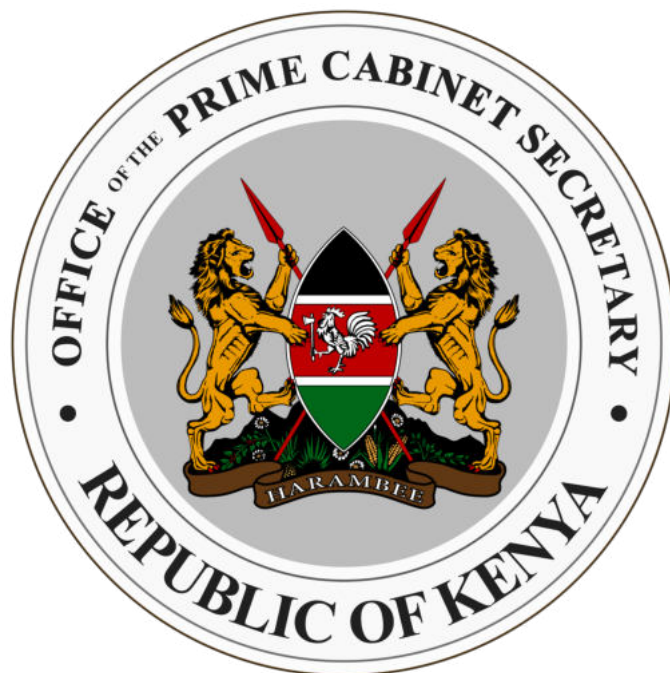




SPEECH BY H.E. HON. DR MUSALIA MUDAVADI, EGH., PRIME CABINET SECRETARY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA, AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 39TH ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT IN AFRICA (AEAA) CONFERENCE



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CONFERENCE**

**SAFARI PARK HOTEL, NAIROBI, KENYA**

**MONDAY AUGUST 21, 2023**





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**Cabinet Secretary, Hon. Ezekiel Machong'u;**

**Principal Secretary, Dr. Belio Kipsang;**

**The President AEAA, Mr. Patrick Areghan;**

**AEAA Executive Committee Members;**

**CEO, KNEC, Dr David Njengere;**

**KNEC Council Members;**

**CEOs from various Institutions.**

1. **Esteemed AEAA Delegates:** It is an honor to have you congregate in Kenya for the 39<sup>th</sup> Association for Educational Assessment in Africa (AEAA) Conference. **Karibuni Kenya!** More than anyone else, you need no telling how the Conference has contributed to changing assessment





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practices in member countries, for nearly 40 years now. All that remains is to appeal to member countries to institutionalize the sharing of best practices and rich learning experiences to improve assessments.

2. I am proud to announce that Kenya, represented by the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC), apart from being a primary member of the Association, has actively participated in all the conferences since the inception of AEAA. Kenya has hosted four previous Conferences in 1993, 1998, 2001, and 2011. This is the fifth conference we are glad to host.

3. Having a Bird's Eye View of Kenya's Government activities, I confirm to this Conference that key recommendations from the previous three (3) conferences have laid a strong foundation for regional integration discussions. Kenya now works with most countries on comparability, complementarity, and transferability of certificates for continuity of study in Kenya. Kenya has also institutionalized the use of school-based assessments so that learning is informed by prompt assessment feedback.





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4. The theme for this year's conference, *'Educational Assessment for nurturing every learner's potential'* speaks to this transformation. Indeed, this theme is also timely for Kenya since we are in the midst of transitioning to the new educational system of Competency-Based Assessment (CBC). While we are faced with emerging challenges resulting from technological advancement and appropriate assessment for CBC, we look forward to best practice takeaways from this Conference that will guarantee no learner is left behind on account of assessments under CBC.

5. Allow me to also speak to the 39<sup>th</sup> Conference sub-themes, where I see a web of immediate inter-ministerial engagements and synergies required to actualize key Conference outputs. The sub-themes are relevant and resonate with the experiences of many education systems, as is affirmed by the number of Education Experts and their researched presentations. I single out the sub-theme on the **"Role of Assessment Data in Informing Teaching, Learning and Policy"**, which I am informed attracted the highest number of presentations from seventeen (17) countries.





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6. From a Kenyan perspective, we have placed a high premium on research and the use of empirical data to inform policy and practice. Consequently, the recommendations from discussions around this sub-theme will require the cross-engagement of the Ministries of Education and ICT, KNEC, and the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) for effective implementation. This scenario may not be unique to Kenya, as each country will have to work on the best domestic mutations, but with a focus on regional complementarity.

