



**Our Chief Guest of the Day, Sen. James Orengo;
Excellency Governors from the Lake Region Economic Bloc;
Honorable Members of the County Assembly;
Mama Kisumu Dorothy Nyong’o;
Members of the County Executive;
Invited Guests;
Members of the Fourth Estate;
Ladies and Gentlemen;**

Let me begin this afternoon by first of all thanking His Excellency the President Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta for delivering his State of the Nation Address two days ago, and following this august event with conferring Nakuru Municipality with a City status yesterday. Our Party Leader, Rt. Hon. Raila Amolo Odinga, his Deputy, Governor Wycliffe Oparanya of Kakamega, myself and many other leaders were witness to this momentous day. Myself and the people of Kisumu would like to send hearty congratulations to Governor Lee Kinyanjui and the people of Nakuru for joining us – Nairobi and Mombasa as the cities of Kenya.

On August 21 2017, the decision of the people of the great county of Kisumu was consummated at the steps of “Aguch Kisumu”, now renamed Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Sports Complex as I took oath of office for the position of Governor of Kisumu County. The oath I took was to abide by, and fully implement, the manifesto which I had presented to the people of Kisumu and received their resounding approval.

That day marked the beginning of a journey to Socio-Economic Progress and improving livelihoods for the people of Kisumu.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

I am very happy to stand before this August house today to deliver my 4th State of the County Address as envisioned in the County Government Act and a reminder to me and indeed all of us that it is time to reflect on what we had set out to do together as a people.

The journey of developing and building Kisumu to respond to the needs of our people has been both challenging and fulfilling. At times we have been disappointed by little achievements but most of the time we have celebrated the bigger achievements as this report will show today.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

The world is steadily warming up from the dark effects that have characterized our lives occasioned by the Covid-19 pandemic over the past two years. Notwithstanding the loss of many lives and the stagnation of our economy, there are critical lessons we learnt from this sad experience that we shall never forget. Life has taken a trajectory of new normal that must form part of our daily lives from now on. The easing of containment measures that have been in place must not lead us to complacency in observing the strict hygienic standards that will always be useful to us in preventive health. We must not lower our guards in ensuring we clean our hands as often as possible and wear masks because we are not out of the woods yet.

One of the critical lessons learnt is that we must focus more than ever, in producing



enough foods for sustainable livelihoods.

This is amplified in the agenda number one of my manifesto; “Revitalizing agriculture for food security and agribusiness” and resonates well with the second SDG of “provision of food and establishing sustainable food production”. In this last decade of the implementation of the SDGs, this call couldn’t be more urgent.

In this regard, I am happy to note that our journey to sustainable food security is on course. Today, the potential of Kisumu I talked about when I became Governor has clearly been manifested in the growth recorded in the various sectors of Agri-production and agro-processing we are witnessing today.

Our strategies to develop the rice sub-sector through rehabilitation of the irrigation infrastructure, provision of input to farmers, capacity building and expanding land under irrigation has realized tremendous growth in production that has steadily risen from 15 bags per acre three years ago to 35 bags per acre today.

The steady growth of the rice subsector over the last four years led to last year’s cumulative production of 280,000 bags (16,000 metric tonnes) from 8,000 acres of land earning our 2,285 farmers 560 million shillings. This translates to about 530% growth from 2016 when we realized a production of 52,500 bags from 3500 acres of land worth 105 million shillings.

This growth in productivity comes with demand for improved market access. However, sustainable market access must be premised on value addition. To this end, I want to thank our partner - Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), for financing the installation of a modern rice mill in Katito town to enhance rice processing. My government has also purchased a 30 million-shilling rice mill to be installed in Ahero town.

As we consolidate our gains in production through provision of the necessary inputs and extension services, we are also focusing more investments in putting more land to production and embracing modern farming methods.

In the concluded financial year **Mr. Speaker Sir**, my administration invested KES 160 million in irrigation infrastructural development that has brought 2,025 acres of land under production in Kobura, Awach, Kano, Gem Rae, and Siany CC3 Irrigation Schemes.

