

**SPEECH BY THE CABINET SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS, CREATIVE ECONOMY AND SPORTS, HON. SALIM MVURYA, EGH, DURING THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 14TH KALASHA INTERNATIONAL FILM & TV MARKET, FESTIVAL AND AWARDS, HELD AT THE KICC, NAIROBI, ON 28TH APRIL 2026**

Honourable Guests,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great honour and privilege to join you today at the opening of the 14th Edition of the Kalasha International Film & TV Market, Festival, and Awards.

Allow me to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Kenya Film Commission for successfully organizing this important international event, under the stewardship of the Commission's Board and Management. Your dedication and commitment to advancing Kenya's film and television industry continue to position our country as a serious player on the global creative stage.

To all our international delegates and partners who have travelled from across the continent and beyond, I warmly welcome you to Kenya. Karibuni sana. Our country is rich in culture, diversity, landscapes, and stories, and we are delighted to host you. We hope your time here will not only be productive but also memorable, as you experience all that Kenya has to offer.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The Kalasha International Film & TV Market and Festival has steadily grown to become one of the largest and most influential platforms for the film and television industry in Africa. It brings together leading stakeholders, innovators, creatives, and decision-makers, creating a unique space for industry dialogue, policy exchange, collaboration, and the showcasing of innovation within the global screen sector.

This year's edition, themed "**Innovating Tradition: Re-inventing Storytelling One Frame at a Time,**" is both timely and visionary. It challenges us to rethink how we tell our stories, how we preserve our heritage, and how we leverage innovation to reach global audiences.

The diversity of participants gathered here including local and international film and television professionals, buyers and distributors demonstrates the growing significance of this platform. The Kalasha Market Exhibition, alongside the conferences, workshops provide invaluable opportunities for networking, learning, and business development.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As a Ministry, we recognize that the growth of the creative economy does not happen by chance. It requires deliberate policy formulation, strategic investment, and strong institutional support. This is why the Ministry of Youth Affairs, Creative Economy and Sports remains firmly committed to nurturing and monetizing creative talent across the country.

We are advancing a robust policy and legislative framework to unlock the full potential of the sector. At the centre of this effort is the Creative Economy Bill, 2026, a landmark piece of legislation designed to formalize, support, and regulate the creative industry.

This comprehensive Bill proposes the establishment of key institutions that will transform the sector. Among them is the Kenya Audio-Visual & Cinema Commission, which will be responsible for promotion, as well as the Kenya Audio-Visual Regulatory Authority, which will oversee regulation and licensing.

In addition, the Bill introduces critical funding and incentive mechanisms. These include the Creative Industry Development Fund which will provide grants and financial support to creatives. It also proposes a Creative Voucher System to facilitate access to training, equipment, and capacity building.

Through these interventions, we are laying the foundation to position Nairobi and Kenya as a sub-Saharan hub for film and content creation.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The creative economy is the next frontier of economic growth. It holds immense potential to create jobs, generate income, and empower our youth. It is also central to the realization of our Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda.

We must therefore challenge our creatives to take up this space boldly, to innovate, to collaborate, and to tell authentic African stories that resonate globally.

Across the world, the creative economy is expanding at an extraordinary pace, and Kenya is well placed to take advantage of this momentum. Already, our creative sector contributes 5% to the national economy, powered by a youthful, highly skilled, and digitally connected population. This growing ecosystem presents a unique opportunity to transform livelihoods while amplifying Kenya's cultural footprint on the global stage.

Globally, the creative economy is projected to account for at least 10% share of economic output by 2030, and this presents a clear call to action for Kenya to position itself as a leader both within the continent and beyond. To realize this ambition, we must invest across the entire value chain, from nurturing talent through training institutions and digital skills programmes, to strengthening production capacity in film, music, and expanding access to markets through festivals, digital platforms, and e-commerce channels that connect our creatives to the world. Kenya Film Commission has set a good example by organizing Kalasha Market and we couldn't be prouder.

As Government, we are taking deliberate steps to elevate the creative sector into a structured and sustainable industry. This includes investing in modern infrastructure, strengthening intellectual property protections, and creating pathways for creatives to earn and grow from their work.

Our goal is clear: to shift the perception of the creative economy from a side pursuit to a serious, thriving economic pillar. We must therefore challenge our creatives to step into this space with confidence, to innovate, to collaborate, and to share authentic African stories that resonate far beyond our borders.

At the same time, institutions such as the Kenya Film Commission must continue to raise their level of ambition. There is an urgent need to intensify the promotion and marketing of Kenya, both locally and internationally, as a premier filming destination. We must also do more to promote and distribute local content so that Kenyan stories can find their rightful place on global platforms.

The vision of making Kenya a global hub for film production is achievable, but it requires coordinated effort, strategic partnerships, and sustained investment.

In this regard, I wish to acknowledge the critical role played by the State Department for Youth Affairs and Creative Economy, under the leadership of the Principal Secretary, Hon. Fikirini Jackobs Katoi Kahindi. As the accounting officer, the PS will continue to provide the necessary oversight and support to ensure that our policies and programmes are effectively implemented for the benefit of the sector.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As we look forward to the culmination of this event, we are particularly excited about the Kalasha Awards Gala scheduled for 2nd May. This red-carpet event continues to celebrate excellence in the industry and recognize the outstanding achievements of our creatives.

The Kalasha Awards have increasingly gained international recognition and are often compared to the Oscars, a testament to the growing stature of Kenya's film industry on the global stage. This is a moment of pride for our country and a clear indication that we are moving in the right direction.

In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm the Ministry's unwavering commitment to supporting the growth and sustainability of the creative economy. We will continue to provide strong policy leadership, invest in talent development, modernize infrastructure, and strengthen regulatory frameworks to ensure that the sector thrives.

Let us seize this moment to innovate, to collaborate, and to elevate African storytelling to new heights.

I wish you all a successful and impactful Kalasha International Film & TV Market, Festival, and Awards.

Thank you, and God bless you all.