



**OPENING REMARKS BY MR. MOHAMMED NYAOGA, DURING THE GROUND-BREAKING CEREMONY OF THE PROPOSED ICJ KENYA HOUSE
22ND MAY 2018, KAREN, NAIROBI**

ICJ Kenya past Chairmen present,

Fellow ICJ Kenya Council Members,

ICJ Kenya Members,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good afternoon to you all.

It is my great honor and pleasure to attend this long awaited Groundbreaking Ceremony today. First of all, please allow me to express my warm congratulations to ICJ Kenya Members, the Governing Council, the Secretariat and all Friends and supporters of ICJ Kenya on the groundbreaking of the ICJ Kenya House.

It is indeed a happy occasion as it marks a new level and another important milestone to the ICJ Kenya fraternity of which am happy to be part of.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to commend ICJ Kenya for the great and very important role they have historically played in the promotion of human rights, democracy and rule of law in Kenya and the region. Since 1959, ICJ Kenya has continuously and consistently exhibited courage acting for the people sometimes at the risk of their individual lives and freedoms.

Over the years, ICJ Kenya has greatly contributed to the empowerment of citizens to participate in democratic governance, and to the enhancement of the rule of law. This group of jurists has also contributed to improved human rights protection, access to justice and the quality of justice sector institutions in the region.

In particular, ICJ Kenya has made tremendous contributions in the areas of human rights judicial reforms, constitutionalism, open government and international criminal justice.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To mention just a few, internationally, ICJ Kenya has continuously supported accountability of crimes before International Criminal justice mechanisms; you recall the role played at the ICC in relation to the 2007/8 post-election violence, and the current monitoring of the trial of genocide suspects in Rwanda; advocacy work within national and regional instruments amongst others.

We have seen ICJ Kenya take a lead and has remained active in supporting parliamentary processes and has consistently provided technical support and developed resources for various criminal justice institutions in Kenya and the region.

The intellectual pedigree that the ICJ Kenya brand brings to all these process is immense and should be supported, as well as it's convening power and international reach.

Dear Colleagues,

The closing civic space, corruption, including the lack of transparency and accountability in governance remain key challenges facing Kenya's mainstream institutions. This affects the delivery and access to goods and services by citizens. In addition, the limited spaces for public participation have further limited the opportunities for public oversight of governance processes.

A lot still needs to be done, a lot more must be achieved. It is with this in mind that I would like to emphasize that the continued effectiveness of ICJ Kenya's work depends to a very large extent on program sustainability and financial stability. One of the reasons we are at this ceremony is to support ICJ Kenya fulfil its dream of stability.

Well, ladies and gentlemen,

An event like this cannot happen overnight. The wheels start rolling many years ago. It has required planning and a bird's eye for details. We have been fortunate enough to be backed by a team of very motivated and dedicated past and present Council, members and the Secretariat. I also appreciate the valuable cooperation provided by ICJ Kenya partners and donors.

This is just the beginning and I believe that the time ICJ Kenya needs the support of everyone is now. We need to come together to financially assist this great organization, the oldest human rights institution in Kenya get their own home.

I would like to appreciate all of you present here today in support of this wonderful organization. Once this new facility is complete, ICJ Kenya is poised to grow further and become an even better agency in the promotion of human rights, governance and the rule of law.

Thank you