

SPEECH BY SICILY K. KARIUKI (MRS.), MBS, MANAGING DIRECTOR, THE TEA BOARD OF KENYA, DURING THE 6TH NATIONAL TEA DRINKING DAY AND INDUSTRY AWARDS CEREMONY ON 30TH SEPTEMBER 2011 AT HILTON HOTEL, NAIROBI

Our Chief Guest, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Dr. Romano Kiome

Chairman, Tea Board of Kenya, Mr. Titus Kipyab

Directors of the Tea Board of Kenya

Your Excellencies Ambassadors and High Commissioners

CEOs and Directors of Tea industry organizations represented here,

Members of the Press

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am delighted to warmly welcome you all to the 6th National Tea Drinking Day; a day set aside to recognize and celebrate the winners of the Tea Classes and Tea Packers competitions. On behalf of the Tea Board of Kenya, I wish to appreciate all of you for taking time to join us in the celebration. Tonight is a culmination of a series of week-long activities which are part of the Local Generic Promotion Campaign (LGPC).

Ladies and Gentlemen;

This day has been observed for many years. However, with the introduction of the Tea Packers Competition Awards three years ago, the day continues to grow as an important day in the calendar of the tea industry. Not only does the day give us a time to network, but it also gives us a chance to share information on pertinent industry issues.

It is a great honour this evening to have with us the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Dr. Romano Kiome.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Allow me therefore to briefly share with you some current information on what is happening in the industry.

As you may recall, we launched the Kenya Tea Mark of Origin last year. I am happy to report that great strides have been achieved towards its full implementation. Last month six stakeholders namely; James Finlay Kenya Ltd, Kapchebet Tea Factory, Kiptagich Tea Estates Ltd, Maisha Commodities, Nandi Tea Estates Ltd and Al Noor Faisal were certified to commence use of the mark on their tea packets. This was after a rigorous process of pre-certification audits undertaken in partnership with the Kenya Bureau of Standards. More stakeholders are expected to come on board in due course. Having been registered locally by the Kenya Industrial Property Institute (KIPI) and internationally under the Madrid System, the Mark will continue to be promoted in our key markets.

With regard to market development, Tea Board of Kenya continues to spearhead efforts towards retaining our traditional markets while enhancing exports to emerging markets. It is encouraging to note that some of the markets have registered significant growth in the last few years. During the current financial year, TBK will be facilitating the stakeholders in marketing events in UAE, China, Africa (Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo & South Sudan) and Iran, among others.

I also wish to draw your attention to the on-going development of the Kenya Tea Industry curriculum. Following consultations with industry players, the industry training and human resource capacity needs were identified. We have now moved a step further to develop the curriculum with the support of Egerton University. The draft curriculum is ready and will shortly be subjected to review in conjunction with stakeholders. It is expected that the final curriculum will be ready for use before the close of the year. Once the new curriculum is unveiled, Tea

Board of Kenya will partner with institutions of higher learning to execute the training programmes.

Turning on to matters of regulation and compliance, let me also take this opportunity to recognize the industry's success in sustaining high quality standards. I am happy to report that stakeholders have continued to maintain a high level of compliance to local and international standards. The compliance levels in 2010/2011 stood at 85% and 94% on tea trade and production respectively. This is a commendable effort and should be sustained. TBK technical and compliance teams will therefore maintain monitoring to ensure these levels are sustained. Further, in a bid to carry out our licensing and registration role efficiently, we are in the process of mapping and demarcating the "brown line" as well as undertake a factories capacity study to assess whether or not there is still room for more factories.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Turning to tonight, the Tea Classes Competition, now in its 51st year, has contributed towards raising quality standards for tea production. The annual competition is undertaken by the Tea Board of Kenya in partnership with the Agricultural Society of Kenya (ASK) and the Tea Trade. This year, over 90 factories participated compared to 84 last year with samples being presented on the Commercial category, Special Manufacture category and the Specialty Teas category; while on the Tea Packers Competition (TPC), which is in its 3rd year, an opportunity was presented to brand owners to bring out their innovations in branding and value addition in response to market expectations and business objectives. Packers are recognized and awarded on the following categories – Marketing; Branding; Innovation; Sales, and; Value Addition. Judging was undertaken by the Tea Board of Kenya in partnership with the Marketing Society of Kenya (MSK).

Eleven packers participated in the competition from seven packers who participated last year. It is my hope that more packers will come on board in the subsequent competitions.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the winners of the two competitions and to appreciate the participation of all stakeholders in these initiatives, including our collaborators the ASK, MSK and the EATTA judges. Special appreciation to the TBK team which managed the events.

In conclusion, I wish to welcome all of you and invite you to enjoy the evening with us.

It is now my joy and pleasure to welcome the Chairman, Tea Board of Kenya, Mr. Titus Kipyab to address us.

Thank you.

**Sicily K. Kariuki (Mrs.), MBS
MANAGING DIRECTOR
TEA BOARD OF KENYA**