

**OPENING SPEECH BY SAITOTI TOROME, CBS, PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, STATE DEPARTMENT FOR PLANNING DURING THE CENTRAL PLANNING & PROJECT MONITORING UNITS (CPPMUs) FORUM HELD ON 12<sup>TH</sup> TO 14<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2020 AT PRIDEINN PARADISE, SHANZU, MOMBASA.**

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**Chief Administrative Secretary;**

**Economic Planning Secretary;**

**Secretary Administration;**

**Economic Planning Advisor;**

**Director General, VDS;**

**Directors of Planning present;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen.**

It gives me great pleasure to join you during this **Central Planning & Project Monitoring Units (CPPMUs) forum**. I take note that this forum comes at a time when significant career changes have happened to the Economists cadre. It is worth to note that the Public Service Commission approved establishment of the position of Directors for Planning in the MDAs and 47 Counties. This is key milestone in our profession as economists.

Let me take this early opportunity to congratulate all Economists for the well-deserved recent promotions and specifically officers in the State Department for Planning who worked tirelessly and passionately to produce the new staff establishment for the cadre. I would like to promise you, that this is the beginning of ensuring professional upward mobility for the cadre. During this forum,

CPPMUs are expected to engage among other issues on the proposed Career Progression Guidelines for the Economist Cadre which is a paradigm shift from the existing Schemes of Service.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Let us be aware that this forum is taking place at a time when the country is dealing with the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are operating under a totally different environment which calls for new ways of conducting Government business. In view of this, I am happy to note that my State Department has developed a Post COVID-19 Economic Recovery Strategy which is at an advanced stage of finalization. The recovery strategy aims at revitalizing the economy and bringing it back to the desired growth trajectory. The strategy is the outcome a critical review of our existing programmes and policies to ensure that they are not only consistent with our development agenda but also informed by emerging realities brought about by emergence of COVID-19 pandemic and related economic shocks.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

There will be an extensive dialogue between the State Department for Planning and the CPPMUs on key areas. Key among the issues to be discussed in this forum is the question on how to sustainably revitalize and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the CPPMUs core functions. The forum will also provide participants with an opportunity to interact and allow peer to peer learning and present a platform to discuss topical and emerging issues related to the national development agenda.

CPPMUs across MDAs are crucial to the implementation of the National and Sectoral development planning function. Specifically, the functions include planning, budgeting and costing of projects and programmes; economic analysis and review of government

policies, strategies and programmes; monitoring and evaluation of development programmes and projects; and spearheading the strategic planning process. As such the CPPMUs are important in the harmonization and alignment of the Ministerial and State Department's goals, objectives and programmes to the national development agenda.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

In order to effectively revitalize the function of CPPMUs, there is need to strengthen the link between CPPMUs, the State Department for Planning and County Planning Offices; as well as to re-calibrate the roles that economists play in the policy, planning and implementation of projects and programmes at the National, Sectoral and County levels. In view of the foregoing, my State Department has introduced a budget Vote Head for CPPMUs in all the line Ministries; the headship of the CPPMUs has been elevated to the level of Directors of Planning; and we are in the process of enhancing staffing levels in all CPPMUs to ensure adequate capacity to deliver on our mandate

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

The State Department commissioned a survey to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the Central Planning and Project Monitoring Units (CPPMUs). I am duly informed that the preliminary findings of the evaluation will be shared and discussed during this forum.

To strengthen and improve linkages between national level planning and county level planning, I am pleased to inform you that the State Department for Planning has been granted the approval to establish the National Government County Development Planning Offices to coordinate national planning functions at regional and county levels. In this regard, 47 Directors

of Planning at the county level will be responsible for coordinating National Government development planning in respective counties.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

To streamline the use of government resources on projects at the National and County Governments' level, the State Department has been mandated through the Executive Order No. 1 of January 2020 (Revised in May 2020) to coordinate Public Investment Management (PIM) Directorate. In this area, the role of Economists in the Project Management Cycle cannot be over-emphasized. Economists should assist in undertaking economic analysis at the early stages of the project cycle to enable decision makers make informed decisions about particular investments given various alternatives and the corresponding costs.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

The State Department for Planning remains committed to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the CPPMUs in undertaking set core functions. It is my expectation that the deliberations of this Forum will come up with a clear way forward on the same. During the three days, I sincerely hope that you will get plenty of opportunity to share knowledge and experiences from your State Departments. On our part, the State Department for Planning shall endeavor to continue organizing similar forums with the purpose of escalating benefits that come with team work and a common purpose in national development planning.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

As I conclude, I wish to express my appreciation to the Vision 2030 Delivery Secretariat for partnering with us and making this Forum a success. I also wish to thank the Director, Social and Governance and his team for working tirelessly to ensure that this forum kicks off as scheduled.

## **Colleagues**

As you are aware, Mombasa is one of the most hospitable counties in Kenya and has a lot to offer especially being our coastal city. I therefore, urge you to take time to visit our beautiful tourism attractions, sample the local cuisine and interact with locals even as you observe the Ministry of Health guidelines on COVID-19 containment protocols.

## **Ladies and Gentlemen**

To conclude, let me thank you all for finding time to attend this important forum. I challenge you to hold candid discussions and to provide feedback that will inform the strengthening of the planning function. It is instructive that this Forum must act as a catalyst to push you to new heights of commitment on delivering on National and Sectoral Development Planning.

I now take this opportunity to declare this forum officially open.

**THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU ALL**