

**ADDRESS BY CPA CHARITY KISOTU, EBS, VICE CHAIRPERSON
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION DURING THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH
OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME CAPACITY
BUILDING FOR MENTORS AND COACHES IN MDAs AT KSG EMBU
CAMPUS ON TUESDAY 12TH OCTOBER 2021**

Honourable members of the National Assembly Departmental
Committee on Administration and National Security,

Fellow PSC Commissioners,

Commission Secretary Dr Simon Rotich,

ABSA Group Customer Network Director Mr Peter Mutua,

Director KSG Embu Campus,

Mentors and coaches,

PSC Staff,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning,

I am pleased to preside over this very important occasion of the launch and roll out of the capacity building programme for mentors and coaches under the Public Service Internship Programme (PSIP). I welcome you all to this event and especially our colleagues from ministries, departments and agencies who will henceforth be mentors and coaches for the young graduates under the PSIP program.

As you may be aware, the Public Service Internship Programme is the brain child of the late Stephen Kirogo, who until his death in May this year was the Chairman of the Public Service Commission. The late Mr Kirogo was passionate about youth empowerment and the internship programme that we celebrate today is what it is because of his visionary leadership, pioneering work and commitment to ensure its success.

I therefore wish to request that we all be up standing to observe a minute's silence in his honour and memory....

(Thank you and let's be seated).

Ladies and Gentlemen,

PSIP is a transformative program that is currently in its third year with 5,600 young university graduates having successfully completed a 12-month internship period since its inception in 2019. Some 3,000 interns are currently on the programme this year and another 3,000 more will shortly be onboarded.

The programme was purposely designed to offer an opportunity for university graduates to acquire and develop valuable technical and professional skills while gaining work experience in the public service. It involves attachment of interns in Ministries, State Departments and Agencies where they are exposed to the actual work environment and given specialized training and certification.

It also aims to develop a wholesome individual through mentorship and coaching. The interns work under seasoned mentors who are able to offer career guidance and also inculcate the right qualities, attitudes and values that would transform them into patriotic, upright and honest citizens.

The internship programme has immense value not only to the individual intern but also to the country. At the individual level, it is an opportunity for the intern to gain work experience and enhance their employability chances. It provides hands-on experience by building upon skills learned in the classroom while also instilling public service etiquette, values and ethics. The interns also get an insider-view of available career paths in the public service.

Through the programme, the government is able to establish a database of skills available to the public service for future human resource needs. The programme also helps to promote inclusivity and diversity as envisaged in the Constitution.

The internship programme is therefore a clear testimony of the Government's commitment to empower our youth and enable them to contribute significantly to the socio-economic transformation of our country. The Public Service Commission is equally committed to the youth agenda and has demonstrated this commitment by prioritizing the internship programme in its Strategic Plan 2019-2024.

The programme has injected vigor and energy into the public service through the fresh ideas and ingenuity of the youthful interns. The interns who are, for all practical purposes, public servants not only learn from the institutions where they are attached but also challenge the public service with ideas on how to improve and streamline service delivery.

The roll-out of this programme would not have been possible were it not for the collaboration and support that the Commission received from Parliament through the National Assembly Departmental Committee on Administration and National Security, and the National Treasury. Through this collaboration, Parliament allocated the initial seed capital of Ksh One Billion to finance the programme during the 2019/2020 financial year. Parliament also allocated funds in the subsequent financial years thus enabling the Commission to conduct the programme annually.

On behalf of the Commission and indeed on behalf of the young graduate beneficiaries, I wish to express gratitude to Parliament and the National Treasury for making the programme a reality. We look forward to increased funding so as to scale up and sustain the programme in subsequent years.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The role of coaches and mentors in this programme cannot be overemphasized considering its critical place in handholding and shaping future public servants. Mentorship and coaching is based on a participatory model of learning. However, it does not replace, but supplements the role of the immediate supervisor to provide on-the-job training and development. Mentorship and coaching is considered beneficial to the internship programme insofar as it

enables interns to develop professional skills and competences, practices and conduct, values and attitudes through experiential learning. It also acts as a preventive strategy that pre-emptly disciplines amongst interns.

In view of the above, the Commission found it necessary to institutionalize mentorship and coaching in the internship programme in order to ensure improved professional conduct and performance, provision of quality services and improved learning outcomes to the mentees as well as achievement of their full potential. In the current Financial Year, the Commission has purposed to train 400 mentors and coaches as part of our efforts to equip those charged with the responsibility of guiding the interns with the requisite skills. The mentors will be drawn from the more than 200 institutions in which PSIP interns are deployed.

We have, in this regard, partnered with Kenya School of Government, Embu Campus, to mount this training which is the first in a series of programmes that we will be conducting in the coming days. I am therefore happy to note that you were carefully selected to be part of this team that will help to mentor and coach the interns as they join the internship program. You will therefore be expected to guide the interns under your charge throughout the duration of the programme once you return to your various workstations.

As I conclude, **Ladies and Gentlemen**, let me in a very special way express our deep gratitude to ABSA Group for the support they have continued to offer the internship programme, including this training. We note with appreciation and do not take it for granted that ABSA bank has been our valued partner since the programme began in 2019.

We are also grateful to the Kenya School of Government for hosting and conducting this training programme here in Embu and we look forward to continued collaboration in the days ahead as we seek to empower our youth to become better public servants.

It is now my pleasure to declare this Public Service Internship Programme Capacity Building Programme for Mentors and Coaches officially launched.

Thank you and God bless you all.