. In other countries that have developed their theatres and art galleries, art and culture are significant earners, attracting tourists and creating employment opportunities for many people.

**28.1 The NDA's Commitment:** An NDA government will:

- re-equip the museum of Malawi with more items and artefacts depicting Malawian cultures;
- establish a National Heritage Fund to help preserve historic buildings and artistic treasures for the nation;
- set up a National Endowment for Science and the Arts (NESTA) to be funded by:
  - the lottery and
  - artists that have benefited from the arts and are willing to support young talent through their donations,and charge it with the responsibility of sponsoring young talent;
- promote the establishment of cultural villages in each region to attract tourists, and thereby creating employment opportunities to local communities;
- encourage and support indigenous musicians, playwrights, and cultural group;

- establish a Special Sports Development Fund to be used for the promotion of sports through the education system;
- restructure the Football Association of Malawi in order to improve football administration in the country and revive Malawi glory in this sport;
- in partnership with the private sector, develop or improve sports infrastructure to meet current international standards;
- support sporting excellence.