

**KERICHO COUNTY ASSEMBLY**

**THE HANSARD**

**Third Assembly**

**First Session**

**Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2022**

*(The House met at 9:30am)*

*[The Speaker (Hon. Dr. Patrick Mutai) in the Chair]*

**PRAYER**

**The Speaker (Hon. Dr. Patrick Mutai):** Good morning Honorable Members, I take this opportunity to welcome His Excellency the Governor to the Assembly.

**CONVOCATION**

**The Speaker (Hon. Dr. Patrick Mutai):** His Excellency honorable Dr. Erick Mutai Governor of the County Government of Kericho, honorable Members of County Assembly of Kericho, Standing Order 21 requires that H.E the Governor addresses the opening of every Assembly. The Governor notified the Speaker of the Assembly of his intention to address the new Assembly on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at 9:30a.m. Accordingly pursuant to Standing Order 13(1), I communicated to the honorable members on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022 of the same hence this sitting is properly convened. Consequently it is now my singular honor and privilege to invite H.E the Governor of the County Government of Kericho to address the first sitting of the third Assembly. Welcome.

**The Governor (His Excellency Dr.Erick Kipkoech Mutai):** I am elated to address the inaugural sitting of the third County Assembly of Kericho. Allow me from the onset honorable members to congratulate you on your election to this House of honor. Many desired and many mounted massive campaigns to step into these historical precincts but only the 47 among you found favor amongst the electorate to carry that mandate with distinction and with the honor it deserves. Honorable members, allow me once again to congratulate the Speaker on his election to steer the third County Assembly. May you rise to the occasion and discharge your mandate with distinction in accordance with the Constitution.

Mr. Speaker Sir, the law and practice demands that I address the House on this particular day but that is not my motivation today. My motivation today is the belief that we are a family and need to be engaging on a regular basis. It is for that reason ladies and gentlemen, that I want to assure you that I am more than ready together with my team to always have a robust discourse with the Assembly on matters service delivery.

Mr. Speaker Sir, your role as an Assembly is clearly cut out in our Constitution. In a nutshell it involves legislation, oversight and representation. On the legislative bit I want to believe that every one of you has legislation at the top of his or her mind that your wish becomes an Act of this House. It is my sincere hope and belief that at the end of the third Assembly, every member shall have legislation under his or her name because in essence that is why you are a legislator. My office shall provide the necessary support to ensure that we churn out quality legislations. Mr. Speaker Sir, for the legislative proposals that emanate from my office, I have equally directed the relevant departments that only quality legislations are transmitted to the Assembly for consideration. Even as I call for them, it is my desire that we avoid duplication of legislations. Let us only do it where there is a genuine need for one. I want to undertake that I will not hesitate to assent to legislations that have met the set threshold.

On the oversight Mr. Speaker sir, I want to reiterate that my administration submits itself to the authority of this House. In the next few days I will be sending names of men and women that I have considered to help me execute my mandate as the County Executive Committee members,

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County Secretary and Chief Officers. I believe that will be your first call on the oversight role. I guarantee you that I have compiled a list of passionate and hardworking people within the constitutional threshold who maybe humble in means but rich in ideas. Continue holding them to account after giving your input on their nominations. Mr. Speaker Sir, the buck in the Executive stops with me. It is a role I appreciate too well and that is why I will at all times strive to address any lapse before it escalates to the Assembly.

On the representation bit Honorable members, try your best at all times to advance the interests of those that sent you to this House. Table their agenda in this House, bring their grievances to my office and let us put our minds together on how best we can address their concerns. My success is your success honorable members and the contrast also applies. Mr. Speaker Sir, to further facilitate your work, and in consultation with your leadership, we will fund infrastructural works that have been put forth by the Assembly including equipping your offices. I don't guarantee perfection but I promise progress. We promised our people a lot and that is why we have no option but to deliver. We promised roads, sound health care system, water, better education, improved value addition in agriculture, we promised bursaries, internships, good governance among others. It is now time to live the promises. Five years is quite a short time and the clock has started ticking. What are the plans then for all that we promised? It is not in question that the task of initiating projects lies with the Executive arm. I am however alive to the fact that implementation is not done in exclusion, more particularly without the input of this Assembly and without public participation.

