

**SPEECH BY H.E. THE GOVERNOR, HON. JOHN OBIERO NYAGARAMA
ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE COUNTY
ASSEMBLY ON FEBRUARY 18, 2015**

Mr. Speaker

Deputy Governor

The Senator

Honourable Members of Nyamira County Assembly

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

May you all join me in acknowledging the supremacy of the Almighty God of all creation; He took care of us throughout the past year, and He has brought us here this afternoon. I have faith that the Lord will continue to guide us all in our concerted efforts to lay a firm foundation for our beloved County.

Mr. Speaker:

It gives me a great pleasure to be with you this afternoon to preside over the Official Opening of Nyamira County Assembly.

I wish to take this early opportunity welcome you to 2015 and to thank you, Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members for executing your legislative mandate with utmost diligence and commitment. Similarly, your readiness to engage my Government in constructive consultations from time to time has enabled us all to accomplish the various election promises we made to the people of Nyamira.

Mr. Speaker:

Allow me to also thank both the Majority and Minority leaders for the forthright and collaborative manner they have worked in ensuring organized debates in the Assembly. Consequently, the Assembly has managed to pass the various critical legislation in record time.

We are aware, Mr. Speaker, that behind any progressive legislation there are Chairmen and Members of various Committees who spend long hours looking into the very details that determine the overall quality of our County laws.

Allow me, Honorable Members, to thank you all for this excellent work that continues to provide the leadership and oversight my Government needs to remain accountable to the great people of Nyamira.

Mr. Speaker:

The number of Bills brought to this Honourable Assembly by my Government for debate and adoption increased significantly over the past year. The objective of the Bills is to guide County Government operations in a manner that is consistent with the principles of good and accountable government. I am happy to note that a record of six Bills were passed in the last session alone.

The expeditious passage of these Bills by the Assembly is a strong indication of your continued commitment and devotion to the Honourable Members' core mandate of legislation.

Among these laws is **The Nyamira County Early Childhood Development Education Act**, which seeks to provide a framework for the establishment of systems for the administration of early childhood education within the County.

To spur growth at the grassroots, the Assembly passed **The Nyamira County Ward Development Fund Act**. To promote micro and small enterprises, the Assembly passed the **Trade and Investment Development Act**. With regard to health, the Assembly debated and passed **The Nyamira County Healthcare Service Fund Act**. The objective of this piece of legislation is to provide resources to enable sustainable management and operations of health facilities in the County.

Mr. Speaker:

As Honourable Members are well aware, alcoholism is a major threat to the health and economic wellbeing of our County. Your decision to enact **The County Alcoholic Drinks Control Act** is a blessing to thousands of both young and adult men and women whose lives are ruined by irresponsible alcohol consumption. Above all, this specific Act seeks to provide mechanism to license, regulate production, sale, distribution, and consumption of alcoholic drinks.

Finally, **The Animal Disease Control Act** legislated by this Assembly, addresses matters relating to animal disease, transportation, sale, slaughter, and disposal of infected animals.

Mr. Speaker:

During the 2013 elections, our vision for Nyamira was summed up as **Our Manifesto for Change**; identifying unemployment, inadequate infrastructure, insecurity, and access to better health services, as our key concerns. In my inaugural speech, I clearly stated that as a County we must invest in education,

job creation, infrastructure, transport, health, agriculture, security, water and energy.

My Government continues to follow this path of social and economic development as articulated in the manifesto we presented to the people at the time of elections.

Once again, in February 18, 2014, when I had another opportunity to address this noble Assembly, I appealed for your support and encouragement towards realization of My Government's development agenda. Key among these projects and programmes are: infrastructural development across sectors; investing and modernizing farming; as well as diversification of products, value addition, and opening up new markets for our products.

Other development activities include creation of a conducive business climate that encourage innovation, investment and growth; Expansion of our partnership programs to create jobs and accelerate growth; and empowering of our people to reduce cost of ordinary goods.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that My Government has already registered impressive gains in most of these target areas.

Mr. Speaker:

Firstly, to enhance the performance and responsiveness of the public service, My Government initiated an Integrated Performance Management System, in which senior County officers signed performance contracts, while others commit themselves through the performance appraisal system. This mechanism of

personnel management has already instilled discipline, and the work ethic leading to enhanced overall performance.

To ensure that My Government is fully aware of the progress of departmental programs and projects, I have established a Result Office in my office to monitor and evaluate performance. Through reports generated by the team manning this crucial office, we will be able to avail regular and accurate reports on the performance of the entire Government to this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker:

The 2010 Constitution envisages consultation and engagement of stakeholders in the County development process. To fulfil this requirement, My Government has established a new department, charged with the responsibility of public administration and coordination of devolved units, to oversee the process of continuous citizen engagement.

My Government has already initiated weekly public participation fora at sub-county level where citizens get an opportunity to interact and share ideas with the Executive on matters affecting them. These fora are interactive, informative, and acts as a reliable feedback mechanism that enables the County to design citizen-centred development policies, programmes, and projects.

Mr. Speaker:

Since the inception of My Government some two years ago, I have had an opportunity to coordinate and oversee the Executive team. I have no doubt whatsoever that the men and women who constitute this important arm of the County Government are equal to the task.

