

Inauguration 2009 -- A Day to Remember

Michael K. Thang'wah, FMH

I am still reliving the joy that I experienced during the Inauguration of President Barack Obama. I had waited for that day since he was announced the winner of November elections.

I woke up at 4:00 am, Tuesday, and at 5:00am, I was on my way to down town DC. What amazed me was the sea of people flocking the Metro Station in those wee hours of the morning (I thought I was the only early riser to beat the crowd). Within two hours of train-riding and walking, I had secured myself a place at the National Mall: unfortunately, I did not have a ticket. In short, I remained standing for seven hours until the ceremony was over. Nonetheless, it was worth it: I am proud that I was part of that historic moment. As a Kenyan, I felt that I represented my fellow country men and women who could not make it to witness president Obama's inauguration.

President Obama is held with high esteem in Kenya: you all recall that after he won the elections, the government of Kenya declared the next day a holiday – in his honor. During the inauguration, the Kenyans were glued on their TV sets; others listened to the radio, to get the event as it unfolded. The whole of Kenya was in celebratory mood – the young and the old alike were all celebrating.

What enthused me – and I feel it is a sentiment shared by many – is the message of hope that president Obama stands for. He is an icon of hope to America, and the world at large. His openness to reach out to both friends and foes, to extend a helping hand to those in need, and his foresight – to prepare a better tomorrow for the future generations – “nourishes” my hope. His youthful age is both a challenge and an inspiration to the young generation.

It is my prayer that all people embrace each other as brothers and sisters for a better world: and as president Obama said, “we cannot help but believe that the old hatreds shall someday pass; that the lines of tribe shall soon dissolve; that as the world grows smaller, our common humanity shall reveal itself; and that America must play its role in ushering in a new era of peace.” There is hope...!

Submitted to the HNP Communications Office Jan. 2009