

UASIN GISHU COUNTY ASSEMBLY

HANSARD

Thursday, 21st September, 2017

The House Met at 2:20PM

[Mr. Speaker (Hon. David Kiplagat) in the Chair]

ARRIVAL OF HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR

[His Excellency the Governor (Hon. Jackson Mandago) escorted by the Speaker (Hon. David Kiplagat) entered the Chamber]

PRAYERS

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

Mr. Speaker (Hon. David Kiplagat): I want to make brief Communication from the Chair:

Honourable Members, I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate each one of you for being elected or nominated to this Honourable Assembly.

Applause

CONVOCATION

CONVENING OF SPECIAL SITTING OF THE COUNTY ASSEMBLY FOR THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS

Honourable Members, I wish to take this opportunity to welcome His Excellency the Governor Jackson Mandago. Honourable Members, this being the official opening of the Second Assembly of Uasin Gishu County, it is important to take note of Standing Order No.17 (i), which provides as follows:

The Governor shall address the opening of each newly elected County Assembly.

Honourable Members, Standing Order No. 20 (iii) provides - and this is important - When delivering an address to County Assembly, the Governor shall be heard in silence and address shall not be followed by any comment or question. At this juncture, Honourable Members, I wish to invite His Excellency the Governor to address the House.

Applause

GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS

EXPOSITION OF PUBLIC POLICY

His Excellency the Governor (Hon. Mandago): Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members of the County Assembly of Uasin Gishu, let me start by expressing my profound congratulations to you

all for your election to serve in this Honourable House. Your election against many competent aspirants is clear manifestations of the electorate's belief in your potentials and capabilities.

Applause

The responsibility placed upon your shoulders following this election is enormous. But I am confident that you are all equal to the task, and that you will therefore discharge your duties in a diligent, objective and impartial manner. It is, therefore, your responsibility as Members of County Assembly to live up to the electorate's expectations. Your debates on the Floor of the House must resonate with the issues that matter the most to the electorate. Our focus for the next five years will be premised on the developmental milestones that we shall endeavour to achieve in line with the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP), whose focus is to achieve a resilient and diversified economy.

Arising from this developmental focus, we will place high priority on areas that will empower our people, improve the economy and that which will create more jobs and wealth for our people. It is important to note that we can only share wealth and not poverty and therefore we must all rise to this challenge and that all deliberations in this Honourable House should be guided by these societal demands.

I wish also to congratulate the residents of this County for showing their confidence in us by electing us in the recently concluded elections.

Applause

I want to thank them most sincerely for maintaining peace before, during and after the elections. I want to extend my thanks to all Kenyans for staying calm during the court process and after the Supreme Court ruling on the contested presidential election results. We continue to urge you to maintain the peace that we have continued to have in our County and in our Country.

My address this afternoon will focus on the ideal of building on an integrated multi-sectoral approach to development that will enhance inclusiveness in development without leaving anyone behind. This will mainly target creating linkages between various sectors and building upon each sector's comparative advantage. We should all work to embrace this approach which will endeavour to build synergies across sectors. This is with view to ensuring that developmental outcomes mutually reinforce each other.

It is against this background that we have restructured some of the departments and introduced some that had not been in place previously to effectively coordinate various sectors and strengthen synergies among government departments. We will endeavour to create an atmosphere where sectors will simultaneously work together to resolve developmental challenges such as youth unemployment and high levels of poverty, by harnessing our youthful population's productivity in the County.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to remind this Honorable House that in our last term of office, we had prioritised departments of Roads and infrastructure, Health services and Water in our working framework. This however does not mean that we did not give the necessary consideration to other sectors. On the contrary, we did allocate resources fairly equally to all departments. In the current term, we would like to give priority in improving productivity in Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock, provision of water to the residents and health services in the County.

Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock sector will be the main focus around which other sectors will be developed in an integrated manner. The rural population in particular, derives its livelihood on and off the land. It is from agriculture that school fees are paid, health bills are met, and it is agriculture that puts food on the table for the urban population in this County. Agriculture is, therefore, a key lever for improving rural livelihoods as well as providing food for the general population in the County. To this end, we will focus on boosting agricultural production both in dairy and crop production to enhance production and increase earnings of our farmers. We intend to make Agricultural Mechanization Services (AMS) a County Parastatal and also allocate funds to acquire equipment that will subsidise production.

My Government intends to reinforce existing programmes in agriculture, promote and support agro-processing initiatives for value addition, and enlarge the cooperative movement and trade sector by providing them with loans at an interest rate of 5 per cent per annum. We will establish more farmer cooperative societies and create links between farmers and markets, both local and international to ensure that farmers get value for their products. We will promote value addition of agricultural produce by developing and supporting agro-processing initiatives and reduce post-harvest losses through provision of adequate storage facilities. We have to make agriculture a real business venture even for small-scale peasant farmers. We must look closely at the agriculture supply chain and in order to make as much capital out of all the produce harvested by hardworking people. Every crop takes a tremendous amount of investment from planting to harvesting.

