Speech by the Assistant Minister for Industrialization HON. Ndiritu Muriithi during the opening ceremony of the Afrimets 2011 Metrology School, at the Red Court Hotel on Monday 7th February 2011 at 9:00 Am

his excellency per ludvig magnus, ambassador of norway to kenya,

dr. (eng) karanja kibicho, the permanent secretary, ministry of industrialization;

dr. wynand louw, chairman, intra africa metrology system (afrimets);

mr. lalith goonatilake, director – trade capacity building branch, united nations industrial development organization (unido);

mr joseph kipketer koskey, managing director, kenya bureau of standards (kebs);

mr. michael onyancha, director, department of weights and measures;

facilitators and resource persons;

participants; distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen:

i am pleased to join you this morning to officially open "the afrimets metrology school - the first of its kind to be held in africa. kenya is indeed privileged to host the *afrimets 2011 metrology school* from 7th to 16th february 2010. this is the first metrology school and follows the tradition of the *bipm metrology summer schools* held at the international bureau of weights and

measures (bipm), paris, france. in the effort to reach out to more metrologists, the concept of the *bipm metrology summer schools* has now been picked up by the regional metrology organizations such as the intra africa metrology system (afrimets). the choice of kenya to host this event may be viewed as a confidence statement on the sound measurement infrastructure of the country.

the afrimets 2011 metrology school aims to introduce standards, quality, accreditation and metrology infrastructure to young african metrologists and to provide technical training addressing

legal and scientific/industrial metrology requirements in selected fields.

metrology, the science of measurements forms an important pillar in support of a national quality/technical infrastructure for a sustainable social and economic development by providing traceability in measurements. in view of this, afrimets has been accepted internationally as the regional metrology organization representing africa, to propel the development of a sound measurement system in the african continent. therefore with the consent of the african union (au), afrimets, arso and afrac

(african regional accreditation co-operation) should be recognized as organs to be supported to fast track the growth of an intra-african trading system.

ladies and gentlemen:

metrology in kenya was established in the early 1980s and has continued to grow and support both national and regional industries. all these activities contribute to the elevation and recognition of kenya's measurements in the international measurement community.

kenya's vision 2030 has projected an economic growth rate of 10 per cent per annum and further identified the role or use of **science**, **technology and innovation** for raising productivity and efficiency in the economy, society and political establishment.

the initiative on science, technology and innovation (sti) has been identified as one of the anchors of the economic, social and political pillars of kenya's vision 2030. a successful sti programme is firmly based on "good" measurements. "good" measurements in turn depend on a sound national

measurement system that is linked to the international measurement system, the international measurement system is coordinated by the bipm which ensures world-wide uniformity of measurements and their traceability to the international system of units (si).

trade and industry depend on "good" measurements for efficiency in their activities. the small and medium enterprises (smes) as well as the micro enterprise (jua kali) need measurement to improve on the quality of their products. the tea, coffee, fish, horticulture and floriculture industry require

measurements in order to meet the strict export requirements of their major customers in europe and widen their global presence. in order to meet the ever demanding needs of industry, the government has continued to invest in the national metrology programme. an example is the new initiative on metrology in chemistry.

the metrology facilities at the kenya bureau of standards (kebs) offer national traceability of measurements to the international system of units (si) through the custody and maintenance of the national measurement standards. the establishment of a

national metrology institute (nmi), in line with the international best practices, enhances development in the area of measurements.

ladies and gentlemen:

the status of a country's measurement system is a good indicator of its development level. in line with our aspirations to be a middle-income country as outlined in the *kenya vision* 2030, a robust national measurement system that supports this vision has been established.

the republic of kenya (through kebs) became a full member of the international bureau of weights and measures (bipm), from 1st january, 2010 including the ratification of its constituent instrument, the *metre convention*.

this membership comes with the opportunity to enjoy the many advantages provided, such as the most effective manner of obtaining recognition of our various national metrology programmes. further, member states also enjoy a collaborative forum that multiplies the investment in their national metrology programmes through synergy with the national metrology efforts

of other members. finally, among other additional advantages, membership gives the right to attend and vote at the general conference for weights and measures (cgpm). i say this to you as young metrologists so that you may appreciate the importance of international linkages with your national metrology programmes. an internationally recognized national metrology programme is then able to effectively support its country's industry and trade.

i challenge all of us gathered here and the african continent to embrace the use of reliable and traceable measurements if we are to remain relevant in international trade, as measurements are key to quality products. reliable and traceable measurements in turn can only occur in a sound national metrology system that is linked to the international metrology system as operated by the bipm.

ladies and gentlemen: allow me this opportunity to thank afrimets for coming up with the idea of running this school. further, i wish to thank unido for partnering with afrimets in this noble task. i am also reliably informed that kenya will be hosting the 5th afrimets general assembly in july this year.

allow me to also take cognizance of the germany government through ptb who has constantly supported metrology activities in kenya as well as the quality infrastructure in the eac.

kenya is a beautiful country, endowed with a rich culture and people, an abundance of wildlife, wonderful scenery and beaches. you are welcome, and as a country we will support your efforts to bring africa up to speed with the best in the measurement world.

it is now my pleasure to declare the *afrimets 2011 metrology* school officially opened. **thank you.**