



OFFICE OF THE CABINET SECRETARY

REMARKS BY

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CABINET SECRETARY

LABOUR AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

DURING THE MEETING WITH

THE AMBASSADOR OF POLAND

19TH OCTOBER, 2020

Your Excellence the Ambassador of Poland to Kenya

Other Members of the Diplomatic Mission

Secretary Administration, State Department for Labour

Other Ministry Staff

Good Afternoon

On behalf of the government of Kenya and my own behalf, I take this the opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to your Excellency and the Government of Poland for accepting our invitation.

Your Excellency,

Our two countries have enjoyed exceptional cooperation in political, economic and cultural fields since December 1963 when Kenya established diplomatic relations with the Polish People's Republic.

It is gratifying to note that the continued increase in exchange of official visits at high political levels between our two countries is testimony to the scale and depth of our bilateral relations. Some of these include the visit by the Minister of Environment during the United Nations Environmental Assembly- UNEA2 conference in 2016, the delegation of the Polish Senate in 2016 at the invitation of the Kenyan Senate and the visit by the Minister of Economic Development and Investment in 2019 during the UNEA4.

Many students from Kenya study in Poland, both as a part of scholarships as well private fee paying students. I am aware that students from Kenya take up second and third-degree studies in technical fields in Poland as part of the scholarship of the Polish Committee for UNESCO. It is also gratifying to note that a number of

Kenyan priests are also educated in Poland. This is a clear indication of the confidence our people place in your education facilities.

It is also encouraging to note that academic documents from Kenya are recognized by Polish universities, subject to legalization at the Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Nairobi.

Your Excellency,

Migration is a key feature of today's world of work. We are all aware of the immense benefits that labour migration accords to migrants, communities, employers, governments, and other stakeholders, in both countries of origin and destination when managed well.

For countries of origin, labour migration reduces the stress of national unemployment or underemployment, and contributes to development through remittances, transfer of skills, and the creation of business and trade networks.

For countries of destination, labour migration helps address critical labour shortages, especially within the context of ageing populations and changing labour demographics.

For workers, migration provides opportunities to raise income levels, gain skills and competencies, and improve living conditions for their families and communities.

Improving the governance of labour migration is high on the global political agenda, as reflected in the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) that sets goals on strengthening international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly and regular migration as well as facilitation of fair and ethical recruitment

and safeguarding conditions that ensure decent work. These goals are supplemented by the Migration Governance Framework.

The Government of Kenya is the Current Chair of the “Nairobi Process” a Regional Ministerial Forum on Harmonization of Labour Migration Policies in the East and Horn of Africa. The Nairobi process is a forum brings together Ministries in-charge of Labour and Social Protection from Kenya, Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Rwanda, South Sudan, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda with the harmonizing labour migration policies across the region for enhanced labour migration management.

Your Excellency

When supported by the right policies, Migration can be a positive force for development. Towards this, the Kenyan Government is undertaking a number of reforms in labour migration management. Some of these reforms include:

- ❖ Enhancing labour migration governance
- ❖ Policy and legal reforms on labour migration
- ❖ Design and implementation of pre-departure training
- ❖ Development of systems for collection and dissemination of labour migration data
- ❖ Establishing partnerships and collaboration in labour migration management
- ❖ Streamlining activities of recruitment agencies and;

- ❖ Design of a return and re-integration programme for returning migrant workers

I am convinced that our efforts will go a long way in enhancing safe, orderly and productive labour migration, which is beneficial to the migrant workers and their families; our country as well as the countries of destination.

Excellency

The Kenyan Government continues to invest heavily in human capital. We have well trained people in various professionals and technical skills such as engineering, architecture, medicine, nursing, agriculture, banking, teaching, transportation and skilled artisans who are willing to migrate to other countries including your country when opportunities arise.

We have received demand from employers in Poland for the following skill areas; food production, manufacture of apparels, car manufacture, fruit picking and packaging, pharmaceutical industries, carpentry among others.

Possible Areas of collaboration

The employment agencies have been having a challenge in accessing visas for your country hence making it difficult to access the available opportunities. It's my hope that our engagement today can become the starting point of easing and streamlining of VISA acquisition for Kenyan's wishing to travel to Poland.

Bilateral labour migration agreements between countries of origin and countries of destination are the primary instruments through which labour mobility arrangements are affected.

Bilateral agreements also provide governance over the movement of workers between jurisdictions, often focusing on seasonal, temporary or circular migration. Our overall objective is to conclude agreements with all key labour destination countries. It is our hope that we can begin this process with Poland.

The aim of the meeting is to provide an opportunity to engage and explore the opportunities regarding labour migration from Kenya to your country; and share information on possible areas of partnerships and intervention to optimize benefits from organized overseas employment.

Thank you