

**KERICHO COUNTY ASSEMBLY**

**THE HANSARD**

**Second Assembly**

**Fourth Session**

**Thursday, 13th February 2020**

*(The House met at 2.30 p .m.)*

*Speaker (Hon. Dominic Rono) in the Chair]*

**PRAYERS**

**The Speaker (Hon. Dominic Rono):** Honorable Members I take this opportunity to welcome you all to the opening of this session; the first session of the fourth session in the second Assembly. Today you have noticed that we have His Excellency The Governor joining us for the official opening of the Assembly. I want to wish all the Honorable Members and everyone who has joined us today a fruitful session.

Because I will not be able to make any other remarks today, I would also like to wish all of you a happy Valentine's Day tomorrow. Thank you.

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**ADDRESS BY H.E THE GOVERNOR PROF. PAUL KIPRONO CHEPKWONY**

**EXPOSITION OF THE PUBLIC POLICY**

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**H.E The Governor (Hon. Paul Kiprono Chepkwony):** Your Excellency the Deputy Governor, Honourable Senator, Honourable Members of National Assembly, Honourable Speaker, Honourable Deputy Speaker, Honourable Leaders of Majority and Minority, Honourable Members of the County Assembly, Hon County Executive Committee Members, Chief Officers, Members Of the County Public Service Board, Other officers of government, Members of the Fourth Estate, distinguished residents of Kericho County, Ladies and Gentlemen, Good afternoon,

I feel greatly delighted and honored to deliver the 2020 State of the County Address in this dignified house and in the presence of the great people of Kericho County.

**Mr. Speaker,**

Before I proceed with my remarks, I wish to request that we all stand and observe a moment of silence in honour of former President, H. E. Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi who passed on last week.

We shall all remember President Moi for his steadfast and firm leadership which advocated for peace, love and unity among all Kenyans. May his legacy of peace, love and unity live on.

He was very passionate towards his vision for a more cohesive and united nation free from tribalism and hatred among all communities.

In Kericho County, we have many development projects that were initiated and completed by Mzee Moi during his tenure and for which we shall forever be grateful and remember him.

I therefore once again extend my deepest condolences on behalf of the people of Kericho to the family of Mzee Moi, H. E. President Uhuru Kenyatta, the Government of Kenya and indeed to the entire nation on the loss of this senior statesman and African icon.

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**Mr. Speaker,**

First and foremost, allow me to express my deep gratitude to this Honourable House, which under your leadership, has fostered a warm working relationship with the County Executive.

This has enabled us to roll out development programs for the benefit of the people of this county.

Kericho is one of the counties that have been recognized for peace, security and stability. This is largely because of the cordial relations between the members of this House and the members of the Executive Arm of the County Government.

I acknowledge the cardinal role this honorable house has played towards the realization of the County Government's development objectives and programmes.

I also want to thank you most sincerely for facilitating and hosting this very important sitting today.

It has provided me with ample opportunity to outline the status of the implementation of development priorities by my Government.

I laud this House for remaining focused and being objective in the discharge of its mandate that comprise legislation, representation and oversight.

The many pieces of legislation that have been passed by this house over time have unlocked several obstacles which had previously hindered smooth delivery of services.

We are partnering with the judiciary towards the establishment of a county court for the enforcement of county legislation passed by this House.

Because of our partnership, this county has become a benchmarking destination for leaders from other counties and organizations in Kenya and beyond.

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Indeed Mr. Speaker, we were honored recently to host Governor Simon Bako Lalong of the Plateau State of Nigeria who was in Kenya to understand how devolution works.

We have also received benchmarking delegations from various counties; most recently Trans Nzoia County which sent a powerful team led by the Deputy Governor to benchmark on our revenue collection systems.

We have within the past two years hosted delegations from Uganda, newly appointed Kenyan ambassadors, the Kenya Defense Forces and several counties, all of whom have been keen on getting lessons from Kericho's devolution story.

**Mr. Speaker,**

Additionally, our county has in the recent months been selected to host high profile national events, thereby giving credence to our decision to upgrade the Kericho Green Stadium.

In August last year, we successfully hosted the annual Kenya Inter- Counties Sports and Cultural Association (KICOSCA) Games followed by the Annual Conference of Constitutional Commissions and Independent Offices in October.

This year is looking up to be just as busy.

So far, Kericho has been selected to host the first Youth in Climate Action Conference on 16<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> April, the Kenya Communications Sports Organization (KECOSO) Games and the Rift Valley Regional finals of the *Chapa Dimba na Safaricom* Tournament.

These are major events which bring together thousands of people and cumulatively have the capacity to boost our economic prospects by bringing increased business to the county.

**Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members**

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This is not to say that we have reached the pinnacle of our journey; far from it.

