

**PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION
ON THE ASSESSMENT OF LAND ISSUES IN NGORONGORO DISTRICT**

12 MARCH, 2026

PROTOCOL

Your Excellency, the President, in a special way I thank Almighty God for enabling us to meet today in good health for the purpose of presenting the findings of the Assessment of land issues that are being complained about in Ngorongoro District. I also thank you personally for trusting us and appointing us to carry out this assessment. Thank you very much!

Your Excellency, the President, the findings of the assessment of land issues we are presenting to you concern three areas, namely the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, the Pololeti Game Reserve, and the Lake Natron Game Controlled Area. Due to their importance, the Government at different times made a decision to conserve these areas in accordance with the law.

Your Excellency, the President, in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area the complaints concern the balance and sustainability of Multiple Land Use within the conservation area, and the complaints in the Pololeti Game Reserve are that citizens were not fully involved in the process of upgrading the former Loliondo Game Controlled Area in 2022 into a Game Reserve. For the Lake Natron Game Controlled Area, citizens fear losing their land if the Government implements the decision to upgrade that game controlled area into a Game Reserve.

KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED

A. NGORONGORO CONSERVATION AREA

Your Excellency, the President, the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) is part of the Serengeti-Mara Ecosystem which is made up of the Serengeti National Park; the Ngorongoro Conservation Area; the Maswa, Kijereshi, Ikorongo, Grumeti and Pololeti Game Reserves; the Ikoma and Makao Community Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs); Mwiba Ranch; and the Maasai Mara National Park in Kenya. The Serengeti-Mara Ecosystem is world famous for large numbers of migratory wildlife such as wildebeest and zebras. In addition, the Ndutu area within the Ngorongoro Conservation Area is important as a calving ground for wildebeest. Your Excellency, the President, in the period of approximately 67 years of implementing Multiple Land Use within the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, there have been several achievements which include:-

- a. the Ngorongoro Conservation Area continuing to be a unique area in the world;
- b. the number of tourists increasing from Five Hundred Ninety-Two Thousand Four Hundred Ninety-Eight (592,498) in 2015 to reaching Eight Hundred Eighty-Four Thousand Four Hundred Eighty-Four (884,484) in March 2025 and tourism revenue increasing from shillings

billion Sixty (60) in 2015 to reaching shillings billion Two Hundred Twenty-Three (223) in March 2025;

- c. indigenous communities living inside the conservation area have continued to develop their customs and traditions without interference; and
- d. indigenous communities have continued to benefit from communal grazing lands they use jointly (communal grazing land).

Your Excellency, the President, despite those achievements, there are many challenges which are affecting Multiple Land Use of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, and if these challenges are not resolved, pressure on land use inside the Conservation Area will not be sustainable. These challenges are:-

- a. Increase in community development needs within the Ngorongoro Conservation Area due to population increase.

The population inside the conservation area has increased from approximately Eight Thousand (8,000) people in 1959 to One Hundred Thousand Seven Hundred Ninety-Three (100,793) in 2022. According to the National Bureau of Statistics of 2022, this number is estimated to increase to Two Hundred Seventy-Six Thousand Six Hundred Fifty-One (276,651) by 2050 at an average growth rate of 3.6% per year. This

increase in population goes hand in hand with an increase in land use demand and therefore increases competition for land use for conservation, tourism and community development because the size of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area does not increase;

- b. Increase in competition for land use, environmental degradation and reduction of grazing land for livestock and wildlife due to population increase and settlement dispersion inside the Conservation Area.

Settlements have increased from Thirteen Thousand Three Hundred Eighty-One (13,381) in 2019 to Seventeen Thousand Seven Hundred Thirty-Four (17,734) in 2025, equal to an increase of 28.8%;

- c. Increase in livestock inside the Conservation Area from Two Hundred Sixty-One Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty-Three (261,723) in 1960 to Seven Hundred Fifteen Thousand Four Hundred Sixty-Six (715,466) in 2022.

This livestock population includes cattle Two Hundred Seventy-Four Thousand Nine Hundred Forty-Three (274,943), goats Two Hundred One Thousand Nine Hundred Thirty-Eight (201,938), sheep Two Hundred Twenty-Six Thousand Five Hundred Fifty-Three (226,553), and donkeys Eleven Thousand Thirty-Two (11,032). According to the Commission's

assessment, cattle alone are estimated to increase from Two Hundred Seventy-Four Thousand Nine Hundred Forty-Three (274,943) in 2022 to Four Hundred Eighteen Thousand Nine Hundred Thirteen (418,913) by 2050 at an average growth rate of 2.7% per year, thereby increasing demand for grazing land.

Your Excellency, the President, the assessment shows that in 2022 livestock required an area of Four Thousand Five Hundred Seventy-Nine (4,579) square kilometres, equal to 56.4% of the entire NCA area of Eight Thousand One Hundred Twenty-Two point Seven (8,122.70) square kilometres. These requirements are estimated to increase to Eight Thousand Four Hundred Sixty-Four point Five Six (8,464.56) square kilometres equal to 104% of the entire NCA area by 2050. This means that even if wildlife and settlements are removed, that area will not be sufficient for livestock use alone by 2050.

