**SPEECH BY MR. AMOUR HAMIL BAKARI, COMMISSIONER OF ZANZIBAR REVENUE BOARD DURING THE OPENING OF THE WORKSHOP ON BUILDING EFFECTIVE TAXPAYER REGISTERS**

**HELD AT THE HYATT PART HOTEL, ZANZIBAR ON 11TH TO 15TH DECEMBER 2017**

# IMF East-Afritac Revenue Administration Advisor Mr. Berlin Msiska,

# IMF Representatives,

# Fellow Revenue Administrators,

# Ladies and Gentlemen,

Habari za Asubuhi/ Good Morning

I would like to begin by expressing my sincere gratitude to the East AFRITAC Centre of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for hosting this important workshop on Building Effective Taxpayer Registers in Zanzibar. The theme of the workshop is quite timely and topical. It is timely to ZRB as we have just received the final Report on TADAT in Zanzibar and one among the weakness area is Unreliable and inaccurate taxpayer database where number of active and inactive taxpayers is uncertain.

I also would like to take this opportunity to extend a very special welcome to Revenue Administrators from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania Mainland and Uganda who have come from outside Zanzibar. I welcome you all by saying ***Karibuni Sana***, ***Zanzibar ni Njema Atakaye Aje*** which means Zanzibar is a Nice place for everyone to come. I hope you have already started to enjoy the beauties of Zanzibar since your arrivals. It is my hope that you will enjoy your stay and also do take some time off your busy workshop schedule to taste the hospitality of Zanzibaris and their culture.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I may take this opportunity to talk very few words about Zanzibar Revenue Board your co-host in this workshop. ZRB was established in 1998 during the reforms era of revenue administration in our region. ZRB as a semi-autonomous organ, is the Premiere Agency of the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar for the Administration and Collection of government revenue from inland sources other than Custom Duties and Income Taxes which are collected by Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) Zanzibar Office. Therefore, Zanzibar has a Duo Tax Administration Structure at National Level. The government of Zanzibar established ZRB to maximize revenue collection by enhancing voluntary compliance through improvement of service delivery to taxpayers, integration and harmonisation of revenue administration operations, and improvement of staff productivity.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Specifically, this workshop is relevance for “***Data Integrity in Taxpayer Registration”*** which is a major subject in our Revenue Authorities. Unreliable and inaccurate taxpayer database, hampering effective compliance management, particularly with the uncertainty surrounding status and number of taxpayers. The design of our Taxpayer Registration Database does not meet a number of the key features of a sound taxpayer registration system.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Accurate Taxpayer Registration by giving them a unique identified number, is a fundamental step in administering taxes. Revenue Authorities must compile and maintain a complete database of businesses and individuals that are required by law to be registered. We have to understand that, registration and numbering of each taxpayer, underpins key administrative processes associated with filling, payment, assessment and collection of revenue.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Therefore, A key initiative for most of the Revenue Authorities, has been moving away from a traditional means of registering taxpayer to a modern way of using electronic system. We are also, in the process of acquiring an integrated Tax Administration system, preparing a single tax procedures code and strengthening and enhancing of provision of quality taxpayer services.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

I have gone through the schedule of this workshop, and found that during the five (5) days the facilitators will take you through the following areas: Achieving A High Integrity Taxpayer Register, Building A high Integrity Taxpayer register, Building Effective Taxpayer Registers, Overview on the design and preparation of an improvement plan/program for registration and sharing each other experiences in the registration of taxpayers in the region.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

At this point, I wish to pose a challenge to you, that in your deliberations during this workshop, you come up with recommendations to be adopted by the Regional Tax Administration authorities, especially but not limited to the alternative strategies for improving Taxpayer Registration within the Regions that will enhance taxpayer compliance and the provision of quality taxpayer services.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

I wish to conclude by recapping that, we, as revenue administrators, should recognise the critical role we play as the facilitators of economic recovery and in the process of shaping our respective countries’ future. We are the principal institutions, charged with the responsibility of collecting government revenue in modern societies that are built on taxes. Domestic financing, will remain the only sustainable source of funding for government’s development projects.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

We must therefore, continuously embrace the leading practices in revenue administration starting with registration processes. I am therefore personally very enthusiastic about this forum. It is a great opportunity to tap rare and incisive information on the challenges of registration in this part of African. I look forward to fruitful and interactive discussions in the following couple of days. I wish to thank the IMF for organizing this event. I am certain that these forthcoming days will be very educative and useful in enhancing the registration of taxpayers.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

With these few remarks, I formally open this workshop and thank you very much for your attention.