

HON. SENATOR,  
HON. MP  
H.E DEPUTY GOVERNOR  
HON. SPEAKER  
COUNTY COMMISSIONER  
HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER  
HON MAJORITY LEADER  
HON MINORITY LEADER  
ALL INVITED GUESTS

#### **The State of Our County OneYear into Devolution**

##### **All Invited Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.**

Our County Men and Women, My greetings and message of goodwill to all our people, in all corners of our county. On this day, 12 months ago I took oath of office as the first Governor of our beloved County of Isiolo and at that history-making moment I represented the people of Isiolo, ushering in the new form of government called County Government. The restructuring of a new system was heralded and we witnessed the dawn of self-governing of our affairs. A few weeks earlier, our County assembly as the legislative arm of the government had the speaker and the members sworn in. During my inauguration the executive arm constituted only my deputy and I.

Today we have significantly put in place all the major offices mandated to run the government. We have in place the County Executive Committee members (mawaziri), the County Public Service Board (Waaajiri) and recently the County Secretary (mkuuwautumishiwaummanakatibuwamawaziri) County Chief Officers (makatibu). Other important public servants are being recruited to complete the full formation of the government. Foundation of any government is based on its working and skilled workforce. We are prepared to have such calibre of workers that are capable of providing public services without unnecessary delays.

##### **My Fellow County men and women,**

As Governor, I led my team in making pledges to work for Isiolo people. One year after elections we are back again to the same platform upon which I took the oath of office to report back what we have been able to achieve, what we are still doing to achieve our goals and the challenges and setbacks we have endured as a government.

The County government, like all others in Kenya inherited offices and staff of the defunct local authorities. For us Isiolo County Council was our entry point and like many councils, ours was also bedevilled by excessive amount of liabilities running into millions of shillings and a lethargic workforce whose moral and attitude was incredibly low. The institutional and organizational capacity was too weak and barely functional. The workers did not benefit from re-skilling and continuing training. Our County Government unlike many of our counterparts struggled to settle down as many requisite technical supports required were missing. However, Transitional Authority provided us with interim officers particularly in finance and procurement departments, which significantly avoided any void,

In partnership with our development partners we in earnest embarked on setting up systems and processes that would enhance our overall governance by strengthening financial management, budget planning, control mechanism, revenue collection, human resource capabilities, information and communication, improving land database and standardisation. Having implemented some of these incremental changes, we made some

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In partnership with our development partners we in earnest embarked on setting up systems and processes that would enhance our overall governance by strengthening financial management, budget planning, control mechanism, revenue collection, human resource capabilities, information and communication, improving land database and standardisation. Having implemented some of these incremental changes, we made some significant quick wins. With the support of the National treasury, we successfully made to top 10 counties to become IFMIS compliant thus furnishing our operational needs. We likewise smoothly embraced G-Pay, Improved IPPD, LAIFOM and other customised software financial applications. Towards this early success we want to recognise and appreciate the support of USAID that funded Kenya Transitional Initiative, Turkish Aid Coordination Office (TIKA) and DANIDA supported MTAP. Other locally based organisations and agencies also played critical roles in supporting County Government. This include Red Cross, World Vision, Regal AG, Regal IR, WFP, Helping Hand, Action Aid, SNV, VSF, ACF, Northern Water Services Board, ENNDA, NRT, RAP and others.

In addition the Executive and the County Assembly continued to benefit from capacity building initiatives. National Constitutional offices such as Commission on Revenue Allocation, Constitutional Implementation Commission, National Gender and Equality Commission, Kenya Law Reform Commission, The Ombudsman Office, Controller of Budget, Auditor-General Office and the Transitional Authority kept watch on our progress and ensured we carried our tasks within the parameters of constitutional and legal mandates.

Today as we commemorate Isiolo @1, our objective is to take this early opportunity to take stock, review and reflect our One Year in office. As we contemplate and plan for the next phase, we are not oblivious to the fact that we ought to place our report before you and invite your participation and engagement.

I will not take you through all details of our challenges and milestones as individual government dockets have set up tents to provide necessary information on their performance more comprehensively. Again, it was only yesterday that we organised 'Public Accountability Forum' where report on each docket was provided up-close and openly. Dialogue and discussions took place. Questions were raised and answers were provided. Mine is to rather give you in summary achievements we made and challenges we faced.