Your Excellency, the President, despite statistics showing that livestock numbers are increasing, the ability of pastoralists inside the conservation area to sustain themselves economically and have food security by relying on livestock alone, known as Tropical Livestock Unit (TLU), has continued to decline. Technically, the minimum level for a person to sustain themselves by

relying on livestock alone is eight (8) cattle each weighing 250 kilograms. In 2022, Tropical Livestock Unit per person inside the conservation area was 3.5, which is estimated to fall to 1.5 per person by 2050. This means that the indigenous community living inside the Ngorongoro Conservation Area needs alternative economic activities in order to sustain themselves and achieve food security. However, due to legal restrictions, there is no opportunity to carry out other activities to increase food security apart from livestock keeping inside the Ngorongoro Conservation Area;

d. decline or disappearance of some wildlife, especially in the Ngorongoro Crater. Studies show that since 2000, some wildlife such as choroa, nyamela and swala twiga have disappeared within the Ngorongoro Conservation Area. Other wildlife such as resident wildebeest have declined in the Ngorongoro Crater. The decline or disappearance of wildlife is associated with an increase in human activities and climate change within the Conservation Area;

e. human wildlife conflicts where statistics show that an average of seven (7) people have been killed by wildlife every year from 2015 to 2025, making a total of seventy-seven (77) people killed. Also, two hundred seventy-four (274) people have been injured and one thousand four

hundred fifty (1,450) livestock have been killed by wildlife during that period;

- f. presence of communicable diseases (zoonotic diseases) such as anthrax and rabies affecting humans, livestock and wildlife due to interaction between humans, livestock and wildlife, as it is difficult to treat or vaccinate wildlife;
- g. environmental degradation resulting from human activities which is causing a reduction of natural vegetation within the Ngorongoro Conservation Area; and
- h. impacts of climate change which are causing changes in vegetation and increase and spread of invasive plant species, thereby reducing grazing lands for livestock and wildlife. This situation increases competition for grazing land for livestock and wildlife and also causes environmental degradation.

B. POLOLETI GAME RESERVE

Your Excellency, the President, the Pololeti Game Reserve was first conserved as the Loliondo Game Controlled Area since 1951 due to its importance in the

Serengeti–Mara Ecosystem. Due to the area being affected by human activities, especially livestock keeping that does not consider the carrying capacity of the area and the establishment of settlements within the area, in 2022 the Government excised an area of one thousand five hundred and two (1,502) square kilometres out of four thousand and two (4,002) square kilometres of the area and upgraded it into the Pololeti Game Reserve. The remaining area of approximately two thousand five hundred (2,500) square kilometres was allocated to citizens for their activities.

Your Excellency, the President, the Pololeti Game Reserve has environmental, ecological and economic importance because:

- a. this area is surrounded by mountain ranges, valleys, rocks and plains and has important water sources for Serengeti National Park;
- b. this area is a wildlife corridor and breeding area for migrating wildebeest in the Serengeti–Mara ecosystem;
and
- c. this area is important for tourism and is a buffer (“buffer”) for other conservation areas.

Your Excellency, the President, following the establishment of the Pololeti Game Reserve, the challenges include;

(i) citizens complaining about the legality of upgrading the reserve because it was their land taken without their participation, and therefore they request that the land of the reserve be returned so that they can use it under Multiple Land Use as in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area;

(ii) in 2022 the Government transferred the management authority of the Pololeti Game Reserve from the Wildlife Management Authority (TAWA) to the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority (NCAA) without observing the Wildlife Conservation Act, Cap. 283, which gives TAWA authority to manage game reserves and game controlled areas. The Commission has found that this Government decision creates legal, institutional and operational conflicts in the management of the reserve;

(iii) inefficient use of the area of two thousand five hundred (2,500) square kilometres allocated to citizens due to large numbers of livestock together with challenges of invasive plant species, a situation which creates competition for land use and continues to increase land demand for citizens. Also, during inspection in Loliondo and Sale divisions, the Commission observed groups of wildlife especially wildebeest, gazelles, zebras and giraffes mixing with

livestock in areas handed over to citizens;

(iv) lack of essential extension services for citizens in villages bordering the Pololeti Game Reserve; and

(v) the importance of improving the main Mto wa Mbu–Wasso road in order to stimulate economic growth of the district.

C. LAKE NATRON GAME CONTROLLED AREA

Your Excellency, the President, the Lake Natron Game Controlled Area was established under Section 9 of the Wildlife Conservation Law (The Fauna Conservation Ordinance, Cap. 302) of 1951. This area touches three (3) districts of Ngorongoro, Monduli and Longido. In Ngorongoro District, the area is in Sale Division and affects four (4) villages of Engaresero, Pinyinyi, Oldonyosambu and Jema.