It is true that together we have made tremendous progress on many development fronts, but we still have a long way to go. We must now dedicate ourselves to working even harder than before to deliver services to the people of Kericho.

The people are depending on us to deliver on the promises we made to them. We must set the bar high for the next set of leaders by honoring these promises and remaining true to public service.

Like all other counties, we have had our fair share of challenges, but the speed and commitment with which we overcame these challenges and learnt from them is quite commendable.

The Executive and this House have not always agreed on all issues.

We have differed on a number of areas, but at the end of the day we have risen above the disagreements and found common ground for the sake of development.

**Mr. Speaker,**

I wish to also take this opportunity to thank the people of Kericho for the enormous support that they have accorded the County Government of Kericho and for their participation in matters of governance.

As I have said time and again, this is a government of the people, for the people and by the people.

We cherish this participation of the residents of Kericho in governance as provided for under the law.

Our people have participated by giving their views and feedback during citizen participation fora and public participation events. These have been captured in our second County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP).

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I thank them and call on them to continue exercising their constitutional rights to have their voice heard on matters that affect them every day.

As the County Government, we guarantee you a listening ear and action to the extent possible to provide the most appropriate responses to the issues raised.

**Mr. Speaker,**

Since 2017, revenue collection in Kericho has been on the rise. Our revenue collection increased from KShs 415 million in Financial Year 2017/2018 to KShs 473 million in Financial Year 2018/2019. This year, we project to further increase own source revenue to KShs 513 million.

This has been made possible through digitization of revenue collection in a number of areas including issuance of business permits and car parking.

As more revenue streams are digitized, we anticipate that the revenue will also go up.

One of the areas that we consider as a huge potential in pushing our revenue collection upwards is land rates and land rent.

As the body responsible for the passage of laws in the county, I call upon you to approve the updated valuation roll once it is presented before this House for consideration.

This will enable the government to activate this potential and raise revenue for the people of Kericho which is crucial towards supporting our development programs.

**Mr. Speaker,**

As a county government and with the support of the members of this House, we have taken deliberate steps to continually change the manner in which services are delivered in this county.

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We have endeavored to ensure that the resources meant for development are shared equitably across all our 30 wards.

Over the last seven years, we have walked a journey through which we have faced challenges together, learnt from them and evolved appropriately in order to meet the needs of the people of this county.

Since the onset of the current term in 2017, we have taken robust steps geared towards spurring economic development as well as uplifting the living standards of our people.

Our development programs are guided by CIDP 2018-2022 and the Jubilee Government's Big Four Agenda.

I wish to thank you, Honourable Members of this House, for supporting the Strategic Interventions Program which has brought more development to marginalized areas.

We have rolled out major projects in priority areas under the Strategic Interventions Program which have transformed the county.

They include the tarmacking of streets in Londiani Town, the construction of a multi-storey market in Sondu and numerous water projects including Kipkobob in Bureti and Kiptunoi in Ainamoi.

I have also established the Governor's Delivery Unit, which will work alongside the existing monitoring and evaluation frameworks in the County Government to ensure that projects are completed as expected and in timely fashion.

We remain determined towards ensuring that all projects started by the County Government of Kericho are completed and commissioned for use by members of the public.

My Government is committed towards seeing to it that the public funds entrusted to us for development is used for the right purpose down to the last cent.

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Misappropriation of public funds will not be tolerated in my government and as I have done in the past, I will not hesitate to drop the axe on anyone found engaging in such unacceptable practices.

**Mr. Speaker,**

Our health sector continues to be the highest funded department in the county as we prioritize our efforts towards attaining universal healthcare and ensuring that our people have access to medical services of the highest quality.

My Government has equipped our health facilities with the most modern equipment, starting with the Kericho Country Referral Hospital and the Sub County Hospitals.

We have invested heavily in this sector and we have all seen the results through improved service delivery and better healthcare.

We have allocated Kshs. 18 million for the purchase of land for the expansion and subsequent upgrading of Sosirot Health Centre into a fully-fledged Level Four facility. This will enable the facility to offer both inpatient and outpatient services hence decongesting the County Referral Hospital.

The construction of a diagnostic laboratory and medical store at Londiani Sub County Hospital is well on course.

The construction of modern surgical and medical wards is ongoing at the Kipkelion Sub County Hospital and will soon admit patients for the first time in the history of our county.

At Fort Ternan Sub County Hospital, the expansion of the laboratory and construction of a surgical theater are ongoing. We have also tendered the construction of an X-Ray block.

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To cater for the growing demand for affordable dialysis services, we have expanded the renal unit at the Kericho County Referral Hospital by an additional 5 beds bringing the total number of dialysis beds at the facility to 9. Three such machines have also been installed at the Kapkatet Hospital.

**Honourable Members,**

Works are ongoing to upgrade the Ainamoi Health Center into a Sub County Hospital and to complete the construction of the Kaitui Accident and Emergency Center along the Kericho-Kisumu highway.

