



COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS

**REMARKS FOR H.E. HON. FCPA WYCLIFFE AMBETSA**  
**OPARANYA, DURING THE LUNCHEON OF 20<sup>TH</sup>**  
**JANUARY, 2020**  
**MOVENPICK, NAIROBI**

***Excellency Governors present,  
Speaker of the Senate,  
Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Devolution and ASAL,  
The Chief Justice and the President of the Supreme Court,  
Honorable Senators,  
High Commissioners and Ambassadors,  
Development Partners  
Representatives from the Private Sector,  
Distinguished Guests,***

**Good Afternoon!**

1. Today marks the beginning of another chapter for the Council of Governors. Let me convey a heartfelt thank you to all the Excellency Governors for their support in the last one year. I stand here proud of what we have achieved. On my part it has been a privilege, an honor and a humbling experience, to serve as a Chairman of the Council of Governors.
2. The Council remains a key pillar in the implementation of the devolved system of governance. For this reason, we the Governors are aware that it is our dedication and teamwork that will continue to strengthen the place of the Council in this constitutional dispensation.

***Ladies and Gentlemen,***

3. In March 2020, it will be seven (7) years since the establishment of County Governments. In that short period, remarkable transformation has been witnessed in service delivery in Counties. Also, public support for devolution has not waned. However, there are several challenges that must be addressed in order to firmly anchor devolution.
4. Underfunding of County Governments is an issue we have continually highlighted. The Constitution places the minimum threshold of County allocations at 15% yet County Governments deliver the majority of the services. We are happy that the Building Bridges Initiative is proposing to increase this threshold to 35%. On our part, we hope that the minimum percentage of equitable share to Counties increases to 45%.
5. Delayed disbursements has made the situation much worse with some development projects almost being rendered paralyzed. The continued existence of regional development authorities and parastatals that perform similar functions as County Governments is a factor that has contributed to reduced County allocations. Through intergovernmental forums, there is need for both levels of government to agree on restructuring models for such institutions.
6. On the same issue of finances, we do admit that in the last year, two other challenges stood out. One was the prolonged and tedious division of revenue process that dragged on into a new financial year without resolution. It is from this stalemate that prompted the County Governments to institute a Supreme Court reference seeking declaration of some fundamental constitutional principles relating to vertical

sharing of revenue. Another problem was pending bills. In taking cognizance that the progress of our economy is dependent on the growth of small businesses, County Governments have put in place strict measures to ensure that all eligible pending bills are paid. Therefore I urge my brothers and sisters to speed up this process so that all these efforts can contribute to the jumpstarting of our economy.

***Ladies and Gentlemen,***

7. On matters security, we stand in solidarity with the families of those who have recently lost loved ones in terror related attacks. Concerted efforts are required to deal with terrorism and violent extremism. As much as security is an exclusive function of the National Government, the two levels of government should work together collaboratively so that there is seamless information flow from the community policing committees to the national security agencies.

8. I cannot also fail to mention the fight against corruption. This country is bleeding from the scars of corruption. We must all join the President in his efforts to rid Kenya of wanton graft. All State Officers and public officers must remain ethical and transparent in the conduct of their day to day work. The economy is losing billions because of corruption. Kenyans are suffering at the hands of cartels who continue to hold the nation hostage. As leaders, we have a duty. A non-negotiable duty which is to live by the national values and principles of leadership entrenched in the Constitution.

***Ladies and Gentlemen,***

9. On matters healthcare, we are aware Counties have reported that KEMSA has been delivering less than 50% of the orders for drugs from all the Counties. Noting that Counties have been restricted from purchasing drugs from any other supplier

except KEMSA, and KEMSA is proving not to have capacity to deliver to all Counties on time, healthcare service delivery will be hampered. We will pick this issue urgently for discussion with the Ministry of Health with a bid to finding a speedy and sustainable solution.

10. As we move into another year of devolution, my desire is that this will be a year of closer and deeper partnerships. Synergy between the National Government and County Governments is so important in delivery of development agendas like the Universal Healthcare Coverage (UHC). Without dialogue based on good faith and proper coordination, the two levels of government will achieve little. And cooperation should also be seen in the development partner and private sector fronts.

***Ladies and Gentlemen,***

11. To deliver the promises that came with the devolved system of governance in 2010, we require the contribution of each and every County. Our success depends largely on our ability to overcome divisiveness and form unprecedented partnerships, which will lead us to unlimited possibilities. This will lead us to prosperity. No less was done for us by those who preceded us, and we need that vision—that commitment—now, more than ever.

Thank you and God Bless you all.