We have also concluded the rehabilitation of Gem Rae Irrigation Scheme at a cost of 32 million shillings. The rehabilitation saw the construction of a weir and lined canals to control and improve water flow efficiency. This will improve production of rice and horticultural crops and increase the area under irrigation from 300 to 500 acres supporting 800 households.

Likewise, our dairy sub sector has also recorded very encouraging growth over the last four years. Our strategies of developing the sector through distribution of superior resilient breeds to farmers coupled with investment in the dairy food chain has seen our milk production grow from **26 million liters in 2017 to 37.9 million litres valued at 1.9 billion Shillings in the last financial year.** And we intend to continue reinforcing this trend in our second administration after election next year.



Over the past four years, we have distributed a total of 336 dairy cows and 669 dairy goats to our farmers with very minimal losses. This is attributed to the use of technology where we are able to track all the animals, keeping a close watch over their health needs through a revamped extension services including a toll free extension service.

To support the industry, 264 acres of pastures and fodder have been established to improve access to adequate quality feed for livestock thus creating opportunities and supporting livelihoods for 140 households.

The steady improvement in milk production has informed our diversified investments in this sector. The investments are also geared at strengthening the cooperative movements as key drivers to production and marketing. We started off by constructing the **10,000-litre Osiepe Milk Cooling Plant in Muhoroni**, built in partnership with ILRI, to support the 3000-member OSIEPE Practical Action Cooperative Society. This was followed by a **4000-litre cooling plant given to Seke Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society from Nyahera in Kisumu West**, in partnership with the National Government, a 3000-litre Cooling plant to **Ahero Dairy Cooperative Society from Nyando Sub County** and a **3000-litre cooling Plant to Seme Farmers’ Cooperative Society from Seme Sub County**.

We have also finished the construction of the flagship **Dairy Multiplication Centre in Nyangore in Chemelil**. This 112 million-shilling project constructed in partnership with the European Union comes with a 10,000 litre cooling plant and fully integrated to produce dairy breeds that are suited to our climatic and environmental conditions.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

We are fully focused on laying the infrastructure for the dairy industry with focus to production, marketing, value addition and strengthening the value chain.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

When I presided over the commencement of the construction of Osiepe Milk Chilling Plant in Muhoroni in 2018, I gave an undertaking that my vision was to turn agriculture to a “young man’s” job.

I am encouraged to see more young people taking up agro-production and not just making a living out it, but creating more employment opportunities for others like Mr. Geoffrey Ogonji with us here today. (Mr. Ogonji, kindly rise up to be acknowledged).

Mr. Ogonji from Nyamaroka in South East Nyakach, a beneficiary of our dairy distribution project quit his bodaboda business to focus on dairy farming where today he produces about 13 litres of milk per day per cow earning him an average of 700 shillings.

He has also realized that with increased production, he and other farmers around him are going to need a more coherent market access. To this end, he has mobilized his fellow farmers and formed **Nyabondo Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society** where he is the current vice chairperson. I would like to appeal to all our leaders at the Ward level to take keen interest in food production and encourage our farmers to take advantage of our service.

Mr. Speaker Sir,



We all remember Mr. Evans Gichuru, a resident of Kadongo village, Kisian in Kisumu West Sub County who was a guest of this August House last year. Evans, a beneficiary of our poultry distribution project having dropped out of his course in Maseno University, was able to resume, fully supporting his tuition and upkeep from this poultry business. Today, Mr. Evans has employed two people to take care of his business full time as he focusses on his studies.

These are the life changing stories that our journey of transforming Kisumu has produced. We can only do more. And we **SHALL** do more.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Our experience at the height of the Covid-19 explosion taught us that you cannot delink healthy living from sustainable food security.

We put together a recovery and response team from various sectors under the coordination of a special committee of Kisumu Economic and Social Council (KECOSOC). The committee’s major finding was that health provision must be supported by investment in production of fast maturing and nutritious leafy vegetables.

This has been one of the areas that Mama Kisumu has been championing. She has been able to mobilize resources to provide cone gardens for cancer patients undergoing palliative care and yet needing to boost their immune systems through healthy eating.