This facility will enhance our capacity to provide emergency response to traffic accidents.

Late last year, First Lady Margaret Kenyatta officially opened the newly completed and equipped state of the art two theatre maternity and 100 bed New Born Unit at Kapkatet Hospital which was constructed with the support of the Andrew Wemyss Trust.

A modern accident and emergency unit has also been completed and is in use at the hospital.

The Department of Health Services has also started the process of procuring three new ambulances and two support supervision vehicles as part of our efforts to enhance referral capacity and mobility.

**Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members,**

As a result of all these efforts, Kericho has now become a destination for health tourism.

I am reliably informed by the Department of Health Services that clients come from as far as Narok, Nakuru, Bomet, Kisii, Nyamira and Kisumu to access services in our health facilities.

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While we appreciate of this as an indicator of excellence in the sector, we also acknowledge that this has the effect of straining the available resources including both facilities and personnel.

To cure this, we have embarked on the process of constructing new medical facilities and upgrading the existing ones. Currently over 40 medical facilities are under construction across the county.

To enhance service delivery, the county government is also seeking to fill the human resource gap in the health sector and we have commenced a process to recruit new staff across all cadres.

**Mr. Speaker,**

The County Government of Kericho has modernized vocational training education by constructing modern workshops for the Vocational Training Centers (VTCs) and recruiting qualified tutors.

We have now established seven Centers of Excellence in Vocational Training, which have been designed to provide quality education in specific areas.

They are the Chepseon Center of Excellence in Building and Construction, Leldet Center of Excellence in Timber Technology, Kipsamumgut Center of Excellence in Automotive Works, Kipkoyan Center of Excellence in Domestic Textile Technologies, Kiptere Center of Excellence in Metal Works, Chemosot Center of Excellence in Conferencing and Hospitality Management and Chebigen Center of Excellence in Hair Dressing and Beauty Therapy.

We will continue to take steps towards ensuring that the courses offered in these institutions are market-oriented and that these facilities promote innovation and creativity among our young people.

In partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Research Triangle International (RTI), we supported 15,248 young people to receive training in our VTC

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We have also transformed Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) through recruitment of qualified teachers as well as construction of quality classrooms and toilets.

To ensure compliance with the new Competency Based Curriculum, we trained all ECDE teachers and procured teaching aids and learning materials worth KShs. 13 million which have been disbursed to all ECDE Centers within the County.

With KShs. 20 million, we have also kicked off the process of equipping all our newly built classrooms with child friendly desks and chairs to ensure that the children are as comfortable as possible.

Even though basic and tertiary education is not a devolved function, we have endeavored to support these areas through the Bursary Fund kitty. Since 2013, I am proud to note that we have disbursed KShs. 681 million to 167,000 beneficiaries.

**Honourable Members,**

Sustainable Development Goal 2, which started in 2015, strives to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

To this end, my government has partnered with the World Bank through the Kenya Climate Smart Agriculture Program (KCSAP) to construct water pans which will support irrigation and promote food security in the county.

One of such projects is Chepchirik water pan in Buchenge, Kapsaos Ward. The project will be completed in March and will provide the residents of Buchenge with a reservoir of 11.2 million liters of water and support over 1000 families engaging in crop and dairy farming.

A similar project will also be undertaken in Kamasian Ward, Kipkelion West Sub County.

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We are also partnering with the KCSAP to support farmers directly and earlier today I disbursed KShs. 58 million to various farmer groups and field extension service providers.

This will go a long way to boost agricultural production in Kericho and lead our farmers and their cooperatives to a path of economic freedom. We thank the World Bank for this partnership.

We have taken additional steps to support farmers enhance their production by providing field extension services, distributing assorted crop seedlings and continually seeking new markets for agricultural produce locally and abroad.

**Mr. Speaker,**

The State of the County Address cannot be complete without mention of the major agricultural activities in Kericho, including the tea sector.

The tea sector is a crucial economic sector in Kericho County. The current acreage under tea is 17,000 hectares. To support tea farmers, we invested in the renovation of 86 tea buying centers across the county.

However, the sector has been hit hard by poor management by the Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA) which has seen small scale tea farmers suffer reduced income in the last few years.

Last year, tea farmers in Kericho received only KShs 1.96 billion in bonus payments from the KTDA after producing 26.6 million kilograms of made tea. This is the lowest payment

As you might be aware, I moved to court seeking judicial intervention into the various ills that ail the sector and render tea farmers poor. That matter is still before court and I will not delve further into it.

On behalf of the leadership of Kericho, I welcome the recent move by President Uhuru Kenyatta to order the reorganization and clean up of

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KTDA, citing cases of malpractice and conflict of interest within the organization.

This action will save tea farmers from the exploitation from which they have suffered for years. These are the issues that we have raised time and again and we will offer total support to the President in finding solutions to the problems in the sector.