Allow me to highlight a raft of issues that I have purposed to implement but subject to your input and the public. Health care tops the list of what I believe we must find a working solution. Healthcare cuts across all our thirty wards and that is why I believe it is in the interest of everybody in this House that we get it right as a team. For the few days that I have been in office, I have made random visits to Kericho County Referral Hospital. Honorable members, we have no drugs in our hospitals, no medical equipment, no water in some hospitals, and we have no specialized facilities for terminal diseases among many other challenges. It is for that reason that

I will be seeking this Houses' concurrence to raise our budgetary allocations for health. The money is targeted at bridging the gaps that I have highlighted above in all our facilities. I have already directed the relevant officers to give me detailed status of all our facilities and that will inform our action plan. In the past, we have built a culture of funding only facilities in our wards. But of what essence is it to develop our individual ward facilities and have an empty referral facility? Does it sit well to refer a patient from your ward facility to Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital (MTRH) because ours is an empty shell? It is on that premise that I will be seeking small sacrifices from your end so that we can direct the finances to our level 5 and level 4 hospitals. The challenges in those hospitals are an eye sore, let us come together and rescue them for the sake of our people. In brief I am saying we shall fund our local facilities but we shall in the same breath fund facilities that are cross-cutting. With the rise of poverty levels among our people, National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) is now a mandatory utility if our people are to afford healthcare. With your input, we shall put down modalities of placing our people on NHIF cover funded by the County Government. Of course we will not cover everybody but we shall be making progress if we touch the few vulnerable ones. As I said earlier, I don't guarantee perfection but I promise progress. While at health care, I am putting forth a proposal to build an Oncology Centre at the Kericho County Referral Hospital. The numerous trips by cancer patients to Eldoret is more tormenting than cancer itself and history shall judge us harshly if we do not come to their aid.

Our other major point of focus is agriculture. We are zeroing in on agribusiness because it is what gives livelihoods to our people. Coffee mills, flour mill, sugar cane factory, milk processors and fruit industry are some of the salient value addition projects that our people are waiting for. Budgetary proposals for some of these ambitious projects will find their way in the supplementary budgets that will be forwarded to this House while some will be captured in the main budget. The benefits of these projects cannot be over emphasized and again I beseech you to apply the cross-cutting lens and fund projects that even though not located in your Ward, will impact positively in your region and our County. Apart from appropriations from the exchequer, I have identified proceeds from Kabianga Tea Farm and Kipkelion Coffee Farm to fund our

bursary vote. Immediate measures are going to be deployed to ensure that we have proper management in the twin valuable county resources that is Kabianga Tea Farm and Kipkelion Coffee Farm.

It goes without saying that Education is an equalizer. Bursaries in the past have been inconsistent and in the worst case scenario unavailable. This state of affairs affected the re-election chances of your colleagues in the first and Second Assembly. It is my sincere hope and belief that this does not happen in the Third Assembly. We shall make budgetary allocations for bursaries in every Fiscal Year and I request you to support me on this. In the next few days we are going to roll out 3000 scholarships targeting students keen on undertaking technical courses in our Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions. I will be seeking your partnership in rolling out this noble initiative targeting the humble in our societies.

After education, comes internships in our facilities. Our children do not have where to find attachments yet their institutions are on their necks to find a place. I have made a directive to relevant departments to put in place logistics to accommodate an increased intake of interns. Sometimes all our youth need are a chair and a table to work but we have failed to provide them even with that bare minimum. On Early Childhood Education (ECD) which is our core mandate I give my commitment to build and equip our infrastructure facilities to suit our young learners. I also undertake to progressively confirm our ECD teachers to permanent and pensionable terms. The biggest problem we are facing is unemployment. The County Government which includes this House definitely has a role in addressing the state of affairs. Formal employment is insufficient and it will remain so to the unforeseeable future. But even for the few vacancies, we must begin to see equitability and fairness in public sector employment. I will begin by streamlining the County Public Service Board (CPSB) and in the next few days you will see the drastic measures I will take with regards to public service delivery. We will then have reviewed criteria to guide professionalism and clear employment policies. The agribusiness value addition project as earlier pleaded with in this House to approve across the county shall also go a long way in creating employment for our youth. To further target unemployment amongst our youth,

we are going to demand from our contractors that they source labour from within our communities. We are also intentionally routing for labour based contracts so that the local community benefits. The multinationals that we host in our midst have the potential to create jobs. It is in public domain that I have in many occasions made my stand known with regards to mechanization that has rendered our people jobless. On this day I request you to be my lieutenants in this journey of scaling down the level of mechanizations in our multinationals. The first point of call is obviously through legislation and government policy from both levels of Government. At the National level I will engage no less than the President himself with a request that a national policy and legislation is enacted regulating the level of mechanization so that hustlers also have a role to play. At the County level my legal team will be drafting legislations for this House consideration regarding that particular matter. I call upon this House to stamp its authority as regards activities taking place in lands that belonged to our forefathers. We are not helpless at least not on this particular subject. Do not for a moment imagine that you are helpless. We definitely are not helpless as regards to our heritage. While at the multinationals the rates they pay currently is honestly way below the market rates. While at multinational honorable members, let me state on this floor that we intend to review the rates they pay to be commensurate with their earnings from the tea.

