



CENTRAL BANK OF KENYA

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FRANCOPHONIE

Kenya School of Monetary Studies on March 20, 2016

Speech by

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GOVERNOR, CENTRAL BANK OF KENYA

As Prepared for Delivery (623 words)

His Excellency, Abdoul Wahab Haidara, Ambassador of Senegal and Honorary President of the Committee for Francophonie;

Her Excellency, Béatrice Kankindi, Ambassador of Burundi;

Ambassadors and Representatives of French speaking countries here present;

Mr. Jean-Pierre Tutin, Cultural Counsellor of the French Embassy;

The Executive Director, Kenya School of Monetary Studies;

Faculty Members and Students;

All Invited Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is an honor for me, on behalf of the Central Bank of Kenya Family, to welcome you to the Kenya School of Monetary Studies on this auspicious occasion of the **International Day of Francophonie**, a special day in the Calendar of French speakers globally when the French Language and Culture is celebrated.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am informed that the International Day of Francophonie celebrated every 20th day of March, marks the signing of the Niamey Convention in Niger in the year 1970 and is a day celebrated to create space for solidarity, based on principles of humanity, democracy and respect for cultural and linguistic diversity of all.

We are glad to be associated with this great event because we recognize that with well over 270 million speakers globally, French is the 9th most widely spoken language on the planet earth and just like English, it is spoken on all the five continents. Closer Home, French speakers are estimated at 96 million.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we all acknowledge that mastering a foreign language is an important skill which enhances capacity to work within a multilingual environment. Learning a second foreign language obviously broadens one's chances of competing effectively in the international labour market and getting employed by multinational organizations in the NGO world, banking and the hospitality industries, amongst others.

Due to globalization, it is becoming increasingly important that we are able to integrate and work in multilingual environments. For the Kenyan companies and human capital to expand and compete into new markets, in Africa and around the world, they will need to overcome the language barrier.

Ladies & Gentlemen, it is in recognition of this that Kenya School of Monetary Studies (KSMS), which is a Department of the Central of Kenya, made a strategic decision to offer French to its students in its continuing effort to fill the gap for the increasing need for French speakers in the labor market; not only in the Eastern African region but globally.

Distinguished Guests, Excellences, allow me to take this opportunity to speak more specifically to students who have come in large numbers from all over the country and other parts of the region to attend this event. I presume that some of you are looking forward to working in International Organizations.

As students, you chose French language for many reasons; maybe because it is a fancy language, or because you wish to travel to France someday, or maybe just to read French writers in their own language. But the first reason should be the practical utility of this language. Indeed, thanks to those of you who have chosen to learn French language, because this will certainly help you develop abilities to overcome language barriers and accord you an opportunity to compete on the international labour market.

Today, **Ladies and Gentlemen**, the fast growing economy of Kenya and the rest of represent the promise of a better future for us and for the next generations. This economic growth should be strengthened in the next few years by the intensification of the exchanges between our country and those of the region. Foreign languages will eliminate the language and communication barrier and will definitely play a key role in this forecast.

Distinguished Guests, I wish you God's Blessing and Favour in all your scheduled activities and look forward to meeting you again.

Thank you for your attention.