However, after observing the individual skills and competencies of the team for a period of about two years, based on the demands of efficient and effective service delivery, I have reorganized My Government through a mini-reshuffle. The reorganization involved movement of some Executive Committee Members and Chief Officers to departments where their full potential will be realized.

Furthermore, during the mini-reshuffle I also established a new department of Public Administration and Coordination of Devolved Units and realigned other departmental portfolios to suit emerging challenges. Other important functions of this newly created department include mobilizing citizen participation and stakeholder involvement in County policy making and handling the human resource management function.

Mr. Speaker:

Our development agenda across sectors remains active despite growing challenges. The perpetual challenge for both National and County Government is how to strike a fair balance between development and recurrent expenditure. Mr Speaker, allow me to report that in a recent survey conducted by World Bank, Nyamira County was ranked among the top ten counties that have done exceptionally well in meeting the required 30% threshold on development expenditure.

Mr. Speaker, this a remarkable achievement attributable to our able Executive team, your unrelenting support in the oversight role, and the people of Nyamira, in general.

Mr. Speaker:

As we work on the 2015/2016 budget estimates, I am certain that a higher percentage of our County expenditure will go to development. We can achieve this feat once we all agree to institute stringent austerity measures such as cutting down on administrative and operational costs and redirecting more available resources towards development.

As we come to the close of the third quarter and approach the last quarter of 2014/2015 financial year, we intend to broaden our revenue base, strengthen enforcement and compliance measures, and seal any possible revenue leakages.

To strengthen accountability and transparency and ensure zero tolerance to corruption, my Government has already put in place relevant departmental committees to address the vice, if and when it may arise. We will also work closely with the National oversight agencies to ensure integrity and professionalism among public service officers.

Mr. Speaker:

My government is spending Ksh.25M to implement the solar street light project, which has seen remarkable increase in business hours in various market centres as well as enhanced security.

Mr. Speaker:

The Artificial Insemination (AI) programme, which was started a year ago, has started bearing fruit. A total of 375 calves have been born to date.

The **bamboo tree** nurseries are flowing with quality seedlings, which are currently ready for distribution in an effort to do away with the water-demanding eucalyptus trees. The bamboo variety is of better quality and value.

Mr. Speaker:

A healthy population is the secret behind creation of wealth. That is why my Government is spending Ksh. 210M in this department. We have already renovated 64 health facilities, set up an integrated emergency referral system, installed a CT Scan, and embarked on upgrading Nyamira District hospital to a full-fledged referral hospital.

Mr. Speaker:

An elaborate infrastructure is key to un-clogging the business potential of our people and the entire county. My Government has opened up rural access roads, urban backstreets and empowered 320 citizens in appropriate building technology through training.

A good number of water projects, which were initiated in the last financial year, are almost complete, 21 water springs have been protected, and 7 boreholes sunk.

Mr. Speaker:

To widen our County investment portfolio, My Government has organized an investment forum in April 2015. It is expected that the forum will explore various investment opportunities for our people and create a platform to exhibit

County investment potential. In the same sector, plans are underway to revive dormant savings and cooperative societies in the County.

Mr. Speaker:

My Government has also scheduled for a **Youth Forum** that will draw the youth from every corner of the county to deliberate on the best way forward on how to empower them and have them in the mainstream of our development agenda. This is an innovative cluster of our population that we cannot afford to ignore.

Mr. Speaker:

Let me note that the famous **Bob ni Swag SACCO** was finally registered on 14th July 2014. Logistics of housing its office and automating its services will be finalized this financial year. Besides, legislation of a Bill to establish Nyamira County Youth Ventures Development Fund is ready awaiting presentation to this house for your consideration. In gender, policies to empower women, youth, and people living with disabilities are in place.

Mr. speaker:

The **County stadium** project at Manga is underway. My government is spending Ksh.33M towards this project, which, no doubt will improve the sporting spirit of our people and help tap and nurture talent. Besides, the **County Talent Academy** at Kiabonyoru, in which we are spending Ksh.8M is up and running having admitted over 100 recruits in various disciplines such as athletics, ball games, music and drama. Meanwhile, the Sports Council is in place

and will help in the coordination and running of sports activities, such as the kick-off of games and sports from the ward level.

Mr. Speaker,

The **county cultural motifs; flag and emblems** Bill is ready from the Executive and already forwarded to this Honorable house for debate and approval. This will help in branding the Nyamira we want!

Mr. Speaker.

To ensure that our products compete favourably in the market and also to ensure that our producers get value for their production, my government entered into an agreement of consultancy with Kenya Industrial Estates (KIE) in Resource Mapping, Value Addition and Integrated Fruit Processing Plant.

Mr. Speaker:

We have had a successful **ECDE Stakeholders Conference** mainly targeting managers and head teachers of our ECDE Centers. The resolutions, which were made from this conference are informative and illuminating and will be used to improve the quality of education at this level.

Mr. Speaker:

As you embark on the business of the Assembly, let us focus on development, development and development. This is a journey that we must accomplish together as a team.

God bless our people

God bless our County Government

God bless and guide Nyamira County Assembly

With these few remarks, Mr. Speaker, I now declare Nyamira County Assembly officially opened.

THANK YOU

THANK YOU.