



## Minimal services to be available as Commission goes on annual recess



PSC Vice chairperson Ms Charity Kisotu addresses Commissioners and Senior Secretariat staff during the end-of-year working luncheon at Carnivore Restaurant, Nairobi. The CEO, Simon Rotich (left) and inset, Commissioners Dr. Joyce Nyabuti and Dr. Reuben Chirchir listen.

By Browne Kutswa and Habel Shiloli

**T**he Public Service Commission began its annual recess on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2020 to allow commissioners and staff to celebrate Christmas and New Year festivities.

During the break, limited but critical services will be offered by a lean secretariat staff until 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021 when normal services will resume.

In a memo to all staff, the Commission Secretary/CEO Mr. Simon Rotich advised the secretariat staff to also take their annual leave during the recess, while

ensuring that contingency measures are put in place for continued provision of critical services.

And speaking during the end-of-year working luncheon for the commissioners and senior management staff at Carnivore Restaurant Nairobi on Tuesday 22nd December 2020, Mr. Rotich noted that the recess will enable commissioners and the secretariat staff to rejuvenate in preparation for the New Year.

He commended the Chairman, Vice-Chairperson and the Commissioners for providing strategic leadership

and innovative approaches to work, which ensured uninterrupted service delivery, despite the disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

He assured the board of continued support by the secretariat.

Commission Vice-Chairperson, Ms. Charity Kisotu commended the Commissioners for their unity of purpose in ensuring that the Commission continued to deliver on its mandate regardless of the disruptions triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic.

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## Editor's Note

It takes commitment and passion to generate news stories and pen articles that capture the interest and imagination of readers.

This commitment and passion is often tested on the basis of frequency of editorial contributions and publications.

In this regard, and as we come to the end of the year 2020, I wish to take this opportunity to express deep gratitude to the editorial team and all those who contributed articles for this newsletter.

Together, we have produced several issues despite the COVID-19 pandemic that disrupted the steady stream of news making events.

We are most grateful to the Commission under the leadership of Commission Chairman Mr Stephen Kirogo and secretariat senior management team headed by Commission Secretary/CEO Mr Simon Rotich for their support, both as news sources/news makers and also for the facilitation and resources availed to us to publish this newsletter.

We look forward to a great and fulfilling New Year 2021 with renewed energy and commitment in the pursuit of a citizen-centric public service.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all.

**Browne Kutswa, Editor**

## PSC Board goes on annual recess

*From page 1*

"The year 2020 was a difficult one, not only for PSC but globally," she said.

Despite the challenges, the Vice Chair noted that the Commission registered impressive achievements.

"We have achieved a lot, within a very short time, and under very difficult circumstances," she stated.

Ms. Kisotu declared that there was everything to thank God for because "there were no casualties" at the Commission despite some persons having been affected by Covid-19.

The Vice Chair appreciated the Commissioners and the secretariat staff for their support

and commitment to their work..

Commissioner Amb. Salma Ahmed, on behalf of her colleagues commended the Vice-chair for her stewardship, fellow commissioners for their resilience, and the Secretariat staff for their support to the board.

"There were moments when we were so thin on the ground but took care of any issue that came on the board's agenda," she disclosed.

Commissioners present were Dr. Mary Mwiandi, Amb. Patrick Wamoto, Dr. Joyce Nyabuti, Dr. Reuben Chirchir, and Andrew Muriuki. Others were Deputy Commission Secretaries Ms Jane Chege, Mr. Remmy Mulati and PSC Directors.

## Review of structures and staff establishment for MDAs to end in March 2021

**By John Muriungi and Pauline Muriuki**

The review of organization structures and staff establishments for MDAs in line with the current organization of government has been on-going at the Commission.

During the current financial year, the Commission has approved organization structures and staff establishment for over 15 MDAs.

The Commission has also rationalized staff establishments and significantly reduced staffing levels in shared-services cadres in order to ensure that MDAs are adequately staffed in technical services cadres.

