

COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF KISUMU



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

SPEECH BY H.E PROF. PETER ANYANG'

NYONG'O EGH, GOVERNOR KISUMU COUNTY

DURING THE UNVEILING OF MASENO TOWN,

AGRICULTURAL TRAINING COLLEGE, MASENO.

September 10th 2020

The Deputy Governor – Dr. Mathew Owili

The MP for Kisumu West – Hon. Olago Aluoch

Speaker of the County Assembly – Hon. Jack Oraro

Area MCA – Hon. Jagongo

County and National Government Officials;

Members of the Fourth Estate,

Ladies and gentlemen;

1. It is my pleasure to welcome you all this to Maseno Town this beautiful Thursday afternoon.
2. I remember with nostalgia, many years ago, growing up as a young man in Rata village, not very far from here; making trips to Maseno to come and sell vegetables grown in my mother's backyard to the missionaries living here then.
3. The missionaries set the foundation for the educational institutions here which have been the real foundation of the growth of this town into the thriving town we congregate to unveil today.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

4. Urbanization is here with us and we have to embrace it. On a global scale, over 55% of the population now live in urban centres and this is projected to reach about 70% by 2050. As an African country, these statistics are particularly important to us because apart from Asia, the urbanization will be happening in Africa. According to the World Bank and the

2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census, the annual urbanization rate is estimated at 4%.

5. It is important to note that with the promulgation of the new constitution 2010 and subsequent coming into effect the devolved governance system, the growth of small towns across the republic has been unprecedented, a remarkable impact of devolution.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

6. Growth of towns and cities are influenced by various factors. Educational institutions have played a critical role in the growth of hundreds of towns throughout the world; Cape Town and Mbolela in South Africa – Universities of Cape Town Mpumalanga; the world renown University Town of Shenzhen in China; Manipal City of India birthed by Manipal University; Copenhagen in Denmark; Bordeaux in France; Berlin in Germany; Aberdeen in the United Kingdom; Kansas City in Kansas, USA and the list goes on.

7. Today we witness the birth and indeed growth of another college town. Maseno University and its predecessor Siriba College; and the outlying educational institutions are responsible for the birth and growth of this vibrant.

8. Urbanization has the potential and has been evidenced to contribute to socio-economic growth. Urban centres, attract populations from diverse areas, both within and outside the national borders and are therefore melting pots for different cultures that shape the very growth of those towns. Urban centres are also centres for innovation and Maseno here, by virtue of being a university town, has the capacity to contribute to socio-economic transformation of not only Kisumu county and Western region, but also the East African region.

Ladies and gentlemen,

9. Growth of urban centres have been characterised by challenges such as poor planning, low infrastructure investment and social amenities, poor governance and weak

institutional capacity. Often times, this has led to proliferation of slums and other informal settlements, poverty and unemployment, environmental degradation among other negative issues witnessed in our towns.

10. Prudent and deliberate effort must therefore be put in place to ensure that we harness the benefits of urbanization while reducing possible emerging outcomes. It is against this backdrop that my government has made the deliberate and informed decision to confer town status with its administration system to Maseno and to give special attention to its socio-economic and environmental issues.

11. To this extent, there will be a dedicated team of staff headed by the office of the Town Administrator working under the oversight of a Town Committee put in place as per the provisions of the Urban Areas and Cities Act.

12. To underscore our commitment to the realization of the Maseno dream, we have appropriated over 40 million in this financial year for water and sewerage, road and lighting

infrastructure, solid waste management and tourism development in Maseno. I am aware that this is not enough but it is a statement that going forward we will have a dedicated budget for Maseno town to adequately offer services to her residents.

13. The governance structure put in place to manage the town will also enable the town to create its own linkages and partnerships that will improve service delivery and accelerate its growth and development.

14. The growth of these satellite towns will not only bring services closer to the people but also create economic nodes that will create opportunities for thousands of people. This will also serve to reduce pressure on the City of Kisumu.

15. I am looking forward with excitement to the completion of the conferment exercise to the other four remaining towns of Ahero, Muhoroni, Kombewa and Katito gazetted together with Maseno.

16. We shall continue monitoring the growth of our urban centres and make appropriate plans for them so as to ensure that we harness the full potential of urbanization.

Ladies and gentlemen,

17. With those many remarks, please join me in this joyous duty of the official unveiling of Maseno town.

God bless Maseno, God bless Kisumu County and God bless Kenya.