Mr. Speaker Sir, our health care provision as a service has recorded the most notable growth over the years. Various lessons learnt from the UHC pilot scheme have shown that our investment in this sector must encompass infrastructure, commodity management, human resource and research not forgetting partnership linkages.

These investments must be supported by very innovative financing models which ensure sustainability and reduces over reliance on government funding.

Building on partnerships and linkages led to the implementation of our innovative “MARWA” Kisumu Solidarity Health. Through collaboration with PharmAccess Foundation and National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF), we currently support **42,564 vulnerable households and 79,761 dependents**. In effect, MARWA is intended to effectively insure **450,000 vulnerable persons** when fully operational. Further **1,968 Community Health Workers** have also been enlisted to receive both inpatient and outpatient services at the 49 public health facilities spread across the county under this initiative.

Since the launch of Marwa, the 49 MARWA facilities have recorded 109,828 new outpatient visits. This influx can be attributed to availability of commodities and provision of quality services within the facilities.

Implementing MARWA has led to a steady increase in the claims process from NHIF for secondary healthcare, rising steadily from Ksh. 12,711,300 in the first quarter of implementation to an all-time high of Ksh 49,260,193 in the last quarter of the year. This brings the total claims through MARWA to 142,817,046 million shillings.

Health Products and Technologies are a vital component of healthcare provision. The county envisions universal access to essential health products and technologies such



that these products should be available, affordable, safe, efficacious and of good quality and appropriately used; thus, contributing to optimal healthcare.

Therefore, we have adopted a comprehensive approach to maintain a reliable supply of these products as well as the requisite management systems through procurement from KEMSA, hence ensuring that pharmaceuticals and non-pharmaceuticals are affordable, effective and of good quality. To improve on accountability and ensure end-to-end visibility of the medicines procured by the county, an inventory management system has been introduced. So far 102 county health facilities are using the system.

Technology remains the answer to the hemorrhage of products that has bedeviled public health facilities overtime.

Going forward, we shall digitize all aspects of health provision including clients’ hospital visits and community health management.

As we continue investing in health human resource, we are putting measures in place to ensure enhanced productivity and improve on capacity building.

To this end, the government has partnered with Learning Institutions including Maseno University, Kenya Medical Training College and Kenya School of Government to ensure continuous information acquisition and skill advancement of health officers.

The University provides fellowship courses in Surgery and Obstetrics & Gynecology and plans are underway to establish one for Anesthesia in conjunction with East Africa College of Anesthesiologists.

Notable results in the area of collaboration and partnerships has been realized at Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Teaching and rReferral Hospital (JOOTRH) where several specialized services like Neurosurgery, Gastroenterology, Nephrology, Cardiology, Neurology, Urology, Neonatology, Endocrinology, Orthopedic surgery, Oncology, Gyno-Oncology, and many more **“ologies”** among other services have been introduced.

Plans are at advanced stages to introduce more services like Open Heart Surgeries, Kidney transplants, Plastic and reconstructive surgery among other specialized services.

Through our inpatient expansion program to reduce congestion at the hospital the inpatient bed capacity has increased from 600 beds to 850 beds by the construction of three new wards.

A landmark development in the hospital is the construction of the Comprehensive Cancer Care Centre cancer and Blood Disorders Center to comprehensively manage cancers and other blood disorders. The services will include Radiotherapy, brachytherapy, Pet CT, Chemotherapy among other related services.

On completion, the ongoing Kisumu Comprehensive Cancer and Hematology Centre at the Kisumu’s Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Teaching and Referral Hospital (JOOTRH) will be a center for comprehensive management of cancer and blood disorders serving the entire East and Central Africa region and beyond.



Bone Marrow transplant services will be available and this will save patients from traveling to centers outside the region like India, South Africa, the USA, and Europe.

This new development will position Kisumu as a medical tourism hub in the region.

The construction of the project is expected to be completed by March 2022 and the installation of equipment including the PET scan (an advanced digital tool for cancer diagnosis) will be complete in another three months.

