

SPEECH READ BY HON. DR. NOAH M. WEKESA, EGH, MP, MINISTER FOR FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE DURING THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTHERN SUDAN WILDLIFE OFFICERS COURSE ON 22nd DECEMBER 2009 AT THE KENYA WILDLIFE SERVICE TRAINING INSTITUTE, NAIVASHA AT 11.45AM.

Representative of the Minister of Tourism & Wildlife of Southern Sudan

Director KESSULO- Amb. Col (Ret) Elijah M. Matibo

Representative of Ministry of State for Public Service

Director KWS Dr Julius Kipn'getich

Senior Government Officers

Principal KWSTI

Trainee Officers from Southern Sudan

Staff Members of Kenya Wildlife Service Training Institute

Ladies and Gentlemen

First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to the organizers of this course for inviting me to join you during this auspicious occasion which is a milestone for both the Government of Kenya and the Government of Southern Sudan. The Government of Kenya takes pride in having had a chance to support the Government of Southern Sudan in their efforts to rebuild their country in the post-war period. The Government of Southern Sudan on the other hand, has had the privilege of rewarding its citizens by selecting them to be part of the team to be trained away from home and in the process build capacity in Wildlife Conservation and Management for Sudan's posterity besides boosting their morale after many years of struggle for peace.

I wish to record my appreciation for the choice to host the training at Naivasha which as most of you are aware was the place where the Sudan Peace was negotiated. I also wish to mention that Kenya Wildlife Service Training Institute is gaining reputation as a regional training centre on Biodiversity conservation including Wetlands.

Ladies and Gentlemen, This training initiative I understand is under the auspices of the Kenya/Southern Sudan Liaison Office and Ministry of State for Public Service who have

been charged with the responsibility of coordinating the Government of Kenya support to Southern Sudan and I wish to thank the two Government Offices for the efforts they have put to ensure that this training takes place before end of 2009.

I am further informed that the purpose of this training was crucial towards the development of competent officers who would return to Sudan and enhance the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife Conservation. The officers also have a big responsibility of starting the process of building wildlife systems for their Directorate. It is my hope that this will be a dynamic means of ensuring local ownership of the future management of Natural resources in Southern Sudan..

Ladies and Gentlemen, My Ministry through the KWS will continue to support additional programmes and offer advice and training opportunities to Officers from Southern Sudan as the need arises.

It is interesting to note that this training had 16 trainees selected from a pool of other qualified officers across the 10 States of Southern Sudan. Although the trainees were from Sudan, the facilitators/trainers are from following Institutions:-

National Museums of Kenya,
Kenya Utalii College,
Rift Valley Institute of Science and Technology,
University of Nairobi,
Kenya Wildlife Service.

This national representation further amplifies the diverse range of areas that exist in this country.

I am sure the diversity of trainers must have enriched the training profiles and the knowledge you have received should assist you to successfully manage the vast natural resources in Southern Sudan. I am therefore convinced that what you have gained in this course will enable you improve the quality of life of the communities who are dependent on the resources. Your cumulative wealth of knowledge and experience should be applied expeditiously to set a clear direction on this matter. Kenya, like several other sub-Saharan African countries, has been undergoing very serious drought

conditions which have resulted in destruction and death among people and livestock. This phenomenon underscores the importance of sustainable wildlife and water resources management in the affected areas, which is often undermined by inadequate capacity and technical knowhow among the stakeholders.

The 3 months training has been intensive and extensive both in class and in the field and often-involved extra hours of inputs from you, and resource persons. I am sure the planners and the Institute takes a lot of pride in this class of Southern Sudan Wildlife Officers as your zeal to learn was encouraging.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the success of this course will only be fully realized if you who were trained put in practice what you have learnt, transmitting the same to your colleagues, associates and stakeholders. Practical demonstration of the knowledge you have gained should be applied so that it is not lost.

May I take this opportunity to thank the institutions you represent for allowing you to attend this course. I am sure your assignments were handled by your colleagues during this period. I also thank all the lecturers from the various institutions that assisted by training you and most of all the principal of this college and his staff for taking good care of you during your stay in this country.

I also thank the Director Kenya Wildlife Service and his team in Nairobi for the support they have continued to offer to this institute.

With these remarks, **Ladies and Gentlemen**, our dear guests and participants, I take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and prosperous 2010. I also wish you a safe journey as you travel back to your homes I am sure you have been able to tour most of exciting parks and game reserves. It is now my pleasure to declare this training course officially closed.

Thank you

Hon. Dr. Noah M. Wekesa, EGH. MP