



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

REMARKS BY
CABINET SECRETARY,
DURING THE 90TH
KENYA MEDICAL TRAINING COLLEGE
GRADUATION CEREMONY
HELD AT THE KMTC GRADUATION SQUARE, NAIROBI
DATE: 2ND DECEMBER, 2021.

- **Chairperson of the KMTC Board of Directors, Amb. Zachary Muburi-Muita**
- **KMTC Board of Directors**
- **KMTC Acting Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Kelly Oluoch**
- **Representatives of Government Agencies**
- **Development Partners**
- **Graduating Class of December 2021 and their families**
- **Members of the Fourth Estate**
- **Faculty, Staff and Students**
- **Online audience,**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to begin by thanking the entire KMTC fraternity for their warm welcome at this graduation ceremony. I am delighted to celebrate this auspicious occasion with all of you as KMTC marks its 90th Graduation ceremony.

I am proud of this institution that has contributed immensely to the development of our country by producing competent health professionals in various disciplines.

I want to congratulate the class of December 2021 for their tireless efforts and commitment to undertake courses in the medical field. To many of you, this is a realization of your dreams. We all share in your joy and are very proud of what you have accomplished. *Hongera sana!*

I know that your training here at KMTC has equipped you, not just with knowledge, skills and abilities but it has also given you a great foundation to become positive agents of change who will provide solutions to the problems facing our health sector.

As you go out, remember that the interest of your patient supersedes any other interest. May you remain patriotic Kenyans and proud ambassadors of the KMTC.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our country, like many other countries in the world, is working towards achieving the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals whose duration of accomplishment coincides with that of our national development blueprint, the Kenya Vision 2030.

Aspirations of the Sustainable Development Goals are dependent on a strong, skilled, motivated and responsive health workforce.

The global agenda of sustainable development is directly linked to fulfilling the aspirations of adolescents and youth. Empowering the world's 1.8 billion young people, these graduands included, and unleashing their full potential to contribute to economic and social progress, is instrumental for bringing the 2030 agenda for sustainable development to life.

Aware of this objective, the Government has set a strategic roadmap through "The Big Four Agenda", premised on Universal Health Coverage that seeks to provide affordable health care for all. I note with satisfaction that KMTC is committed to this agenda, through

training of Human Resources for Health, some of who are being presented during today's graduation.

Colleagues and friends,

The Constitution provides for citizen's fundamental rights and freedom, including the right to the highest attainable standards of health. As is now clear, the UHC agenda promises to deliver on this right.

We have made tremendous effort towards ensuring socioeconomic transformation through access to equitable, affordable and high-quality healthcare for all Kenyans.

To actualize this promise, we began the UHC journey with a waiver of user fees in lower-level health facilities and improving health security. Now, the Government has designed and is implementing several policy reforms and programs in the health sector. These include an explicit Policy on UHC and essential benefit package, the Kenya Health Sector Strategic Plan 2018–2023, the Kenya Health Policy 2014–2030, just to mention but a few.

To increase access and demand for services in public hospitals as well as address emerging and re-emerging health challenges, investment in initiatives such as:

- Primary Health Care.
- Free maternity services commonly referred to as **Linda Mama**.
- Health insurance subsidies for the vulnerable.
- Development of a health financing strategy as well as
- Increase in staff and world class medical equipment, have been prioritized.

Towards addressing the soaring demand for customer-centered quality health services, the Government continues to collaborate with like-minded partners and County Governments. These efforts have resulted in increase in the number of healthcare workers to meet health demands and improve the health worker population ratio, especially in hard to reach areas, aspirations of which today's graduands strategically enhance.

To strengthen the regional supply chain of affordable health products and increase access to specialized health services for Kenyans, we

remain committed to joining hands with entities willing to collaborate on telemedicine, diagnostics capacity, as well as vaccine and pharmaceutical production.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am aware of the strategic role that the College plays in attainment of UHC in as far as training is concerned. I direct the Board to ensure quality of training to all our mid-level health workers for sustainable provision of health care services for all is not in any way compromised. In collaboration with my Ministry and County Governments, KMTC Board should explore other measures to mitigate the gaps in Human Resources for Health in the country including a collegiate health care workers training system in our health facilities, so as to achieve the desirable health workforce in the country in the shortest time possible. In this regard, I challenge the board to think not just of the current needs but also those of the future. You need to ask what will the healthcare worker of the future need to look like and how best is the institution preparing the students for

that environment? How will the graduates from this college interact with the emerging and technological trends of the future?