Working with a renowned Pharmaceutical company Novartis, the hospital on 7th December 2021, will launch the Sickle Cell Disease Infant Screening and Comprehensive Management targeting to screen **38,000 babies** annually after the ‘migele’ machine arrived.

This is a machine that can detect cancer in the infancy stages.

Mr. Speaker Sir, Honorable Members;

What gets measured, gets done. This is the mantra that has guided our journey of transforming and developing this great county.

My Manifesto at agenda three of “ensuring a healthy population living in a clean environment”, was heavily informed by the prevailing water and sanitation situation in the county.

My conscience was always pricked by sights of women with yellow jericans trekking long distances at the “*hour of God*” to fetch this prized commodity.

The worst of documented experiences was where women had to bare abuse in return for water. My heart has never stopped bleeding at those exposes that filled our media spaces.

I was determined to forever consign that blot in our history to unreclaimable abyss.

In our water implementation strategy, we set out to ensure that 68% of the people of Kisumu will have access to quality portable water by 2022.

Despite the challenges posed by the covid pandemic that slowed our efforts down for almost two years, I am happy to report that we were still able to surpass that target by four percentage point to record 72% coverage of the population.

In the just concluded financial year alone, characterized by the Covid-19 containment measures, we managed to increase the number of people with access to safe portable water by **4.8% translating to 56,700 of the population of Kisumu.**

This achievement was made possible by close collaboration with partners in the sector under **Kisumu County WASH Network Forum**. In this regard, I want to acknowledge the support of UNICEF, USAID (KIWASH Programme), SWAP (Safe Water & Aids Project), Living water Service Centre, Practical Action, World Vision, Water is Life, LVWWDA (Lake victoria Water Works Development Authority) and Carbon zero.



I want to assure them of our strong undertaking that we shall build on this partnership going forward by ensuring that we play fidelity to the various partnership agreements governing our collaboration.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Climate change remains one of the biggest threat to the world of our times. Sadly, the biggest polluters are not willing to stop their bad habits of emitting Green House Gases into the atmosphere through equally bad industrial habits of exploiting fossil fuels for automation and production.

Supporting developing countries to undertake this change by establishing and financing the **ADAPTATION FUND** is non-negotiable.

Since COP26 failed us in this regard, we hope to make better progress in COP27 in Cairo next year. The world refused to take action when the scientists spoke at COP26. We have reached a point of no return. Inaction will mean catastrophic outcomes for life on the planet.

It is for this reason that my Government prioritized the formulation of **County Climate Change Policy and Kisumu Climate Change Act, 2020** which this Assembly debated and approved. Mr. Speaker Sir, I must thank the Assembly through your leadership for this.

The Act operationalizes the County Climate Change Fund Mechanism (CCCFM) where, the Climate Change Council, the County Climate Change planning committee and the Ward Climate Change planning committees were institutionalized.

The ward climate change planning committees have formally been established in every ward to coordinate and identify climate investments for local action.

The act also provides for 2% of County development budget to be used for climate investments and projects in all our 35 wards particularly in supporting tree planting.

These institutions give Kisumu County a millage in localizing climate change actions and hence contributing to the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).

Mr. Speaker Sir, Honorable Members;

Our overall activities in the area on environment will not only impact climate action but also how we leave in our dwellings.

Studies have shown that by 2050, the world population will be living in urban dwellings. We are therefore called upon to start preparing our urban areas to be able to respond to emerging challenges that will have a bearing on the quality of livelihood going into the future.

This informed our decision to start planning our urban areas in line with global trends. Mr. Speaker, you will recall that we gazzetted five urbans areas into towns, that is Maseno, Kombewa, Katito, Muhoroni and Ahero. We have since unveiled Maseno, Ahero and Katito and put in place institutional structures to manage it in accordance with the law.



In the concluded financial year, we have prioritized infrastructure improvements in those towns that would prepare them for commercial take-off.

Paving of Kadani road in Ahero, Kombewa ring road in Kombewa town and paving of Katito market in Katito town will ease movement of goods and services and allow for more trading hours in a healthier environment.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Prudent use of resources from development partners has been one of our strengths for attracting further support from bilateral partners.

