**Prof. Njuguna Ndung’u,**

**Executive Director,**

**African Economic Research Consortium (AERC)**

**Welcome Remarks for the AERC Senior Policy Seminar XXIV on**

***Climate Change and Economic Development in Africa***

**30 March 2022**

***Honourable Ministers***

#### ***Members of the AERC network***

***Distinguished Guests***

***Ladies and Gentlemen***

It is my very great pleasure to welcome all of you to this Senior Policy Seminar – the twenty fourth such seminar to be convened by the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC). This is a singularly important event for AERC, and we cannot adequately express our honour and delight at having all of you join this meeting virtually. The combined experience of the impressive range of policy makers gathered here promises to provide an exciting series of discussions. Please accept our sincere and heartfelt gratitude to you for taking the time from your busy schedules to grace this occasion.

***Ladies and gentlemen,***

I should first tell you a bit about AERC, the organization that I head. The African Economic Research Consortium has a background of over three decades of building the capacity and network of the economics profession in sub-Saharan Africa. This is achieved through research and post graduate training in economics as well as supported by communication and policy outreach program to disseminate our research results. Our alumni are found in ministries of finance, ministries of planning, ministries of agriculture, central banks, universities, and Thinks Tanks all over sub-Saharan Africa.

The Consortium itself consists of a group of bilateral governments, multilateral and foundation donor agencies who come together to support a commonly agreed programme of research activities, the dissemination of the research results and the training of future potential researchers. This provides a critical mass of support for a set of coordinated activities with shared overheads. We have a small Secretariat in Nairobi, Kenya, that implements the programme and provides technical support to the researchers, students, institutions, and others who constitute the AERC network.

All these elements come together strategically to fulfil AERC’s mission and objectives. Our mission is to strengthen local capacity for conducting independent, rigorous inquiry into problems pertinent to the management of African economies, through a synergetic programme combining research with post graduate training in economics. Our mission is founded on the premise that:

* first, development is more likely to occur where there is sustained sound management of the economy.
* second, that such management is more likely to happen where there is an active, well-informed group of locally based professional economists to conduct policy-relevant research.

Our business is to build that professional capacity, and we do this in two ways: one, through support for a wide range of research modalities and projects; and two, through postgraduate training in economics. These are complemented by communications and outreach activities that encourage the application of AERC products to economic policy making.

Due to its success, we have seen Government of Kenya training its economists through the AERC network public universities for the last 11 years with encouraging results. Other Governments in Africa (Ethiopia, Equatorial Guinea, and Ghana) are trying to replicate the GoK Capacity Building and Training Model

***Ladies and gentlemen,***

The link with economic policy making is integral to the research work itself, and Senior Policy Seminars such as this one is an important way of forging that link. The AERC Senior Policy Seminars provide a forum for the presentation of frontier research and evidence from country case studies that are synthesized to form a policy package for implementation. This is the design of AERC research output and knowledge generation, dissemination and seeking feedback from policy makers to improve policy design and the process of implementation.

The very first Senior Policy Seminar took place more than 27 years ago – in 1995 in Nairobi, Kenya. It focused on exchange rate, fiscal and financial policies. The next year in 1996 the proceedings moved to Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire for discussions on financial sector reforms

Previous titles of the SPS:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Theme** | **Dates** |
|  | Economic Research and Policy Making in Sub-Saharan Africa | March 1995 |
|  | Financial Sector Reforms, Domestic Resource Mobilization, and Investment in Africa | November 1996 |
|  | Fiscal Policy in Africa | October 1997 |
|  | Revenue Mobilization in Sub-Saharan Africa | February 2000 |
|  | Macroeconomic Policy and Poverty Reduction in Africa | February 2002 |
|  | Financing Pro-Poor Growth in Africa | March 2004 |
|  | Poverty, Growth, and Institutions | March 2005 |
|  | Governance and Pro-poor Growth in sub-Saharan Africa | March 2006 |
|  | Managing Commodity Booms in Sub-Saharan Africa | February 2007 |
|  | Climate Change and Economic Development in Sub-Saharan Africa | April 2008 |
|  | The Global Financial Crisis and Its Implications for the African Economies | April 2009 |
|  | Bank Regulatory Reforms in Africa: Enhancing Bank Competition and Intermediation Efficiency | March 2010 |
|  | Natural Resource Management in sub-Saharan Africa | March 2011 |
|  | (a) Health, Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction in sub-Saharan Africa  (b) Challenges Associated with the   Development of Oil Sector in Uganda (Special Policy Seminar) | March 2012  February 2012 |
|  | Youth and Unemployment in Africa | March 2013 |
|  | Capital Flight from Africa | April 2014 |
|  | Agriculture in Africa’s Transformation: The Role of Smallholder Farmers | March 2015 |
|  | Financial Inclusion in Africa | March 2016 |
|  | Industrialization in Africa | March 2017 |
|  | Rethinking Regional Integration in Africa | March 2018 |
| Fragility of Growth in African Economies | | March, 2019 |
| Agriculture and Food Policies for Better Nutrition Outcomes in Africa | | March, 2020 |
| The Global COVID-19 Health Pandemic and Its Implications for the African Economies | | March, 2021 |

The AERC since then has managed a wide range of topical issues of policy relevance that have shaped the policy space, policy design and implementation.

***Ladies and gentlemen,***

The topic of this twenty fourth Senior Policy Seminar – *Climate Change and Economic Development in Africa* – Climate change has adverse implications for Africa’s development, from health systems to agriculture and food systems and food markets, ecosystems, water resources, energy resources and physical infrastructure and threatens the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We hope to listen to the emerging knowledge and solutions for African economies.

***Ladies and gentlemen,***

Before I conclude let me take note of the financial support that make AERC’s programmes possible – This study has been funded by Norad, the Norwegian Development Agency, we continue to appreciate this support but the best way to appreciate the support even better is to make use of the knowledge generated to influence public policy. The policy debate today on climate change is critical for SDGs in Africa, but also the offshoot to this debate is central banking in Africa and climate change – negative supply shocks on food and energy prices and the transition to green economy. These challenges will be with us for a long time, and we need to develop policy instruments and dynamic policy resolutions. That is why the SPS today is critical.

And now, ladies and gentlemen, it is my very great pleasure to introduce our guest of honour at this Senior Policy Seminar. He is a leading African policy maker and heads the Kenyan Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperative. He has spearheaded reforms in the agricultural sector in the last few years with success. He has also pushed reforms in the market where the small holder farmers stand to benefit. It is important for policy makers to drive market reforms; this is where economic rent is shared and distributed and encourages productivity downstream. This is what Hon. Peter Munya stands for.

**Hon. Peter Munya Welcome to the 24th AERC SPS that awaits your Keynote speech!**

Thank you.