7. The Sub-theme on **‘Enhancing Technical, Vocational and Occupational Assessment Including Recognition of Prior Learning’** has stimulated my interest. This is the reason that in Kenya, the Technical Vocational Education and Training sub-sector has been undergoing reforms since 2008. These reforms culminated in the enactment of the Technical Vocation Education and Training Act No. 29 of 2013. The Act provides for the establishment of a TVET Authority for regulation and quality assurance; the





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establishment of the TVET-Curriculum Development Assessment and Certification Council (TVET-CDACC) to develop curricular, assess, and certify TVET qualifications; and authorizes National Polytechnics as qualifications-awarding Institutions. It is my hope that the discussions under this sub-theme will enrich our ongoing policy dialogues on how TVET graduates can be more compliant with the needs of the industry.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen;**

8. Reason straddles my curiosity on the same sub-theme because, through the Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BeTA), the Kenya Government is committed to increasing GDP from 7.2% to a double-digit one by 2030. For a key driver like the manufacturing sector, we have identified TVETs as the enablers. TVETs are expected to provide skilled manpower to remedy the skills gap currently being experienced.

9. **Esteemed delegates,** Kenya has also embarked on a digital transformation that envisages the provision of digital jobs





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because of dwindling white-collar job opportunities. This calls for leveraging ICT in learning, teaching, and assessment. Our desire is that learners are agile and ready to embrace the needs of the 21st-century workplace. We, therefore, hope to benefit from Conference discussions on leveraging ICT in assessment.

10. I am famous for '***Tusidanganyane!***' call-up, a Kiswahili language phrase cautioning Kenyans that 'let's *not deceive one another.*' I reiterate it here to emphasize that no other profession demands integrity, honesty, and ethics like the psychometricians, educators, and researchers attending this conference. You are the professionals who determine the true abilities of every learner in the education system. You determine the fate of countries whose most crucial asset is the human resource. Governments rely on products you have molded to make investments, policies, job placements, reviews, and reforms. *Kwa hivyo, Tusidanganyane!* while discussing the sub-theme "**Managing the Social and Educational Effects of High Stakes Assessment to Ensure Equity and Fairness.**"





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11. **Delegates;** Climate Change has occasioned destruction and calamities from the unrelenting forces of nature. Humanity is on the verge of destitution, thanks to constant threats of droughts, flooding, unpredictable rainfall patterns, outbreaks of diseases, and infestation of pests. Rapid behavior-change measures need to be taught, practiced, and assessed progressively in our education systems to systematically change citizen behavior in the face of these adversities.

12. Schools and colleges should become the best spaces for measuring innovative ideas to counter the effects of Climate Change. As the saying goes; *the early bird catches the worm*. We therefore owe it to ourselves and future generations to inculcate into the young the ethics of living as one with nature, before it is too late. Again, nature has its lessons that should help us save our planet for future generations. I hope that in this Conference, Climate Change awareness, nurturing innovations, creativity, and technology for sustainable development, will find a place in discussions





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and pragmatic recommendations.

13. Meanwhile, I am informed that you will have opportunities to visit some parts of Magical Kenya! We encourage you to enjoy the tours and if possible, extend your stay to sample even more destinations than what has been planned for. Plant at least one tree while sightseeing in Kenya. We have set the pace against Climate Change in Kenya. The Special Presidential Programme on the Accelerated Restoration of Forests and Rangelands launched in December 2022 provides opportunities for the participation of youth and women in tree-growing campaigns. Over the next 10 years, we will plant 15 billion trees; and create 320,000 direct jobs in seedling production; tree planting and maintenance; thinning and pruning; maintenance of forest roads and fire breaks; community scouts, forest rangers, and foresters. Those in our education systems must have increased awareness that will sustain such efforts.

14. I appreciate the Ministry of Education and KNEC for good organizational arrangements; and the sponsors and partners





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for their support in financial, technical, and technological resources that should make this Conference a pleasant experience.

**It is now my pleasant duty to declare the 39<sup>th</sup> AEAA Conference officially open for fruitful discussions!**

**God Bless Africa, and You All!**

**ASANTENI SAANA!!**

**H.E. HON. MUSALIA MUDAVADI, EGH.,  
PRIME CABINET SECRETARY,  
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