Following successful implementation of Kenya Informal Settlements Programme phase one, a World bank funded project through the Ministry of Housing and urban Development, we have qualified for phase two of the project worth **Kshs. 984.395 million**. This fund will be used for infrastructure improvements in **10 settlements** around the county.

The successful implementation of KISIP one has also put us in good stead for consideration of a further 40 million Euros to be disbursed to 33 counties participating in KISIP 2.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Our Urban Regeneration Agenda is now clear for all to see. The transformation of Kisumu City has positioned it as a business hub of choice.

Further, the consultative framework with the people living and doing business in the city has brought us together in collaborative framework to better the development of the city.

I want to thank the private sector who have joined us in the “City beautification and Urban Aesthetics Enhancement” and the “city greening” projects.

These projects have brought life to focal places in the city especially the roundabouts. We shall continue engaging the citizenry and the private sector on how best to build a sustainable resilient city together.

Honorable Members;

The industrial growth potential will be driven by innovative investments.

In order to create investments of the future, we must introduce our people, especially the youth to cottage industries and innovation. The construction of Rotary Innovation and Incubation Centre has been concluded and we shall soon be calling for admissions of young innovators to be admitted. This Centre will officially be opened soon.

However, we are alive to the fact that not all cadre of innovators will gain access to the centre due to space limitation.

It is for this reason that we are working with the youth and women groups in various locations to build their capacity and help develop their cottage innovations.



In the concluded financial year, we re-established Kawuonda Bakery cottage industry by supplying and installing a modern, energy efficient 3-oven 25.2KW Bakery machine in Sigoti, South East Nyakach in Nyakach Sub County.

Likewise, my government bought a Lathe machine for Nyaori Self-help group in Nyalenda ‘A’ thereby up-scaling their carpentry and workshop capacity.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

The marvel of our constitution 2010 is clear on the Fourth schedule as to the responsibilities of the two levels of government.

Why do I say so?

The constitution apportioned the County governments responsibilities that touch directly on the people. Be it health, water, environment or education. I am especially elated that our education responsibilities are for molding citizens of the future at ECDE and building producers of manpower that will drive government economy at TVET level. Kisumu County has 673 ECD centers of which 660 are anchored in primary schools while 13 are stand-alone public ECD centers. The public ECD centers have a total enrolment of 51,408 children in the Seven Sub-counties. Out of these, 25,266 are girls and 26,142 are boys. Nyakach sub-county has the highest number of ECD children at 11,369 while Kisumu Central has the least at 3,207.

In the last financial year, 2020/2021 our Pre-Primary Program focused on delivering our mandate through Access to Free, quality, and safe ECDE education to pre-primary children in Kisumu County. The feeding program has been scaled up to ensure a 100 percent retention of children in school. In the Financial year 2020/2021, the County government distributed food to all the ECD centers and fed 50,000 learners. In the financial year 2020/2021, my administration distributed Shs 205,000,000 worth of bursaries and scholarships to needy students in high schools and Colleges. Scholarship and bursaries beneficiaries in the year were 1,260 and 36,259 respectively spread across all the 35 civic wards. The beneficiaries increased from 33,403 in 2019/2020 to 36,259 in 2020/2021 which translates to a 9% growth.

That is why we must do more to ensure that our investments in those two core areas deliver the desired results. We have resolved as a government to start giving bursaries to those seeking to study Marine studies at the recently built Marine school.

Over the four years of my administration, we have kept pace with the aspiration of strengthening this devolved mandate by building infrastructure at the two levels and equipping them so as to produce market ready professional and strong minds that can graduate to the next level of education. I want to recognize the efforts of Mama Kisumu for championing the strengthening of inclusive ECDEs where parents can continue to play a crucial role in the growth of the young ones even during school hours. In as much as higher levels of education are the preserve of the National Government, we are alive to the fact that the students in those schools are still our responsibility as local governments. It is for this reason that we have continued to grow our bursary and scholarship portfolios to broaden the numbers of beneficiaries. Having increased the number of beneficiaries through enhanced budgetary allocations, we have gone ahead to ensure that each beneficiary receives allocations that are commensurate with their schooling needs.



