



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY

SPEECH BY SAMMY ITEMERE, CBS, PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, STATE DEPARTMENT OF BROADCASTING AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS, MINISTRY OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY DURING THE OPENING OF THE 5TH MEETING OF EAST AFRICAN COOPERATION (EAC) TECHNICAL COMMITTEE FOR POSTAL SERVICES TO PREPARE THE EAC POSTAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY HELD AT NAIROBI SAFARI CLUB ON 12TH JANUARY 2017 AT 9.30 AM

Good Morning Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my great pleasure to be here with you this morning to share some ideas on the development of the East African Cooperation (EAC) Postal Development Strategy. The development of the Strategy could not have come at a better time than this when the region is yearning for a competitive postal sector with reliable and secure high quality postal services accessible to all users in the region.

As you are aware, the EAC Postal Services, like in many other regions all over the world, have been affected by the rapid conversion to digital communications, competition from the private sector, high costs of infrastructure, and the heavy public mandate of providing the universal postal services to all citizens. Many people associate postal services with delivery of letters, bills, magazines, parcels, personal and invitations cards to the residents at affordable rates.

Nevertheless this trend is changing with the advent of advanced communication technology minimizing distance and boundaries as barriers of communication and delivery of most items mentioned above.

This has drastically reduced the volume of postal delivery on communications items thereby affecting the revenue and operation of postal systems. It is a fact that the postal system did not embrace the changes in technology fast enough in tandem with the new developments. However, it is not late and postal service providers can still catch up through reforms that are geared to adopt the changes in operating environment.

The starting point for the postal transformation process is the formulation of a new Development Strategy that would re-engineer the system to adopt the new economic and social environment. This means that available data and information should be used to inform what the Postal System does well today and what should be done for better future economic results.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Preparation of the EAC Postal Development Strategy is an important exercise that is expected to achieve 4 major milestones for the regional postal sector.

1. Identification of major issues affecting the postal operations in the region.
2. Establishment of a strategic framework for the development of EAC Postal Services Sector
3. Setting up regional goals, objectives and strategies for implementation,
4. Promotion of interests of postal service users and providers by ensuring high quality services are offered throughout the region.

As you are aware, the postal sector in the region is experiencing various challenges that include;

1. Non-provision of universal postal service in all parts of EAC

2. Lack of a national electronic addressing system and
3. Low quality Service standards;
4. weak legal and regulatory framework,
5. Lack of information-based services,
6. Inadequate postal service network.

To address the situation, I expect the Technical Committee on Postal Services to propose projects and activities for implementation to increase efficiency, transparency, quality of service at affordable prices to all people in the EAC region. I am expecting project proposals on:

1. Modernization of postal infrastructure in order to fulfill the citizens' needs and demands for universal postal services and other commercial services.
2. Development and provision of high quality postal services at affordable prices

3. Creation of financial sustainability and stability,
4. Enhancement of access for persons with social needs in postal universal services,
5. Adoption and application of the electronic address system;
6. Establishment of an appropriate legal and regulatory framework for the provision of postal services;
7. Informatization of the postal network and postal services;
8. Establishment of a suitable environment and conditions for an open and competitive environment,
9. Introduction of new postal services like financial services, transportation-logistics services, insurance activities,
10. Provision of various products and e-services

Development of the postal sector based on global best practices and harmonization of the domestic legislation would ensure sustainability of the postal services sector.

I believe that there exists a significant opportunity to achieve real reform to ensure sustainable and affordable postal delivery system for the region targeting both public and private sector.

Kenya has initiated the process of postal sector revitalization where policy and regulatory frameworks are being reviewed to address the new developments in the sector. An independent taskforce has been put in place to advise the government on how to make the postal network economically viable, supplement the role of post office in financial inclusion, including insurance products and how to strengthen the role of Postal Corporation of Kenya in the provision of the E-commerce services among others. I am expecting the report to be complete soon.

Finally, there are concerns by stakeholders and observers about the ability of the sector to overcome the changing market and technological environment.

I am convinced that there always an innovative way out of any difficult situation. The development of this strategy is the beginning of the postal sector transformation into an economic giant in the region. Lastly, I wish you resourceful and successful deliberations.

With those few remarks I wish to declare this **Fifth (5th)EAC Postal Sector Technical Committee Meeting** officially opened.