REPUBLIC OF KENYA

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE DIGITAL ECONOMY

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY MR STEPHEN ISABOKE, EBS, PRINCIPAL SECRETARY FOR BROADCASTING AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS, MINISTRY OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE DIGITAL ECONOMY, DURING THE 5TH BROADCASTERS CONVENTION EAST AFRICA.

TUESDAY, 26 MAY 2026.

EMARA OLE SERENI, NAIROBI.

SALUTATION

- Distinguished Delegates
- Industry Leaders
- Partners
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning

I. It is a great honour to welcome you all to Nairobi for the 5th Broadcasters Convention East Africa. The theme of this year's convention, 'Reimagining Next: AI, Cloud, and the Future of Broadcast in Africa,' is especially significant as Africa navigates a rapidly evolving digital era. Broadcasting across Africa is entering a new era, one defined not only by transmission infrastructure, but increasingly by data, cloud computing, artificial intelligence and digital platforms that are reshaping how content is created, distributed and consumed.

II. The Government of Kenya recognises broadcasting and telecommunications as strategic pillars within the Digital Superhighway and Creative Economy pillar of the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA). Our policy direction remains focused on expanding digital infrastructure, strengthening connectivity, supporting innovation ecosystems and creating an

enabling regulatory environment that allows media and creative industries to thrive responsibly within the digital economy.

III. Kenya's digital ecosystem continues to grow at an unprecedented pace. Latest data from the Communications Authority of Kenya reveals that our mobile data subscriptions have reached about 62 million, while smartphone penetration across our networks has climbed decisively to 92.9 per cent. Driven by a historic surge in 5G data consumption, which now averages an extraordinary 46.4 gigabytes per user every month, this expanding digital infrastructure is fundamentally transforming media consumption patterns, particularly among young people, whose engagement is entirely mobile-first, on-demand and digitally driven.

IV. Across East Africa, we are witnessing a significant structural shift away from legacy broadcasting infrastructure towards cloud-enabled, platform-driven ecosystems. Continentally, Africa's cloud computing market is expanding at an accelerated annual rate of 25 to 30 per cent, democratising access to production, storage and content distribution capabilities. Cloud technology allows local broadcasters to scale operations dynamically and lower overhead

costs, presenting enormous opportunities to compete effectively within regional and global digital markets.

V. Artificial Intelligence is equally transforming the broadcasting value chain. From automated subtitling and real-time translation in African languages, to intelligent content recommendation systems, metadata tagging and audience analytics, AI is creating new possibilities for efficiency and audience engagement. However, as we embrace a continental AI market projected to grow from 4.5 billion US dollars to 16.5 billion US dollars by 2030, we must ensure that African stories, cultures and identities remain at the absolute centre of this digital transformation.

VI. Indeed, the future of AI in broadcasting cannot simply rely on imported models and external realities. We must intentionally build systems that understand African contexts, languages and cultures. AI must help preserve and amplify our indigenous narratives, not dilute them. This is particularly important in a continent as culturally rich and linguistically diverse as ours, where technology must serve as a custodian of our heritage rather than an agent of cultural homogenization.

VII. At the same time, the rise of AI and cloud technologies introduces critical policy and governance considerations. Issues of data protection, intellectual property rights, platform accountability, cybersecurity and ethical AI deployment require proactive, collaborative regulatory responses. As Government, we are actively advancing national AI governance frameworks and strengthening digital policy environments to ensure these technologies support local innovation while strictly safeguarding public trust and copyright integrity.

VIII. We must also recognise that the future broadcaster will require a fundamentally transformed skillset. The International Finance Corporation estimates that 230 million jobs in Sub-Saharan Africa will require digital skills by 2030. Media professionals of tomorrow will operate at the intersection of journalism, technology, data science and digital production. This makes digital skills development and continuous capacity building absolutely essential for the sustainability and competitiveness of Africa's media industry.

IX. The opportunities before us are far too significant for fragmented approaches. Regional collaboration will be critical. We must strengthen cross-border partnerships, harmonise regulatory

frameworks, encourage regional content exchange and build shared digital infrastructure that positions East Africa as a globally competitive media, broadcast and innovation hub.

X. As I conclude, let this Convention not simply be a platform for discussing emerging technologies, but a space for collectively shaping the future of African broadcasting. The future of media in Africa must be innovative, inclusive, trusted and proudly African. Together, let us boldly reimagine the next chapter of broadcasting in our region.

XI. It is now my singular honour and pleasure to declare the 5th Broadcasters Convention East Africa officially open.

Thank you very much.