

<p>MINISITERI Y'ABAKOZI BA LETA N'UMURIMO</p>	<p>REPUBLIKA Y'U RWANDA</p>  <p>REPUBLIC OF RWANDA</p>	<p>MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND LABOR</p>
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**Opening Remarks by Hon. RWANYINDO KAYIRANGWA
Fanfan, Minister of Public Service and Labour at the
Signing Ceremony and Launch the Decent Work Country
Programme and the Project for the Promotion of Decent
Work in Rwanda's Informal Economy**

Kigali Marriott Hotel, Febuary 22nd, 2018

- **Mr. Chibebe Wellington, Country Director for the ILO Office for the United Republic of Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda;**
- **Head of Development Cooperation, Swedish Embassy in Kigali-Rwanda;**
- **CEO of Rwanda Private Sector Federation;**
- **Secretary General of *Centrale de Syndicats des Travailleurs au Rwanda (CESTRAR)***
- **Distinguished Social Partners;**
- **Distinguished Guests;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen;**

1. Good Morning and Happy new Year especially for those we are seeing each other for the first time in 2018

2. I am pleased to be with you today as we launch the Decent Work Country Program (DWCP) for Rwanda and the Project for the Promotion of Decent Work in Rwanda's Informal Economy

3. At this occasion, I would like to commend the tripartite constituents for the successful

consultations and subsequent joint formulation of the Decent Work Country Program for Rwanda.

4. In a special way, I also want to express my deepest appreciation to the following:

- **First: The Government of Sweden here represented through the Swedish Embassy in Kigali. The Head of Development Cooperation is here with us. Thank you very much. Your special continuous support to the National Employment Programme (NEP) has contributed greatly to many successes registered in employment promotion in Rwanda for the last years;**

- **Second: The ILO for the long-lasting excellent relations with the Government of Rwanda through the Ministry of Public Service and Labour.**

5. Your support continues to help us achieve many of our shared aspirations in promoting labour rights and employment for sustainable socio-economic development of our population.

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7. It merits mentioning that Additionally, the Project for the Promotion of Decent Work in Rwanda's Informal Economy that we are launching today has been elaborated in partnership with ILO and with full funding from the Government of Sweden.

8. There is no doubt that the Five Year Decent Work Country Program and the Three Year Project both will contribute to our efforts aimed at promoting labour rights and employment in Rwanda, and help build sustainable livelihoods for many young women and men.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

9. The objectives of the Decent Work Country Programme are well aligned with our National Strategy for Transformation (NST 1) 2017–2024, Rwanda's Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy ; national development goals and the broader country Vision 2050.

- 10. The launch of the Decent Work Country Programme takes place at a time when unemployment in Rwanda calls for special attention and more efforts. .**
- 11. According to the results of labour force survey conducted in February 2017, the overall employment statistics are low with 54% of the workforce in employment of which 45.3% are female workers and 54.7% are male.**
- 12. The national unemployment rate is at 16.7 per cent, with female unemployment rate of 17.5 and male unemployment rate of 16.1. The unemployment is particularly high for our young people.**
- 13. In this context, the launch of the Decent Work Country Program is very timely. The Program includes strategies and priorities that create better quality employment opportunities through promoting employment for youth and women; extension of social protection for all; promoting tripartite social dialogue and promoting rights at work.**

14. Both the Decent Work Country Program and the Project for the Promotion of Decent Work in Rwanda's Informal Economy will build on the gains achieved through our joint relentless efforts of promoting decent work and advancing the tenets of social justice in work places.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

10. Our Seven Year National Strategy for Transformation (2017–2024) has a broad objective of creating 215,000 new decent jobs annually and 1.5 million by 2024 and improving the social well-being of the people of Rwanda.

11. The National Strategy for Transformation is anchored on the premise that decent work is central to people's well-being. It is in line with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets especially Pillar 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth

12. The benefits of decent work cannot therefore be emphasised enough.

13In addition to providing income, decent work in general paves way for broader social and economic advancement, strengthening individuals, their families and communities.

14. It is therefore very meaningful that our Decent Work Country Program is anchored on the four basic but important principles of: (i) promoting employment for youth and women; (ii) extending social protection; (iii) promoting tripartite social dialogue; and (iv) promoting rights at work.

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

16In the context of employment, this will include: (i) promotion of productive employment and decent

jobs; (ii) improving the application and implementation of international labour standards; and (iii) pursuing social protection programs that target the most vulnerable groups.

17. With regards to the relevant legislative framework, I would like to note that, in this year 2018 Rwanda has ratified additional 6 ILO conventions which include Tripartite Consultations Convention (No.144), Labour Administration Convention (No.150), Occupation safety and Health Convention (No. 155), Promotion of Collective Bargaining Convention (No. 154), Private Employment Agencies Convention (No. 181) and Promotional framework for Occupational safety and Health Convention, (No. 187) .

18. Currently, the law regulating labour in Rwanda is being reviewed in order to domesticate and integrate some of the international labour standards provisions into national labour laws and regulations.

There is therefore a conducive legal environment that has never ceased to grow and which will enable a smooth implementation of the Program and the Project Objectives.

19. I am confident that through our usual constructive dialogue and partnerships, the Decent Work Country

Program for Rwanda will deliver all of its expected outcome.

20I would like to reiterate the commitment of Government of Rwanda to partner with the tripartite constituents as we keep building together on our previous joint achievements, towards achieving more together. .

21. May I take this opportunity to also appeal to each and everyone of you here present to maintain your resource mobilisation efforts for the numerous projects outlined in the document so that the desired impact is achieved.

22. Let us now, all of us together, leaving no one behind, make necessary steps from paper to implementation. Let this signig and launch session always remind us of our joint commitment to make a reality our aspirations to create more decent work for our communities.

23. As I conclude, I would like to thank you once again. Thank you very much for making this

happen. Thank you for your efforts and tireless dedication.

24. It is now my great pleasure to declare officially launched the Decent Work Programme for Rwanda (2018-2022) and the Project for the Promotion of Decent Work in Rwanda's Informal Economy.

23. Thank You all for your kind attention.

24. God Bless You.