



## **REMARKS**

**BY DR. NICHOLAS MURAGURI, THE PRINCIPAL SECRETARY**

**MINISTRY OF HEALTH**

**AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF**

# **The Health Care Quality Challenge: Making Quality Matter Now and in the Future**

An Inter-Professional Conference Charting the Way Forward

**NOVEMBER 10, 2016**

**NAIROBI**

**Distinguished participants,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Achieving impact on the health of Kenyans is of central importance to the Government of Kenya if we are to achieve the 2030 vision of transforming the country into a globally competitive and prosperous middle-income nation with a high quality of life. I know our neighbours, Governments from other East African countries have similar visions and we are all signatories to the 2030 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

To achieve SDG Goal 3 will require the concerted effort of all players in the health sector – whether these are health professionals in service delivery, educators creating the leaders that will drive improvement in the future, or researchers able to contribute new knowledge to practice and policy. I am therefore pleased to see that the Aga Khan Development Network and the Aga Khan University in partnership with the Johnson & Johnson Corporate Citizenship Trust have brought you all together over the next three days to energize you and charge you to

come up with innovative ideas that will move us toward our common goal.

The Government of Kenya is well aware of the commitment His Highness the Aga Khan has made to advancing health, education and civil society institutions in East Africa. A commitment made over 100 years ago that continues today. It is this level of commitment that is essential to having the impact we desire. That you are also celebrating the first 15 years of the Aga Khan University in East Africa is an equally important message for the future. Fifteen years is a short period of time for a university to have an impact. But as I see the advancements in health care delivery made by the Aga Khan University Hospital and the leadership role played by the graduates of its nursing and midwifery school and the medical college, as well as the quality programmes that the Network implements throughout the continuum of care, it is clear that AKU and the AKDN will play an important role over the next 15 years and beyond.

The Ministry of Health in Kenya is developing a strategic plan that aims at ensuring improved service delivery, greater accountability and equity in access and citizens' participation in the management of services as

well as resources. The plan is the first in a series of other five-year strategic plans that will facilitate the implementation of the Kenya Health Policy 2014-2030. The health policy sets out a plan to attain a level of distribution of health services commensurate with those of a middle-income country through attainment of specific health impact targets. The plan also contains a robust monitoring framework that will track achievements in a way that is responsive and accountable to the health needs of Kenyans.

We know the challenges in the health sector – reproductive, maternal, newborn and child mortality and morbidity, adolescent health issues, emerging and re-emerging diseases, increasing numbers of persons newly infected with HIV (mainly young women), and the increasing cases of injuries and non-communicable diseases. I am encouraged to see that most of these topics will be covered in your conference over the next few days.

You are aware of the commitment Her Excellency the First Lady of the Republic of Kenya, Margaret Kenyatta, has made to reduce the number of deaths among women and children. I am very encouraged to see a

similar commitment by the Aga Khan University in establishing a Centre of Excellence in Women and Child Health based here in Nairobi and in bringing Professor Marleen Temmerman back to Kenya to take on this leadership in East Africa. I also understand that the Aga Khan University Hospital will embark on establishing a Children's Hospital within their hospital and build high quality specialty pediatric care together with specialty medical and nursing training programmes in child health. These are enormously important contributions to our vision for the future health of our population. The fact that these are East African resources will surely have a significant impact over the next 15 years.

I am pleased to also see that injury is on your conference agenda. This has to be a critical area of focus for Kenya and indeed East Africa as a whole. The current loss of life and disability related to injury is unacceptable and we need effective strategies to tackle this highly preventable problem and we need a more effective system of pre-hospital and hospital care that reduces mortality and morbidity when injury occurs. I am pleased to say that the Violence and Injury Prevention Unit of the Ministry of Health in partnership with the Red Cross and ICChange will hold a national trauma stakeholders meeting

later this month to develop a trauma framework that aims to structure and guide the country's response to trauma and injury. I am sure ideas from your conference can contribute to this framework.

I see also that you are tackling the issues related to non-communicable diseases and that the Aga Khan University has a focus on NCDs from research to policy under the leadership of Dr. Gerald Yonga. To say this area is a priority of government would be an understatement. It is an area where all levels of government, public and private health care organizations and industry must come together to advance innovative promotion, prevention and early intervention strategies to arrest the impending crisis of non-communicable diseases on the horizon. Without innovation in this area we will not be able to reach the 2030 goals.

My other observation of your meeting is perhaps the most important! That the focus of this meeting on health systems and of course the core theme of quality. Providing access to quality services to our population is the major challenge. Following Moi University, the Aga Khan University was the second university in the country to recognize the importance of family medicine to the quality/access agenda. The

interdisciplinary collaboration between nursing and family medicine at the community and facility level can be a significant contributor to improving access and quality. This conference bringing these disciplines together to discuss the way forward is important and I look forward to hearing your strategies for achieving this.

Finally, I want to congratulate the AKDN, AKU and Johnson & Johnson Corporate Citizen Trust for the 15-year partnership that has had such impact on building the health workforce, particularly of nurses – the impact which is so well captured in the School of Nursing and Midwifery's *Healthy Futures* report, on the leadership role being played by your nursing alumni. It is long term partnerships such as this that have greater impact. Let me charge the AKDN and your partners with the added responsibility of building such partnerships with our public health systems. As a government we greatly appreciate the contributions over the last 15 years but we challenge you to do even more to achieve our collective vision of health for all and at all ages.

Thanks you for asking me to participate in the launch of your meeting. I wish you all great success and look forward to hearing the results of your work over these three days.