

**DIRECTORATE OF PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS  
UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA**

Telephone: 255-22-2114512, 2116898

E-mail: [ikulumawasiliano@yahoo.com](mailto:ikulumawasiliano@yahoo.com)

[press@ikulu.go.tz](mailto:press@ikulu.go.tz)

Fax: 255-22-2113425



***PRESIDENT'S OFFICE,  
THE STATE HOUSE,  
P.O. BOX 9120,  
DAR ES SALAAM.  
Tanzania.***

**PRESS RELEASE**

The Government has reassured the international community that Tanzania will never do anything to hurt or take any decision that may irresponsibly destroy the Serengeti National Park such as building a tarmac road through the Park.

However, the Government has reiterated its commitment to meet its responsibilities of supporting development efforts of poorer communities living around the park including building a tarmac road on the northern tip of the park to ease the severe transport challenges facing those communities.

“The Serengeti is a jewel of our nation as well as for the international community. We want to give you our assurances that we cannot be irresponsible by destroying the Serengeti. We will do nothing to hurt the Serengeti and we would like the international community to know this,” President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete told Mr. John McIntire, World Bank Country Director today, Wednesday, February 9, 2011 during a courtesy call on the President at the State House in Dar es Salaam.

The Dar es Salaam-based Mr. McIntire also represents the Bank in Uganda and Burundi.

Armed with an illustration of a map of northern Tanzania, President Kikwete told Mr. McIntire: “There has been so much unnecessary confusion about this issue. Let me give you my assurances that we will keep the Serengeti intact. We will not build a tarmac road through the Serengeti National Park. We will only build a road around the park to ease very serious transport challenges facing the poorer communities around the park.”

Under the plan, the Government wants to decongest traffic inside the park that currently crosses the Serengeti daily on a 220-kilometer road which passes right

through the park. Instead, a planned road will only cross the Serengeti for only 54 kilometers which will remain unpaved.

In recent months, a global network of environmental activists and conservators has mounted a completely misinformed campaign claiming that the Government of Tanzania intends to destroy the Serengeti by building tarmac road through the park, which will seriously hurt the famous migration of wildlife.

“No tarmac road will be built through the Serengeti. As you know well, Tanzania is the most conservator country in the world. This has been our policy and position since our independence and you can have my assurances that this position will remain unchanged,” said President Kikwete adding:

“While we will continue protecting our Serengeti seriously, we will also make sure that, as Government, we meet our responsibilities to our people. These people living in the northern side of the park were removed from inside the park itself as part of our conservation efforts. It takes about eight hours of very rough travel to reach their area from Mto wa Mbu town, and it is only 170 kilometers stretch. They have no road. They have no water. They have no power. We will be doing huge injustice if we do not move to correct these imbalances. If they perceive that we don’t care about them, they will easily become enemies of the park and that will harder to deal with.”

He said: “We will continue with our serious efforts of conservation, but we cannot deny these people living on the northern side of the Serengeti border a road. There is neither justification nor explanation for not building this important road.”

The President thank Mr. McIntire for his suggestion that the World Bank would be willing to fund processes leading to building a tarmac road on the southern side of Serengeti National Park but insisted that the road to the south would not solve transport challenges of communities living on the northern side of the park.

Ends.

Issued by:

Directorate of Presidential Communications,

**State House.**

Dar es Salaam.

9<sup>th</sup> February, 2011