

TALKING POINTS FOR THE PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, STATE DEPARTMENT OF GENDER AFFAIRS, MS, MWANAMAKA A. MABRUKI, CBS, DURING THE GENDER SECTOR CO-ORDINATION GROUP MEETING AT THE SAROVA PANAFRIC HOTEL ON 16TH MAY, 2017.

The Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs, Sicily K. Kariuki, (Mrs.), E.G.H,

The Swedish Ambassador to Kenya, His Excellency Johan Borgstam,

The Country Director, UN Women, Ms. Zebib Kavuma,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First, let me warmly welcome you all to this meeting of the Gender Sector Coordination Group.

I hope that my welcome remarks will help to give us all a sense of direction and a common purpose for our work within the mandate of the Gender Sector Coordination Group.

Let me begin by briefly highlighting the origin, structure and purpose of the Group:

The Gender Sector Coordination Group (GSCG) was established as part of the aid architecture in which the Government together with its development partners adopted the implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

The establishment of the GSCG thus provides an opportunity to reform delivery and management of aid in order to strengthen impact of development results as well an opportunity for a more holistic engagement matters related to gender equality in the country.

The Group is Chaired by the Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs (MPYGA) and co-chaired by the Chair of the Development Partners Gender Group, currently the Embassy of Sweden. This is in line with the current Government policy for leadership of Aid Coordination structures.

Membership of the Gender Sector Coordination Group consists of Government ministries, representatives of donor agencies that support the gender sector and relevant civil society organizations, research & academic institutions, and the private sector.

To facilitate ownership and accountability of all stakeholders, four taskforces were established, namey:

- i. Sexual and Gender Based Violence Task Force;
- ii. Women in Leadership and Decision Making Task Force;
- iii. Socio-economic Empowerment Task Force; and,
- iv. Women in Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Task Force.

The group is supported by a secretariat located at the State Department of Gender Affairs which is charged with the responsibility to execute the necessary operational processes on the back end for the effective running of the Gender Sector Coordination Group.

Having given you a brief highlight on the group, let me thank you all for being here for today's important discussion, for continuing to demonstrate your commitment to the issues of gender equality and women's empowerment.

These are issues we have discussed at length including grounding our support and interventions in strategies that build just and equal societies, and yet how to do this effectively continues to be our common challenge.

A major challenge we have faced has been in the area of women and leadership. The failure to implement the 2/3 gender principle by the National Assembly and Senate poses a risk of women being further left behind. This said, we have worked hard together to launch the National Strategy on the greater participation of women in elective politics, we have seen progress and for this we must be proud.

So what is needed for us to move forward in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment?

We need to ensure that gender equality and women's rights are prioritized in the support that we provide. To promote gender equality and women's rights, we need to work together. Everyone here has a fundamental role to play.

The success of this Group depends on you. Your active involvement in and contribution to the discussion will be of vital importance in seeking effective strategies towards the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment.

In concluding, let me reiterate my sincere hope that this meeting will result in success and with your co-operation will establish strategic partnerships for the good of this country.

It is now my pleasure to invite the Country Director UN Women, Ms. Zebib Kavuma to address you.

Thank you.