

# COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF KISUMU



## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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### **SPEECH OF THE GOVERNOR ON THE OCCASION OF THE LAUNCH OF PREPARATIONS FOR *AFRICITIES* SUMMIT 2021.**

**30<sup>th</sup> May 2019. Ciala Resort, Kisumu.**

- The Cabinet Secretary for Devolution and Chairperson of the National Steering Committee on *Africities* 2021, Honorable Eugene Wamalwa;
- Honorable Cabinet Secretaries;
- The Chairperson of the Council of Governors H.E. Governor Wycliffe Ambetsa Oparanya;
- Excellencies Fellow Governors;
- His Excellency Jean-Pierre Elong-Mbassi, Secretary General of the United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLGA);
- Honorable Sithole Mbanga, Deputy Secretary-General of UCLGA;
- Members of the Diplomatic Corps and development partners;
- Principal Secretaries;
- Honorable Members of the Senate and National Assembly;
- Representatives of national government agencies, including the County Commissioner;
- Honorable Dr. Mathew Ochieng' Owili, my Deputy Governor;

- Honorable Onyango Oloo, Speaker of the County Assembly,
- Honorable Members of the County Assembly,
- Members of the County Executive Committee (CEC) and staff of the County Government;
- Members of the Press;
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the County Government and the people of Kisumu County, I welcome all our guests from outside the County to Kisumu and all of us present here to this great occasion. This event represents a great milestone in the growth and maturity of Kisumu City.

As you know, the Pan-African Summit of Local and Regional Governments (*Africities* Summit) is organized every three years by the United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLGA). *Africities* Summits highlight the importance of decentralization in Africa and the role of sub-national governments in governance and development on the continent. The Summits also provide a platform for policy dialogue on decentralization and integration of Africa towards improving governance at the level of cities and territories. In summary, *Africities* Summit is a platform for expression of the views of the people and their leaders in local and sub-national governments on the development challenges in Africa and strategies for addressing those challenges. The Summits, in their international nature, expose participants to knowledge beyond the continent.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me announce that the 9<sup>th</sup> edition of *Africities* Summit will be held in Kisumu City from 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> November 2021. That is why we gather here to launch the official preparations for the Summit, as a joint venture between the Kenyan national Government, the

County Government of Kisumu and UCLGA together with other partners, some of whom are present at this event.

The bid to host the 9<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Africities* Summit was first and foremost Kenya's national project. However, Kisumu had already been selected as the Host City by the time of submission of the national bid. As you can see, the competition to host the Summit was at two levels – at the continental level between African countries and nationally between Kenyan cities. Let me not disclose the competitors in the national race. If you recall that Nairobi had already hosted the Summit in 2006, you can guess the Kenyan cities that were in competition for the 2021 event. But the national competition was neither fierce nor protracted. Within a short time, and well ahead of Kenya's formal bid, a consensus was reached to host the Summit in Kisumu. The Council of Governors (CoG) played a crucial role in facilitating dialogue between the counties to support one among them for the role. The CoG was established for this kind of purposes and the Council delivered very well on their mandate in this instance as in other functions. Kenya went to *Africities* 2018 in Marrakech, Morocco in November last year, speaking in one voice under a united national front led by CoG to clinch the host of *Africities* 2021. And we did!

Ladies and gentlemen, it would not have been possible to win the bid to host *Africities* 2021 without the commitment and support of the national government at the highest level. His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta provided the most crucial guarantee to UCLGA that Kenya was willing and ready to host the Summit. Cabinet Secretary for Devolution, Honorable Eugene Wamalwa followed up the President's commitment by giving assurances to UCLGA that the

national government will work together with the County Government of Kisumu and other partners to meet the financial, political and logistical conditions necessary for a successful Summit. While we pushed our bid, a new idea was growing among the leadership and membership of UCLGA for the hosting of the 9<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Africities* Summit in an intermediary city for the first time. Hence, Kisumu is the first intermediary city to host the Summit and 2021 will be the first time the Summit will be hosted outside a capital city. I must thank the Secretary-General of the UCLGA, Honorable Jean Pierre Elong-Mbassi for believing in Kisumu right from the beginning of the bidding process until this time.

Ladies and gentlemen, the commitment of the national government towards *Africities* 2021 in Kisumu has been made even clearer and stronger in the post-bidding period. The President has moved fast to appoint the National Steering Committee for *Africities* 2021, comprising cabinet secretaries for finance; foreign affairs and international trade; internal security; tourism; transport and infrastructure under the chairmanship of the Cabinet Secretary for Devolution Honorable Eugene Wamalwa. All these ministries in the national steering committee are represented here and CS Wamalwa will introduce them to you shortly. This is the top organ in the preparations for the Summit. At that high level, we also have the full backing and support of the Right Honorable Prime Minister Raila Amolo Odinga, who is following very closely the *Africities* 2021 process, with us at the County government as well as with the Ministry of Devolution. Cabinet Secretary Eugene Wamalwa and I had occasion to brief Honorable Odinga on the process a couple of months ago.

In addition to the National Steering Committee, we have established the County Organizing Committee and its secretariat, and there is a joint technical committee of the County Government, Ministry of Devolution and CoG. The County Organizing Committee brings together

representatives of both the executive and the County Assembly. As we begin preparations in earnest, the structures of the Summit will be further developed for the involvement of non-state actors (including the private sector and civil society), development partners, government agencies and people's organizations at the County level. Like the Summit itself, the preparatory organs will be inclusive of all sections of society.

Ladies and gentlemen, after our participation at the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of *Africities* Summit in Morocco, Marrakech last year and subsequent consultations with the leadership of UCLGA, we know the implications of being Host City for the 2021 Summit. And it is not a walk in the park. There were 8,300 delegates in Marrakech. Going by statistics from previous Summits, we expect about 8,500 people in Kisumu. The number of participants could hit 10,000 boosted by high numbers of local delegates. All the Summit delegates will expect world class services in security, immigration, accommodation, registration, international connectivity by flights, on-site transport, conference facilities, exhibition spaces as well as information and communication services. Neither the national government nor the county government can provide the goods and services required at a grand scale.

The private sector in Kisumu and the Lake Region Economic Bloc (LREB), and indeed across the country, will have to organize itself to respond to these needs, while making profits for their businesses. This is of course the first benefit of *Africities* to the County's economy and our people. Hopefully, these gains will accrue to both big business and the small and medium enterprises owned the local people.

There's a lot more to gain by hosting *Africities* 2021. The national government will certainly invest heavily in development of infrastructure and services in Kisumu. This city will not be the same again after the *Africities* Summit. From the time Kisumu was declared host of *Africities* 2021, the city was placed strategically on the global map as the first intermediary city to host the *Africities* Summit. We have begun to attract attention and interest from around the world. This attention will definitely intensify as we embark on pre-Summit activities, especially the mobilization of delegates, translating into fortunes in tourism and direct investments even before the Summit.

Ladies and gentlemen, I do not want to give the impression that this opportunity to host *Africities* Summit 2021 will solve all of our contemporary development challenges in this County or in the City. Far from it. However, hosting this Summit provides Kisumu City and towns around it with an unprecedented opportunity to leap-frog in urban development. There are many cities in the world that took leaps in development by the push of international conferences and other grand events. All of us in Kisumu, the Lake Region and the entire Republic of Kenya must come together to deliver an excellent and memorable *Africities* Summit in 2021, while drawing all the economic benefits that accrue from this wonderful opportunity.

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**HONOURABLE (PROFESSOR) P. ANYANG' NYONG'O, EGH.  
GOVERNOR – KISUMU COUNTY**