

## **Horn of Africa meet to harmonise migrant Labour policies**

**November 26<sup>th</sup> 2020**

**By Cheruiyot Korir**

Eleven countries from the horn of Africa and officials drawn from four regional blocks have met to harmonise labour migration policies in the region to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migrant labour force.

The virtual meeting under the banner of “Nairobi Process” brought together Kenya, Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda and Tanzania. The Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), African Union (AU), East African Community (EAC), and Development Partners also participated in the meeting.

The Nairobi Forum aims to review policy frameworks of various states in the horn of Africa and design appropriate innovative interventions to promote labour migration and protect migrant workers and their jobs.

In his opening remarks, the Cabinet Secretary for Labour and Social Protection, who is also the Chair of the Nairobi Process, Mr Simon Chelugui said, the region was faced with challenges of uncoordinated labour migration management, inadequate institutional, legal and policy frameworks among other issues in countries of destination that disadvantages migrant labour.

To resolve the challenges, there was need to have “mechanisms in place to reduce the possibility of abuse and exploitation of migrant workers and promote regional approaches in labour migration’ said Mr Chelugui.

He said, it was important to address regional labour migration challenges by developing bilateral labour agreements, labour market information systems on migration and diaspora engagements and human resolve trafficking and abuse of migrant workers' rights.

The Cabinet Secretary noted that, although Bilateral Labour Migration Agreements (BLMAs) are the primary instruments that guarantee protection of migrant workers' rights, some studies have identified inadequacies in social protection and access to services available to the workers that needed to be addressed.

Mr Chelugui observed that, in view of the economic hardships and geopolitical crisis that affect labour market and trigger migratory movement, it was important to reengineer migrant labour policies to spur social economic benefits to derived from migrant labour by countries of origin and destination.