

SPEECH FOR THE CHAIRMAN, KEMRI BOARD OF DIRECTORS, DR. DANIEL M. MBINDA, DURING THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 12TH KEMRI ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC AND HEALTH (KASH) CONFERENCE HELD ONLINE FROM 16TH - 18TH FEBRUARY 2022

- *The Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Health, Hon. Mutahi Kagwe*
- *Fellow, KEMRI Board of Directors Present;*
- *Ag. Director General, KEMRI, Prof. Sam Kariuki;*
- *Chairman, KASH Conference Organizing Committee – Prof. Charles Mbogo;*
- *Key Plenary Speakers;*
- *KEMRI Directors Present;*
- *Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Good Morning!

Let me take this opportunity on behalf of the KEMRI Board of Directors to welcome you to the 12th KEMRI Annual Scientific and Health (KASH) Conference, which is both physical and virtual. I am pleased to note that we as an Institute have decided to also use this occasion to launch the Malaria Rapid Diagnostic Kit as well as various COVID-19 related products developed by KEMRI. From the onset, I wish to extend a very special welcome to our Chief Guest, as well as all other senior government officials that have joined us today as well as the KEMRI Board of Directors present.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to most sincerely celebrate the efforts of all the 192 participants whose abstracts were accepted for presentation during this conference including the distinguished keynote and plenary speakers. Let me take this opportunity to congratulate KEMRI for a well-organized Conference despite the challenges of COVID-19 pandemic in our country. **I salute you.**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The success of this conference, is a testimony that the KEMRI fraternity has continued to grow in our research and development portfolio, as well as in service delivery. It is an acknowledgement that we continue to respond to the ever increasing, public health challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, in Kenya and the region, as we endeavor to provide solutions to such challenges.

Ladies and Gentlemen, This year's Conference theme ***“Building a resilient health sector through investments in data science, research evidence, technology and innovations,”*** and the seven sub-themes speaks to such unique challenges we are facing today. I am indeed, pleased to note that most of the papers being presented at this Conference focus on this area of the global pandemic.

I am humbled by the gains we have made since the KASH conference started 12 years ago and I look at the future with more confidence and conviction that we can only do even better both as an Institute and as a conference. The resolutions from this conference will no doubt provide solutions for the various health challenges we face today. Therefore, I wish to urge all our partners to support this great initiative that brings together great scientific minds in addressing health challenges, noting that these challenges have no boundaries.

Let me thank the Government of Kenya, through the Ministry of Health represented by our Chief Guest, for their invaluable support in ensuring this conference is successful. I am indebted to our partners and collaborators for their immeasurable support and partnership. Not forgetting the Board of Directors for their leadership and vision. Let me also take this opportunity to thank the Acting Director General KEMRI, Prof. Sam Kariuki and the Conference organizers led by Dr. Cecilia Mbae and all distinguished scientists and staff who made this conference a success.

Thank You

DR. DANIEL M. MBINDA
THE CHAIRMAN, KEMRI BOARD OF DIRECTORS,