

**SPEECH BY**  
**THE CABINET SECRETARY FOR HEALTH**  
**SICILY K. KARIUKI (MRS.), EGH**  
**DURING THE SIGNING CEREMONY OF**  
**THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**BETWEEN THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AND COUNTY**  
**GOVERNMENTS**  
**ON**  
**HEALTH COLLABORATION AND SERVICE PROVISION BY**  
**MEDICAL SPECIALISTS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA**  
**14<sup>th</sup> May 2018**

- **Chair, Council of Governors;**
- **Hon. Governors;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen.**

Let me begin by requesting that we take a moment of silence to remember the victims of flooding in Tana River and those who lost their lives following the burst dam in Solai, Nakuru County.

Our country has been going through a season of heavy rains. However in the very recent past we have regrettably had floods devastate many families through the loss of lives and property.

PAUSE FOR A MOMENT OF SILENCE

Thank you.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

H.E. The President, declared Affordable Healthcare for all, as one of the Big Four Action Plan, for his second term in office. In line with this declaration, the President instructed The Ministry of Health to pursue health cooperation projects with the Ministry of Public Health in Cuba, during his recent State visit to that nation.

Just to highlight briefly, these areas of cooperation include:

1. The Malaria Vector Control Project which endeavours to eliminate the larvae of the Anopheles mosquito that spreads malaria. The project is projected for piloting in 8 counties where we have prevalence rates of malaria above 20%. These include Kisumu, Bungoma, Kakamega, Siaya, Homabay, Vihiga, Busia and Migori Counties. This is a concern to us all given that malaria remains a leading cause of death in children below five years of age and pregnant mothers. The agreement on malaria cooperation is however still a work in progress.

2. Second is the training of 1000 nurses and clinical officers in a higher diploma course in family medicine. The training in family medicine will enhance our primary health care services, an area of great importance as our journey towards Universal Health Care is will be shortened by effective Primary Health Care services. Currently, the team from the Kenya Medical Training College, KMTC, is working on developing a curriculum.

3. Thirdly, we are also pursuing collaboration in research in the areas of HIV vaccine development and Hepatitis Vaccines. These areas are still under exploration and we are eager to learn from the successes in Cuba.
  
4. Finally, and of high priority is our reason for being here today, the exchange programs of medical specialists. Three weeks ago, I visited Cuba and signed the two agreements with the Ministry of Public Health of Cuba. These agreements laid ground for acquisition 100 Cuban

Medical Specialists by the Kenyan Government and the training of 50 Kenyan Medical doctors in Cuba.

I wish to confirm that the 100 Cuban Specialists have undergone rigorous Pre-selection and Peer review by the Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentist Board. They have been vetted and found qualified to practise in Kenya. Cuban doctors shall be deployed to work with the existing medical teams in the counties and shall remain in the service of the counties for a period of two years.



The specialists are also expected to build the capacity of the local teams through knowledge transfer.

On the other hand, 50 Medical Officers from Kenya are to be selected from Counties and sent for training in Cuba. They shall undergo a 2 year post graduate training in Family Medicine and return home as Family Medicine Specialists.

I am therefore delighted to be here this morning to witness the next step of the Kenya-Cuba technical exchange cooperation.

Honourable Chair, I wish to thank the Council of Governors, the Health Committee and the Intergovernmental Forum for their tireless efforts that have ensured that we are here today. I especially thank the Council of Governors health team and the secretariat for facilitating the smooth and efficient flow of information from the Ministry of Health to the Counties and vice versa.

I am also very proud of the Ministry of health team and the Kenyan embassy in Cuba, who have worked tirelessly to ensure that these projects of utmost benefit to Kenya have been developed and are now in the final stages of completion prior to implementation.

Lastly, I look forward to coming back here to evaluate and celebrate the successful implementation of this and other Cuban health collaboration projects.

**I THANK YOU.**