



MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

OFFICE OF THE CABINET SECRETARY

**SPEECH BY THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY
(CAS), MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL PROTECTION,
HON. ABDUL BAHARI DURING THE CENTENARY
CELEBRATIONS OF SAVE CHILDREN, MAY 23RD 2019 AT
SAFARI PARK HOTEL, NAIROBI.**

MAY 2019

The Country Director, Save the Children, Kenya and Madagascar Programme

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to join you today during these celebrations to mark 100 years of impacting on children globally. Your programmes have delivered results for children in Kenya and around the world, giving them a health start in life, and to learn and protection from all forms of abuse. Your rich history since 1919 when your founder Eglantyne Jebb launched Save the Children Fund to assist children affected by the First World War resonates deeply with the Ministry's focus on child rights. I want to assure you that my Ministry supports actors and players who are ready to improve the lives of our children and their families.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Government has achieved a lot in its efforts to improve the rights and the welfare of our children. The Ministry has been implementing a cash transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) for the last 15 years which has seen 353,000 households benefitting from a stipend of Ksh. 4,000 every two months which is regular and predictable. This programme has assisted families to retain OVC in the community. These children go to school and are assured of a meal every day. Apart from the Cash Transfer to Orphans and Vulnerable Children, the Ministry is also implementing other cash transfers to cushion persons with severe disability and older persons. A total of 1.2 million households are under the three programmes.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

as you are aware, Kenya is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC). We have domesticated the two international legal instruments into the Children Act 2001. However, my ministry has come up with the Children Bill which aligns the children laws to the Constitution of Kenya 2010.

I wish to state that the welfare of children has greatly improved through programmes the Government has been implementing. Since the onset of free Primary Education

and Subsidized Secondary Education programmes, more children have enrolled in schools and the transition and retention rates have greatly gone up.

As we celebrate your 100 Years today, I would like us to reflect on the words of Nelson Mandela who said that “History will judge us by the difference we make in the everyday lives of children.” As a country, we must step up to provide solutions so that every child have access to basic services like education, clothing, shelter, health care, and protection. It is encouraging to hear from your Country Director, Ms. Wang Le about the successful programming that you support in the several counties among them Turkana, Wajir, Mandera, Bungoma, Busia, Kisumu, Kakamega, Migori, Kitui and of course Nairobi that impact on children.

My ministry has developed guidelines on the alternative family care and missing children to give directions on how children should be handled in the event they are not under parental care. We are further developing guidelines on child online protection to address all forms of online child abuse.

Recognising that the family is the best place where a child can grow and develop, the ministry has directed that there will be no more registration of charitable children’s institutions(CCI). Children should grow within the communities they come from. We will enhance the deinstitutionalization programme and promote alternative family care initiatives to allow children be brought up in a family environment. Institutions should be the last resort for a child.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Last year, the ministry, in collaboration with some partners, conducted a survey on the violence against children in Kenya. The data is being analyzed by a team of experts and once we receive the report we will disseminate it to the public. A national prevention and response plan is also being developed to address the issues raised in the survey. However, I note that there has been increased reporting on cases of violence against children and legal actions have been taken.

Today, I am pleased to see on your panel child participation, and I am honored when I hear how articulate they are about their rights and responsibilities. This tells me that child participation is a reality. We can be able to get children to articulate their needs. Am reminded of the Children Charter process in 2017 that collected views of

children and young people in over 40 counties and provided children with an opportunity to share their thoughts on the issues that make them happy and those they are sad about. I wish to reiterate the Ministry's commitment in continuing to support child participation platforms like the Kenya Children Assembly.

I must also congratulate you for launching your Country Strategic plan 2019-2021. I reiterate the support of the ministry as we work together to achieve your strategic objectives in education, health and nutrition, child protection, livelihoods, and maternal and child health. Listening to your Country Strategic Plan for 2019-2021, I note that Save the Children is well aligned with the Big 4 agenda, as you will be focusing on reducing malnutrition which speaks to the Nutrition and Food Security agenda, and reducing maternal and child mortality and morbidity, which directly contributes to the Universal Health Care. We commend you for that and look forward to working together for their realization. As a government, we are committed to ensuring that children enjoy their rights as per the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Kenya ratified in 1990.

As you celebrate 100 Years, I want to wish you many more years and hope that you strengthen your resilience for every last child to survive, learn and be protected from harm. Investing in the future of Kenya children is a priority and we must massively step up our efforts to be there for children when they need us most.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

it is now in order for me to declare your Country Strategic Plan officially launched and happy 100 Years and to many many more.

Thank you