



**MINISTRY OF ROADS AND TRANSPORT
STATE DEPARTMENT FOR ROADS**

REMARKS BY THE PRINCIPAL SECRETARY ROADS, ENG. JOSEPH MBUGUA, CBS. DURING THE VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT WITH THE HEAD OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND THE STATE DEPARTMENTS FOR ROADS AND TRANSPORT ON 16TH APRIL, 2026.

**The Chief of Staff and Head of Public Service,
Principal Secretary, Transport
Board Chairs and Board Members,
Director Generals and CEOs,
Chief Engineers and Heads of Departments,
Senior Officials from State Departments for Roads and Transport,
Staff of the Ministry of Roads and Transport,**

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Good morning.

It is a great honour to welcome you to this important consultative engagement between the Chief of Staff and Head of Public Service and the State Department for Roads. We are sincerely grateful for this opportunity, which reflects the Government's continued commitment to strengthening coordination, fostering accountability, and enhancing performance across the Roads Sub-Sector and its agencies.

This virtual engagement, the first of its kind, brings together management and staff from across the entire Roads Sub-Sector on a single platform. It provides a valuable forum for open dialogue, alignment of priorities, and renewal of our collective commitment in delivering efficient, high-quality, and citizen-centred infrastructure services.

The State Department for Roads derives its mandate from Executive Order No. 1 of 2025. In executing this mandate, the Department remains central to national development through policy formulation, development, construction and

maintenance of the national road network, materials testing, protection of road reserves, administration of the Mechanical and Transport Fund, and enforcement of axle load control. These functions continue to play a critical role in enabling mobility, facilitating trade, and supporting Kenya's socio-economic transformation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Over the last three years, the Roads Sub-Sector has continued to record steady progress in the implementation of its mandate, even in the face of competing fiscal demands and operational challenges. We have expanded and upgraded to bitumen standards approximately 2,700 km of road network significantly improving connectivity across the country. This has translated into enhanced access to markets, schools, health facilities, and economic opportunities, particularly in underserved regions.

In the recent past, several road projects have been **successfully completed and commissioned across the country**, marking an important milestone in improving mobility and unlocking economic potential. These include key urban link roads that have eased congestion in major towns, rural access roads that have opened up agricultural zones, and strategic corridors that have strengthened inter-county and regional connectivity. Collectively, these completed projects reflect tangible progress in delivering infrastructure that directly impacts the daily lives of citizens.

We have also made notable progress on flagship corridors, including the transformative Rironi-Mau Summit section of the A8 corridor, spanning approximately 175 kilometres on the Northern Corridor, which continues to advance within a structured implementation framework aimed at timely delivery and high-quality standards. In addition, the Horn of Africa Gateway Development Project, covering approximately 750 kilometres along the Isiolo-Wajir-Mandera corridor, is steadily progressing and is set to open up Northern Kenya, strengthen regional connectivity to the Horn of Africa, and unlock significant trade, investment, and socio-economic opportunities for the country and the wider region.

In addition, the development of integrated economic corridors, incorporating over one hundred and five socio-economic infrastructure facilities, has reinforced a more

holistic approach to infrastructure planning, one that connects regions while simultaneously stimulating investment, trade, and inclusive growth.

Further, the Department is implementing an expanded programme targeting approximately 28,000 kilometres of roads to bitumen standards and dual 2,500km in the next 10 years. This is anchored on last-mile connectivity to ensure that infrastructure investments are felt at the community level, particularly in rural and peri-urban areas.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Alongside network expansion, we have strengthened project planning, sequencing, and supervision to ensure improved delivery efficiency and strict adherence to technical standards. This has enhanced value for money and reduced inefficiencies in project execution. Routine and periodic maintenance programmes continue to be implemented to preserve existing assets and reduce lifecycle costs.

The sector has also embraced digital transformation as a key enabler of efficiency and accountability. The deployment of Intelligent Transport Systems has improved traffic management and operational monitoring, while the digitization of weighbridge operations has significantly strengthened axle load control, improved compliance, and safeguarded road infrastructure.

Similarly, strengthening materials testing and research through digital systems has improved accuracy, consistency, and traceability, ensuring higher quality and durability of road infrastructure investments.

Climate resilience has also been mainstreamed into planning and design, with increased emphasis on drainage systems, durable materials, and environmental safeguards to address the growing impact of extreme weather conditions.

