

SPEECH BY MS JACQUELINE MOGENI DURING THE OPENING CEREMONY COUNTY ATTORNEYS TRAINING HELD ON MONDAY 23RD FEBRUARY 2015 AT THE KENYA SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT.

**County Attorneys,
National Government Representatives,
Partners,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Welcome to the County Attorneys Forum. This forum forms part of a continuous effort to institutionalize the County Law Office, as the Council recognizes the important role of this Office in the functioning of County Governments. The inception of County Governments in 2013 meant that devolved units have full legislative and executive authority to ensure service delivery at the local level. Therefore, the legal arms of the counties have the task of developing policies and laws that translate into effective service delivery. In essence, the legal advisors and County Attorneys play a fundamental role in the direction a county takes in execution of its functions.

However, devolution laws have not catered for these crucial offices. The lack of an institutional and legal framework for the County Law Office continues to impede the work of attorneys. The devolved governments face a myriad of legal challenges on a daily basis, noting that devolution is novel to all implementers. Legislation, dispute resolution, contracts and agreements and all matters legal are in the hands of the attorneys. In this regard, it is critical to set up administrative structures for the County Law Office so that it can work effectively in addressing the legal needs of the county; which needs are at both the County Executive level and the County Assembly level.

The Council of Governors, in conjunction with International Development Law Organization (IDLO) and the Ministry of Devolution and Planning (MDP) have previously hosted a county attorneys forum in 15th May, 2014 at Serena Hotel, Nairobi, in a bid to identifying gaps and consequently developing interventions with respect to county legislative and policy drafting. However, the Council, in consultation with stakeholders, has sought to not only deal with matters of legislative drafting, but also to explore ways in which the County Law Office and its envisioned departments can be anchored in law.

It is my hope that today's forum will offer clarity on the structure of the County Law Office and that intervention mechanisms and strategies proposed today will begin to be implemented. It is also my conviction that all the stakeholders in this room will continue to offer support to

County Governments in setting up of this Office. Eventually, it is the Council's aspirations that County Law Offices will be strengthened, visible and capable of offering relevant solutions to county legal needs.

Enjoy. Learn. Implement.