

WELCOME REMARKS BY DR. MOHAMMED ISAHAKIA, CBS; PERMANENT SECRETARY, OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER, DURING THE LAUNCH OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER, HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 19TH AUGUST, 2009, AT THE KENYATTA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE (KICC).

Your Excellency, Hon. Mwai Kibaki, President of the Republic of Kenya, and Commander In Chief of the Armed Forces;
Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga, EGH, MP; Prime Minister of the Republic of Kenya;
Your Excellency Hon. Kalonzo Musyoka, the Vice President of the Republic of Kenya;
Hon. Kenneth Marende, the speaker of the National Assembly of Kenya;
Hon. Musalia Mudavadi, the Deputy Prime Minister, and Minister for Local Government;
Hon. Ministers and Assistant Ministers present;
Permanent Secretaries;
Your Excellencies , Ambassadors and High Commissioners present;
Your Worship the Mayors present;
Chairmen and Chief Executives of State Corporations;
Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of you on this important occasion of the launch of the Strategic Plan for the office of the Prime Minister.

Your Excellency, the development of this Strategic Plan is an important milestone, not only in building the capacity of the office of the Prime Minister, but also enabling the Coalition Government to deliver services to citizens in the face of new and growing challenges driven by the dynamics of the Coalition nature of our Government.

The plan has therefore, been developed in the context of the Grand Coalition.

The office of the Prime Minister is a new office. Its Constitutional function which is “to Coordinate and Supervise the execution of the Affairs and functions of the government including Ministries” is often not well understood by many people. The Strategic Plan therefore, deliberately focuses on crystallizing the meaning of this constitutional mandate.

It also proceeds to introduce the concept of prioritization and the need to consistently focus on the delivery of identified government priorities.

Your Excellency, the complexity of modern government, both in terms of subject matter and in terms of organization, necessitates a focal point for coordination. This is the main responsibility of the Office of the Prime Minister. The office of the Prime Minister is, therefore, primarily a coordinating body whose main job is to make diverse activities of individual ministries and agencies work effectively and coherently across government so as to deliver services to citizens of this country.

Within this framework, The Strategic Plan provides a coordination mechanism that seeks to provide quality service, national well-being and improved quality of life for all Kenyans.

Your Excellency, the formation of the grand coalition government imposes unique constraints and responsibilities on the public service. This is because the public service is a key instrument in the delivery of government policies and programmes.

The Public Service also plays a critical role as an important lever in the coordination of government business and machinery.

As we move forward the Public Service, therefore, needs to play a pivotal role in the delivery of services to Kenyans. To respond to these demands the service will need to transform itself into an outward-facing organization, able to provide timely and easily accessible services to citizens. The quality of the service, and the way it is delivered should be from the perspective of the citizen. In carrying out this, the job of the Prime Minister's office will be to provide leadership, support, and cohesion across government.

The Strategic Plan also provides a change and modernization agenda for the Public Service. This includes attitudinal and cultural change, a relentless focus on delivering priorities, and ensuring that foundational drivers such as Human Resources Management, and Corporate performance management are in place.

There is also the need to link the management of our human resource with service delivery so that frontline staff who come into contact with citizens on a daily basis are highly motivated through incentive programmes and perform their duties with zeal and commitment.

The achievement of the objectives of the plan will require a lean and nimble structure, as this is a mechanism largely reliant on working with line ministries to deliver the government's goals and objectives.

The structure that has been created therefore provides a framework for engagement with both the Public Sector and the Private Sector and focuses on building Partnerships in order to secure mutually agreed targets in the delivery of quality services.

The presence of all of us at this launch is an indication of how we will all need to work together in an integrated, effective and linked up manner, to deliver government policies and programmes.

In preparing this plan, the principle of inclusivity and wide consultations within the public sector, and also with non-state actors, was observed.

Your Excellency, I would like to thank all those who contributed in whatever way to the development and finalization of the Strategic Plan for the Office of the Prime Minister. All these contributions have enriched the document that we are about to launch today.

I therefore welcome you all to this launch, and look forward to working with you to deliver the Strategic objectives of the Strategic Plan for the Office of the Prime Minister.

Thank you.

DR. MOHAMMED ISAHAKIA, CBS.