To cushion our youth even as they seek employment, I propose to create a county revolving fund where a financial kitty is given to our youth to invest and return the money with minimal charges for the benefit of other youth. For our people already in informal employment, I guarantee you that the County Government shall be your support system and not an adversary. We are going to build more sheds for our *Mama Mbogas* and our *Boda boda* people. We are going to purchase more market spaces and build ablution blocks for our traders and their customers. Affirmative action for our women and youth, I beseech you honorable members to consider that during budgetary allocations and tendering because that is the way to empower our people. We are going to give the youth what belongs to the youth, the women what belongs to the women and to People Living with Disabilities (PLWD) what belongs to them.

Water is an essential role of the developed unit and many of our people in the villages have to travel for long to get this valuable utility. There are several water project identified or commenced but not completed. We are going to begin with those projects, Honorable Members even as we identify new water sources for areas that have none. We have made tremendous progress with water connection in the urban areas even though the water flow is inconsistent. We are equally going to fix those lapses through cooperation with partners and donors. It is my desire that every household is connected to piped water. The National Housing Corporation (NHC) has already expressed their intent on assisting us solve the housing problem for our people especially in the urban areas. We are going to engage with them together with the relevant committee of this House and find a common ground because housing is a major concern for our people. Honorable members to do all these, we need resources.

The equitable share from the National Government is definitely not enough. It is for that reason that we are stepping up on measures aimed at raising our revenue levels. I have directed the revenue personnel to seal the gaps that see us miss out on revenue targets. Mr. Speaker Sir, I have particularly directed that we automate revenue collection in all our revenue sources. I am imploring on this House on this particular front to give their input especially through the Public Finance Management Act. We need not necessarily raise the rates but we should widen our revenue nets. The burden of taxation should not be left to the Mama Mbogas, Boda bodas and small shops alone as is the case currently. Let us be creative and find ways of bringing everybody within the revenue collection bracket. Honorable Members, even as we collect resources I am alive to the fact that there has been a trend of wastage, pilferage or theft by crooked officials. That trend shall and must come to an end. I have already made it known to my Executive team that there will be no negotiations with stealing of public resources. We shall be rolling out several austerity measures aimed at saving public resources including the choice of venue of conferences and regularity of the same. It is my hope that the Assembly adopts the same. As I conclude Honorable members, I want to wish you all the best in your stint in this House. To the new members let us learn the ropes as soon as we can and to the re-elected members let us mentor our colleagues. Once again Congratulations Honorable Members and I



thank you Mr. Speaker Sir. It is my singular honor now to declare the first session of the third County Assembly of Kericho officially open. God blesses you all. God bless this great county of Kericho, God bless Kenya.

Mr. Speaker Sir, just an off the cut remarks. I just want to say thank you. Am so much happy to see the forty seven of you here today. We have today officially opened this House, we now have a journey of five years. I pray that we live in unity and I pray to God from the depth of my heart that we live in unity as a House. Kericho County has been known as a unified county, it has always been known and admired across Kenya for its tranquility and its commitment towards service delivery. You are all equal to the task and I believe in you so much. We will be doing a lot of consultations on matters legislation, bills and on the common interest of the people and I know through God's grace ladies and gentlemen that at the end of this five years we will make a difference. I know for a fact that we have had three Assemblies and truth be said if we look around, very few people have survived one or two nominations and elections and to reduce the high turnover of elected members because it is not good for a county to keep having new faces every now and then. To reduce the high turnover, I pray that we do our duties religiously and with commitment and with deep consultation and I assure you for my maximum support and cooperation from the executive arm and each time you require a CEC or CO to come and answer your question, I commit myself as your Governor that they will be available for you. To that end thank you so much Mr. Speaker and I wish you Gods blessings as we begin the journey of five years. Thank you.

*(Adjournment)*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dr. Patrick Mutai):** Thank you very much your Excellency the Governor, you have made an elaborate speech and ours as the County Assembly is that we shall be very objective in carrying out our mandate of oversight, legislation and representation. I assure you that as the legislative arm of the government we shall give you the full support so that you can implement the programs accordingly. The members will have the opportunity to deliberate on the



speech starting this afternoon. There being no other business we adjourn until 2:30pm this afternoon. Lunch will be served at Exotic hotel. Thank you.

*(The House rose at 10:00am)*