REPUBLIC OF KENYA

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY

SPEECH BY MR. SAMMY ITEMERE, PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, FOR BROADCASTING AND TELECOMMUNICATION DURING THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF NATIONAL TRAINING FOR THE 800 VILLAGE DIGITAL TV PROJECT ON 4TH APRIL, 2018, NAIROBI, KENYA
Representatives from the Embassy, Peoples Republic of China
Mr. David Zhang; CEO StarTimes
Senior Government of Kenya officials present
Senior employees of Startimes
Distinguished trainers and trainees
Ladies and Gentlemen

I wish to express my appreciation for your kind invitation for me to join you here at this opening ceremony for this training workshop of Digital Village TV Project
for Kenya. The training aims to equip the engineers with the relevant skills and experience necessary for successful installation of digital TV in 800(eight hundred) villages across the country.

On behalf of the people and the Government of Kenya, I wish to thank the Government of Peoples’ Republic of China for identifying Kenya as one of the key beneficiary for the 10,000 (ten thousand) villages digital television project in Africa. ICTs occupy a very special place in the hearts and minds of Kenyans. Indeed, ICTs not only drive the Kenyan society today but also are intricately embedded in our national development plan, christened Vision 2030. As a country, we have
embraced ICTs because of our firm belief in their transformative power. Kenya's ICT sector is vibrant, ambitious and innovative, and is underpinned by sound and progressive National ICT Policy. As a result, ICTs have in recent times transformed our country into one of the smartest societies in the region, and made life easier, work more productive and enterprise more efficient and profitable for our people. We are not at the peak as yet, but we are slowly but surely meeting our policy objectives in this strategic sector of our economy.

Ladies and gentlemen, Article 35 of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010 provides for
the right of access to information. This right has been actualized through the enactment of the Access to Information Act, 2016. This therefore, obligates the Government to ensure that citizens have access to information they required for their social-economic wellbeing.

Following the successful migration from analogue to digital Television (TV) Broadcast in 2015 in compliance with International Telecommunications Union (ITU) mandatory requirement, a significant part of Kenyan population remains unserved or underserved by digital broadcast. Statistics from the Communications
Authority of Kenya for the quarter ending December 2017 indicates that the digital broadcasting signal currently covers 83.6 per cent of the Kenyan population. This implies that one in every six Kenyans is unable to access digital broadcasting services; mainly in rural areas. The Digital TV project will complement the ongoing digital TV roll out through Kenya Broadcasting Corporation and ensure all Kenyans have access to information.

As leaders in this field, we have the obligation to mitigate the unequal distribution and the divide in access to TV services; I am glad to note that this project intends
to provide;

1. Two sets of solar power projector TV Systems and one set 32-inch digital TV set, satellite dishes and accessories to 3 public facilities e.g. School, Youth Centre or other prominent public areas in each village;

2. Twenty Sets of Satellite TV Terminals including STBs, Satellite dishes and accessories to Twenty Households with functional TV Sets.

This will help to bridge this divide in access to broadcast information.
Therefore, Ladies and gentlemen, the successful roll out of this project will lead to; Increased access to Information through TV broadcast; Reduced urban-Rural Digital Divide; Increased Bilateral cooperation; Increased Knowledge transfer and wealth creation and Increased in national Cohesion. This will facilitate the achievement of the Government BIG four transformation Agenda through provision of communication and marketing services.

As Government we are committed to the successful implementation of the project
and we have established and operationalized a project implementation committee, as well as ensuring that all key issues including duty/ tax exemption, selection of villages and signing of a contractual agreement with StarTimes are effectively addressed.

I wish to challenge all of us to play our part in unleashing the energy and unexploited talent of the youth who today constitute the majority of our population by ensuring inclusion of youth, children and people with disabilities, women and other vulnerable groups in society during the entire project cycle.

I am positive that we shall take full advantage of the wealth of knowledge and
experience present at this training workshop, and the partnerships we have forged between our Governments and StarTimes Limited, to identify the key success factors in order to drive the project implementation. I wish the trainee engineers success in this noble endeavor.

With those remarks, it is now my humble pleasure to declare the First National Training Workshop for the 800 village Digital TV project officially opened.

Thank you.