#### **Fellow County men and women**

Allow me to highlight just a few areas of successes in our development programmes and Projects

#### **1. PEACE AND HARMONIOUS CO-EXISTENCE**

We thank Almighty God for bestowing us with bountiful peace and prosperity we are experiencing during this period of one year. Our communities in all part of Isiolo contributed in restoring peace and cohesion. Cases of highway robberies and wanton destruction of lives and property was tackled through consistent security and intelligence sharing between county and national government led by the County Commissioner and his team. Through this collaboration measures were put in place to detect and deter criminal acts. Our people go about their daily life activities without much threats and fear.

#### **2. TREASURY AND ECONOMIC PLANNING**

We took early opportunity to put in place sound financial systems for better management and prudent use of our limited financial resources. As you are aware Isiolo receive meagre funding from shareable national revenue. Only Lamu received least amount than Isiolo. In recognition of this and considering our huge historical deficits in various developments needs, which are competing priority, the Executive and County Assembly worked hand in hand to make optimal use of available funds. In spite of huge wage and operations bills, we achieved at least 30% development threshold. Successful revenue collection measures were put in place, which would in the long run increase our local revenues by many folds. IFMIS and other financial systems to control waste and pilferage were installed in earnest. System and financial audits were severally carried internally and externally. Revenue collection is being streamlined through automated collection devices.

#### **3. ROAD AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Road and other infrastructural needs continue to pose greatest challenges to the Government, as road conditions had been neglected for many decades. Billion of shillings are required to elevate our earth surface roads to bitumised standards. In the meantime to address deplorable condition of access roads in the county the government has embarked on a massive road improvement programme within Isiolo town and other rural areas in the wards.

A couple of kilometre tarmac road is planned for this year. Parking bays for vehicles are also underway in Isiolo town to ease unruly and disorderly movements of trucks, buses, taxis, bodaboda which in most cases have led to grisly accidents. An initiative to light up our streets and residential areas have also started.

#### **4. WATER, IRRIGATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

With support of Danida Isiolo is today the only county with a comprehensive water assessment report showing data and information on ground surface water available for extraction and use. Almost all our wards boost of drilled and equipped boreholes and plans are underway to improve in water deficient areas such Madogashe, Duse, Boji and Kipsing. Drought mitigation plan was developed and interventions through water tankering have been made in acute water scarce places like some wards. County water policy and county water bill are at advanced level. Many water projects across the county have been procured and will be soon implemented.

#### **5. LAND AND PHYSICAL PLANNING**

Taking into accounts monumental land mismanagement and almost out of control allocations bedevilled by conflicts and counterclaims I declared moratorium on land transactions on 1st June 2013. Am happy to report today that much of the mess at administration, recording and registration have been sorted out. Computerisation and systematic filing and database systems are in place. A draft county land policy has been formulated and validated by the public. With a few technical input a comprehensive policy will be launched soon. Illegal squatters and unplanned settlement is being tackled most profusely. New areas for allocation will be earmarked sooner than later. Planning of BulaPesa, and other villages have been commissioned. Incomplete surveying and planning of Mwangaza, Chechelis,

## 5. LAND AND MINERAL TENURES

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County Assembly 's Ad Hoc Committee on Boundaries had completed its investigation which will soon be implemented with a view to address historical border conflicts with bordering counties such as Meru. At the moment we have agreed to give chance to relevant institution such as the National Land Commission and IEBC to mediate between Isiolo and Meru. Other simmering boundary issues with Garissa and other counties will be addressed amicably. In all this our stand as government is that our side of the boundaries must be respected and we shall tirelessly protect our land and land-based resources.

The Government in partnership with our development partners is in the process of mapping our land and land based resources.

## 6. AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK

Agriculture and livestock remain the backbone of our economy and livelihoods both in urban and rural areas. We are endowed with vast and virgin land that is viable for crop farming, particularly in irrigated schemes and livestock production. It is in recognition of this potential that the County is fast-tracking completion of ultra-modern abattoir that will enhance beef production and other crucial value additions such as tannery.

To boost food security and attain a post relief- food in Isiolo, the government will soon put in place a robust program to revitalize agricultural sector. All part of the County will soon benefit from large mechanization and mobilization of farmlands.