The output of this exercise is the implementation of the succession management initiative through which civil servants have been promoted to higher grades.

The objective of this initiative is to fill all vacant posts in the MDAs and ensure that officers are

mentored and prepared early enough to take up managerial and leadership positions in the service and reduce the increasing demand for extension of service for officers who have attained mandatory retirement age.

The exercise will ensure that there is optimal utilization of staff in MDAs and the need to contain payroll cost in the public service.

Cumulatively, the Commission has so far promoted over twenty thousand civil servants in various cadres.

Meanwhile, Commission CEO Mr Simon Rotich has reiterated the Commission's commitment to fill all outstanding job vacancies through a Rapid Results Initiative by March 2021.

"No new vacancies will be advertised until the backlog is cleared," said Mr Rotich.

## Commission retreats to review draft policy documents



*PSC Vice chairperson Ms Charity Kisotu (Centre seated), Commissioners and senior management staff pose for a group photo during the Strategic Policy working retreat in Naivasha*

**By Browne Kutswa and Pauline Muriuki**

**A** five-day strategic policy working retreat was convened by the Commission at Lake Naivasha Resort on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2020 to review key draft policy and strategy documents.

The retreat was officially opened by Vice Chairperson Ms. Charity Kisotu and attended by commissioners and senior management staff.

Among the draft documents presented for review and validation were the Communication and Branding Strategy, Risk Management Policy and Framework, Human Resource Masterplan, 2019/2020 Values and Principles Report, and the Public Service Management Bill.

Presentations were done by both external Consultants and secretariat staff who have been working closely with the Commission to develop the

documents.

In her opening remarks, Ms. Kisotu noted that Covid-19 has created opportunity for innovation and enabled the Commission to leverage technology in its efforts to continue rendering services to the public despite the disruptive effects of the pandemic.

“The Commission has continued to offer vital services to the citizens while strictly adhering to safety guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health,” she said.

Some of the scheduled programmes most affected by the pandemic were the End of Year staff forum and the Public Servant of the Year Award (PSEA) ceremony where hardworking public servants are usually recognized.

Ms. Kisotu expressed satisfaction that as the year 2020 draws to a close, the Commission has every reason to be grateful to God for good health.

She said that a number of challenges have been experienced, but the Commission had combined efforts to surmount them.

She thanked all the Secretariat staff for the resilience and commitment they have continued to show even in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic.

“I urge all commissioners and staff to continue adhering to the safety protocols by the Ministry of Health in order to overcome the Covid-19 pandemic and keep your families safe,” said Ms Kisotu.

## Draft Values and Principles Report receives Board approval



Mr Simon Wachinga, director CQA explains a point during his presentation of the draft values and principles report

By Isaac Mugo

The Public Service Commission has finalized the 2020 Evaluation Report on the Status of the Public Service Compliance with Values and Principles in Articles 10 and 232 of the Constitution.

The report which the Commission Board approved on 4th December 2020 will be presented to the President and Parliament by 31st December 2020 as required by the law. Thereafter it will be available for the general public.

The Commission prepares the report annually under the Public Service (Values and Principles) Act, 2015, in fulfilment of the constitutional

mandate as provided in Article 234 2(c) and (h).

The article mandates the Commission to promote the values and principles, evaluate and report to the President and Parliament on the extent to which they are complied with, in the public service.

The report, which is the ninth in a series to be prepared by the Commission after the promulgation of the Constitution

2010, covers the financial year 2019/2020.

An inter-departmental technical team, under the overall leadership of Commissioner Dr. Reuben Chirchir, the Compliance and Quality Assurance Committee Chairman and Commissioner Dr. Joyce Nyabuti, a member of the committee, developed the report.

The CEO, Mr. Simon Rotich who visited the team on 16th October 2020 during the report preparation in Naivasha presented them with laptops and other equipment to facilitate smooth working. He commended the team for their dedication and good work.

The Report will also be translated into Kiswahili and transcribed into Braille.

