



**MINISTRY OF LABOUR
OFFICE OF THE CABINET SECRETARY**

REMARKS BY

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**CABINET SECRETARY
MINISTRY OF LABOUR**

**DURING THE EAST AFRICA ANNUAL PLANNERS'
CONVENTION 2021**

IN

MALINDI

8TH -12TH NOVEMBER, 2021

My Cabinet Colleagues Present,

Hon Obiga Kania, Minister of state, Urban Development, Uganda

H.E Governor Amason Kingi

Joakim Nyarangi, president Kenya Institute of Planners

Mildred Ambani, Honorary Secretary Kenya Institute of Planners

Mr Gershom Otachi, Chairman National Lands Commission

Other invited Guest

Planners,

Fourth Estate

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning

I am honored to be invited for this annual Planners Convention bring held here in Malindi. Let me start by appreciating your profession for the good work that you do in land use and physical planning.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Kenya aspires to acquire a middle–income country status offering high quality of life as envisaged in the Kenya Vision 2030. Attainment of this noble aspiration is however hinged on our Country’s ability to create sustainable employment and livelihood for our people

Labour is one of the most important factors of production, and must therefore be at the center of all planning activities whether by public or private firms. Kenya's economically active population is **22.3 million** with the youth population accounting for **75.1 % (35.7 million)**.

While close to **1.2 million** Kenyan youth join the labour market every year, our economy was only able to accommodate **800 thousand** in both formal and informal sectors before the onset of COVID-19 pandemic.

This therefore presents a challenge not only to labour and employment sector, but also to the planners because, with unemployment opportunities diminishing in the rural areas, comes rural urban migration and hence mushrooming of informal settlements.

As the ministry responsible for Labour and employment, we have made a deliberate decision to address the unemployment problem by focusing on labour migration even as we strengthen our local economy to create more decent jobs.

We are cognizant of the immense socio-economic benefits of labour migration to both countries of origin and destination. While labour migration is a source of employment and livelihoods for migrant workers, brings in the much-needed remittances to migrants' countries of origin and is also one of the main avenues of technology and skills-transfer between countries, to destination countries it addresses skills gaps.

Currently, there are **4 million** Kenyans in the diaspora who bring in much needed diaspora remittance. In the year 2020, diaspora remittance was **USD 3.09 billion**. In the first 6 months of this year 2021, we have received **Ksh 192 billion**.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Planner are needed to advice investors when planning their facility layout. They are to have an eye on operating costs, material costs, management control and maintenance of facilities. Even as they do this, I want to encourage you all, to also have an eye in the overall productivity of not just the facility, but also those who will be operating that facility.

I have a department in my Ministry, the National Productivity and Competitiveness Center which can partner with planners to put a special focus on enterprise productivity for overall economic growth and hence Job creation.

Similarly, I wish to encourage all planners to familiarize themselves with the OSH Act 2010, and more specifically section 125 (1) which mandates the director OSH to approve all building before they are erected or converted for use as a workplace.

I also wish to bring to your attention the occupational safety and health (building operations and works of engineering construction) rules 2021. In particular, I wish to focus on article 7 subsection (1) which requires every contractor who employs more than twenty persons, for every site on which he is the contractor; to appoint a site safety supervisor who is experienced in the operations or works carried at the site, and is suitably qualified for the purpose of advising the contractor on safety, health and welfare requirements; he is also to supervise and ensure the observance of those requirements, and promote the safe conduct of work at the sites.

These rules further require a contractor who employs twenty or less persons to either appoint himself or another person to be safety supervisor as long as he or the person appointed is experienced and is suitably qualified.

Under these rules a 'Site safety supervisor' is a person competent in occupational safety and health and has undertaken construction safety supervisor course or its equivalent.

Let me encourage all of you to embrace this statutory requirement to ensure that all the work place have safety requirements such as enough ventilations, Fire safety requirements, proper Lighting among others. I invite you to partner with DOSH NEMA, National Construction Authority, Counties among others so that, together we implement these requirements under the OSH Act.

Ladies and gentlemen,

My Ministry is the custodian of the Kenya National Occupational Classification Standard, popularly known as (KNOCS). This is a dictionary of all occupations in the country.

