

REMARKS BY H.E WILLIAM RUTO, DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA, AT THE 2ND DEPUTY GOVERNORS FORUM IN NAIVASHA ON THE 27TH OF JANUARY 2016.

It is a pleasure to be with you again at the National Deputy Governors' Leadership Conference.

I want to believe that we are having the 2nd edition of this event because the first one was successful and impacted on our work as deputy governors.

I want to thank the organizers of this event; the Ministry of Devolution, The Kenya School of Government, The World Bank and the Deputy Governor's Forum.

An opportunity to share experiences and perspectives is noble.

As leaders, in the practice of Devolution all of you carry invaluable first hand insights into the successes and challenges of the system; you bring with you critical lessons from what you have seen and learnt in your own counties.

Let us make maximum use of this platform to grab practical insights and create real value for the people that we serve.

We have come a long way since the election; devolution has come a long way. We are here to ensure that it is even more successful and goes even further towards meeting the needs of Kenyans at the grassroots.

You must play your role as deputy governors in bringing about this new success.

Let me re-affirm the commitment of the Government to devolution and in fostering harmonious and consultative intergovernmental relations and capacity building at both levels of government for a better Kenya as enshrined in Article 6 of the Constitution.

Section 15 (2)(a) of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution mandates the National Government to facilitate the devolution of power; assist and support county governments in building their capacity to govern effectively and to provide public services.

Section 121 of the County Governments Act 2012 provides for the National Government ministry or department responsible for matters relating to intergovernmental relations to provide support to county governments to enable them to perform their functions effectively.

The national Government has lived true to this provision. It has done its part.

We have increased the equitable share of nationally raised revenues to 40% and adhered to Article 203 of the Constitution.

We have provided an enabling environment and enhanced the capacity building opportunities for county governments and we will continue to do so.

The Kenya School of Government Act no. 9 of 2012 mandates the School to “build capacity for the Public Service” and “provide training, consultancy and research services designed to inform public policy, promote national development and standards of competence, and integrity in the Public Service.”

I ask the School of Government to design high-end programs like this one that will drastically transform Kenya. The school must be seen to deliver on its mandate and its presence must be felt at home and abroad.

The Government expects the school to strengthen the capacity of the public service of the national and county governments to achieve the desired goals and aspirations.

The Government has been keen to facilitate counties to operate optimally within its space, and to uphold their autonomy within the law.

So far, we have been successful. Even so, challenges abound, as they inevitably would. Overcoming these challenges is the purpose of devolution.

The only yardstick available for transformative leadership at the county level is the focus and commitment to surmounting these challenges.

On the other hand, wastefulness, corruption, unnecessary delay and discrimination are indicators of dysfunctional leadership.

By this criteria, it is possible to determine how devolution fairs at its most critical level. Without a doubt, devolution can be undermined at the counties. Similarly, devolution can be practiced best at the county level. Devolution's most serious threats lie at the counties. Devolution's greatest potential also lies at the counties.

I can assure you that the National Government will play its role in ensuring the sustainable impact of devolution. We are strongly committed to devolution and the proof is in the allocation of resources and transfer of functions.

Every year since our election we have consistently upped the ante; sending more and more billions to the counties. Since 2013 we have funneled a cumulative total of more than Sh 700 billion to the counties.

Last year, we increased the share of revenue to the counties to 40% of the national budget- that my friends is called commitment.

The President and I firmly believe that devolution can unlock incredible transformation and we are putting our money where our mouths are in this regard.

The Theme of this conference is brilliant: Building Winning Teams For County Effectiveness. Luckily for you I am not going to beat around the bush-some of you are not on the same team with your governors.

In some counties the concept of teamwork between the Deputy Governor and the Governor is a strange if not alien concept. Some of you are not even Facebook or Twitter friends with your bosses!

The approaching elections make things even more complicated but I am here to tell you today that there is no excuse for not giving a 100% to being a team player. Work with your governors, speakers and members of County Assemblies for the sake of the people we serve.

My friends, I am also a Deputy and I can tell you that if you bring competency, reliability and trust to the table your bosses will reciprocate.

Working together alone does not make you a team; having offices in the same building does not make you a team-trusting each other makes you a team; sharing and contributing ideas makes you a team; delivering together makes you a team.

Do you have a common vision in your county? Or does the Governor, the Speaker and half the MCA's have their own vision?

The President and I have a common goal-everyone knows about it, all of you know it-can we say the same about you in the counties?

Being a Deputy does not absolve you from the essentials of leadership; you need to take responsibility, you need to pull your weight and you need to be accountable.

You can help your Governors do incredible things for the people that elected both of you.

It is really astonishing what can be achieved when no one cares who gets the credit.

It is possible to build winning teams; it is possible to build transformational teams but it demands strong political will.

If you want to take the Governor's position my best advice to you would be to do a wonderful job as a Deputy; don't make the mistake of thinking that no one is watching you. They are, all the time.

It is neither politically acceptable nor admissible that a Deputy Governor should forge a parallel political programme separate or independent of the Governor's.

Should this happen, the authority that springs naturally out of the image of unity of purpose gets eroded leading to the loss of confidence where it matters most.

It is such pointless turf wars at the top that if allowed will stand on the way of success of devolution in Kenya.

In sum, unless the agenda is to choke devolution, the Deputy and Governor must work in concert in order to offer a unitary and seamless similitude of harmony.

After all, you will agree with me that in leadership the combination of programmes, processes and procedures is as important as perceptions.

You were elected as a team. When you become dysfunctional and even comical there is every possibility that you will get thrown out as a team because voters will judge you as a team.

It is ridiculous to imagine that a reasonable person will buy the idea that a Governor failed but the Deputy Governor *is okay*.

It is my strong hope that your time at this forum will make you better leaders; your contribution to the management of counties will become more deliberate and pronounced and that your relationships with Governors will not be defined by insecurity-from either party-but by the common responsibility to serve the people who elected you.

I also hope that your sessions will be candid and open for maximum impact. You have a role to play in the transformation of this country through devolution; you are all part of a team-your service will define this position for generations to come. Give them a track record to emulate; to admire and to learn from.

It is now my privilege to declare this 2nd Deputy Governors Forum officially opened.

God Bless You and God Bless Kenya.