## Civil Service Promotions to be competitive

By Habel Shiloli

The Commission will no longer entertain requests for promotions on merit basis.

According to a Circular dated 19th November 2020 and signed by PSC Chairman, Mr. Stephen Kirogo, all promotions in the civil service will be based on a competitive process, subject to availability of vacancies, with effect from 1st January 2021.

This is aimed at preventing the promotion-on-merit requests that the Commission has continued to receive that do not meet the threshold in legislation and existing guidelines.

The directive is in line with Article 234(2)(a)(ii) of the Constitution and Regulation 21 of the PSC Regulations 2020. The circular notes that the Commission, as guided by the Constitution and the Regulations, has been promoting officers on merit, based on exemplary performance, taking into account officers' experience, competencies, personal qualities, exceptional abilities, innovation, tangible creativity, leadership, demonstrable milestones and integrity.

However, the circular states that the requests for promotion on merit "have distorted authorized establishments and disadvantaged officers in the service, thereby undermining the intended purpose."

The Commission will continue to implement programmes aimed at ensuring effective succession management in the public service.

## Third cohort of interns to report in new year

By Julius Mwaura and Badi Khamis

Interviews for over 6000 candidates shortlisted for Public Service Internship Program (PSIP) for the year 2020/2021 have been concluded.

The interviews which were conducted virtually to adhere to the Ministry of Health's preventive measures on COVID-19 started on 7th to 9th December.

The program was first rolled out in 2019 with the first cohort of 3,100 interns completing their contracts in October 2020.

Most interns in the first cohort applauded PSC for the initiative, terming the program as well organized and fruitful.

PSIP is aimed at empowering youths and giving them practical workplace experience. It is designed to instill Public Service Values and Principles and bring innovative minds into the public service, give opportunity to the young graduates to serve their country and also bring in their ideas as they strive to contribute to the country's development.



*Principal Human Resource Management Officer Mr. Alfred Mueke conducting internship interviews via telephone*

Successful candidates will be deployed to Ministries, Departments, Agencies (MDAs) and State Corporations fairly next

year. The Commission will monitor and evaluate the performance of the interns during their internship period.

## No more extensions for retiring public servants

By Badi Khamis

Public servants who attain the mandatory retirement age of 60 years, and 65 years for persons with disability will no longer be retained in service in line with Section 80(1)(a) and (b) of the Public Service Commission Act.

This is according to a circular to all MDAs signed by PSC Chairman, Mr. Stephen Kirogo on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2020, .

The Act provides that a public officer shall retire from the service with effect from the date of attaining the mandatory retirement age.

The circular indicates that the

Commission or other appointing authority shall not extend the service of such a retired public officer.

It read in part, "Accordingly, it has been decided that, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021, the Commission shall not approve any extension of service for officers retiring from the service upon attainment of the mandatory retirement age of 60 years, and 65 years for persons with disability."

The circular urged Ministries, Departments and Agencies to ensure proactive succession planning for continuity in service delivery upon retirement of

officers.

It quoted a 2009 cabinet circular which reviewed the mandatory retirement age for public servants from 50 to 60 years, effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April of the same year.

The purpose, it noted, was to retain productive employees with critical skills in the public service, especially those with professional, technical and hands-on experience.

These were employees on whom the government had invested considerable resources in training and capacity building.

## PSC scoops top taxpayers' award



KRA Deputy Commissioner Mr. George Muya presents the Taxpayers Winner's Award 2020 to PSC Vice Chairperson Ms. Charity Kisotu at the Commission House in Nairobi.

### By Pauline Muriuki

**T**he Public Service Commission won the Taxpayers Winner's Award 2020, in the Public Sector category during a virtual ceremony presided over by President Uhuru Kenyatta on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

The ceremony was organized by the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) under the theme "Enhancing tax administration for economic sustainability."

KRA Deputy Commissioner Mr. George Muya presented the award to the PSC Vice Chairperson Ms. Charity Kisotu at the Commission House on 25<sup>th</sup>

November 2020.