This dictionary helps in defining the job specific roles of each occupation so that employers are in a position to assign responsibilities and also remunerate employees on the basis of tasks performed.

I wish to encourage the Institute of Planners to partner with my Ministry under the department of National Human Resource Planning and Development to review this dictionary of occupations so that we can classify all the occupation that falls within your domain.

Similarly, In the performance of your duties, my Ministry would also wish to partner with you so that we can together design curriculum for the workers in your industry. In my Ministry, National Industrial Training Authority has been given the mandate of all Industrial Training. All the training programmes being offered by NITA have gone through vetting and approval by the Kenya National Qualification Authority.

Let me encourage you to partner with NITA because industrial training provides a flexible, effective and work friendly on the job training that can easily bridge the gaps in the industry. The competencies acquired are then certified to enable graduates to expand their outlook or join the formal employment. Currently NITA is implementing the Recognition of Prior learning policy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As Planners it is important to identify the nexus between you profession and overall economic growth of our Economy.

While Economic growth is important, however, the desire for growth has to be related to employment creation, economic stability, sustainability of investments, raising the quality of life and other social objectives.

Analyzing the role of physical and Land use planning is therefore vital in understanding how planning can help to achieve a balanced development. Generally speaking, physical planning plays the role of translating socio economy and other policies into spatial and physical forms.

In the course of your work, it is important for Physical planners to take interest in urban unemployment and poverty. Failure to do this, would be equivalent to planning in a vacuum. This therefore calls on all planners to develop special policies and programmes to address this challenge.

As planners, you need to analyze the implication of all the projects you design from the perspective of employment creation. For example when you undertake infrastructure development project, you must be in a position to see the direct results of that investments to the local community. Big infrastructure investment must generate jobs, incomes and business opportunities, to the local community.

Similarly, as planners, you must see beyond the project and plan for long lasting impacts such as improved access to goods and services, and enhanced local production which can contribute to sustainable poverty reduction and local development.

For example, when implementing rural infrastructure especially in our new dispensation of County governments, as planners how often do, we integrate local resource-based strategies such as the use of local labour, local materials, local suppliers and contractors.

In an economy, like ours where we still have unemployment at 6.6 percent, local resource-based approaches absorb more un skilled and semi-skilled labour, hence creating direct and indirect jobs.

As planners, I also wish to challenge you all to go Green in Jobs creation initiatives, by promoting employment that reduces environmental impacts, restores ecosystems and biodiversity, reduce consumption of energy, materials and resources; and avoid the generation of waste and pollution.

As you come up with urban plans, ensure the proposed project will create urban green jobs. In land use planning, labour and employment has to be at the heart of every single activity to be undertaken.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In the world today, there is a competition between cities to attract investment and hence create employment opportunities for its people. It is therefore the responsibility of Planners to make their cities and towns attractive for investment; this must be the new requirement of any urban planner.

Attractive cities are competitive and able to attract new-emerging businesses and skilled workforces that are the driving force in the global economy. I want to challenge you today, to make our cities attractive so that we can attract more investment and hence better and decent Jobs.

I also wish to challenge you to make our cities Unique. For example, Lamu is known for its uniqueness, how many of us here today consider this as an important factor in our spatial planning. If someone visit any of our cities, is there anything distinctive about them that is uniquely Kenyan enough to attract huge investment.

This is the greatest challenge facing all of you here today, and It is my believe that by the end of this convention, you will have come up with new strategies that will help you overcome existing barriers in order to achieve attractive physical urban environment, that is conducive for business and hence job creation.

If others have done it, why not us? A good example is Dubai, Singapore, Taiwan, Doha, the new city that is being constructed in Saudi Arabia, among others. It can be done, all that is needed is to partner with county governments to make this happen.

Finally, as you address long-term development goals; you must ensure land use and physical plans are flexible and offer choices, rather than remain static “master plans”. This is how you will create employment opportunities for our unemployed population.

Let me thank you once again for extending this invitation to me and My delegation to come and dialogue with you on your role as planners in Labour and employment.

May God bless you as you continue with this one-week long convention.

Thank You.