

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY HON. SAMUEL POGHISIO, MINISTER FOR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS, DURING THE 3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL POSTAL/COURIERSTAKEHOLDERSFORUM AT INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL, NAIROBI, 18<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2011**

**Mr. Charles J.K. Njoroge, Director-General, CCK**

**Mr. Bishar Abdulrahman. Hussein, Chairman of Council of Administration (CA) of UPU**

**Maj. General (Rtd) Hussein Ali, Postmaster General, Postal Corporation of Kenya**

**Madam Jane Babsa –Nzibo, Chairperson, CIAK**

**CEOs and their representatives present,**

**Industry players and stakeholders**

**Distinguished guests**

**Ladies and gentlemen**

I am pleased to join you this morning at the official opening of the third Annual Postal/courier Stakeholders Forum. I am pleased to note that this Forum has now become a permanent fixture in the Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK) annual calendar of events. I wish to take this opportunity to commend the CCK for providing sector stakeholders and interested parties with the opportunity to discuss pertinent and current issues that will inform the future policy and regulatory direction of the post.

As you all appreciate, the Ministry of Information and Communications appreciates the importance of engaging stakeholders in the process of policy and legal formulation. This explains why the *ICT Sector Policy Guidelines of March 2006* and supporting legal framework were developed after extensive consultations with the communications sector players and other interested parties. My Ministry has been actively participating in the Annual Postal/courier Stakeholders Forum in order to appreciate the policy, legal and regulatory concerns that may have a bearing in the development of the postal sector in the country.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Government recognizes the importance of the post in the Kenya's socio-economic development. For many of our people, particularly in the rural and remote locations, the post remains the only cost-effective and easily accessible means of communication. The Government will continue doing

everything within its power to ensure that the country has a vibrant and efficient postal service. This will be achieved by among others ensuring that postal operators provide affordable, equitable and efficient universal service.

To ensure that universal postal services are attained, the Government has designated the Postal Corporation of Kenya as the National Postal Operator with Universal Service Obligations. To give impetus to the attainment of the policy objective of universal access to postal services, the Government has reviewed the sector law and regulations to provide for the establishment of a Universal Service Fund. I wish call on the CCK to fast-track the implementation of the sector regulations relating to the Universal Service Fund so that postal services can be made available all.

For the post to remain relevant today's world where customers want services to be delivered fast and efficiently, focus should be concentrated on meeting customer concerns and expectations. This is the only way the post will be able to hold its own in face of the dramatic uptake of ICT services in the country. The post utilize the opportunities presented by ICTs to position its services in tandem with new customer trends and prevailing market realities.

The theme this year, *“meeting consumer concerns and expectations in a liberalised postal/courier market”* aptly captures the focus all operators in the sector should encompass. Indeed, it cannot be overemphasised that today, consumer demands and expectations shape products and services in the market and this is particularly pertinent in an industry that must respond to the fast changing technology in the global arena.

The Government of Kenya through my ministry acknowledges that good addressing and high quality address data constitute an important part of a nation's infrastructure. In response to the demand from consumers on the need to have door-to-door delivery service, my ministry and the CCK are in the process of developing a national addressing system through a multi-stakeholder taskforce.

Worldwide, it has been acknowledged that addresses are an essential tool for economic and social development and that the existence of complete, correct and unique address data should be seen as being of fundamental importance for all countries.

Inaccurate and unreliable location address has a financial cost and human loss, particularly in dispatch of police, fire and ambulance in emergency situations. These costs are increasing as the range and use of address information increases. A

good addressing system reduces undeliverable-as-addressed mail, and provides mutual cost reduction opportunities through improved efficiency.

Ladies and gentlemen, an informed consumer is an empowered one. In recognition of this fact, I wish to laud the Communications Commission of Kenya for the deliberate efforts being undertaken to educate consumers of postal/courier services. This will increase consumer demand thereby empowering postal/ courier consumers to make informed choices .There have been issues ranging from transmission of prohibited items in the postal/courier networks that put consumers' lives on the line, to ignorance of available complaints recourse mechanisms inherent in utilising services from licensed operators.

Dear participants, my Ministry recently reviewed fourteen sets of regulations in the ICT sector in tandem with feedback from interactions with stakeholders in forums such as the one in point. This is aimed among others at providing clarity and facilitating the consumer to make informed choices. Furthermore, the regulations have enabled effective competition, investment and innovation to thrive in the sector.

Contrary to earlier predictions, the post is weathering the initial storm presented by ICTs and instant messaging technologies. Although new technologies have eaten into some of the traditional postal business segments, ICTs have opened new business opportunities for the post. .For instance, in the present world goods are ordered online but delivered by post and courier services.Physical mail volumes remain positive in most regions of the world despite increased competition particularly from electronic communication together with the global economic slowdown. In response to the new business environment, the postal industry should exploit ICTs to develop new products and services that merge the opportunities of cyberspace with the extensive physical distribution capabilities in order to retain fair portions of the communications market.

As I conclude, I wish to assure the postal/courier fraternity that the government will continue to support the development of this industry. This we shall do, recognizing as we do, its importance in the development of the economy and in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

With those remarks, it is now my pleasure to declare this third annual postal/courier stakeholders forum officially open.

Thank you for your attention.