He said PSC has been consistent in compiling tax returns and has continuously collaborated with KRA, thereby contributing to the realization of KRA's targets in tax collection.

"KRA recognizes PSC for compliance as well as rallying Government Ministries Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to also comply," said Mr Muya.

He disclosed that PSC's circular to MDAs to pay taxes was a game-changer, hence the recognition.

Mr. Muya observed that

Government institutions were previously perceived as being reluctant to fulfil their tax obligations, but the situation has since changed following PSC's intervention.

Ms. Kisotu noted the importance of tax compliance the world over, stating that it is critical in promoting any government's development agenda, and delivery of services to the citizens.

She commended the President and the KRA for placing great importance on recognizing institutions that

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## Construction of additional offices gets underway

By Badi Khamis

**T**he construction of additional offices on the fifth floor of the old office block of the Commission House has begun in earnest.

The contractor took over the construction site on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and has arranged to complete the work within nine months, under the supervision of the State Department of Public Works.



*Workers on the construction site on 5<sup>th</sup> floor of Commission House*

The Director of Administration Services, Mr. Gerald Kuhaka said that the additional offices will accommodate more than 20 officers under an open-plan office arrangement.

The target functions to be assigned the new offices will be

the Public Communication Division, Public Service Delivery Contact Centre, Procurement Division, and the Performance Management and Service Delivery Improvement directorate among others.

Once completed, the new

offices will alleviate the existing and evolving challenge on office accommodation at the Commission House, as a short-term intervention while the Commission explores long-term interventions.

## PSC scoops top taxpayers' award

*From page 6*

pay their taxes promptly.

"I wish to appeal to all public institutions to lead by example in being tax compliant. This is because tax payment is an obligation for all public and private organizations as well as individuals, to enable the government to effectively undertake its role of providing services to citizens," said Ms Kisotu.

She noted that PSC is mandated under Articles 10 and

232 of the Constitution to ensure compliance with values and principles of the public service, hence its support for tax compliance in the public sector.

"We must lead by example and demonstrate to public servants, who look up to us, the same values we stand for by not only paying our taxes but also filing the returns within the stipulated time frame," she said.

She hailed KRA for leveraging technology by introducing the

web-based iTax system in 2013, which has improved compliance levels.

Present at the event were Commissioners Dr. Mary Mwiandi, Dr. Reuben Chirchir, Dr. Joyce Nyabuti, Andrew Muriuki, and Joan Otieno; CEO Simon Rotich; and Deputy Commission Secretary Jane Chege.

Officials from KRA were Alice Kiptoo, Beatrice Mundu and Susan Kwamboka.

## Job Description Manual for PSC staff

By Caroline Kiget

**T**he Public Service Commission is in the advanced stages of developing the Commission's Job Description Development Manual for presentation to the Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC).

The SRC under Section 11 (e) of the SRC Act 2011 has set a four-year remuneration cycle to determine remuneration and benefits in the public sector.

The first cycle covered the period 2013/14-2016/17 and

the second cycle covered the period 2017/18-2020/21.

The third remuneration cycle is set to cover the period 2021/22-2024/25 and will involve carrying out a job evaluation exercise to evaluate all jobs in all public sector entities.

This will include new jobs and jobs that have changed for both state officers and public officers in order to determine comparable and relative worth of jobs and provide a rationalized, harmonized and equitable job grading structure.

The Commission just like other public institutions is expected to submit a consolidated job description manual and career progression



*Members of the Job Description Analysis Committee (JDAC) at the Eseriani Resort, Naivasha*

guidelines to facilitate the review of jobs at the Commission.

The Commission staff were sensitized through Webex on 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2020 on how to fill a SRC prescribed job description manual by the Job Description Analysis Committee (JDAC) that was appointed by the Authorized officer.

