

SPEECH BY PROF. GEORGE A. O. MAGOHA, EGH, CABINET SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION DURING THE LAUNCH OF 2020 NATIONAL EXAMINATION PERIOD AND ISSUING OF CONTAINER SECURITY PADLOCKS AT KENYA SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT ON THURSDAY 4TH MARCH 2021

- **Dr. Fred O. Matiang'i, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Interior and National Co-ordination;**
- **Joe Mucheru, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs;**
- **Principal Secretaries of State Departments for:**
 - **Early Learning & Basic Education;**
 - **Interior and Citizen Services;**
 - **ICT and Innovation;**
- **TSC Secretary/CEO**
- **Directors of Education**
- **Regional coordinators of Education;**
- **TSC Regional Coordinators;**
- **County Directors of Education;**
- **TSC County Directors;**
- **Deputy County Commissioners and Assistant County Commissioners;**
- **Sub County Directors of Education;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good Morning!!!

It is my honour and pleasure to launch the 2020 national examinations and officiate the issuing of security padlocks for the 479 containers to the Deputy County Commissioners and the Sub County Directors of Education today ahead of this year's KCPE and KCSE.

As part of the Multisectoral Approach to the administration of national examinations, we are all assembled here this morning because the success or failure of this important exercise depends on all of us. And since we have no option for failure, I urge all of us to firmly commit that we will play our roles with lots of military precision to ensure we achieve the highest levels of success in this examinations.

I wish to thank my fellow Cabinet Secretaries from the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government and Ministry of ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs for the joint effort and sacrifice that has been put towards supporting the provision of credible examinations in this country over the last four years. Because of this, we managed to stamp out the bad practice of leaking national examinations.

This year is, however, much different from the previous years given that we are operating in the COVID-19 era. As a result, I am urging all those who will be involved in the examinations administration to strictly comply with the Ministry of Health's COVID-19 protocols, which we have been enforcing in schools since the resumption of studies. Particularly, I wish to stress that:

1. No Centre Manager should turn up at any examination container to collect or drop off examinations without wearing a face mask;

2. All officials who attend to services at the examination centres must use sanitizer or wash their hands before being allowed to handle examination materials.
3. At examination centres, all examination officials must wash their hands or sanitise before they can open examination scripts for distribution to candidates.
4. All examination officials must regularly use sanitiser or wash their hands before frisking candidates ahead of the start of examination sittings.

At the Ministry of Education, I have today recalled all officers who were on leave right from the Sub-County Level to Jogoo House. All of us will be on duty on all days during the examinations season to ensure everything goes on as planned. In liaison with all Ministries and Departments, we are prepared to steer a nationwide exercise in all parts of the country to ensure smooth running of the examinations.

To this end, I urge all of us to be mindful of our candidates, some of whom are in one way or the other affected by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We must all take cognizant of the environment of the 2020 examinations and give hope to all candidates by assuring them that none of them will be disadvantaged in the examination process.

The Ministry is also aware of plans that some centre managers are planning to retain teachers employed by the Board of Management (BoM) in schools to aid in cheating. The examination centres with such plans have been identified and are being monitored closely. It's important for all of us to ensure that all head teachers and other persons steer a credible examination process in 2020.

The Ministry of Education, Ministry of ICT, Ministry of interior and Coordination of National Government have agreed on strategies to enhance the security of the 2020 national examinations. The following have been agreed upon:

- i) Deputy County Commissioners (DCCs) and Assistant County Commissioners (ACCs), will be involved in the daily opening and closing of the containers in their respective Sub Counties.
- ii) Each container will be manned by four armed security officers on a 24/7 basis once the examinations are delivered to the Sub Counties. Additional security officers will be deployed from time to time when need arises.
- iii) Once the examination papers for the day have been issued, the container must be locked to be reopened when candidates' answer scripts are returned after the day's examinations. The security in charge of the container must adhere to the rules pertaining to the opening and closing of the container.
- iv) Security officers will be used to escort the examination materials from the KNEC warehouse to the examination storage facilities in the Sub Counties. Upon arrival at the Sub Counties, the examinations will be handed over to the Sub County Directors of Education and the Deputy County Commissioners who will provide security for the examinations.
- v) All question papers will be escorted by armed security officers each day of the examination when the centre managers will be collecting and returning the candidates' answer scripts to the container. While at the examination centre, the security officers will ensure adequate security is provided to all the candidates and the examination materials.
- vi) The centre manager must hand over examination materials to the Supervisor once he/she arrives at the examination centre. At no time should the examination papers be in the centre manager's office.

- vii) Upon completion of the examinations, the Council will liaise with the Sub County Directors of Education and Deputy County Commissioners on when the candidates' answer scripts will be returned to KNEC premises under armed security escort.

While overseeing examinations, the vetted and appointed supervisors and invigilators must uphold integrity in execution of their roles. They should be vigilant and deter any form of examination malpractice.

The Ministry of Education has banned supervisors and invigilators from being deployed in the same examination centres for more than two consecutive years in line with KNEC's policy.

Let me reiterate that the Ministry will never tire in dealing with any form of examinations cheating. Let us allow candidates to apply their knowledge in the examination room.

Grade 4 Assessment

I wish to urge our colleagues from the education sector to ensure that the Grade 4 Assessment that begins next week goes on as planned. KNEC has already provided guidelines on this important assessment, which is part of the successful implementation of the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC). The Grade 4 assessment will take place from 8th to 18th March 2021.

I urge parents to support our candidates during this period as they have always done. Parents should not be duped into parting with money to aid any form of cheating in the KCPE and KCSE like has been the case in the past. The examinations will not be leaked whatsoever.

Our Regional Coordinators and County Directors of Education must be alert during this time of examinations and work closely with our TSC counterparts to ensure smooth running of examinations.

Once again, I wish to thank you for the support you have given to this national noble course on management of examinations.

Finally, I wish to inform the country that we have now supplied 98 per cent of the KSh1.9 Billion Economic Stimulus Programme Desks to targeted schools countrywide. We hope that centres will utilise some of these desks to ensure candidates sit their examinations in a more comfortable environment.

I wish all candidates the very best in their national examinations.