

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF MURANG'A

THIRD ASSEMBLY

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

SPEECH BY THE HON. SPEAKER UPON ASSUMPTION OF OFFICE

SEPTEMBER 20, 2022

Thank you Hon. Members you may be seated

Hon. Members of the 3rd County Assembly;

The Clerk of this County Assembly;

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen;

First, I thank God the Almighty, to whom not even the greatest rivers are big enough for Him to wash His hands in, and in whose eyes we are like ants, for anointing and granting me this favor. Ultimately, I owe this position to his continuous grace and blessings!

Honorable Members,

I am honored and greatly privileged by your resolution to nominate and elect me to be the Speaker of the 3rd County Assembly of Murang'a. With utmost humility, I hereby submit to the will of this Honorable House. Most certainly, I am extremely humbled by the conviction and trust you have reposed in me. I hasten

to acknowledge, that I, fully comprehend the enormous responsibilities that our Standing Orders delegate to the Office of the Speaker. I also acknowledge that, as elected and nominated representatives of the people, not only are we products but also custodians of the values enshrined in our Constitution.

To my worthy opponents, thank you for upholding a high degree of democracy. I have to thank the Clerk of this Assembly, Mr. Kuria Thuita, for professionally guiding this House during the on-going transition period. His priceless and unconditional counsel will further be valued in future. There is no doubt, whatsoever, that a lot of effort has been put towards making this historic day a success. Unquestionably, we cannot ignore the reflection of the hard work put in by all the stakeholders, especially the Members of Staff of this County Assembly.

Allow me to also recognize and applaud the First and Second Assemblies under the leadership of the First Speaker of this House, Honorable Nduati Kariuki, for their respective roles in the past ten years of representation, oversight, and legislation amidst very difficult circumstances, including but not limited to the teething challenges of devolution. We wish the former MCAs and the former Speaker well in their future endeavors.

Hon. Members,

The past few months have witnessed a highly competitive electioneering period in our nation. Campaigning is not a walk in the park; marketing a vision is costly and exhaustive. Consequently, allow me to convey my sincere best wishes to the entire membership of this House for your successful election or nomination. On that election, the people of Murang'a entrusted you, Honorable MCAs, to be their representatives in this County Assembly for the next five years.

Congratulations for winning your seats. Looking at your faces, and having, there before, listened to the manifesto of His Excellency the Governor of this County, Honorable Dr. Irungu Kang'ata, I, am deeply optimistic that a great destiny beckons for the origin of Gikuyu and Mumbi.

Allow me to also recognize Members of the First and Second Assemblies who clinched back their seats. For some, it will be their second term while it shall be a third term for others. We have Honorable Murigi, Honorable Gachui, Honorable Caroline, Honorable Karina, Honorable Kibe, Honorable Morris, Honorable Elizabeth, Honorable Ndunda, Honorable Karanja and Honorable Muthoni. I direct these experienced ones to mentor the up-coming MCAs.

I also recognize two Honorable Members who were in the First Assembly and are now representing their people in the Parliament of Kenya. These are Hon. Mary Waithera (Wamaua) and Honorable Peter Kihungi. These two legislators are a clear illustration that the people of Murang'a recognize hard work and reward merit. Hon. Kihungi's leadership skills and humility earned him the First Leader of the Majority Party in this County. On the other hand, Hon. Wamaua is a true reflection of the audacious women who are successful in the high strata of the male dominated political arena. This County Assembly prides in having created a platform that shaped the excellent debating competences, strong oversight and legislative skills of the two legislators. I hope that they will have a session with our Members, in due course.

Honorable Members;

This is a House of Rules and Procedure. I need to caution the new entrants that the highly procedural nature of County Assemblies calls for an equally high level of discipline and commitment to the rules and procedures. Nevertheless, for us all, it is a unique opportunity to serve our dear County.

In exercise of the powers conferred by Article 124 of the Constitution of the Republic of Kenya, and Section 14 of the County Governments Act No 17 of 2012, the First Assembly of Murang'a County, by resolution, adopted the Standing Orders of this Assembly. I encourage all of us to internalize the Standing Orders and make a personal commitment to always abide by them. Prepare and present issues of interest as guided by those rules. Apply the debating time well; your brilliant visibility will affect your re-election. I look forward to, not a vociferous House; but a serene, composed and a House of robust and healthy debates.

Honorable Members;

I will meet with various leadership of Murang'a and seek support of the experienced lawmakers to help you deliver. I mandate the Office of the Clerk, to come up with a schedule of trainings to empower my honorable MCAs. Scholars opine that a comprehensive mentoring and induction process is vital for improved performance. I second that serious learning will therefore have to be undertaken to sharpen your debating competencies in order to function optimally.

Every one of you is in this Honorable House as provided for by Article 177 of the Constitution of Kenya. All of you, irrespective of gender, religion, party affiliation, age or tribe, must be guided by the mandate given to the new government; to establish a vibrant society anchored on the principles of fairness and equality of opportunities. As the legislative arm of this County Government, we will be expected to also offer oversight to the County Executive. Therefore, it is our duty to conduct ourselves with decorum, consistently observe the due processes and uphold the rule of law, legality and the culture of constitutionalism.

I look forward to maximizing the opportunities of every Honorable Member to contribute. I must have been placed on this platform so that every MCA can catch my eye. I, therefore, pledge to be impartial and seek your support for every ruling that the Chair will make, as provided for by the Standing Orders of this House.

