

**STATEMENT BY HON. (AMB.) UKUR YATANI, EGH, CABINET SECRETARY,  
THE NATIONAL TREASURY AND PLANNING DURING THE LAUNCH OF THE  
SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW ON SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS FOR KENYA ON MONDAY, 6<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2020**

**Members of the Press,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good Morning!

Let me take this opportunity to welcome you to this ceremony, from wherever you are – those present here with me and those tuned in virtually.

The reality of the COVID-19 pandemic is with us and we have to adapt ourselves to doing things differently. The report we are launching today is the second since the adoption of the SDGs in 2015 having prepared the first one in 2017 and the first one to be launched virtually.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

The National Treasury and Planning through the State Department for Planning is mandated to coordinate the implementation, monitoring and review of the SDGs in Kenya. To enhance effectiveness and efficiency, the State Department for Planning prepares progress reports of the implementation of the SDGs in the country. It also prepares Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) which are part of follow-up and review of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. The Voluntary National Review (VNR) is a process through which countries assess and present progress made in achieving the global goals and the pledge to leave no one behind.

The reviews are voluntary, state led and are undertaken by both developed and developing countries. They provide a platform for partnerships of the various stakeholders, allow for sharing of experiences, successes, challenges and lessons learnt with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The reports are shared with the other UN Member States during the High Level Political Forum(HLPF) held at the UN headquarters annually.

Since the adoption of the Agenda in 2015, 120 reviews have been made at HLPF. In 2020, 51 countries (28 first time presenters, 22 second time presenters and 1 third time presenter) will present their national voluntary reviews to the HLPF. Kenya is among the 22 second time presenters.

The VNR presentations will be done virtually and are planned to begin on Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2020 and Kenya is scheduled to present her report on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

## **Ladies and Gentlemen**

The process of preparing this VNR was consultative. The State Department for Planning led the process and adopted the “Whole of Government and Whole of Society Approach”. Various stakeholders including Government, CSOs, Development Partners, Private Sector, Human Rights Institutions, Academia, and Youth Organizations among others were involved in the process.

This has provided the various stakeholders with an opportunity to contribute to the 2020 VNR for Kenya.

This report covers progress made in the creation of an enabling environment for the SDGs implementation as well as progress on all the 17 goals since the first VNR report in 2017. The report also identifies the challenges and recommends the way forward.

The mainstreaming of the SDGs in the planning and budgeting frameworks at both the national and county levels, the continuous awareness and capacity building programmes position the country to better implement the SDGs.

During the period 2017–2019, progress was made in SDG 3(Health), SDG 4 ( Education), SDG 6- (Provision of clean water and sanitation), Goal (access to energy) and SDG 11( ensuring sustainable cities). The Government continues to implement social protection programs across the country with the aim of ensuring that all Kenyans live in dignity and exploit their human capabilities for social and economic development.

In addition, during the same period the percentage of skilled deliveries increased from 61 percent (2016/17), to 65 percent (2018/19). At the same time, the proportion of pregnant women attending antenatal clinic visits increased from 48 percent to 50 percent (2018/19). In the education sector, the Net Enrolment Rates (NER) in primary education has taken an upward trend.

The number of pupils enrolled in public primary schools was 8,896,932 in 2017/18 and increased to 8,959,719 in 2018/19.

There was increase in the proportion of households with safely managed sanitation services from 65.7 percent in 2016 to 82.5 percent in 2019. The percentage of population with access to electricity rose from 41.5 percent in 2016 to 46 percent in 2018 and increased further to 50.4 percent in 2019. The country has set an ambitious plan to achieve universal access rate to electricity by the year 2022.

Kenya is undertaking measures to promote sustainable cities and human settlements. The measures include formulation and review of various policies and legislations including amendment of the Urban Areas and Cities Act by Parliament in 2017.

All county governments have adopted and implemented local Disaster Risk Reduction Strategies in line with the National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategies.

Other measures undertaken include protection, restoration and promotion of sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystem, sustainable management of forests, combating desertification and halting and reversing land degradation. Kenya embarked on afforestation programmes where the forest area as a proportion of total land area increased from 7.21 percent in 2016 to 7.28

percent in 2018. Kenya's economic growth rate increased gradually from, 5.9 percent in 2017 to 6.3 percent in 2018. It however, dropped to 5.4 percent in 2019.

However, a number of goals, targets and indicators need to be fast tracked as they are still lagging behind. They include poverty reduction, reduction in maternal mortality, malaria and non -communicable diseases, unemployment, some gender related indicators, and environmental degradation among others. Moving forward, more effort will be required to accelerate these goals, targets and indicators.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

Kenya is also undertaking initiatives aimed at enhancing domestic resource mobilization that is critical in the implementation of the SDGs. Towards this, Kenya is focusing on building the capacity of the Kenya Revenue Authority to increase tax to GDP ratio.

An Integrated National Financing Framework that improves effectiveness of development cooperation and matching plans, strategies and resources is also in place.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

The key challenges to the implementation of the SDGs in Kenya include inadequate funding, inadequate timely and disaggregated data and inadequate capacity. Covid 19 has also adversely affected several sectors such as education, health, tourism, agriculture, manufacturing and trade. This has affected the livelihood of the most vulnerable groups and wiped out many SDGs gains. Kenya is following "whole of government" and "whole of society" approach to tackle the pandemic.

The National Emergency Response Committee on COVID-19 is taking the necessary measures to address the pandemic in the short-term, while the Economic Recovery Strategy under preparation will be medium term.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

The responsibility of coordinating the implementation and tracking of the SDGs is led by the Government. However, the implementation of the same is a shared responsibility among all stakeholders. The Government acknowledges that implementation of the SDGs is a concerted effort involving a host of different stakeholders, and will continue engaging them during implementation, follow-up and review.

It is only through a cohesive, collaborative and concerted effort of all stakeholders that Kenya will make good progress towards meeting these goals and targets.

Moving forward, the report we are launching today will be disseminated to the stakeholders and an action plan developed to address the identified gaps and challenges in order to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs and raising awareness. This process will also help in strengthening dialogue with the stakeholders that is critical in the implementation of the SDGs during the Decade of Action.

Finally, as I conclude allow me to thank the members of the Inter Agency Technical Committee who greatly contributed to the preparation of this report I also commend the good work by the SDGs Coordination Directorate in the State Department for Planning for spearheading this process, and the overall guidance of Saitoti Torome, CBS, Principal Secretary for providing leadership to the 2020 VNR process.

With those, remarks allow me to thank you all once again, for finding time to be with us as we launch the 2020 VNR for Kenya.

**Thank you very much.**