



**KEY NOTE SPEECH BY H.E. MUTHOMI NJUKI, EGH, GOVERNOR THARAKA NITHI  
COUNTY AND CHAIR OF THE HEALTH COMMITTEE, COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS**

**DURING THE ANNUAL TOBACCO TAXATION CONFERENCE**

**HELD AT THE AGHAKHAN UNIVERSITY, NAIROBI**

**3<sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER 2023 AT 9AM**

**Ministry of Health Representatives**

**County Government officials**

**National Treasury and KRA Representatives**

**CEO, International Institute for Legislative Affairs**

**Mr. Albert Taiti, Chair of Kenya Clinical Officers Association**

**Mr. Gamaliel Omondi, Head of Tobacco Control Board**

**KIPPRA Representatives**

**Development partners present**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**Good Morning,**

Allow me to take this early opportunity to thank you all for being part of this critical conference that will move this nation to not only improve our health indicators but also enable progress towards attainment of UHC. This conference serves a very important role of bringing together stakeholders to deliberate on tobacco use, particularly how to tap on the revenue generated from taxation of tobacco and tobacco products for health financing. Tobacco use takes a heavy toll on public health, causing an array of diseases and placing an enormous burden on healthcare systems worldwide especially in financing health care.

**Globally, Tobacco kills 6 million people annually,** It also contributes to **80% of premature deaths** and is one of the main risk factors for non-communicable diseases in developing countries. In Kenya, **2.7 million adults use tobacco products,** the prevalence of tobacco use in Kenya stands at 9%. The effect of using tobacco and tobacco products goes beyond the individual. It can cause cancer, heart disease, stroke, lung diseases, diabetes, increases risk for tuberculosis, and problems of the immune system.

Second hand smoke exposure contributes to approximately **41,000 deaths among non-smoking adults and 400 deaths in infants each year world wide.** Smoking during pregnancy can cause tissue damage in the unborn baby, particularly in the lung and brain, and some studies suggests a link between maternal smoking and cleft lip. The wide use of tobacco products in Kenya **has generated up USD815.80m in 2023** and this expected to grow **annually by 1.95%.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

In this context, Tobacco taxation serves as a powerful tool not only for curbing tobacco consumption but also for generating much-needed revenue to finance healthcare system and combat health issues caused by the use. The funding can therefore be channelled into improving among others, healthcare infrastructure, expanding access to health services, and supporting public health campaigns that promote healthier lifestyles.