The challenge is how to create opportunities for the hardworking farmers, so that they can increase their income and truly prosper. How can we position the farmers to engage in the market place and thereby the economy? How can we strengthen the producer-consumer links in agriculture? How can we help our farmers and the agriculture sector in general to attain value addition on the way to market?

The solutions will be found when farmers would aggregate, and produce reliable volumes. This means, they would be more likely to sell and less likely to lose supply contracts because of failure to hit quantity and quality targets. Helping farmers to aggregate, store and linking them to markets would lead to more opportunity for them to produce more and earn more. This means we must now seriously look at building for every small and medium scale farmer, a well-structured path from the field to the market.

Given our abundant ground and surface water within the County, the fisheries sub-sector has immense potential. We need to turn this potential into commercially viable projects that will uplift our people's nutrition status and incomes. To this effect, my administration will encourage the development of fisheries value chains in parts with abundant water resources. The Government will then expand this sub-sector through the development of aquaculture.

Mr. Speaker, for health department in the next five years, my Government intends to complete and operationalise the six sub-county hospitals, equip 50 per cent of the medical laboratories of our dispensaries and increase ambulances from the current thirteen to thirty.

Applause

We will also ensure that hospitals have adequate medical supplies and improve service delivery to the residents. Furthermore, we will work to increase immunisation coverage from the current 87 per cent to 95 percent by 2022, and implement hospital management information system in all

levels of our health sector. I wish to call upon unions to engage with Government and avoid frequent strikes that affect service delivery. It must be noted that once life is lost it will never be recovered even when the signing of a collective bargaining agreement is done thereafter.

In the water department, we intend to purchase four borehole drilling machines and other assorted equipment required for de-silting of dams and construction that will ensure all schools, hospitals and any other public institution and the residents in all wards access clean water.

Applause

We will also work towards improving the management of solid waste in Eldoret Town and the other townships within our County and implement a last pipe connectivity water programme. To increase the amount of water to Eldoret Town, we will target to construct two river dams and Kipkaren Dam that will see water rationing become a thing of the past.

Applause

Mr. Speaker, human capital development is key for any Government to make lasting progress. Uasin Gishu County is no exception. In addressing human capital development, we will continue to focus on skills development. My government will continue to invest in technical and vocational skills that will place our people at a better position for employment in some of our recently established and yet to be established investment opportunities within and beyond our County, and also to promote self-employment, particularly among our youths. This will enable youths to fully and effectively participate in the County's economy. We recognise that Youth form the biggest percentage of our population and the biggest challenges facing the youth in the county is unemployment. To deal with this problem my Government will provide cheap affordable and accessible credit at an interest rate of 5 per cent per annum to enable those interested in business to pursue them and those with innovative skills to bring them out.

Two, ensure that the 30 per cent AGPO reservation for the youths, women and people living with disabilities is met and exceeded to 50 per cent by the year 2020. Three, continue to equip youth with various skills as demanded by the labour market through sponsored programmes at Rift Valley Technical Training Institute, Eldoret National Polytechnic, Kenya Medical Training College and other institutions from time to time. Four, continue to create conducive environment for investors such as those investing in the African Economic Zone that is expected to create over 2, 000 jobs in the first year of operation and at its optimum 40,000 jobs.

My Government will also empower women through women groups by providing them with loans at an interest rate of 5 per cent per annum to pursue business.

To improve the business environment and enhance competitiveness, we will promote the use of efficient systems for business licensing and regulation. Our goal is to have a robust business environment, which promotes investment and competitiveness with limited bureaucracy.

My administration will promote the use of electronic services. We have already embarked on a programme to automate service provision and create platforms for sharing information. My government will put in place means to ensure optimum collection of revenue in revenue in all streams. All this is being done in order to reduce the cost of doing business, promote transparency, increase productivity and eliminate opportunities for corruption.

One of the major impediments to growth of business and maintaining competitiveness is limited access to finance. To improve our people's access to finance, we will strive to create avenues to

give them opportunities to access loans that will attract the least interest rates. My government will promote the use of co-operatives as an effective business model to spur development and capital which ordinarily many of our people would find difficulties to acquire individually. This is what makes co-operatives an appropriate tool for wealth creation for our people.

As a result of my Government's concerted efforts to develop conducive environment for investment through automation of services and enhancement of security within urban the urban centres, the World Bank report released in September 2016, put our County on the top of the list of Kenya's favorable investment destinations.

Applause

In the follow-up on this, my priority in trade and investment this time around is to encourage industrialization in order to transform our county from a primarily agricultural society into one based on the manufacturing of goods and services. As witnessed in the recently launched special Economic Zone Project, we will continue with private-public partnership endeavours with both local and international investors.

I also wish to assure you that we will continue to upgrade our ICT systems including free Wi-Fi in designated areas within the CBD and other urban centres to enhance access to information and services. We will also establish ICT training centre and empower one 100 youths per ward per year for the use of internet for job creation and job search.

My government will continue to ensure that we have adequate, modern and well-functioning social and economic infrastructure. This includes roads and housing. To this end, we will re-align financing of infrastructure development and strengthen the public private partnerships to maximise utilization of the same.

