

**SPEECH BY THE GUEST OF HONOUR, DR. SERVACIUS
LIKWELILE, PERMANENT SECRETARY – MINISTRY OF
FINANCE AT THE COMMEMORATION OF THE AFRICAN
STATISTICS DAY, 23RD NOVEMBER 2015 AT THE EASTERN
AFRICA STATISTICAL TRAINING CENTRE
DAR ES SALAAM**

**Chairperson, Prof. Milline Mbonile, NBS Ministerial Advisory
Board,
Permanent Secretaries,
High Commissioners and Ambassadors,
Development Partners,
Government Officials,
Management of the National Bureau of Statistics and Eastern Africa
Statistical Training Centre,
Candidates from Eastern Statistical Training Centre,
Members of Press,
Invited Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen;**

Chairperson; It is my honor to be invited to join with you this morning to celebrate the *2015 AFRICAN STATISTICS DAY*.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank the organizers of this event for inviting me as a Guest of Honor in this special day. I also commend the organizers for continuing to mark this important day that gives a special

opportunity for producers and users of statistics to discuss issues pertaining to their field. This is also an opportunity to share experience and show your achievements in this field. This special day provides the opportunity for Tanzania and other African countries as well to evaluate our achievements and monitoring the progress in our development agenda as well as measuring the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Chairperson, I am aware that historically, the Economic Commission for Africa's Conference of Ministers responsible for Planning proclaimed for every year the observance of African Statistics Day on 18th November. In this regard, the Government of Tanzania started to celebrate the African Statistics Day started in 1999. The main purpose of this day is to increase public awareness for the important role which statistics plays in all aspects of social and economic life of human being.

Chairperson; May I also wholeheartedly congratulate the organizers of this special gathering that happens every year on the 18th day of November. On the same note, I would like to congratulate you all as you mark yet another celebration of the African Statistics Day here on the premises of the Eastern Africa Statistical Training Centre (EASTC), Changanyikeni, one of the homes of Statisticians. Celebrating this occasion at this Centre is a well thought decision, as apart from meeting with the producers and users of data, we also meet with the Prospective Statisticians. I take this as a motivation for the EASTC candidates to work hard as in the near future they will be responsible for producing quality

statistics that will enable African Governments to monitor progress made on the agreed Development Plans such as Agenda 2063.

Chairperson, The Agenda 2063 is a global strategy to optimize Africa resources for the benefits of all Africans. The Agenda aspire for a Prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development, an Integrated Continent, Politically United, based on the ideals of Pan Africanism, an Africa of Good Governance, Respect for Human Rights, Justice and the Rule of Law and A Peaceful and Secure Africa. Other Agenda's aspirations are an Africa with a strong Cultural Identity, Values and Ethics, an Africa whose development is people-driven, especially relying on the potential offered by its women and youth and Africa as a Strong, Resilient and Influential Global Player and Partner. It is clear that without better data these aspirations will not be met.

Chairperson, The Director General of the National Bureau of Statistics, has mentioned that, this year's celebration is observed under the theme: ***“BETTER DATA FOR BETTER LIVES”***. As noted by United Nations Secretary General during the commemoration of World Statistics Day in October 2015, ***“Good data and statistics are indispensable for informed decision-making by all actors in society”***.

Good data therefore are expected to bring about proper planning and policy-making and consequently better results and better environment for improving lives of the society. As countries embark on implementation of the 2015 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, better and reliable

data are vital. Monitoring of the SDGs will pose a significant challenge to all developing and developed countries alike. Contributions and expertise of all stakeholders: that is, producers and users of statistics, academia, the private sector and civil societies is needed, to continue making better data available for countries' development agenda and fulfillment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the next 15 years.

Chairperson; Better data allow different national and international dialogues in improving efficiency of the Government in proper development planning and tackle different challenges that evolve overtime. Better data also assist policy makers and programme implementers to monitor and evaluate existing programmes and to design new strategies for improving people's lives.

Chairperson; African countries through different platforms have made considerable efforts to strengthen their national statistical systems under the leadership of National Statistical Offices (NSO's). These efforts are geared to ensure that African countries obtain good data for policy formulation and monitoring of the countries', national, regional and international development agenda.

Chairperson; I am delighted to inform you that official statistics that are released by the Government through the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and other Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies meet the requirements of Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics adopted by United Nations. The Government will continue to facilitate the NBS and in particular national statistical system in general in producing data of

high quality for informed decision-making and monitoring and evaluation of different programmes and targets as stipulated in MKUKUTA II, Five Years Development Plans and Tanzania Development Vision 2025.

Therefore, the Government is committed to continue financing NBS and other stakeholders in enhancing capacity in areas that are linked with ensuring better data production. It is in this respect that one of the components of the Tanzania Statistical Master Plan (TSMP) that was endorsed by the Government in 2010 is human resource development and capacity building which guarantees quality of official statistics by different stakeholders in the National Statistical System. Other four components of the Plan are institutional development and legal reforms, development of statistical infrastructure, data development and dissemination and physical infrastructure and equipment development.

Chairperson; Better data increases trustworthiness of the users of official statistics and public in general. On the Government side, better data ensures that proper decisions are made for social and economic development of the people at all levels. I would therefore at this particular time, emphasize that the general public also has a vital contribution in making sure that good data are collected. When approached by data collectors in different surveys that produce official statistics, the public should fully participate and provide credible and correct answers. This cooperation will ensure credible results that will allow proper development planning and hence make our lives better.

Chairperson; As Director General of NBS has said, later on there will be a panel discussion on this year's theme; *“Better Data for Better Lives”*. Let me emphasize that you should use this opportunity to discuss about how to improve the processes of obtaining better data and how it can bring better lives. You should also use the opportunity to deliberate on new data source and application of innovative processes in our countries with the objective of human development. This is also a learning process for students and other young statisticians who are expected to learn from more experienced statistical professionals.

Chairperson; I would like to extend my sincere appreciations to our development partners for their financial support and sharing of experiences that contribute to availability of better data. Their efforts are imperative for facilitating availability of statistics in Tanzania.

Furthermore, I am grateful to the media for their cooperation that they have shown in educating the public on the importance of statistics in planning, monitoring and evaluation of the national development agenda. Therefore, I call upon all stakeholders of statistics to tirelessly provide the required information in different statistical activities undertaken by NBS and other producers of official statistics.

Chairperson; on this Africa Statistics Day, I urge all partners and stakeholders in the field of statistics to collaborate with the National Bureau of Statistics to ensure that the necessary investment are made, adequate capacity is built, new data sources are explored and new technologies are applied to give all African countries the comprehensive

information systems we need to achieve sustainable development. Production and dissemination of better statistics should not be left to NBS alone if we really want a difference to people's lives. The Government will continue to support the undergoing sector reforms and offer support in the areas of financial and human resources.

Chairperson, again let me once again stress the importance of better statistics in monitoring international development agenda. Year 2015 marks the end of the Millennium Development Goals and the start of the Sustainable Development Goals that were endorsed this year. The twenty SDGs goals need to be properly evaluated from time to time with better statistics at country and international level to monitor their implementation. Once again I urge collaboration of key players in this areas as this important task cannot be done by NBS or the Government alone.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me conclude my speech, by reiterating that, all of us here are stakeholders of statistics, therefore, let us all play our part in making sure that better data are available for better planning to conform with this year's theme; ***'BETTER DATA FOR BETTER LIVES'***

With these few remarks, I wish to declare that, AFRICAN STATISTICS DAY 2015 officially opened and wish you fruitful deliberations.

Thank you for your kind attention.