In addition, we have continued to strengthen institutional capacity across the sector through targeted training and skills development initiatives. The Kenya Institute of Highways and Building Technology (KIHBT) has played a pivotal role in this regard, delivering specialized training programmes in highway engineering, construction technology, and plant operations. These efforts have significantly enhanced the technical competencies of our workforce and contributed to improved efficiency, quality, and sustainability in the delivery of road infrastructure projects.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A major milestone in sustaining sector performance has been the Government's intervention to address pending bills through structured mechanisms, including securitization. In this regard, when the current administration came into office, pending bills in the roads sector stood at close to KShs 180 billion. Through deliberate fiscal reforms and prioritization of payments, we have now cleared all outstanding obligations to contractors. This has significantly improved liquidity in the construction sector, restored contractor confidence, and ensured that road projects which had stalled are firmly back on track, with uninterrupted implementation nationwide.

We are also advancing long-term financing reforms through the Infrastructure Fund and Public-Private Partnerships, which are designed to provide predictable and sustainable funding streams for infrastructure development.

At the same time, we have strengthened governance systems across the sector through enhanced procurement compliance, more robust accountability frameworks, and stricter oversight in the management of public resources. This has been further reinforced by the strengthening of our legal and regulatory framework, including the development of key policy instruments such as the National Tolling Policy, amendments to the Roads Act and the Kenya Roads Board Act, as well as the refinement and issuance of relevant statutory instruments to support effective implementation and ensure greater transparency, efficiency, and sustainability in the sector.

Coordination among implementing agencies, including: Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA), Kenya Rural Roads Authority (KeRRA), Kenya Urban Roads Authority (KURA), Kenya Roads Board (KRB), Kenya Engineering Technology Registration Board (KETRB), and Engineers Board of Kenya (EBK), and county governments has significantly improved, leading to better planning coherence and more efficient delivery of road projects.

In support of this, the establishment of the **Roads Sub-Sector Multi-Agency Communication Committee** has greatly enhanced structured communication across the sector. This platform has improved information sharing, strengthened

coordination of messaging, and ensured timely dissemination of updates on ongoing and completed road projects. As a result, public awareness has improved, and transparency in project implementation has been significantly strengthened.

Distinguished Colleagues,

We recognize that the achievements of this sector are anchored on the dedication, professionalism, and commitment of our staff. In this regard, we have placed strong emphasis on strengthening staff welfare, enhancing motivation, and promoting institutional stability across the sector.

We have continued to improve staff progression systems to address longstanding concerns of career stagnation. This includes the strengthening of performance-based advancement frameworks, the acceleration of promotions within established career guidelines, and the enhancement of transparency, fairness, and meritocracy in human resource management processes.

In addition, we have expanded targeted capacity-building programmes and continuous professional development initiatives to equip staff with the requisite competencies to respond effectively to the demands of a rapidly evolving infrastructure environment.

We are equally undertaking deliberate interventions to improve working conditions and strengthen institutional engagement mechanisms, ensuring that staff remain motivated, valued, and adequately supported in the execution of their responsibilities. These reforms are aimed at restoring morale, enhancing productivity, and building a more agile, responsive, and results-oriented public service.

Further, we have developed and finalized key human resource instruments for the State Department, including structured career progression guidelines for artisans, technicians, technologists, and engineers, thereby providing clear, predictable, and equitable career pathways across all technical cadres.

Despite these gains, the sector continues to face several challenges, including budgetary constraints, rising construction costs, contractor performance variability, climate-related risks, and infrastructure vandalism.

We are addressing these challenges through strengthened governance, improved oversight mechanisms, enhanced digital systems, and continuous institutional reforms aimed at improving efficiency and accountability.

The Chief of Staff and Head of Public Service,

To sustain and accelerate these gains, we seek continued support in mobilizing sustainable financing, strengthening inter-agency collaboration, enhancing governance and oversight, and deepening digital transformation across the sector.

In conclusion, I reaffirm the unwavering commitment of the State Department for Roads to delivering safe, reliable, and resilient infrastructure that supports national development and improves the quality of life of all Kenyans. We remain guided by the principles of efficiency, accountability, and service excellence.

We look forward to a fruitful engagement and continued collaboration as we advance Kenya's road network and broader development agenda.

Thank you and May God Bless Kenya.