Honorable Members;

Following the debilitating effects of the Covid-19 pandemic that adversely affected the business environment across the country and the world in general, my Government advanced loans to traders with a one-year grace repayment period to cushion them from the effects of the containment measures of the pandemic and reinvigorate the trading environment. This fund was able to impact vulnerable households enabling them to pick up their shattered livelihoods. The results have been quiet impressive. The revitalization of the business sector has come with improved own source revenue generation. This has translated to an increase of revenue collection by over 100 million shillings in the just concluded financial year. The biggest effect of the loan is seeing people whose livelihoods were shattered back on their feet and able to meet their obligations and take care of their families. I hope that when we come to this August House with a proposal to enhance this fund so as to touch more lives, we shall be heard favorably.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

As we support the business community to pick themselves from the debilitating effects of the pandemic, it is not lost on us that Micro, Medium and Small Enterprises have in the recent past become the engine of growth for the cooperative movement. I am happy to report that our efforts at sensitization on the benefits of the cooperative movements have borne fruits. In the last financial year alone, we were able to register 16 new Cooperative Societies. Of these, eight (8) were Marketing Co-operative Societies and eight Savings and Credit Co-operative societies. This development lays the ground for re-engineering the Co-operative sector in Kisumu that will help play a very important role towards growth of our businesses. The focus of the trainings is not just to prepare them for registration but also to ensure that they are managed in accordance to the applicable laws. To this end, a total of 63 Co-operative societies were audited. Out of these, ten Co-operative Societies were given authority to borrow from financial institutions to sustain their operations because of their sound financial and administrative grounding.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Our recovery efforts from the past flooding that caused untold destruction to our roads infrastructure is far from over. However, it has become an eye opener on how best to mitigate such, going forward. We have been able to turn that disaster into an opportunity. To this end, we have focused on in-house roads construction and maintenance that will cut out the bureaucratic tapes attached to construction processes while at the same time giving an opportunity to own people at the grassroots to be part of managing their own resources. It is for this reason that we are championing the **Roads Maintenance Teams and Machine Based Roads Construction.**

To ensure that these two deliver effectively, we have invested in construction equipment and recruited young people from across the county to be part of this innovative journey of managing our roads infrastructure through the Roads Maintenance Teams. Using the machine based strategy for roads management, we were able to open and maintain 160 kilometers of roads across the County. Some of the roads that have benefitted through the program; Riat-Awach Road, Manason - Ogendo road and Kondik - Lunga road to name but just a few. The success could be small against our set targets but it has enabled us to learn areas to tighten to improve efficiency going forward.



To ensure longevity of the roads, we are put strong emphasis on holistic roads construction, encompassing run-off water management and protection of road reserves. In this regard, roads that are crossed by rivers were mapped and commensurate culverts and water drainages built on those crossing. In the concluded financial year, 10 Box culverts were built to completion.

As a measure to roads sustainability, we have adapted use of new technology in road maintenance, **“the Claycrete Technology”**. Claycrete offers new technology in road maintenance which can sustain roads conditions between 5 to 10 years. The technology has been pioneered in maintaining of Guba-Gita Number Kabongo filter road in Kisumu East.

Mr. Speaker Sir, this roads stabilization method “Claycrete” has been proven to be environmentally safe and protects roads from erosion caused by run-off water. Mr. Speaker Sir, we have also made a strategic decision to improve our major link roads to bitumen standards. Currently, we contracted the National Youth Service, a government agency, to construct lot one of **Namba kapiyo-Bodi-Asat road at cost of 222,182,469 shillings**. The 15 kilometer road will open up Ndere Island, a major tourist destination and also help the fisherfolk access markets easily. We intend to have this road completed in time for Africities next year so that our guests can enjoy the scenic beauty of Ndere Island.

