



**MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL
PROTECTION
OFFICE OF THE CABINET
SECRETARY**

REMARKS BY
HON. FLORENCE BORE CABINET SECRETARY FOR LABOUR
AND SOCIAL PROTECTION
DURING THE WORLD CHILDREN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS ON
20TH NOVEMBER 2023

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- **Mr. Joseph Motari, PS for Social Protection and Senior Citizen Affairs**
- **Hon. Alice Ng'ang'a, The Chairperson, National Assembly Departmental Committee on Social Protection and Member of Parliament for Thika Town**
- **UNICEF Country Kenya Office Representative- Ms. Shaheen Nilofer**
- **Ms. Sophia Abdi-Noor Chair person, NCCS Board of Directors**
- **Hon. Mary Wambui Chair Street Families Rehabilitation Trust Fund Board of Directors**
- **Abdinoor S. Mohamed CEO-National Council for Children's Services**

- **Mr. Joshua Nkanatha, County Commissioner - Kiambu County**
- **Rt. Rev. James Maria Wainaina, Bishop Catholic Diocese of Murang'a**
- **Our Children Guests -Ms. Maisara Melisa and Master Brian Mutua**
- **Ms. Elizabeth Gitau Manager and Founder Kusitawi Villages Children's Home.**
- **Representative of CSOs – Ms. Lucy Minayo Director NurtureFirst, ECDAN**
- **Mr. Steven Zhang Deputy CEO Huawei Technologies (Kenya) Co. Ltd, Public Affairs Department**
Good Morning

We converge today to mark the **World Children's Day 2023** under the theme ***Inclusion for Every Child***'. This pivotal day provide countries across the globe with the opportunity to reflect on the gains made in protecting our children and underscores the need to strengthen the mechanisms to prevent and mitigate against the many challenges affecting children. This year's team serves to remind us that every child is entitled to equal rights and therefore ***No Child Should Be Left Behind*** regardless of their; societal, religious, political, communal or national affiliations.

The World Children Day is commemorated every *20th November since 1989* when the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) was adopted by the UN General Assembly. The Convention is the most imperative universal Child Rights instrument which has helped nations around the world to transform the lives of children and Kenya was among the first African countries to ratify. The laws we have put in place provide for children rights including protection from radicalization, trafficking, child labor, right to parental care and provision of Alternative Family Care. The Children Act, 2022 provides the rights of children with disabilities, recognizes rights of intersex children and the rights of children in the digital space among others.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Children account for nearly half of the total population of the Country and are our future. Investing in children is investing in the nation and securing the foundations for our economic prosperity. In recognition of this realities, the Government has prioritized interventions for children in the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda and in the Vision 2030.

In fulfilment of health rights, the Government through the Universal Health Coverage has prioritized access to primary healthcare where children stand to benefit most. Kenya has also made tremendous progress in the provision of universal free primary Education. As Stakeholders in the child protection and education sectors, we have a responsibility to help our children attain the required rates of enrolment, retention, completion and transition to their higher levels of education.

Every child has the right to a name and nationality and I therefore emphasize to all parents and caregivers to ensure all children are registered. This also calls for the support of all relevant stakeholders in order for the country to achieve universal birth registration.

My Ministry recognizes the importance of child Participation which is an important pillar of children rights. Children should therefore be facilitated to meaningfully participate in matters that concern them and their society. To ensure and promote this, my Ministry will continue to implement and strengthen the Kenya Children Assembly.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Any form of Violence against children is detrimental to the realization of their full potential, growth and development. According to the 2019

National Violence Against the Child (VAC) Survey report, over 50% of children have faced at least one form of violence in their lives. The consequence of these forms of abuse have far reaching negative impacts on our children. We therefore have a duty to promote and protect the rights and welfare of children in all settings. The National Prevention and Response Plan on Violence Against children (NPRP) was developed to provide an integrated response to violence against children. Emanating from the plan, is the end Violence Against Children campaign dubbed “**SPOT IT STOP IT**”. I call on all stakeholders to join the campaign and the efforts in order to make the society safe for children.

Further, the Government has enhanced its efforts to protect children from retrogressive harmful cultural practices such as Female Genital Mutilation

(FGM) and child marriage through engagements with the affected communities and designing deliberate programmes and strategies.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Technology remains an important enabler to development across the world yet it has come with challenges especially to children. Kenya is the first country in Africa to have in place a National Plan of Action to tackle Online Child Exploitation and Abuse. The strategy provides for coordinated efforts by government agencies and other stakeholders to address online child sexual exploitation and abuse. We therefore seek the support of stakeholders in the implementation of the Plan of Action and encourage initiatives for combating online child exploitation and abuse. Within the Ministry, a department has been established under the

Directorate of Children Services dedicated to implement online Child Protection activities

Concerning issues of children in conflict or in contact with the law, am fully aware of the gaps that exist especially as revealed in the Status Report on Children in the Justice system. I commend the Honorable Chief Justice for Gazetting the Standing Committee on the Administration of Justice for Children in Kenya and acknowledge their selfless efforts towards the improvement of the child justice system.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My Ministry acknowledges the commendable work done by residential institutions of care for children. However, research has shown that children separated from their families and communities are deprived of

the care, love, attention, support and opportunities for their full potential development. The family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world where children should live, be cared for and supported by their families and communities.

In response to this, the Government launched the National Care Reform Strategy 2022 – 2032 to transition children from institutional to family and community care. I urge the National Council for Children’s Services, the Directorate of Children’s Services, development partners and all the stakeholders to accelerate the implementation of the child welfare programmes as provided for in the Children Act, 2022 and Care reform Strategy. As part of these measures, my Ministry will prioritize the provision of cash transfer to the households taking care of vulnerable and

orphaned children transitioned from institutions and those at risk of separation from their families. Today, I will be launching the **Transitioning Guidelines and Child Welfare Programmes Guidelines in support of Care Reform agenda in the Country.**

To promote quality child protection services at all levels, My Ministry will be recruiting additional Children's Officers and Social Development Officers to enhance capacity particularly at the sub-county level and will as well strengthen the operations of the Child Help Line 116 this financial year. We are also developing the Regulations to give effect to full implementation of the Children Act 2022 which we have earmarked to be finalized by the end of this financial year.

I wish to acknowledge the efforts of our partners who have made this day a success and for supporting Government in the implementation and in ensuring the realization of children rights.

To the great children of Kenya, I wish to remind you that you are the most important constituents of our population - our future torch bearers and the custodians of our generations. We recognize that there may be challenges in your path and therefore we encourage you to remain steadfast, focused, have self-discipline, be resilient, stay alert so that you don't fall prey to perpetrators of abuse including online child abuse and work hard to realize your full potential. We urge you to make use of the child Helpline 116 any time when you are in distress. As we celebrate you today, we renew our commitment to protect your rights and freedoms.

To our children, have fun, for this is your day.

God bless Our Children, God bless Kenya.