Going forward, I believe that, together with the County Assemblies Forum (CAF), the Council of Governor's (COG), and the Societies of Clerks at The Table (SOCATT), we will unite in seeking the needed assistance for MCAs to, especially, improve their working conditions and welfare. It is very important to improve the welfare of MCAs; we should seriously better the lot of our legislators. In addition, we will, with the guidance of the Clerk of this County Assembly, who is also the Secretary to the County Assembly Service Board, come up with more strategies of motivating our staff and improving on their welfare.

Honorable Members

Of late, there has been debate on the role of Members of Parliament and the Members of County Assembly. A question worth asking is: what do the people expect from the MCAs? There is growing evidence that, public opinion is divided as to the role of MCAs in Kenya. A significant majority of Kenyans are of the view that MCAs should undertake development projects within their Wards. To others, MCAs exist to pay school fees, give funeral donations, - I am sure we have seen all these, and attend weddings and other social events. Of concern is that debating, passing legislations and holding the County Executive Arm of Government to account rank low in the public perception of the role of MCAs. This accounts for the high attrition rate of MCAs across the Country. To counter this, I welcome the media to help in documenting and airing issues debated on the Floor of this House and in the Committees to create awareness, especially of the agendas before the House at any given sitting. On that note, Hon. Members, and as you assemble here today, it is important to have a discourse on the re-establishment of the County Assembly with a sense of history.

The First Assembly existed after promulgation of the new Constitution of Kenya, 2010, and inception of devolution. There are 47 Counties in Kenya; hence we have 47 County Assemblies. Each County Government has two Arms of governance; the Executive arm that is responsible for implementation of projects and the legislative arm to which you belong. The independence of the County Assemblies was conceived with the intent to accomplish the following roles; oversight, representation, legislation and budget making. That is your core mandate as provided for by the Constitution of Kenya. Under Article 185 of the Constitution, the legislative authority of a County is vested in and exercised by its County Assembly.

In addition, a County Assembly, while respecting the principle of separation of powers, exercises oversight for the County Executive Committee and any other Executive organ. I hasten to urge you to exercise high levels of integrity as you play your oversight role. Further, I look forward to a House that will enact laws that will stand the test of time. Undoubtedly, promotion of good governance will require an Assembly that will effectively perform the three cardinal functions of representation, oversight regarding the executive, and law making. As for budget making process, your ability to oversight public expenditure, within the Regulations of the Public Finance Management Act (PFM), will be good service to our people.

Honorable Members,

Allow me to conclude by telling you a short story as narrated by our fore fathers. There was once a big meeting in the animal kingdom to address the problem of drought. Speaker after speaker rose to give their views on how the problem could be solved. By the time the last speaker, the wise elephant, took to the podium, the animals were extremely tired, they could hardly remember what the first speaker had said. Some like the proverbial hyena had begun to forget what the meeting was all about. Others like the cunning hare, were plotting how to dupe the gullible tortoise on their way from the meeting. Clearly, they just wanted to go home. But their wise King, the elephant, pleaded with them saying, 'Ladies and gentlemen, lend me your ears. If you gazed skywards, you would see that the clouds are gathering. If you sniffed the air, you would sense the unmistakable smell of an approaching torrent. And if only you could relax and

allow your skin to perspire, you would be calmed by the cool humidity that precedes a much longed for downpour.'

My able legislators, your attitude towards your roles will reflect your end results. Sometimes, all we need to do is relax and reflect on the reality. If you have listened keenly to your people, if you have read it in their faces, you have no option but deliver. While devolution is taking Kenya places, the fruits of the devolved system of governance are yet to be leaped by all the people of Murang'a. In that regard, through your respective Sectoral Committees, I welcome all the Members to act proactively, responsively and with appropriate capacity on all the devolved functions, namely, issues relating to health, ECDE and polytechnic education, agriculture, roads, garbage collection, tourism, revenue collection, cooperatives, forestry, trade, climate change among others. Let this Third Assembly resolve to enact laws in those sectors to transform the lives of our people. Our commitment and attendance to the Committees will inform our debates in the Plenary. It is bestowed on us to conduct ourselves with integrity, decorum, consistently observe the due processes and uphold the rule of law.

My friends, as I said earlier, the culture of constitutionalism should guide every resolution you make. We are reminded by philosophers that the legislature is the most important institution of governance in a democratic state as it mediates those governing and those being governed. Indeed, political power is found in the State with its constitution which is supreme over all the other laws.

I salute you honorable MCAs. God bless you. God bless the County of Murang'a.

NOTIFICATION OF OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE COUNTY ASSEMBLY

Hon. Members, Standing Order No. 22 on Governors address on opening of a new County Assembly provides that

**The Governor shall address the opening of each newly elected
Assembly**

In view of the above provision of the Standing Orders, I wish to notify this Assembled Assembly, that the Special sitting on the Official opening of the Third Assembly shall be held on Tuesday September 27, 2022 at 9.30 a.m.

Hon. Members, I further wish to communicate that with effect from tomorrow Wednesday September 21, 2022, the Assembly shall commence orientation and induction of members at venues to be communicated in due course.

There being no other business today, this House now stands adjourned until Tuesday September 27, 2022 at 9.30 a.m.

Thank you