

REPUBLIC OF RWANDA



THE PRIME MINISTER

**Remarks by the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister
Dr. Ngirente Edouard**

**At the opening ceremony of the Commonwealth
Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA)
International Conference**

Kigali Convention Center, August 27th, 2019

- **Honourable Ministers, here present,**
- **Secretary General of the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA),**
- **Representatives of Public and Private institutions,**
- **Development Partners,**
- **Representatives of youth here present,**
- **Distinguished participants,**

1. Let me start by wishing you all a very warm welcome to Rwanda and to 2019 Kigali CAPA Conference. I would like to extend a special gratitude to you all, for your participation and wish you a good stay in Kigali.

2. As we all know, the growing problem of youth unemployment in Africa is a major concern for many governments. A big number of young Africans, sometimes without needed skills, leave the school system every year in search for jobs. These young people should be encouraged to complete their studies so as to be qualified for the labour market and even be able to create their own jobs. Supporting the young people to acquire job-related skills is therefore a key developmental challenge for all governments in Africa.

- 3.** Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is one of the most powerful tools to fight poverty. It does not only provide skills to gain paid employment but also to promote and support creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship in order to develop the ability to create jobs and employment opportunities.
- 4.** Africa needs skilled workers. In particular, competent technicians are needed to fill skills gaps in various sectors of the economy, including the construction industry, energy sector, water distribution and sanitation systems, and large public works. Trained workers are also in short supply in the hospitality and agro-processing sectors.
- 5.** One of the seven Aspirations of Agenda 2063 is that we need an “Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of its people”. Like many other African countries, Rwanda aspires to be a Knowledge-Based Economy. The National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) is framed around three Pillars including the “Economic transformation”.

- 6.** Our strategic interventions in education sector is currently giving a special attention to TVET among others. As Government, we believe that TVET skills are one of the drivers that support the economic transformation we want in our country, and this is only possible if graduates from TVET are highly skilled and competitive on the labour market.
- 7.** In this regard, our target in the National Strategy for Transformation (2017-2024), is to increase the number of students attending TVET schools to 60% by 2024 from 31.1% in 2017. This is expected to address the challenge of mismatch in labour market. The implementation of this strategy is ongoing in collaboration with the Private sector.
- 8.** As indicated in various reports, the most competitive economies are talent-driven economies. To succeed in that way, African countries must therefore invest in the education of its young population and create the employment for their gained knowledge and skills”. If African countries are to become talent-driven, we still need to educate our youth and encourage them to embrace labour mobility opportunities. Therefore,

African youth should take advantage of the African Continental free Trade Area (AfCFTA) in terms of free movement of labour as an added opportunity for them.

Distinguished Guests,

9. Before I conclude my remarks, I want to thank all partners for organizing the Kigali Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA) Conference. I believe that Rwanda and other participating countries will gain from this great opportunity. I would like, especially, to acknowledge the role that Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA) has played in the past 41 years since its inception in promoting Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as a major driver of economic development.

10. I wish you all fruitful deliberations and hereby declare this 2019 Kigali Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA) Conference officially open.

I thank you for your kind attention!