



## **REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

# **SPEECH BY MR. JEROME OCHIENG, PRINCIPAL SECRETARY MINISTRY OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY DURING THE INDUCTION OF INTERNS ON MONDAY JANURARY 27<sup>TH</sup> 2020 AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

## **SALUTATION:**

- 1. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY ICT- MAUREEN  
MAGOMA MBAKA**
- 2. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY INNOVATION &  
YOUTH - NADIA AHMED ABDALLA**
- 3. PRINCIPAL SECRETARY STATE DEPARTMENT FOR  
BROADCASTING AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS- ESTHER  
KOIMETT, CBS**
- 4. ALL CEOS PRESENT**
- 5. OUR PARTNERS**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

Good morning!

**1. Today, this a historic moment** in the Ministry of ICT, as we usher you in to the public service. It is historic because, for a long time we have not had such a big number of young professionals joining the Ministry. There have been concerns across government that, the public service is aging and that there was a big risk of gaps in skills transfer that was likely to affect the performance of government services.

**2. Now that you have come on board**, it gives us the assurance that there will be continuity in the public service as you acquire necessary skill and knowledge to drive the sector. I am happy that, our officers too, have set aside time to take you through this induction training to facilitate your integration into the great family of the public service.

**3. As you are aware,** Kenya has embarked on its transformative journey, towards the digital economy. The initiative has facilitated the growth of various digital applications and services in the public and the private sectors such as banking, health, housing, transportation, and agribusinesses. We are glad that you are entering the service at this moment to be part of the team spearheading the implementation of some of our digital solutions and strategies.

**4. In May 2019 H.E The President Uhuru Kenyatta,** launched the Digital Economy Blueprint, which focuses on the achievement of the Kenya Vision 2030 and Big Four Agenda. The Five pillars that will drive the Blue Print are: - Digital Government, Digital Business, Infrastructure, Innovation-Driven Entrepreneurship, Digital skills and

Values. At this stage, we will count on your innovative support as digital warriors for us to realize some of these programs.

## **Ladies and Gentlemen**

**5. According to the Kenya National Economic** Survey report of 2019, the value of the ICT sector expanded by 12.9% from Ksh. 345.6 billion in 2017 to Ksh 390.2 billion in 2018, driven by growth in the digital economy.

**6. In view of this, the Government aims at consolidating** the adoption and application of technology for faster and efficient government services and also enable the private sector to thrive. For instance, the e-Citizen portal has radically transformed the way in

which citizens access government services. The Government's Huduma Centers provide a one-stop shop registration process for key documents such as national identity cards, drivers' licenses, birth certificates and business registration.

**7. For the private sector,** the adoption and application of technology has witnessed the giant leap in the growth of mobile money and SMEs. For this reason, I believe you are excited in being at the Ministry where you will make your positive contribution.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**8. A labor survey conducted** by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2012 showed that the unemployment rate

increases with each level of educational attainment. Every year, half a million young Kenyans graduate from high school, colleges and TVET institutions yearly. Only a quarter manage to join university—the rest join the workforce. In total, one million people enter the job market in Kenya every year.

**9. However, formal employment** has not been growing proportionately with the demand for jobs. In view of this, the government established a broad range of interventions to deal with the growing rate of unemployment with specific attention to the youth.

**10. Among the measures taken to provide** solution to unemployment is the Ajira Digital Program. The Ajira Digital program

aims at introducing young people to on-line work and providing them with necessary tools, training and mentorship to enable the youth to work and earn a decent income online.

**11. As you may be aware,** the explosion of the Internet has created a unique opportunity for many companies and startups to create new products and services that are fashioning our lifestyle. This development provides several opportunities to create jobs for a large and diverse group of beneficiaries through outsourced work.

**12. Therefore, the goal of the Government,** through the Ajira Digital program is to enable over 1 million youth to earn above minimum wage from digital platform every year. We will make

deliberate efforts to raise the profile of on-line work and promote Kenya as a capital of global freelance hub.

**13. To achieve this, we have provided skills,** training and mentorship on on-line work to over 10,000 people, conducted on-line work campaigns, and set up infrastructure. We are proud that currently, tens of thousands of Kenyans are working on-line and earn good income.

**14. Additionally, to encourage the** uptake and application of technology and support the Ajira digital program, the government has set up over 150 technology centers called Constituency Innovation Hubs (CIH) across the country. The Government in liaison with CDF Board has provided free broadband connectivity and digital devices to

the centers to facilitate access to online job opportunities. We plan to have four CIH in every constituency by the end of the program, bringing to 1,160 innovation hubs countrywide.

**15. It is because of the Ajira program** that you are here today. You were recruited to help in facilitating the success of Ajira digital program by providing technical support services across the country. This induction program is meant to prepare you on how you will conduct yourself in the public service. As interns, I want to tell you that you are lucky to be in this team because it is such an honour to get opportunity to serve your country.

**16. As former British, Premier Benjamin Disraeli said, "Youth of a Nation are the trustees of posterity".** I cannot agree more with this

statement. You are the bearers of our vision. I want you to be true pillars of our prosperity by upholding high values and principles of public service.

**17. While working in offices,** you must exercise high standards of professional ethics. It is important for you to stay true to our national values that define our collective identity and our beliefs that are important in the pursuit of our socio-economic and political aspirations as a nation. The public service call for the need to exercise effectiveness and efficiency in the utilization of resources.

**18. Similarly, you are expected** to be responsive, prompt and impartial in discharging your duties and you must exercise

accountability and transparency in your duties.

**19. As youths, you are the nation's** largest and the most active constituency and you represent the aspirations of our beloved country. You possess the zeal, the trust and the energy necessary for the transformation of our nation to an admirable society. I therefore ask you to be diligent in whatever you do.

**20. Ladies and Gentlemen as I conclude,** I believe that the government will benefit immensely from the 1 year of your service. This is because, as youths, you will share your innovative with us to enable the government deliver the Kenya promise of a digital economy. I urge you to be positive and enthusiastic if you are to transform yourselves, your families and our country.

**21. I want to emphasize that,** the decision to hire you as interns was to provide you with an opportunity for mentorship and experience to enable you grow as professionals and become employable.

**22. At the end of the internship,** some of you will possibly secure employment in government, while others in the private sector. In general, terms, the most important thing for you in this program is an opportunity for you to gain experience and create networks that will be instrumental in your personal and professional development and growth.

**With those remarks, I declare this workshop officially open.  
Thank you!**