Members the JDAC chaired by PSC's Director for Human Resource Management and Development, Ms Joan Machayo retreated at the Eseriani Resort in Naivasha from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> November 2020 to review and validate the Commission staff Job Description Manual and develop a Career Progression Guideline. Once approved by the

Commission Board, the documents will be submitted to SRC.

Members of the JDAC included Gilbert Nyandiga, Caroline Kiget, Jeremiah Kagwe, Isaac Njiru, Hannah Mwangi, Phoebe Gor, Alfred Mueke and Janet Kipchoge.

It is expected that SRC will evaluate jobs by SRC in March 2021 and communicate the results to the service by May 2021.

The results of the job evaluation will inform the Commission's salary structures for the 2021/22-2024/25 remuneration review cycle.



## Public institutions need a resilient workforce

By Dr. Gabriel Juma

**T**he year 2020 is unprecedented. It started on a quiet note, and then some news came about the outbreak of coronavirus in Wuhan China.

The virus spread quickly to Europe and America, but we never imagined it would reach us, or even affect us.

After all, the world had earlier experienced Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), which never affected us as a country... so we thought.

We told ourselves 'this is a disease from the West... for the people of the western world'.

Come March 2020, the country went on partial lockdown, for the virus was here with us.

The COVID-19 pandemic drastically and unrelentingly changed the way we lived, moved and interacted.

It threw the public servants and public institutions into a frenzy, forcing them to not only deal with fighting its spread but manage the socio-economic fallout.

We witnessed the effects of the pandemic strain the healthcare system, disrupt the education system, wreak havoc on businesses and economies, and lead to job losses and disrupted social life.

As we come to the close of 2020, the world is far from seeing the end of the pandemic that ruled and ruined the year.

We can only transit to the



**Gabriel Juma, PhD, MKIM**

New Year with the hope and expectation that the nightmare will come to an end, but will it ever?

Let us not lower our guard as the virus may be with us for longer than we expect.

What the pandemic has taught us is that the world is one small global village. We

have learnt the importance of adapting to situations as they arise, being agile and flexible and above all, keeping hope alive.

As we march on to 2021, institutions should focus on building a resilient workforce and perfect the virtual service delivery models.

On a more positive note, the pandemic accelerated many transformations in the public service that were previously slow in picking up.

We should, therefore, build on this momentum and ensure a data-driven public service that shares and acts on data insights to make a lasting difference in the lives of citizens.

I wish the Commission fraternity a merry Christmas and blessed 2021.

**“ What the pandemic has taught us is that the world is one small global village. We have learnt the importance of adapting to situations as they arise, being agile and flexible and above all, keeping hope alive.”**

## PSC Gym to re-open in January 2021

By Pauline Muriuki

The PSC gymnasium that remained closed for the last 10 months is set to be opened in January 2021.

The closure of the facility was among the measures taken by the Commission in March 2020 to manage and contain the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, in line with the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health.

In a memo addressed to Secretariat staff and interns on 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2020, the CEO Mr. Simon Rotich indicated, “Following a number of inquiries and with due consideration to the new normal maxim on the management of Covid-19 pandemic going forward, we write to notify for the general information that the PSC gym facility will be partially re-opened with effect from Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021, but under controlled and restricted arrangements...”

With regard to the safety of secretariat staff and interns, a team of four officers has been appointed to work closely with the Gym Instructors Kenneth Chomba and Griffins Omondi to enforce compliance with the health protocols provided by the Ministry of Health.

The team will continuously consult with the Director of Administration Services and Deputy Director, Supply Chain Management to ensure that there are sufficient supplies required for high level of cleanliness and other



*Gym instructors Kenneth Chomba (left) and Griffins Omondi*

administrative interventions.

The gym facility will be open only to PSC Secretariat staff, PSC Interns (on current engagement) and Security personnel attached to the Commission.

A maximum of four users will be allowed entry and use of the gym facility at any given time. It will be operational for five sessions per every official working day, with an allowance of 15 minutes between the sessions to allow for sanitizing (disinfection) and refreshing of the facilities.

