

**SPEECH BY H.E. HON. MWAI KIBAKI, C.G.H., M.P.,
PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED
FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA DURING A WORKSHOP
FOR PERMANENT SECRETARIES /ACCOUNTING OFFICERS
AND CHIEF EXECUTIVES OF STATE CORPORATIONS ON
STRATEGIES TO FIGHT/ELIMINATE CORRUPTION IN THE
PUBLIC SERVICE, KENYA INSTITUTE OF ADMINISTRATION,
NAIROBI, 5TH FEBRUARY, 2010**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to join you this morning to deliberate on the subject of integrity and eradication of corruption in our public service. This is a subject of high priority to the Government and indeed the people of Kenya. It is also in line with the Government's commitment as outlined under VISION TWENTY THIRTY to have an efficient and modern public service. While it is evident that we are capable of achieving this goal, it is clear we can only succeed if we have a public service that manages public resources prudently and ethically and which operates efficiently with a clear sense of direction.

The theme of this workshop 'Leadership and Integrity in the Public Service' is appropriate. It underscores the urgent need for a national integrity system that seeks;

1. To eliminate corruption that increases the cost of investment and the cost of production to the detriment of the economy and living standards, and
2. To provide focused leadership in public service.

It is for this reason that you are gathered here to reflect on what you are collectively and individually doing to eradicate corruption and provide leadership in the public service.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As Government, we are committed to the elimination of corruption. In the last 7 years, we have passed major legislation aimed at

dealing with corruption in the Public Service. This includes the Anti-Corruption and Economic Crimes Act, 2003 and the Public Officers Ethics Act, 2003. These Acts established the Kenya Anti Corruption Commission with the mandate to combat corruption and economic crimes through law enforcement, prevention, public education and recovery of corruptly acquired wealth. The Acts also provided for wealth declaration by all public servants.

Yesterday, Cabinet approved the Witness Protection Bill that seeks to establish an autonomous agency. The agency will among other issues safeguard potential witnesses in corruption cases and other crimes.

At the same time, the Government has taken measures to improve governance of public finances by enacting the Public Audit Act 2003, the Government Financial Management Act 2004 and the Public Procurement and Disposal Act 2005.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Despite tremendous anti-corruption efforts, incidences of corruption still prevail in the country. More concrete action is needed in the fight against this vice. What is required of you is a clear resolve and commitment to individually and collectively create a public service built on high moral values and integrity.

I would like to see more action in the fight against corruption, including but not limited to:

1. Fast-tracking the use of I.C.T., as a weapon in the fight against corruption.
2. An emphasis on preventive measures to stem corruption with public involvement in the fight.
3. Innovative intelligence collection strategies on unethical practices in the public service.
4. As accounting officers you should also recognize, reward and protect whistle-blowers and officers with integrity.

5. Institute Integrity testing systems in ministries and departments.
6. Prompt legal and disciplinary measures against officers involved in corruption.
7. Transformation of closed-up government offices into open work-stations to ensure more transparency.

I also call upon respective accounting officers to revamp mechanisms that assure efficient service delivery systems and processes, including records management systems and service charters. I expect you to immediately institute reforms that will seal corruption loopholes and address delays in service delivery.

In addition to this, government programs should be monitored continuously to ensure that incidences of corruption are dealt with early and remedial action taken immediately. As Accounting Officers and Chief Executive Officers, you have a responsibility to enforce systems which are intended to ensure transparency and accountability.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our country is today grappling with major development challenges and our resources are limited. As Accounting Officers, you are entrusted with enormous resources to manage on behalf of the Kenyan public. It is critical therefore that you take your responsibilities very seriously and ensure that there is no wastage, and abuse of resources.

Finances entrusted to you should be used strictly for the purposes for which they were intended and be spent within the budget and defined time-frame. If you fail to do that, you will be undermining our country's development agenda. Part of this agenda is employment creation for our youth. I therefore do not expect you to continue purchasing expensive imported furniture when our young people are making quality goods locally. You should therefore support our local furniture industry and help create jobs for our youth.

By the end of your deliberations, I expect you to formulate a Plan of Action with a time-frame and measurable strategies that have specific inputs, outputs and outcomes in the war against corruption.

As I conclude, I expect you all to discharge your respective mandates with integrity, courage and utmost professionalism. As accounting officers, it is your duty to mainstream anti-corruption initiatives and good governance practices in your organizations. You should take appropriate action against officers in your organizations who are found to be involved in corrupt and unethical practices. We will not allow situations where irresponsible officers are transferred from Ministry to Ministry to spread their vice of corruption.

I expect you to have zero-tolerance to corruption because that is Government policy. Administrative procedures should be simplified and streamlined to eliminate opportunities and loopholes for corruption.

As Accounting Officers, you must also lead the fight through your personal integrity. Act urgently to stem corruption. Quick action on your part will ensure that public funds are not misappropriated. Transparency and accountability in the Public Service is a critical pillar for government to attain credibility in the eyes of tax-paying Kenyans.

With these remarks, it is now my pleasure to declare this workshop officially opened and to wish you fruitful deliberations.

Thank you and God bless you all.