The government is also in the process developing policies that will create exclusive disease free zones, and establishment of modern livestock markets capable of sustaining seamless supply of livestock for beef production both for local and international markets. Plans are also underway to build capacity of producers, traders and processors to enhance concretised value chains. Our partners have shown incredible willingness to support government and communities.

## 7. HEALTH SECTOR

Improving health services is at the top of our development agenda in the coming years considering many years of deplorable situations across the county. A strategic plan for the county will be launched soon as a blueprint for a radical overhaul of the sector. Already management and leadership changes have been effected. Small quick wins have started rolling under new management. New equipment's with support of our partners have been acquired to improve surgical and surgery units. Soon Renal Centre, ICU, and Palliative Care will be established at Isiolo Referral County Hospital. Fencing of the hospital will soon start in earnest. Improvement of Casualty and Emergency section will be commenced through provision of basic facilities. Triage and customer friendly reception will be constructed. To monitor services to the patients Close Circuit TV will be installed. Better and clean environment is apparent in this new arrangement.

## 8. TOURISM AND TRADE

Tourism has also played a critical role in sustaining sustainable revenue base of the County. Unfortunately uncertain security situations accompanied by negative advisory from clients' countries have hampered growth of the sector to the disadvantage of Isiolo people. With increased improvement of security around our parks and hotels potential for exponential expansion in the sector is optimistic. The County Government immediately improved all infrastructures in and around our game parks. Rehabilitation of Buffalo Spring airstrip was completed with aim of serving Isiolo and Samburu destinations. Most roads leading to the hotels have been graded and others have been procured for improvement. Marketing of our destinations have commenced through production of documentaries that was aired in the mainstream media houses which is expected to contribute and brand the County positively and portray the image of our pristine and rich flora and fauna. Our website which was just launched is teeming with unprecedented showcasing of unrivalled wealth of sceneries and seamless natural beauty of our wildlife and material culture. We have advanced plan to blend our riveting diverse cultures and ageless customs. To improve security, patrol vehicles fully mounted with modern communication gadgets have been purchased. Bridges and designer Billboards will soon connect our underserved circuit to the rest of the world. For the first time we shall exhibit in international tourism extravaganza,

## 9. EDUCATION AND SPORTS

We today mourn the declining education standard in our county. The schools performances are just but an indicator of our ailing education sector. We all know that the most singular inheritance we bestow to our children and their progeny is education. We can only allow this trend to continue to the detriment of successive generations. In order to address this intractable malaise in our education sector, the County Government has embarked on several programme to arrest the situation and improve the sector. A task force has already finalised its assessment and will avail report to be discussed in a countywide education forum, which will ultimately generate strategies for improvement and restoration of the sector. Meanwhile ECD programme are being undertaken to enhance this critical education category. Construction of classrooms and hiring of teachers will soon commence. To beef up access to education and supplement struggling parents, an amount of KSH 25 million budgetary support package has been unveiled. Each ward will receive a substantial part of this fund. In sports arena our clubs and individual events have been constantly supported by the County Government. Isiolo soccer teams have been performing outstandingly in regional tournaments and Isiolo Youth has been elevated to national league. The County will relentlessly support our sporting groups to excel in many competitive levels.

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This one-year in office is not easy. Many challenges and obstacles have been faced in many fronts. The public expectation in a new government could only be comparable to the feels at Independence. This for our county is understandable, as our communities have been grappling with many challenges affecting their livelihoods due to high level of poverty and lack of opportunities. However, the government could not, particularly at that nascent stage, provide solutions to all problems brought before it.

The first few months also saw inordinate delays of county funds from Nairobi which in turn created perception that county government is not working to serve interests of the people.

Our County has accumulated deficits in almost all sectors and sphere of development, including impassable roads, failed education, runaway unemployment, disempowerment of women and youth.

This one-year has provided us with some lessons upon which we draw and improve on our strategies and execution.

All generation confronts there own serious threats and receive their own favourable circumstance, the presence of challenges and their abundance is not an issue, its how we respond to them that matters.

Through our action or lack of it, we all have potentials to seriously worsen or profoundly to improve our county. We need to rebuild a sense of community and togetherness and increase understanding among diverse people.

Changing this county is everybody's business, all of us have to be part of this, everybody should have opportunity to succeed and learn and know what it feels like to win.

It is in this spirit of winning and achieving our goals that we call ourselves Isiolo. A new frontier for development.