The gym coordinators have been advised to develop a register which will be signed by

all users of the facility for each day and session. Advance notice will also be given to coordinators by anyone who intends to use the gym, without which access will not be allowed.

All the gym users will be required to comply with and observe basic safety precautions such as checking of body temperature, social distancing, using sanitizers and handwashing, carrying own water bottles, among other requirements.

Since its official opening in December 2017, the gym has served the PSC fraternity uninterrupted .

## PSC IN PICTURES



Commissioner Salma Ahmed speaks during the end of year working luncheon at Carnivore restaurant attended by commissioners and top management staff



CEO Mr. Siomon Rotich hands over a laptop to the Director CQA Mr. Simon Wachinga during the Values report preparation at Burch Resort, Naivasha



The Job Description Analysis Committee (JDAC) working on the PSC Job Description Manual at Eseriani Resort in Naivasha



Deputy Commission Secretary, Ms. Jane Chege addresses the team preparing the values report at Burch Resort in Naivasha

**EVENT PICTORIAL: PSC top level Strategic Policy Working Retreat held at the Lake Naivasha Resort from 29th November to 4th December 2020**



**Seated L-R:** Dr Reuben Chirchir, Dr Mary Mwiandi, Ms Charity Kisotu, Dr Joyce Nyabuti. **Standing L-R:** Mr Andrew Muriuki, Mr Simon Rotich, Amb Salma Ahmed, Ms Jane Chege, Ms Joan Otieno



Vice Chairperson Charity Kisotu (centre) and Commissioners Dr Reuben Chirchir (left) and Dr Mary Mwiandi at tea break



PSC Directors Peter Maina (left), Gerald Kuhaka and Dr Sylvester Obong'o



Commissioner Andrew Muriuki (left), Ag Director BMS George Mukabi and CEO Simon Rotich



Ms Kentice Tikolo, CEO Cause-Impact Consulting presents the draft branding and communication strategy



Secretariat Staff Browne Kutswa (left), John Njorio, Ann Njoroge, Dan Maina and Dan Mung'ala

## PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Commission House  
Harambee Avenue  
P. O. Box 30095—00100  
Nairobi

Tel. 254 20 2223901  
254 20 2227471  
Fax No 254 20 214791  
Call Centre: 020 4865 000

Website:  
[www.publicservice.go.ke](http://www.publicservice.go.ke)  
[psck@publicservice.go.ke](mailto:psck@publicservice.go.ke)

Facebook page:  
Public Service Commission of  
Kenya

Twitter:  
[@PSCKenya](https://twitter.com/PSCKenya)

### EDITORIAL TEAM:

**Editor:**  
Browne Kutswa

**Editorial Assistants:**  
Habel Shiloli  
Pauline Muriuki  
Badi Khamis

**Design & Layout:**  
Pauline Muriuki  
Badi Khamis

### Vision

A Citizen-centric public service

### Mission

To reform and transform the public service for efficient service delivery

### Core Values

- Citizen Focus
- Professionalism
- Innovation
- Team-work

### Public Service Commission Directorate

- Recruitment and Selection
- Human Resource Management & Development
- Establishment and Management Consultancy Services
- Performance and Service Delivery Improvement
- Board Management Services
- Compliance and Quality Assurance
- Finance and Planning
- Corporate Services
- Legal Services
- Internal Audit

### Commissioners

Stephen Kirogo, CBS, FPRSK	-	Chairman
Ms Charity Kisotu	-	Vice Chairperson
Dr Joyce Nyabuti	-	Commissioner
Dr Mary Mwiandi	-	Commissioner
Dr Reuben Chirchir	-	Commissioner
Amb. Patrick Wamoto, EBS	-	Commissioner
Amb. Salma Ahmed	-	Commissioner
Mr Andrew Muriuki	-	Commissioner
Ms Joan Otieno	-	Commissioner

### Secretary/Chief Executive

Simon K. Rotich, EBS