

TALKING NOTES FOR RT. HON. RAILA ODINGA, EGH, MP, PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA AT THE FAREWELL PARTY FOR MRS ANNA TIBAIJUKA, AUGUST 31, 2010.

In Kenya and across the world, Mrs. Tibaijuka will be remembered for her tireless efforts to promote water, sanitation and slum up-grading in line with the Millennium Development Goals of improving the lives of 100 million slum dwellers by the year 2020.

It is our expectation that upgrading of slums and provision of decent and affordable housing will remain priorities at the UN-HABITAT.

Kenya has just unveiled a new constitution that makes housing a human right. Our new constitution gives every Kenyan the right to accessible and adequate housing and to reasonable standards of Sanitation.

The government is fully committed to implementing the constitution as ratified by the people of Kenya and to fulfilling the obligations made by the new constitution.

But we could do with support from the international community, including the UN agencies.

The UN agencies, together with others, could help Kenya develop a plan for broad based engagement of all key stakeholders around the transition to and implementation of the new constitution.

Many different disciplines may ultimately be called upon in support of constitutional transition.

Kenya can certainly do with some support in the form of substantive expertise in state restructuring.

The UN and other international and bilateral agencies could consider creating and supporting a Constitutional Support and State Restructuring Programme for Kenya.

It could provide high level advisory services to the Government including Parliament to ensure the country beats the set deadlines.

Kenyans have voted for a radically transformed system of governance that they feel will address their fears that stem from past experiences.

The transition process will herald major changes as we embrace the new constitution because Kenya has remained a thoroughly centralized system for more than four decades.

Under the new constitution, with the devolved structures, Kenya will go through a fundamental and major process of change.

After the successful promulgation, successfully implementing the new constitution will be vital in consolidating democracy and stability. This process will need to be managed, planned, prioritized, timed and costed.

Such support would help the government address concerns like maintaining continuity of government services, developing new financial mechanisms and building the required human resources capacity while implementing the provisions of the new Constitution.

Even more important, it is getting clear that other than implementation, there is need for the government to embark on a post-constitution making education to educate the citizens about the newly adopted document and the process of implementing it.

There is also need for us to embark on major civic education on constitutionalism and the culture of the rule of law if the new constitution is to make a difference in our lives.

Together with the support of the world, Kenya will succeed in accomplishing all these tasks.

Thank you.