Before devolution, production of coffee stood at 10 million kilograms of cherry grown on 2500 hectares of land. Today, land under coffee has increased to 3,500 hectares and farmers produce an estimated 20 million kilograms of cherry valued at Kshs. 800 million.

Between 2016 and 2018, we distributed 121, 342 coffee seedlings valued at Kshs. 3.6 million and in 2019, we distributed 300 kilograms of coffee seedlings sufficient for 1, 184 acres.

With the support of the county government, the Kipkelion Coffee Mills has continued to lead our value addition efforts in the sector.

The amount of coffee parchment delivered to the coffee mill for processing by farmers has grown from 850,000 kilograms in 2017 to 2.1 million kilograms in 2019.

Farmers allied to forty cooperatives now mill, roast and package their coffee in Kericho County and sell it directly to the market as **Zawadi Coffee**.

My government will carry on with efforts to find market for our coffee products locally and abroad to enable our farmers make a decent earning from their toils and sweat.

**Honorable Members,**

We have completed the development of a 10-year Integrated Water and Sanitation Master Plan for the entire county in collaboration with the German Development Corporation (GIZ).

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This master plan will guide the manner in which water resources in the county will be harnessed and managed for effective use.

As you will recall, in April last year, construction work officially began on the KShs. 1.2 billion Kimugu Water Project at Duka Moja.

This is after the County Government through the National Lands Commission acquired the 10 acres of land needed for the project from the Unilever Tea Company Limited.

Expected to be completed by April 2021, this project will supply an additional 13 million liters of water per day which will then be distributed by the Kericho Water and Sanitation Company (KEWASCO) to 200,000 additional households.

There are several ongoing mega water projects across the county which once completed will ensure that water shortage in Kericho becomes a thing of the past.

They include the Kapkures Water Project in Chilchila Ward, Kipkelion West Sub County. This project, which is being done through the Strategic Intervention program, is expected to be completed by the end of this year and will serve over 5000 residents in the three locations of Kipteris, Chilchila and Siwot.

This is being done alongside the Kimologit and Tuiyobei water projects which are being implemented at a total cost of KShs. 245 million.

Borehole drilling projects are also ongoing across the county and those that have been drilled are currently being equipped in readiness for use.

**Mr. Speaker,**

Urban Planning and Management is one of the crucial responsibilities of county governments.

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Through the Department of Lands, Housing and Physical Planning, we have rolled out numerous development projects under the Kenya Urban Support Program (KUSP) for the Municipality of Kericho.

I congratulate the Department of Lands and the Kericho Municipal Board for putting in a lot of hard work which saw Kericho ranked as the best county in the use of the KUSP funds provided by the World Bank and qualifying for the next round of funding.

The projects include the construction of a new storm water drainage system in Kericho Town, construction of pavements around Kericho town, the rehabilitation and beautification of Uhuru Gardens and the construction of a new fire station at Kapsuser to enhance our emergency response.

Land is a crucial asset in development and it is imperative that the same is managed in a manner which promotes development and food security.

With our towns growing rapidly and more land coming under construction, it became necessary for me to take action to ensure that land is appropriately utilized to meet the development needs of the county.

In October last year therefore, I issued an Executive Order requiring entities and individuals who own land including academic institutions to use them productively to promote food production.

I am also glad to note that we have completed the development of the County Spatial Plan for the 2017-2027 period, making Kericho one of the few counties to have done so. I urge this House to approve the document as it is before it.

This plan will guide the socioeconomic development of this county over the next ten years in all sectors by ensuring a more effective utilization of land resources to spur development across all our wards.

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**Honourable Members,**

We have allocated KShs. 152 million this financial year towards maintenance of roads across the county. The construction works are underway despite some delays occasioned by the prolonged rains.

We are also working tirelessly to improve storm water drainage in our urban centers.

Work is currently ongoing to build a new drainage system for Kapkatet Town and procurement for a new drainage system for Brooke is nearing completion.

**Mr. Speaker,**

As we go into future, I assure you that I remain true to my commitment to make Kericho a better place today and for the future.

I note with pride that our county remains a haven of security and we will continue partnering with the office of the County Commissioner to ensure that this continues to be the case.

This is in line with our efforts to continue attracting investments which will in turn boost our economy and create employment opportunities for our young people.

As I end, I call upon all leaders in this county to continue working together to build our county and to find solutions to the challenges that still stand ahead of us and the problems that face our people

To do this, we must remain united and avoid engaging in divisions which only work towards disrupting our journey to becoming a better county because only team work will make the dream work.

With all these remarks, I am happy to declare that the state of the county is strong. I thank you for your attention.

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May God bless you all. May God bless Kericho County. May God bless Kenya.

*(The House rose at 3.06 pm)*

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