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am particularly pleased to note that the graduands being released today are part of our medical fraternity, playing a key role in offering critical services to Kenyans in the management of the Covid 19 pandemic. While I appreciate the bravery and dedication of our medical personnel in tackling the pandemic, we need to ask ourselves, how differently shall we deal with pandemics such as Covid 19 in the future, and to what extent will this college have prepared our health care workers to deal with that challenge.

I want to recognize the good work done by KMTC in the fight against the epidemic. I urge that we do not sit back and relax but rather explore how else we could respond better. This calls for deliberate focus in research on emerging trends in medical care in all the areas of training in the college.

Speaking of research, the implementation of the UHC has been greatly enhanced by the adoption of technology and research. It gives

me great pleasure to note that the College has up-scaled the uptake of research activities, embraced simulation laboratory for inter-professional training and leveraged on ICT to enhance blended learning as well as service delivery.

When the Government declared the epidemic a national emergency at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and all learning institutions physically closed, the College instituted remote ICT supported learning interventions to ensure continuity of teaching and learning.

Indeed, the College's innovative strategy and e-Learning platform, of which several training institutions are currently benchmarking on, ensured graduands completed their studies as scheduled.

This is as it should be, but it also calls for renewed interest in specialized training in areas that we need greater attention such as oncology, radiology and critical care. I challenge the board to shine a spotlight on these and other areas so that our overall response to medicare in the country can be most meaningful to our citizens and contribute to putting a smile on the faces of those seeking services in our facilities.

To the graduands, you leave this college at a very interesting time, a time when the world is most interconnected through technology, and also a time when the world is most unequal on the supply of human resources for health. You will be better when you do not consider this graduation your last, literally in your academic endeavours but also in practice, as you go about delivering services in your chosen field. As future stewards of this country, I urge you to tap the available resources, including digital health innovations to improve yourselves and our healthcare service delivery. You are among the 11,000 graduands leaving the college every year, but you must see yourself not just as a statistic, but rather as a critical player in the health sector. You must challenge yourself to not just be a good healthcare worker but the best that you can be. You must be your own greatest competitor and cheerleader. In being the best you can be, you will contribute to the provision of quality healthcare for our people, your relatives and friends.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

These graduands will from this day moving forward belong to an alumnus of students from a great institution. An institution committed to continuous development aimed at finding solutions to our human resource needs. I note with gratification that to reduce the burden of treatment emanating from late diagnosis, the College continues to attach its trainees to Rural Health facilities, where they spend over 51,000 hours weekly on community diagnosis and treatment.

The College remains a major exporter of Health workforce, with Graduates working in far off countries in Europe, Australia and USA, directly contributing to national development through diaspora remittances and investments from Kenyans working abroad.

It is worth noting that the College in partnership with the Ministry of Health continues to regularly introduce new courses as well as align its training curricula with today's realities and aspirations of the future so as to produce a global health workforce who meet international standards.

I commend the Board of Directors led the Chairperson Amb. Zach Muburi-Muita for offering the strategic direction that has steered the College to greater transformation in achieving its vision of “being a model institution in the training of competent health professionals”.

To the Management team led by the Acting Chief Executive Officer Dr. Kelly Oluoch, thank you for your commitment and contribution that has ensured the College continues to produce middle-level health workforce to support health service delivery in the country.

Lastly, I wish to appreciate our esteemed partners for their collaboration, cooperation and synergy in supporting the implementation of health policies in the country, eventually building a resilient health system in pursuit of attainment of UHC, as a key driver of social economic development and prosperity.

To the Graduands as I finish;

Today is a happy day as we celebrate your academic success. Go out and promote the values that have been instilled in you. Be the transformational leaders that you have been trained to be.

Commit yourselves to the solemn oath that you will take today and maintain a high standard of professionalism in everything that you do.

I also celebrate the parents and guardians of our graduands for your dedication to seeing them through their education. To the December class of 2021, Congratulations once again. The world is yours for the taking. Go forth and shine.

May God bless Kenya. Asante!

Sen. Mutahi Kagwe, EGH
Cabinet Secretary.