

**SPEECH OF H.E RIGATHI GACHAGUA, EGH, DEPUTY
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA, DURING
COMMISSIONING OF THE FOREIGN TRAVEL
MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (FOTIMS) AND
THE PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVES MANAGEMENT
INFORMATION SYSTEM (PDMIS) ON SEPTEMBER 2,
2024 AT THE KENYATTA INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
CENTRE, NAIROBI, AT 9:00AM**

**The Chief of Staff and Head of Public Service Felix
Koskei;
Cabinet Secretaries;
Principal Secretaries;
Senior Government Officials;
Ladies and Gentlemen;**

1. It gives me great pleasure to join you today to jointly celebrate the official launch of the Foreign Travel Information Management System (FOTIMS) and the Presidential Directives Management Information system (PDMIS).

2. I want to thank the Office of the Chief of Staff and Head of the Public Service for this invitation, and the opportunity to jointly engage and reflect on a subject of passion and conviction to me personally – the subject of Digital Transformation.

3. ICT has been universally recognised as an enabler of development in all spheres of human endeavour, through facilitation of access to information to support decision making and through efficient and effective processes.

4. Indeed, technology is a strategic driver to not only improve efficiency – more so in the public sector – but also to make Government more transparent, trustworthy, accountable and open.

This last point is critical, especially when one considers the turmoil we have experienced in the last few months – whose root cause can be traced down to loss of trust, lack of transparency and poor accountability.

5. One objective in the Kenya Kwanza Government's Bottom-Up Economic Transformation (BETA) Plan is to Enhance Government service delivery through digitisation and automation of all Government critical

processes and make available 80 per cent of Government services online.

We meet here today to commission two such interventions on this journey and to celebrate the Office of The President for taking leadership to delivering this digital transformation.

6. The BETA Plan draws its inspiration from the Kenya Vision 2030 economic blueprint. The Vision similarly recognises the role of ICT in harnessing new knowledge

for wealth creation, social welfare and international competitiveness.

7. This Administration has, therefore, set forth ambitious objectives aimed at catalysing transformation and inclusive growth with the digital superhighway playing a critical role in enabling us to make tremendous achievement in delivery for the other four Pillars of the PLAN namely Health, Agriculture, MSMEs and Financing.

Accordingly, the national Government has in FY24/25, allocated 16.3 Billion Shillings as investment in the digital superhighway to enable achievement of the identified objectives in the sector.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. In our ongoing efforts to enhance governance and streamline public service delivery through digital transformation, the Office of the President has introduced two advanced digital platforms which we are officially commissioning today.

9. Foreign travel is one of the big line items in our budget which consumes a significant amount of financial resources.

Whereas it remains important for building networks, learning, building partnerships and allowing us to shift our mindset from thinking Kenya only to thinking globally, it must be done sustainably and devoid of abuse.

10. The commissioning of the Foreign Travel Management Information System (FOTIMS), therefore, is not only exciting, but also truly necessary.

It automates the travel clearance process by enhancing the ease and efficiency of application, processing and approval.

This system will support the implementation of the Government austerity measures, increase efficiency and transparency of the process which all go to restore trust and accountability – two sides of the same coin that the Kenyan people demand of their Government.

11. I am aware that plans are at an advanced stage to cascade the Foreign Travel Information System (FOTIMS) to each MDA for use in undertaking internal approvals.

12. I encourage expedition for conclusion of this process, to secure a holistic structure that will not only secure adherence with prevailing travel guidelines, but also facilitate Government's ability to review overall foreign travel budgets and expenditures, analyse our global travel trends and priorities, and reorganise our foreign service footprints accordingly.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

13. It is said "Change is inevitable, Growth is optional". These words by John Maxwell underscore the radical shift which technology has brought to the world.

The world is changing, and the world will continue to change. Digital Transformation puts technology at the core of strategy, which translates to better processes,

increased efficiencies and a digitally fluent workforce – elements that are key to future survival and growth.

14. The Presidential Directives Management Information system (PDMIS) will record, track and report on the implementation of Presidential Directives replacing manual dispatch methods and providing robust feedback and reporting mechanism.

15. Government moves slowly, which is a good thing, because, while the Executive runs on an election cycle of every five years, institutions preserve continuity.

The slow bureaucratic processes protect from rushed execution, which is important given it is hard to undo bad policy implementation.

16. However, this is not an excuse for delayed execution, corruption and unnecessary delays which are people-issues.

When such behaviours become the norm, rather than exceptions, the public suffer and again the two sides of

the same coin - trust and accountability – which are demanded of us – fail.

17. Implementation of Presidential Directives is done through people, and employees are the greatest asset of any organisation.

Working through and with people, the PDMIS will be used to dispatch directives to ministries and state departments for implementation and status reporting.

18. I believe that the most important benefit of the system is ensuring that we bring dignity to the directives of H.E the President and ensure that the same are followed through and implemented without undue delay.

Where challenges are experienced in the implementation of such directives, as may happen in the course of any programme implementation cycle, then the same is easily flagged, adjusted, and promptly communicated to the public.

19. Effective tracking of directives, and early escalations where challenges are experienced, has been a challenge in seeing through implementations and measurement of impact.

Accordingly, automation of the dispatch, implementation tracking and reporting of directives will ensure Proactive rather than Reactive implementation.

20. I am informed that the two systems are both home grown, developed in-house by a team of young, innovative, technical and ICT officers.

I am proud of the fact that the public service is producing the quality and capability that we have always known to exist within.

My faith in the role of the public service and its ability to shape and define young people continues to be restored when I see such outcomes.

21. I congratulate the team, for translating their patriotism, and desire to transform this nation, into work that has produced the systems and applications we are launching here today.

I invite all public officers to similarly see the potential of their skills, and devise mechanisms for translating them into the transformation outcomes that are necessary for bettering the lives of our people.

Showcase the wonderful innovations that are within us. Remind the country of the talent and potential that the public service has to offer.

22. As I conclude I wish to add caution that a system is only as good as its users. It is imperative that we adopt the necessary integrity tenets in the use and application of the systems in order to reap the expected benefits.

Users must ensure that the information submitted is verifiably accurate or factually correct. This is to ensure that we do not have errors or deliberate omissions that would compromise the system's integrity and utility. I trust that the persons who have been identified and approved as users will live up to this expectation.

23. Our collaborative efforts in enabling digital transformation in all our processes to confront the challenges in public service delivery, will lead to increased accountability, enhanced transparency and prosperity for our citizens tomorrow, and ultimately, build public trust in Government.

24. It is now my pleasure to officially launch the Foreign Travel Information Management System and the Presidential Directives Management Information system (PDMIS).

**God Bless You All
God Bless Kenya**