

**ADDRESS BY DR ALICE OTWALA, CEO/SECRETARY PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
DURING THE FAREWELL LUNCHEON FOR PROF. MARGARET KOBIA, FORMER  
CHAIRPERSON AND CABINET SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SERVICE, YOUTH  
AND GENDER AFFAIRS AT INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL NAIROBI ON WEDNESDAY  
28<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2018**

**TALKING POINTS**

**i. SALUTATIONS**

Prof Margaret Kobia, Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs (MoPSYGA) and immediate former Chairperson Public Service Commission,

Chief Administrative Secretary, Hon Rachael Shebesh,

Principal Secretary for Public service and youth Ms Lillian Omollo,

Acting Vice Chairperson Amb. Peter ole Nkuraiyia,

Commissioners,

Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning

**ii. INTRODUCTION**

❖ I am pleased to welcome all of you to this special luncheon in honour of Prof Margaret Kobia who as you all know has served the Commission as chairperson for the last five years.

❖ On behalf of the commission secretariat, let me take this opportunity to once again congratulate Prof. Kobia on her appointment as Cabinet Secretary and also thank His Excellency the President for the honor he bestowed on the commission by appointing one of us to his cabinet.

- ❖ I have worked very closely with Prof. Kobia over the last five years during which I have learnt a lot from her. She has mentored me and guided me in ways that have made me an even better manager and indeed a better person.
- ❖ I have personally enjoyed working with Prof owing to the good leadership and working atmosphere she cultivated for the entire commission including the secretariat. She has been an inspiration to the staff, many of whom have fond memories that I am sure they would wish to share, if only we had more time with you.
- ❖ Prof Kobia played a key role in retooling the secretariat and created the right environment that has contributed to the productivity of the staff in many ways including the following:

### **iii. ACHIEVEMENTS AND SUPPORT FOR THE SECRETARIAT**

#### **1. Demarcation of roles between Board and Secretariat**

The Public Service Commission is an envy of other sister organizations because of the tranquility and harmony that exists between the board and the secretariat. Prof Kobia helped to delineate the role of the Commission board from that of the secretariat in a manner that has ensured the two complement one another to achieve the mandate of the Commission as opposed to pulling in different directions.

#### **2. Restructuring of the secretariat**

One of the key achievements of the current Commission under the leadership of Prof. Kobia was the restructuring of the secretariat from a steep, structured and

multilayered organization to a much flatter structure of 8 grades and 5 technical directorates.

The restructuring also included establishment of Compliance and Quality Assurance Directorate to oversight implementation of Commission decisions including values and principles in articles 10 and 232 of the Constitution.

### **3. Terms of service**

- Delinking of the Commission from the Civil Service and improved terms of service including higher remuneration for secretariat staff.
- Strengthening secretariat by recruiting technical staff at various levels to enable the secretariat assist the Board to deliver its mandate.

### **4. Medical, WIBA and GPA Insurance**

The Commission introduced Medical, Work, Injury Benefit (WIBA) and Group Personal accident covers (GPA) in 2013. This portfolio has grown from Ksh 6 million at introduction to Ksh 75 million in the current financial year.

### **5. Staff Mortgage and car loans**

During the 2017/18 FY, the commission successfully negotiated for the allocation of an initial seed financing for a revolving staff mortgage and car loan fund of Ksh 100 million. We have now started receiving and processing applications for loans from interested staff.

### **6. Health club for staff**

In realization of our commitment to staff welfare, healthy lifestyle and work life balance, the commission has invested in basic infrastructure for its staff health club. A gym has been operationalized at the commission.

### **7. Pension and Gratuity scheme**

PSC commenced a contributory pension scheme starting off with a 7.5:15 ratio before graduating to a new regime of 10:20 ratio in 2017.

### **8. Budget**

Increased budget allocation to the Commission from Ksh 883 million during 2013/14 Financial Year to Ksh 1.4 billion during the 2017/18 Financial Year. On several occasion, Prof would personally reach out and lobby Treasury and Parliament for funds to support the commission's priority programs.

### **9. Expansion of office space**

The commission officially opened the new wing to Commission House in line with ongoing efforts towards placing all PSC staff under one roof.

### **10. Enterprise Resource Planning**

In recognition of the benefits that automated systems confer on organizations, the commission procured and installed an ERP system with modules for all the technical areas of operations at the secretariat

### **11. Staff Performance Management**

Institutionalization of an online System Staff Performance Management system committing staff to sign performance contracts based on deliverables drawn from strategic plans and annual work plans.

### **12. Recognition for efficiency**

- The Commission received an unqualified audit report by the Controller and auditor general for three years in a row.
- Scooped the 2nd Runners-up position during the Financial Reporting Awards by Kenya Accounting Standards Board in collaboration with ICPAK and Capital Markets Authority for three years in a row.

## **CONCLUSION**

If I was to tell the whole story of what it meant to work with Prof and the positive influence she had on me and my team, I may never know when to stop. But

suffice to say that the Secretariat is as strong and motivated as it is because of the great leadership of Prof Kobia and her ability to rally everyone together.

We look forward to better days ahead especially now with you at the helm of a key ministry that is responsible for public service.