

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE DIGITAL ECONOMY

ADDRESS BY MR STEPHEN ISABOKE, EBS, PRINCIPAL SECRETARY FOR BROADCASTING AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS, MINISTRY OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS & THE DIGITAL ECONOMY, DURING THE OPENING OF THE GUSII INNOVATION WEEK 2025 AS DELIVERED ON HIS BEHALF BY MR ALPHONCE KANUNGA, SECRETARY FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND POSTAL SERVICES.

WEDNESDAY, 29 OCTOBER 2025

KISII.

SALUTATION

All protocols observed,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning!

I. It is a great pleasure to join you today for the Gusii Innovation Week 2025, a premier platform bringing together over 500 participants, from policy makers and innovators to youth, women and investors, to shape the future of innovation in the South-Western part of Kenya.

II. The theme of this year's Innovation Week, "Resilient Agrifood Systems for Nutritional Security and Economic Sustainability," speaks directly to Kenya's priorities under the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA). It calls on us to apply innovation, technology and partnership to strengthen agriculture, create jobs and secure the nation's food systems for future generations.

III. The Government of Kenya, through the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy, recognises that technology and innovation are key enablers of BETA. Our focus is to ensure that every sector, including agriculture, benefit from digital transformation. From farm productivity and market linkages to access to finance and real-time information.

IV. The South-Western part of Kenya, like many parts of our country, faces challenges of youth unemployment, food insecurity and climate vulnerability. Yet, it also holds immense potential, fertile land, dynamic enterprises and a growing innovation ecosystem. Gusii Innovation Week provides the perfect platform to unlock this potential through collaboration and creativity.

V. As the State Department for Broadcasting and Telecommunications, we are committed to expanding digital infrastructure and connectivity, ensuring that innovators in Kisii and Nyamira can access reliable internet and digital tools to drive Agri-Tech solutions and e-commerce growth.

VI. The Agri-Tech AI Hackathon and innovation summit featured this week embody the spirit of the Government's Digital Superhighway agenda, showcasing how artificial intelligence, data analytics and smart technologies can revolutionise Kenya's Agri-Food systems.

VII. GIW2025 also supports entrepreneurship and digital inclusion for youth and women. This aligns with BETA's goal of empowering communities from the bottom up by turning local ideas into viable enterprises that create jobs and income.

VIII. The event's focus on market access and investment partnerships complements national efforts under Vision 2030 and the African Union Agenda 2063, particularly through the promotion of digital trade and opportunities presented by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

IX. I commend the organisers, partners and participants for their collaboration in driving this regional innovation ecosystem. Your work demonstrates that when government, academia and the private sector unite, innovation thrives and communities prosper.

X. To conclude, the Government reaffirms its commitment to leveraging ICT and innovation as engines of national development and economic empowerment. Let us continue to build bridges between technology and agriculture, between innovation and inclusion, and between local action and global opportunity.

And now it is my pleasure to officially declare the Gusii Innovation Week 2025 open.

Thank you. Asanteni sana.