Your Excellency, the President, the challenge facing citizens affected by this area is fear of losing their land if the Government implements the decision to upgrade this area into a Game Reserve. In addition, within this area there is infrastructure invested by the Government and private individuals including schools, dispensaries, roads, communication, tourism, administrative areas and

irrigation infrastructure. Furthermore, Jema Village, which is one of the villages within this area, is an area where in 2006 the Government implemented a programme of reducing population in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, where a total of 159 households of citizens were relocated to that village.

ENEO LA HIFADHI YA NGORONGORO

Taking into account the identified shortcomings and challenges in land use, the current situation and future projections, it is evident that the system of multiple land use within the Ngorongoro Conservation Area is not sustainable.

Therefore, it is recommended that:

- (i) the Ngorongoro Conservation Act, Chapter 284 be reviewed and amended with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders so as to align it with current times and needs;
- (ii) in order to strengthen community welfare and sustainable conservation, non-conservation activities be carried out outside the Ngorongoro Conservation Area;

- (iii) in order to remove encroachment within the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority should identify and register in a database all residents of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, their settlements, livestock, and issue them with a certificate of residence in accordance with the requirements of Section 23 of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Act; and
- (iv) migration within the Ngorongoro Conservation Area should be sustainable and given a legal basis.

Your Excellency, due to the decline in relations and cooperation between citizens and the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority, and thus reduced efficiency in the implementation of conservation, tourism and community development functions within the area, the Commission recommends that:

- (i) the relationship between the Pastoral Council and the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority be strengthened,

including putting in place a system for the use of funds within the Council in accordance with public financial management procedures; and

- (ii) while the Government continues to put in place arrangements to improve conservation and community welfare outside the Conservation Area, social services should continue to be provided, including rehabilitation and improvement of existing infrastructure.

Your Excellency, regarding the rate of spread of invasive plant species compared to the rate of controlling such species from spreading within conservation areas, the Commission recommends that the Government strengthen the implementation of the National Strategy for Control of Invasive Plant Species of 2019–2029. Implementation measures should include allocation of dedicated funds instead of relying on other recurrent expenditure funds of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority.

PORI LA AKIBA POLOLETI

Your Excellency, as stated earlier, residents of Loliondo and Sale divisions complain about not being involved in the establishment of the Pololeti Game Reserve and complain about not being allowed to use the reserve for grazing their livestock. In order to strengthen the management and sustainability of the Pololeti Game Reserve, the Commission recommends that:

- (i) the Government improve extension services and establish better livestock infrastructure including markets, water dams and grazing areas within the area of two thousand five hundred (2,500) square kilometres handed over to citizens, in order to reduce the desire of citizens to continue being attracted to the good environment within the Pololeti Game Reserve;
- (ii) management of the Pololeti Game Reserve be returned to TAWA from the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority in order to strengthen management of the area in accordance with the law;

- (iii) in order to improve the investment environment, the Government should take steps to resolve existing challenges between investors operating within the Pololeti Game Reserve;
- (iv) considering the challenge of livestock movement across Ngorongoro District, especially in border areas, all livestock should be identified through special identification marks in accordance with the Livestock Identification, Registration and Traceability Act, Chapter 184, within one year; and
- (v) the Government should strengthen social services including construction of the Mto wa Mbu–Wasso road of approximately 223 kilometres to bitumen standard in order to stimulate the economy of Ngorongoro District, which will reduce reliance on livestock alone and reduce traffic passing through the Ngorongoro Conservation Area towards the Mara Region.

Your Excellency, residents of the four (4) villages of Engaresero, Pinyinyi, Oldonyosambu and Jema have fears of losing their land if the Government implements its intention to upgrade the Lake Natron Game Controlled Area into a Game Reserve. The Commission recommends that:

(i) the Government should conduct an assessment of the Lake Natron Game Controlled Area to determine whether there is still need to implement the decision to upgrade it into a Game Reserve; and

(ii) in order to remove legal and institutional conflicts regarding the existence of grazing lands within conservation areas, a review should be undertaken of Government Notice No. 597 of 2022 which established grazing lands within those areas, with a view to removing such grazing lands from conservation areas.

OTHER ISSUES

Your Excellency, the President, due to issues identified regarding customary and leadership systems used by indigenous communities and systems of Non-Governmental Organizations, the Commission recommends that:

- (i) the Government, in collaboration with various stakeholders, should continue to provide education to customary leaders of indigenous communities on how to manage their traditions and customs without interfering with the legal and institutional systems governing land matters, conservation, tourism, and community development in their areas; and
- (ii) an assessment should be conducted on the conduct of all Non-Governmental Organizations operating within Ngorongoro District, and action should be taken against organizations found to violate the principles and objectives of their registration.

Your Excellency, in order to enable effective implementation of the Commission's recommendations and to address the shortcomings identified earlier, the Commission recommends that the implementation of the recommendations be supervised by the Prime Minister's Office by: (i) coordinating the implementation of the recommendations issued, (ii) preparing an action plan for the implementation of the recommendations; and (iii)

conducting monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the
recommendations.

Your Excellency, with respect, I request to present to you the Commission's
Report book, the summary report, and the Photo Book.

Your Excellency, with respect, I request to submit.