



**SPEECH BY DR. ANDREW MWIHIA KARANJA, PhD CABINET SECRETARY,
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT DURING
THE SECOND CONTINENTAL CONFERENCE BY THE WORLD
ORGANIZATION FOR ANIMAL HEALTH AIMED AT CREATING A MORE
RESILIENT VETERINARY WORKFORCE ON TUESDAY 26TH NOVEMBER
2024 AT RADISON BLUE HOTEL, NAIROBI**

- **President of the WOAHA Regional Commission for Africa**
- **Regional Representative of the WOAHA Regional Representation for Africa (RR/AF)**
- **Director General of the World Organisation for Animal Health, represented by the ag. Deputy DG**
- **Director of the African Union Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR)**
- **Chief Executive Officer of the Global Alliance for Livestock Veterinary Medicines (GALVmed)**
- **Permanent Secretary for Gender and Affirmative Action, Ministry of Gender, Culture, Arts and Heritage, Kenya**
- **Distinguished guests,**

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am delighted to join you here today to preside over this important Second Continental Meeting convened by the World Organization for Animal Health to focus on creating a more resilient veterinary workforce 2024 and beyond. I recognize WOAHA for choosing to host this event in Kenya after South Africa. I invite all the international participants to sample the many interesting attractions in the country after the Conference. At the outset we wish to associate with the conference objectives that include : Highlighting the relevance and timeliness of investing in veterinary workforces in order to improve animal and human health, sharing challenges and good practices around veterinary workforce development and opportunities for regional

harmonisation amongst countries and sub-regions in Africa; sharing new knowledge, tools and opportunities amongst Members, partners and donors; and exploring issues relevant for a work-ready and future-ready workforce .

Ladies and Gentlemen

The government of Kenya has ensured adequate numbers of skilled and motivated veterinary workforce are available to offer veterinary services by training over 100 veterinary surgeons and over 800 veterinary paraprofessionals annually who are adequately equipped and ready to work in any part of the country. The WOAHA has built capacity of several veterinary professionals over time contributing to improvement of veterinary workforce. Key challenges faced by the veterinary professionals include the traditional veterinary training against a changing practice landscape including an

economy that's not growing fast enough to uptake the required services. I call upon all stakeholders to support the development of Kenya's veterinary workforce planning and development through investment in the animal resources and institutional capacity development while supporting the redistribution of the available veterinary services to the Arid and Semi Arid Lands where they are the most needed. The government fully supports the integrating of private animal health services providers in official veterinary work where registered veterinary surgeons and veterinary paraprofessionals under the law can offer public good services to the public on behalf of national or county governments.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Agricultural transformation is critical to growing the economy, reducing the cost of food, alleviating poverty and therefore delivering 100% food and nutrition security, supporting industrialization and promoting exports. Millions of citizens depend on agriculture for income and food security, and the country's economic growth therefore depends on enabling these people to achieve food security and contribute more fully to the economy. Animal health and production service providers are critical in food security and have sustained increased livestock production and productivity, food safety and security for income generation in terms of livestock products and by-products from the local and export markets, improved animal health care, disease control and improved animal husbandry leading to poverty alleviation and food security in the Nation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Ministry is committed to implementing the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), Medium Term Plan IV of the Vision 2030 through the policy frameworks such as the Agricultural Policy; the Agriculture Sector Transformation and Growth Strategy (ASTGS); Livestock Policy; Veterinary Policy among others. Transforming the Agriculture Sector will provide the tools to combat price volatility, improving the environment for private investment, and developing more strategic approaches to lower the country's dependence on food imports. Food security requires a vibrant,

commercial and modern Agricultural Sector that sustainably supports Kenya's economic development, national priorities, and commitments to the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods and the Livestock Development Strategy for Africa . The policy measures are informed by the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Ladies and Gentlemen,

For Kenya to realise the aspirations of a middle income country, there is need for structural transformation of the Livestock Sector to make it a major purveyor of food security, poverty reduction, economic growth and creation of employment. Sector transformation requires a clear road map that provides

the national and county governments, development partners and private sector with a wide range of choices of evidence-based justified investment opportunities.

I invite you to continue supporting the sector reform agenda within the animal resources sector where we have modernised veterinary laws and merged them into three thus the Animal Health Bill; Veterinary Public Health Bill; Animal Protection and Welfare Bill. We have also published a Livestock Bill to regulate commodity value chains. To inform targeted investments in the Livestock Sector value chains, we are developing the Livestock Masterplan and rollout to maximize on the anticipated benefits to the Sector including support to

mitigating climate change effects that have negatively impacted the Livestock Sector.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Three key flagship programs for this government are in leather and leather products value chain development aimed at boosting productivity along the leather value chain; the Dairy Value Chain Development targeting to double animal productivity and production of surplus milk for value addition and exports; and supplying sufficient red meat for local and international markets. Enabling interventions include control of livestock diseases; improvement of meat processing facilities to enhance value of livestock for the pastoral communities; establishing honey processing plants; livestock genetic improvement; and large-scale commercialization of livestock feeds production

and conservation aimed at improving availability and affordability of livestock feeds and averting feed shortages during drought.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you are aware, growth in demand in animal source proteins is driven by some of Africa's fastest growing economies in the past decade, increasing population and the emergence of an urban centric middle class spurring rapid growth in the consumption. Already the Livestock Sector generates 20 to 80% of the added value in several African countries and is the fastest growing sector in some African states. With this trend of more urbanized lifestyles, the share of livestock as a proportion of agricultural GDP in Africa will increase.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Animal resource categories in Kenya include livestock, wildlife, farmed wildlife, companion and aquatic animal species and bees. Addressing animal health production & welfare, food safety and trade among other concerns in livestock, wildlife, aquatic and companion animals are important interventions. Animal health services are integral to the prevention, control and eradication of animal diseases that occasion huge economic losses and adversely impact livelihoods. Trade in animals and animal products require conformity to prescribed veterinary related standards and application of sanitary measures that follow a farm to fork continuum. Provision of animal welfare is central to physical and psychological wellbeing of animals, animal

health and production and manifests in better performance, improved market access, safe and mutually beneficial companionship.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As I conclude, let me appreciate the strong collaboration between WOAAH and the Ministry where we accommodate the Regional Office that supports implementation of the National and Regional Development Agenda. I invite WOAAH to consider seriously supporting the rest of the continent to adopt Kenya's institutional governance of veterinary medicine and stewardship regulatory regime model as an effective antimicrobial resistance mitigation measure. It's now my pleasure to declare this workshop officially open. Thank you and God bless you.