



**CABINET SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND
HUMAN CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT, HON. JUSTIN MUTURI, EBS**

**DURING THE FIRST (1ST) REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE
AFRICA SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT AT KSG MOMBASA**

22nd OCTOBER, 2024

Chief of Staff and Head of Public Service; Mr. Felix Koskei, EBS;
Principal Secretary, State Department for Public Service, Mr. Amos Gathecha;
Principal Secretaries present;
The Chairperson of KSG Council, Justice (Rtd.) Charles Nyachae;
Members of KSG Council present;
Director General KSG, Prof. Nura Mohamed;
Directors-General of Schools of Government;
Government of Kenya officials;
Development Partners;
Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen

It gives me great honour to preside over the very first African Schools of Government Conference that has been organized and hosted by the Kenya School of Government.

This is indeed the moment that we have been waiting for to witness the coming together of Schools of Government; to discuss the barriers to transformation in the delivery of service in the wake of continued capacity development by MDIs and Schools of Government.

During these days that we are gathered here, we should have an exciting and engaging time of examining mechanisms of advancing the transformative agenda and also consider a unified African approach in pursuit of excellence in our institutions, organizations and countries.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The African Union Agenda 2063 calls for a holistic approach to capacity building. To realize this Agenda, African Governments will be required to set aside resources to respond to policy initiatives and training needs.

Agenda 2063 also identifies key activities which will ensure that it delivers both measurable and qualitative transformational outcomes for Africa's people. One of the aspirations of the Agenda includes having a prosperous Africa, based on inclusive growth and sustainable development.

As such, the theme of AU Agenda 2063 this year "Educate and Skill Africa for the 21st Century" ties in well with the work of Schools of Government in Africa, as they are obligated to empower the public service to be a fit-for-purpose workforce in Africa; a workforce that is resilient, innovative, agile, conversant and relevant.

Ladies and gentlemen,

When it comes to the mandate of Managing Development Institutes, I wish to acknowledge the work of the Kenya School of Government over the years; to provide learning and development programs to capacity-build Public Officers in different aspects of management and operations of Government in Kenya, the Region, the Continent and beyond.

KSG was established as a State Corporation under the KSG Act, 2012. A Vision 2030 project, the School was created to support Government in the realization of national agenda through training, research, consultancy and advisory services as well as outreach programs.

KSG brings on board a wealth of experience in capacity development for officials at all levels- operational, supervisory and managerial, for purposes of achieving the highest possible standards of service delivery. The institution also develops curricula geared towards enhancing the competency and skills of Public Servants and is therefore fit to

hold a conference such as this bringing together a meeting of minds to appreciate the role of MDIs in African Governments.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Africa is confronted with a dilemma of TWO RIGHTS over advancing its public service excellence crisis. The two dominant positions are whether to front a united approach or not. **One side of the divide** wishes to have each African country with its own premier Management Development Institute (**MDI**) to drive in-country capacity building needs.

The **other side** tables a compelling case against in-country capacity building arguing that no country is **self-reliant** and ready to build its own capacity on continental agenda let alone its own national capacity building needs. According to them, **AU agenda 2063**, provides a practical solution; public officers who are empowered to live as **public leaders** and **public-minded citizens**.

Ladies and gentlemen,

After much reflection, Kenya opts for the unified approach over the in-country one, because achieving an impressive record of public services is a collective political choice driven by a professional public service.

More so, because excellence in public service is exemplified by the principle of political neutrality that public servants should uphold:

1. Allegiance to Government, to the Chief Executive and the principal officials of the day;
2. Ability to evaluate the implications of policy options and to tender clear and honest advice in the process of policy formulation;
3. Support and implement the administrative decisions irrespective of their personal preferences and should not make known their own views in public; and
4. Dedication to assisting principal officials in explaining policy decisions and in gaining support of the legislative body and the public.

We believe that the mission of Schools of Government situates them in the middle of politics and public services; to solve some of the most contentious issues facing Africans today. We also believe that by combining cutting-edge research, training and direct interaction with practitioners has an impact on solving public problems that no other institution can match.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am excited to see what the Schools of Government will do in the near future, following this inaugural Schools of Governance Conference whose objective it is to examine mechanisms of advancing the transformative agenda of the MDIs; Embrace best practices to enhance the capacity building of public service; Create collaboration and linkages between African MDIs/ Schools of government; and Peer-to-Peer learning as a strategy of enhancing MDIs/Schools of Government capacity to deliver on their mandates.

To be adaptable and responsible in the shifting environments that we are encountering, public servants must carry out their responsibilities in smart ways. Africa's public official must become a stellar example of principled and effective public service and emotionally and behaviourally, the collective courage to rise to the challenge before them and succeed.

Ladies and gentlemen,

My call to you all, therefore, is to urge you to, 'Ask what your country can do to make Africa public service better.' We must change Africa for the better. Be united in pursuit to realize capable institutions and transformed leadership by charging Africa School of Government to build and develop cutting edge programs that can tackle, unlock and develop transformative solutions to public challenge. I urge you to use your talents and energy to advance the common good which is to foster a more diverse and inclusive African community everywhere you are called to serve. Change Africa's public service, change it for the better, make it more humane, make it more just, make it more prosperous, and make it more peaceful.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I wish to commend you for holding this inaugural Africa Schools of Government Conference. I am proud to be associated with these institutions that are working to better the lives of the public servant through inculcating the value of continuous learning, evidence based research and engaging for positive impact on this continent.

I congratulate you for this milestone and I urge you to sustain the enthusiasm, to stay committed, and to be intentional in attaining success in your various journeys in your MDIs.

God bless you all; God bless Africa.

Thank you.