Speaking point for the official launch of CPF EDE 4th November 2015

Excellence Minister for Devolution and Planning, Hon Anne Waiguru,

Honorable Members of Government and Parliament,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen

All protocol observed,

It is a great honour to present these remarks on behalf of the European Union Ambassador, Stefano Dejak, on the occasion of the launch of the Common Programming Framework for Ending Drought Emergencies (EDE) in Kenya.

Droughts have become increasingly regular and severe – often on an annual basis – affecting both, livestock and crop production, causing deficits in food supply and leading to food insecurity and vulnerability. Arid lands cover the main part of the country, and are home to a large proportion of Kenya's population. Actions needed to address the situation of the local population in the ASAL cannot wait.

The strategic approach promoted by the EDE is built on consensus, and it marks a bold approach by the Government of Kenya to tackle regional imbalances and promote inclusive growth. Kenyans living in the arid lands of the country have too often suffered from droughts and the effects of climate change, and we salute the efforts of the GoK to provide those regions and populations with adequate support in socio-economic and infrastructure development, planning and resilience strengthening.

Droughts usually do not affect a single country, but have a regional impact. They therefore threaten the entire Horn of Africa, and regional responses and strategies need to be supported and strengthened by IGAD, which plays a key role in that regard. Problems are transnational, and answers must be calibrated to that dimension, fostering also economic growth and development, to ensure that the ASAL regions also become a source of increased prosperity for the entire nation.

That is why support to the GoK strategy towards the ASAL regions is a priority for the European Union. We have been working hand in hand with the Kenyan

authorities in this important area of development, providing a significant proportion of our development cooperation through joint mechanisms with the government. An example of this successful cooperation is the Drought Management System, which is supported by the EU funded Kenya Rural Development Programme, and is considered as an international cooperation success story.

Let me take this opportunity to congratulate the Government of Kenya on the effective way the EU Drought Contingency Fund has been used to mitigate the negative impacts of the last drought spells. No later than today, this instrument is still a key contributor to the preparedness to El Nino, making the local communities more resilient to the next climate shock. The EU is committed to continue its support to the Drought Management System, and we welcome the establishment of the National Drought Contingency Fund which establishes a sustainable national system to respond to recurring droughts and external shocks.

We particularly appreciate that the EDE is a people-centred programming that focusses on improved resilience. It combines increased agricultural productivity and diversified livelihoods, while also addressing poverty and inequality through social safety net systems.

We also appreciate the emphasis that is put on developing an environment for the development of the ASAL. Those regions need:

- Infrastructure, which is key to connecting them to the rest of the country, to provide better access to markets, facilitate private sector investment, and to enhance provision of adequate health and education.
- Investing in human capital and creation of local expertise and know-how in ASAL regions is also a condition for economic growth and development.
- Eventually, Security and rule of law are essential to manage conflicts generated around access to resources, but also to foster integration.

The EU has already directly earmarked appr. 10.5 billion KSH (95 million EUR) from the EDF to support Food Security and Resilience in ASAL. This important allocation is complemented by other on-going and planned actions which will also benefit the ASAL areas. It is our hope that this support will contribute significantly to a sustainable socio-economic transformation of the ASAL areas.

With this launch, we have the right framework in place, and we look forward to further align our cooperation in ASAL region to the EDE. The Common

Programming Framework provides the necessary guidance to reach our goals and we are convinced that the EDE leadership will be key in the implementation of the bold vision of the ASAL development policy, including by empowering counties with their responsibilities, in full respect of the devolution process.

Honourable Minister, let me conclude my remarks by reassuring you that EU is committed to continue its support to the Government of Kenya and the 23 ASAL Counties for the successful implementation of the EDE Common Programming Framework.