Mr. Speaker Sir;

The gains enumerated in this report have been as much the effort of the County work force as it is the support of the people of the Great County of Kisumu. My administration has continued to invest in our public administration for better service delivery. This has called for energizing areas that required reinforcements as well as ensuring that the staff are placed where they truly belong. To this end, promotions of deferent cadre were effected right from the health workers to our teachers both in ECDE and TVET institutions. I have been quite encouraged by the timeous manner that our human resource needs have been addressed by the Public Service Board. In this regard, I want to say a big thank you to the Board for ensuring that professionalism has been the hallmark of managing our human resource requirements.

It is also a period that the staff establishment was hit hardest. We lost a number of very dependable colleagues that might not be easy to replace. Prof. Boaz Nyunya, the CECM for Health and sanitation; Mr. Akaka Ramoya, the Chief Finance Officer; Mr. Munoko Wamalwa from the Directorate of Human Resource; Mr. Lazaraus Obera and Nelco Sagwe from the County Assembly; Mr. Andrew Bala, the Village Administrator for Kochogo Village; Joannes Gamba from the City Hall and drivers Herbert Onditi and John Obiero. They were all promising and committed members of this government. We miss them dearly. May I ask that we pause for a minute in their honor. May the Almighty receive and keep their souls in eternal peace. Amen.

The easing of Covid containment measures means going back to our old ways, a more sociable society – more gatherings. We must not forget that we are not out of the woods yet with coronavirus menace. Let us keep our guards up all the time; wear masks, wash hands and keep social distance. However, we must also remember that this is also the defining moment to show our hospitality prowess as we welcome 10,000 delegates from across the globe to the **9th Africities Summit in May, 17 - 21**



2022. Let us seize this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to showcase the abilities and opportunities of Kisumu and the intermediary cities of Africa. The successful hosting of the Africities Summit in Kisumu, the first intermediary city to do so, opens a world of opportunities for secondary cities of Africa. Not only will they be in a position to bid for such conferences in the future against established metropolises, the 9th Edition of this Summit will focus on building sustainable resilient cities including the much talked about cities financing. We remain truly grateful to the Government of Kenya and United Cities and Local Governments of Africa for keeping faith with our capability to deliver. Further, I want to thank His Excellency the President of the republic of Kenya, for ensuring that the resources required to deliver a successful Summit are availed through the relevant ministries.

Some of these infrastructure like the construction of the Africities Convention Centre in Mamboleo and the expansion of Kisumu International Airport, will position Kisumu as the investment hub of the region. Kisumu is ready to lay out the red carpet and deliver the most memorable Africities Summit. As a precursor to this Pan-African event, we have organized Kisumu Investment Conference to be held in Kisumu from 19th to 22nd December 2021. This conference seeks to lay the ground and prepare us to fully reap the benefits of Africities when the world converges in Kisumu.

The preparation journey towards the investment conference led to consultations with various sectors of the society including the Diplomatic Corps, National Government Agencies and the Private Sector to share with them the investment opportunities that abound within our borders. This is the time to showcase Kisumu’s largely untapped investment potential in various sectors such transport, agriculture, tourism and hospitality and maritime transport and trade. Kisumu is leaving nothing to chance as it prepares to reap from the emerging opportunities in the blue economy initiatives. The refurbishment of Kisumu Port, the establishment of Lakefront Development Cooperation, the opening of the Marine School have provided fresh impetus in the drive to use the blue Economy as one of the key drivers for economic development in Kisumu County.

As I conclude **Mr. Speaker Sir**, I want to once again thank H.E Uhuru Kenyatta for selecting Kisumu to host this year’s Madaraka Celebrations and to officially open Jomo Kenyatta International Stadium. This, I must say went down as one of the most successful national days celebrated in this country and under such challenging times. The jamboree atmosphere exhibited the unparalleled passion only found in the people of Kisumu.

And to the people of the great County of Kisumu, I say a big thank you for welcoming the guests as you did.

Let us match into the future confidently, **TOGETHER.**

Indeed, the future is bright and together we shall make it brighter!

A future defined by our journey to **prosperity through hard work.**

I Thank you.