



KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY

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DURING THE

LAUNCH OF KARP REPORT AND HIV ESTIMATES 2018

NOVEMBER 20, 2018

EMBU

**Governor, Embu County, H.E. Martin Wambora,
Chair, National AIDS Control Council, Ms. Angeline Siparo,**

Partners present,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today's launch of the Kenya AIDS Response Progress Report and the HIV Estimates 2018 comes at an unprecedented time in HIV prevention when we see impressive scientific developments and progress. The findings in these reports give an insightful synopsis of the current situation of HIV and AIDS in the country and boost our confidence that we are on the path towards ending HIV and AIDS by 2030- a commitment we made as a country in line with global timelines during the 2016 United Nations declaration with full recognition of its importance to the attainment of our Development blue print as espoused under Vision 2030.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you are all aware the Government has prioritized the attainment of Universal Health Coverage under the Big Four Agenda. We have recently began registering Kenyans for NHIF in preparation for the roll out of the programme as we continue engaging partners and communities in building synergies to drive this programme forward. The UHC agenda has the potential to return huge health dividends for the country because it ensures nobody is left behind including those affected by HIV and AIDS as well as non-communicable diseases (NCD) such as Diabetes and Cancer. To do this we must ensure that requisite infrastructure and resources are in place,

leverage on lessons learnt, use research-based data to guide our decisions, and apply expertise in implementation of all programmes.

Distinguished Guests,

We must realize however, that attaining Universal Health Coverage means tackling inefficiencies and challenges in the health sector as well as pooling resources together. Whereas we know that HIV and AIDS response mechanism provides a good platform for leveraging the delivery of UHC, existing challenges have to be tackled to realize our goal. My Ministry is committed to allocating more resources to HIV programmes and continues to explore sustainable financing mechanisms in the wake of shrinking donor funds. I urge that we utilize prudently these scarce resources.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We cannot ignore the challenges we face as pertains influx of teenage pregnancies, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, as well as other retrogressive practices such as Female Genital Mutilation that reverses our health gains. My Ministry continues to put in place programmes and will continue to partner with the Ministry of Education and the private sector to explore more investment opportunities to further scale up impactful youth friendly programmes to ensure that the gains made are sustained. In this regard, my Ministry will be rolling out a six-month Rapid Results Initiative (RRI) from February 2019, to address new infections, teenage pregnancy and STIs. We expect that all players will dedicate themselves in ensuring that the RRI delivers expected results.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you have seen, the overall HIV prevalence rate has dropped yet again to 4.9% down from 5.6%. The ART coverage has also continued to improve in recent years; a total of 1.2 Million people are on treatment, representing 75% coverage. AIDS related deaths have also been on a down ward trend falling from 60,000 in 2014 to 28,000 in 2018. Whereas the Progress report shows that we are making significant progress against the pandemic, UNAIDS latest report warns that the progress does not match our ambition of ending HIV and AIDS by 2030. We have to be more strategic in our actions in order to realize our dream even with the impressive results we are witnessing.

Distinguished Guests,

I am proud to report that Kenya has received numerous accolades on the HIV response. Just recently at the Madrid HIV Conference 2018, Kenya was lauded for being the first country on the continent to put its prevention road map together. Kenya was also recognized as the second African country, after South Africa, to have pre-exposure prophylaxis guidelines. At the International AIDS Conference a few months back, Kenya's HIV prevention strategies were declared as among the best and most workable in Africa. We cannot forget to mention that every month we receive delegations coming to benchmark on our HIV programming. We are proud of this as a nation. My Ministry will continue working with zeal to ensure that our journey for a HIV free society remains on course. With the launch of these documents we are even more rejuvenated to press towards our common goal.

As I conclude **ladies and gentlemen**, I strongly believe we can change the HIV narrative in this country. We can jointly confront socio-economic

barriers hindering access to HIV and AIDS services. This is the spirit that should guide us. Let me remind you all that to succeed in this fight we need research and data. We need dedication and focus. We need to build relevant partnerships locally and internationally so that we, together, based on our various experiences, can develop solutions that will take us to where we have been trying to go for the past 30 years- a HIV-free world.

Asanteni sana.