



SPEECH BY PROF. PETER MULWA FELIX MBITHI, THE VICE CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI, DURING HIGH LEVEL STAKEHOLDERS' MEETING IN MOMBASA ON THE 23-24 NOVEMBER 2016 REGARDING ESTABLISHING OF A FISHERIES CRIME LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY IN KENYA

Hon. Willy Bett, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Blue Economy

Prof. Micheni Ntiba, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Blue Economy

Team from Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I welcome you all to the first High Level Stakeholders' Meeting on the establishment of the proposed Fisheries Crime Enforcement Academy and I am greatly honoured to be joining you today.

About six (6) months ago, and I had a discussion with Professor Wambua from our School of Law regarding the proposal to set up Fisheries Crime Enforcement Academy in at the University of Nairobi in partnership with the

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. I then indicated that the University of Nairobi was committed to participate in the initiative.

At the request of the State Department of Fisheries and the Blue Economy, I nominated three members (namely Professor Musili Wambua, Johnson Ileri Kinyua and Harriet Mboce) to a joint task committee to prepare for the High Level Stakeholders Meeting which is taking place today at this venue. I have been receiving regular briefings from the team and I was pleased to host a delegation of members of the joint task committee and three members from FishForce Academy at NMMU at my office on September 13, 2016 when they paid a courtesy call on my office.

Fisheries crime has evolved into a fully-fledged global industry. Regrettably, this is crippling the national economies of most coastal states through the loss of vital marine resources; it is estimated that Kenya loses a whopping Kshs 10 billion annually through Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. The University of Nairobi therefore finds this forum, and indeed the proposed initiative for an establishment of East African Fish Force Academy, to be of paramount importance, and is therefore glad to be part and parcel of incubating it.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The commitment by the University is not my discretion, it primarily stems from the University's Vision to be a World-Class University, committed to scholarly excellence, and our Mission to embody the aspirations of the Kenyan people and the global community through creation, preservation, integration, transmission and utilization of knowledge.

Kenya, and indeed several other coastal states around the world, are blessed to naturally have a number of Blue Economy Resources such as: sea tourism; deep sea fishing and mariculture; coastal forest and mangroves; oil and gas energy; ports and coastal transport; and coastal mining. These Blue Economy Resources form a great bulk of our food and economic basket. We have a God given right to optimum enjoyment of these Blue Economy resources. As we enjoy these resources however, we should also remember that we have a corresponding God given obligation, to our children and future generations to enjoy the exploit the same in a sustainable manner.

Kenya and other coastal states are in the process of embracing a framework for Blue Economy economic development in a sustainable, effective and efficient manner.

A key purpose for this meeting, therefore, as I understand it, is to engage as to how best we can achieve both the right to exploit and obligation to conserve the Blue Economy resources. We are invited to share experiences and learn from each other about Fisheries Law Enforcement in our respective jurisdictions. I therefore urge you all, to empty your reserves of experiences, and to equally fill them up with the enriching good practice that I sincerely hope we will all gain from this interaction.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

One key challenge that we all have is a lean capacity. If we do not build on our capacity, our Blue Economy Resources will continue to be mainly exploited by Distance Water Fishing Nations (DWFNs), many times, this is coupled with resource degradation.

The University of Nairobi has over the years dedicated a great number of resources towards building the required capacity of our own as well as through joint initiatives with other stakeholders: we have included this area in our curricula under our various schools; we encourage and facilitate research in marine resources; we have exchange programmes and scholarships with other universities relevant to this area; among other initiatives. Sadly, this has been but a tiny drop of in this great ocean of dire need.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let us always remember, as a continent, region and country, the great obligation that we owe to our future generations to achieve this great initiative that we are setting out.

We, as the University of Nairobi, are grateful to be playing a key role at the infancy stage, we are excited about the development of an integrated local FishForce Academy, and we are ready and willing to play our part towards giving impetus to this cause.

Finally, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me thank the Government of Kenya, the Fish FORCE Academy, The State Department of Fisheries and the Blue Economy , Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, the delegation from the University of Nairobi and each of the countries represented in this sitting including individual delegates for spearheading this process and facilitating this meeting in many fundamental ways.

We look forward to meeting again, very soon, to toast the opening of the FishForce Academy. **Thank you and God bless you all.**