PRESS RELEASE

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DESPATCH FROM CABINET

HIS EXCELLENCY President William Ruto, C.G.H., has today chaired the inaugural meeting of his reconstituted Cabinet. The meeting was preceded by a Cabinet induction programme designed to establish the framework for each portfolio's execution of **a reimagined and catalyzed agenda** as part of the Administration's over-arching plan espoused as the **Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA).**

CABINET CONSIDERED a range of policy proposals aimed at supporting the **rollout of various State programmes** and pioneering initiatives. Additionally, the meeting received an appraisal of the progress being made in the implementation of the administration's key programmes as part of the periodic reporting obligations.

AS PART of the **Broad-based Administration's commitment** to **advancing accountability and transparency** in the management of public affairs as a **strategy to combat corruption**, Cabinet assessed the progress made under a series of initiatives aimed at **strengthening governance and ensuring the prudent use of public resources**. These measures, as proclaimed by His Excellency the President during the swearing-in ceremony of the reconstituted Cabinet include:

I. Implementation of **surcharges against any accounting officer or public official whose actions or omissions lead to loss of public resources**, in accordance with Articles 226(5), 201(d), and 232(b) of the Constitution;

II. Implementation of a **Unified Personnel Identification system** to eradicate *'ghost worker'* payroll fraud across all levels of Government, including constitutional commissions;

III. Establishment of a legal and institutional framework **for mandatory and continuous vetting of all public officers**, centralizing wealth declarations under a single office across the Government;

IV. Timeous investigation and prosecution of corruption and economic crimes, amending relevant statutes such as the **Evidence Act and the Criminal Procedure Code** to ensure that **corruption cases are concluded within six months;**

V. Review of and amendment to the **Witness Protection Act** to provide **appropriate incentives and safeguards for whistleblowers**;

VI. Transition to a **zero-based budgeting system** starting from FY 2025/26;

VII. Review of the **VAT refund process to enhance** openness, transparency, and accountability.

TO INSTITUTIONALIZE the governance reforms annotated above, Cabinet sanctioned the **conclusion of the ongoing stakeholder consultations**, ensuring that **public participation remains at the heart of the process.** The outcome of this consultative process will be considered by Cabinet at the next meeting as the **Omnibus Bill on Governance.**

TO ACCELERATE the implementation of the **Universal Health Coverage (UHC)** pillar of the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), Cabinet ratified the transition from the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) to the **Social Health Authority (SHA),** effective **1st October, 2024.**

AS KENYA transitions into the league of nations with universal health coverage, the scope of existing programmes such as **Edu Afya** will be **broadened to encompass all school-going children**, extending beyond its current focus on secondary school students. In tandem, the acclaimed

Linda Mama Programme will be expanded to not only cover prenatal care but also provide comprehensive postnatal care, ensuring a holistic approach to maternal and child health. This expansion seeks to **safeguard the well-being of both mother and child throughout the entire continuum of care**. In that regard, Cabinet urged all Kenyans to register under **the new scheme through *147# and www.sha.go.ke.**

THE NATION'S top policy-making organ was also apprised of the progress made in advancing financial inclusion through the administration's flagship initiative, the **Financial Inclusion Fund**, commonly referred to as the "**Hustlers Fund**." Cabinet noted that, to date, the Fund has disbursed **Ksh. 57 billion** to Kenyans, with at least **2 million customers** being regular daily borrowers. Additionally, in keeping with the Administration's pledge to inculcate a culture of saving for posterity, the Fund has successfully mobilized **Ksh. 3.2 billion** in savings.

IN COMMEMORATION of the Fund's second anniversary, Cabinet directed the rollout of a **third product offering** specifically focused on the **Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) sector**. This new product will initially target the **2 million beneficiaries** who have demonstrated a strong credit history with the Fund. This groundbreaking initiative aims to create a pathway for banking the targeted beneficiaries, further **deepening financial inclusion within the SME sector.**

IN FURTHERANCE of the administration's commitment to **conserving the nation's heritage and splendour**, the meeting considered a raft of programmes and policies designed to accelerate **climate change adaptation** within **Kenya's terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.**

AS THE onset of the short rains approaches *(October-December),* Cabinet was briefed on preparations for **seedling distribution** under the **National Landscape and Ecosystem Restoration Strategy 2023–2032**, which aims to plant **15 billion trees**. Cabinet acknowledged with appreciation the growing partnership between the public and private sectors in advancing the tree-planting campaign. In that regard, and in an effort to further deepen the partnership from the grassroots Cabinet directed The

Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, and Forestry to establish a more robust framework for **Community-Based Forest Associations** to further empower local communities in forest conservation efforts.

IN LINE with the nation's advancing global leadership on climate change and adaptation, Cabinet considered and approved the establishment of the **Kenya Watershed Services Improvement Program (KEWASIP)**. This seminal programme seeks to preserve the nation's rich heritage through the restoration of degraded landscapes, while enhancing watershed services and building climate resilience across the country.

THIS PROGRAMME aligns with Kenya's commitments to global environmental goals, including the **Bonn Challenge**, which calls for the restoration of 350 million hectares of degraded and deforested landscapes by 2030, and the **United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)**, which requires each member state to formulate **Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN)** targets aimed at addressing the main causes of land degradation.

IN AFFIRMATION of Kenya's rich **biodiversity as one of the nation's most strategic assets and natural wealth**, positioning us as a conservation and tourism destination second to none, Cabinet was briefed on the **progress of the ongoing 2024-2025 national wildlife census.**

THIS CENSUS marks Kenya's second such effort and demonstrates our leadership in implementing **bold actions to conserve and promote our ecological wealth.** In addition, the state's interventions respond effectively to **threats facing botanical and zoological life and their habitats**, updating the annotated inventory of our wildlife resources, thereby acknowledging their significance as crucial national assets.

AS A testament to our commitment to enhancing the nation's **Meetings, Conventions, and Exhibits (MICE) tourism**, Cabinet approved the hosting of **The Third African Forum on Cybercrime in November 2024.** Further, Cabinet approved the calendar of activities to

mark the United Nations World Tourism Day/Week in September 2024. The week-long event, running from 22nd September to 29th, will **include free entry to all parks on 28th September, 2024.**

IN CONCLUDING the day's session, Cabinet expressed satisfaction with the **enhanced surveillance protocols at all national entry points**, designed to **curb the spread of MPOX disease across the country**. These measures build on the national experience from the COVID-19 pandemic and underscore the **commitment to strengthening public health safety through vigilant monitoring and control of potential outbreaks**.

CABINET OFFICE
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
Tuesday, 17th September, 2024