

SPEECH BY THE MINISTER FOR FINANCE HON. NJERU GITHAE, EGH, DURING THE FAREWELL LUNCHEON IN HONOUR OF THE IMMEDIATE PAST COMMISSIONER GENERAL OF KRA AND SENIOR STAFF WHO RETIRED FROM THE AUTHORITY'S SERVICE RECENTLY, HELD AT THE CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL ON FRIDAY THE 13TH APRIL 2012

**Your Excellency the President of the Republic of Kenya and Commander in Chief of the Kenya Defence Forces, Hon. Mwai Kibaki.
Cabinet Ministers Present.**

PS, Ag. Head of Public Service and Secretary to the Cabinet Mr. Francis Kimemia

Permanent Secretary to the Treasury- Mr. Joseph Kinyua.

Mr. M.G. Waweru, immediate former KRA Commissioner General

Chairman and Members of the KRA Board of Directors

KRA Management and Staff

Invited guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. Allow me **Your Excellency** to take this first opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to you for accepting to grace this occasion as we honour some of our patriots who have served at the senior management of the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) in recent years. Your acceptance to join us is, indeed, a clear indication of the importance you attach to the role of the KRA in the development of our country.

2. **Your Excellency**, my main task today is very brief. It is to welcome Your Excellency to address us and grace this occasion. But before I do so allow me to make a few remarks.

3. **Your Excellency**, we are gathered here today to acknowledge some key persons who rendered exemplary service to KRA during the last ten years or so. These include Mr. Michael Gitau Waweru, the immediate former Commissioner General, who retired in March this year. He is also the longest serving Commissioner General since KRA was established.

4. The others are Mr. Mumo Matemu, former Commissioner of Support Services; Mr. Simeon ole Kirgotty, former Commissioner of Motor Vehicles; Mr. Fidelis Mulei, former Commissioner of Domestic Taxes; and Ms Wambui Namu, former Commissioner Customs Services.

5. **Your Excellency**, as you have always advised us, and especially during our tax payers day, no Nation can consider itself independent until it can fiscally sustain its development agenda by raising from the domestic market the required financial

resources. In this regard, KRA, which is responsible for collecting taxes for the Kenya Government, has come a long way over the last ten years or so. We have witnessed tremendous growth in revenues which has more than doubled over the period.

6. Our tax effort stands at 23 per cent of Gross Domestic Product, which is among the highest in the world. Indeed, largely because of raising substantial tax revenue, the Kenya Government has been able to finance around 93% of its expenditure programmes from the domestic resources. The authority has, therefore lived up to its motto of ***“Tulipe Ushuru Tujitegemee”***. We have also witnessed KRA transform and position itself as a leader in tax administration in the region.

“Against this background, the Committee has scheduled the tour for Wednesday, 28th March, 2012 from 10.30 a.m. The purpose of this letter is to request you to make necessary arrangements for the visit”.

7. ***Your Excellency***, the Authority has also shown leadership in tax administration at the global level. In addition ***to hosting tax administrators*** from African countries on study tours, KRA is now a model used by tax administrations worldwide for benchmarking. For example, I am reliably informed that just about a month ago, the Authority hosted a delegation from Bangladesh tax administration on a best practice study visit.

8. KRA is also a key member of the Inter American Center of Tax Administrations (CIAT), Commonwealth Association of Tax Administrators (CATA), African Tax Administration Forum and World Customs Organisation among other world tax bodies. KRA is not just a member of these organisations but an active participant in their deliberations.

9. The Authority also subscribes to globally recognised operational standards as testified by its ISO Certification. In this regard, it is worth noting that KRA was the first tax administration in the world to obtain ISO Certification for all its functions. The Authority is committed to continued improvement in line with requirements for ISO certification.

10. ***Your Excellency***, as you are aware, such a remarkable performance by KRA has been due to the reforms that have been undertaken over the years to enhance tax administration and tax compliance. But ***Your Excellency***, behind these reforms are people who have worked tirelessly to ensure that KRA lives up to its mission.

11. It is through their hard work, commitment, and dedication that we have witnessed such a remarkable performance and it is for this reason that we are here today to recognize their contribution to the development of this nation. ***Your Excellency***, I am aware that some of these individuals have gone out of their way to even risk their lives in pursuit of KRA’s mission. They therefore deserve to be recognized for their work and we are proud of them.

12. But as we recognize these individuals today, we must not forget that they are part of a large team of the KRA establishment including the Board, management, and staff who are equally geared to ensuring that the Authority measures up to international best practice in tax administration. In this regard, I would therefore like

to take this opportunity to commend the entire KRA establishment for their contribution to the development of our country.

13. **Your Excellency**, before I conclude, allow me a few minutes to say a few words about the outgoing Commissioner General, Mr. Waweru. You are leaving KRA with his head held high because he has left the Authority better than he found it. You have earned yourself a break. You deserve a change and as the saying goes, 'a change is good as a rest'.

14. This notwithstanding, you are still full of energy to make a difference in this country and we don't expect you to fade away from public life. Make yourself available to serve this great Nation in a different capacity. I am aware you have a passion for development of our youth. Be there for them; mentor them, inspire them, encourage them and hold their hands and lift them up, for they are the future of our Nation.

15. To Mr. Njiraini, Mr. Waweru has left huge shoes behind. The good news is that your feet are large enough to fit in them. You have great credentials in your own right and with the experience that you have gained over the last six years at the KRA, we are confident that you are well prepared to take the Authority to the highest level. Let me also say that we are there to support KRA in this regard.

16. Your Excellency, with those few remarks, it is now my humble duty to invite you to address this gathering.

Thank You.

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