In the road department, we pride ourselves with this fact that we managed to acquire road equipment worth sh634 Million in our first tenure of office. With the machine, we were able to grade 3,600 kilometres of roads, and graveled 1450 kilometres, opened up to 156 kilometres of new roads, mostly in rural areas and constructed over 28 bridges.

Applause

With this equipment and our resolve to do and maintain quality work, we will ensure proper maintenance of the graveled roads, construct more culverts and bridges, construct extra bus parks and install street lighting in every rural shopping centre. We intend to gravel at least 5,000 km of roads and further decongest Eldoret Town.

We will also endeavour to improve beautification, cleanliness and orderliness of Eldoret Town, through various initiatives that include redesigning and landscaping of various gardens and improvement along the streets among others.

Mr. Speaker, the success of any institution is measured by the level of competence of its personnel. To ensure quality service delivery, the department of Public Service Management will continue to enhance employees' skills by offering quality training and induction courses to all our staff. We will also work towards improving service delivery and access to government information to the residents by building ward offices in the next two years. In the past, I noted that some staff had attitude that they are there to stay while politicians come and go. This time round, I wish to remind them that it is the other way round; politicians will stay and it is them to go if they do not deliver service.

Applause

For land, Physical Planning and Urban development, affordable decent housing is still a challenge in Eldoret Town. My Government intends to partner with the National Social Security Fund (NSSF), National Housing Corporation (NHC) and other housing institutions to redevelop the old municipal council houses to modern storey buildings that will optimise on land use. We will fully implement the Urban Planning Act and Zoning regulations and enforce compliance by all buildings in the town. Any illegal structures in road reserves and public land shall be removed and all buildings that were constructed without approvals or with irregular approvals through collusion with planning officials shall be dealt with accordingly.

My Government intends to put in place an inspection and compliance unit to expedite on this. We will continue to protect public land as well as recover grabbed public lands. I wish to note that in collaboration with the relevant National Government agencies we have managed to recover some parcels in Block 15/1762 in Langas measuring 20 acres, Eldoret Municipal Block 10/1143 -1145 (formally Block 10/8) and Block 10/1253, 10/1256, 10/1257 which form extension of Kipchoge Stadium among others.

Applause

My Government will improve on turn-around time for approval of building plans and deal with corruption matters in the department decisively. We intend to devolve collection of land rates to the lowest administrative unit, constitute an Urban Board, Town Management Committee and establish a County Housing Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, in my concluding remarks, I wish to say that whether we earned our people's vote or not, we have listened to them and we have learned from them. Their stories and struggles should make us more determined; more inspired than ever before about the work there is to do and the future that lies ahead. I believe that our destiny is shared and that this County will only prosper when we accept certain obligations to one another and to the future of our generations.

I believe we can seize this future together because we are not as divided as our politics suggests. We are not as cynical as the pundits believe. We are greater than the sum-total of our individual ambitions, and we remain more than a collection of individuals or any other differences that may exist. We are and forever will be a united County.

Applause

I am committed to ensuring that we in the executive arm of the Government remain accountable to the citizens of this County. We will bring a number of bills to this House and we will support implementation of development agenda that will ensure that we meet the demands of the legislature in respect to the annual reports, committee questions, government assurances and other oversight instruments.

Applause

At this juncture, I wish to also request all to exercise sobriety in carrying out their respective mandates in respect to the separation of powers. Under section 8 and 9 of the County Governments Act and section 185 (1) the functions of the County assembly are restricted to legislation, oversight and responsibility. God bless Uasin Gishu County and God bless Kenya.

Thank you.

Applause

Mr. Speaker: Thank you very much, Your Excellency.

Next Order!

PAPERS LAID

GOVERNORS ADDRESS

Hon. Hosea Korir – MCA Kapsaos Ward)

MCA Lamai: Thank you, Honourable Speaker. Allow me table Papers on the Governor's address during the County Assembly's opening of the second Assembly, first session.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

(Hon. Korir laid the speech on the Table)

Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order No.20, the address of His Excellency the Governor is hereby deemed properly tabled in the House.

Applause

Next Order!

NOTICE OF MOTION

RECORDING OF THE THANKS OF THE COUNTY ASSEMBLY FOR THE EXPOSITION OF PUBLIC POLICY
CONTAINED IN THE ADDRESS OF THE GOVERNOR

(Hon. Josphat Lowoi – Leader of Government Business & MCA Karuna/Meibeki)

MCA Lowoi: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Allow me to move the notice of the following Motion:

Pursuant to Standing Order No. 20 (v), that The Thanks of the County Assembly be recorded for the exposition of public policy contained in the Address of the Governor.

Applause

Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to standing order No.17 (ii) read together with standing order No.20 (iv) and (vi), the address of the Governor can only be debated within the next sitting of this House. According to the calendar, that will take us to Tuesday 26 September, 2017 at 2:30PM.

ADJOURNMENT

So, all Members that Motion is granted and the House stands adjourned until Tuesday 26 September, 2017 at 2:30PM.

DEPARTURE OF HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR

(Hon. Members rose in their places while His Excellency the Governor and the Speaker left the Chamber)

The House rose at 2:45PM