

SPEECH BY KENYA FILM COMMISSION (KFC) CHAIR MR. SUDI WANDABUSI, DURING THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 14TH KALASHA INTERNATIONAL FILM & TV MARKET, FESTIVAL AND AWARDS, HELD AT THE KICC, NAIROBI, ON 28TH APRIL 2026

The CS, Ministry of Youth Affairs, Creative Economy and Sports, Gov. Salim Mvurya,

The PS, State Department for Youth Affairs & Creative Economy, Mr. Fikirini Jacobs Kahindi,

Distinguished Guests,

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

On behalf of the Board of the Kenya Film Commission, I warmly welcome you all to this important gathering that continues to shape and elevate the future of Kenya's film and television industry. I also extend my sincere appreciation to our partners, stakeholders, and the Commission's Board and management for delivering yet another impactful edition of Kalasha.

To our international guests, *Karibuni Kenya*. We are honoured to host you. Kenya is not just a destination you visit—it is a story you experience, and a story worth telling.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our role as a Board is to provide strategic direction, governance, and oversight to ensure the Commission delivers on its mandate. But beyond that, we are focused on one clear ambition: to position Kenya not just as a participant in the global film industry, but as a competitive and preferred destination for film and television production.

This requires a deliberate and forward-looking approach—strengthening institutional capacity, improving service delivery, and remaining responsive to the evolving needs of the global screen sector. I wish to assure you that the Commission remains firmly guided by this vision.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The global film industry is highly competitive, and we must continuously sharpen our value proposition. Kenya's strength lies in its diversity—of locations, cultures, stories, and talent. But more importantly, our strength must be seen in efficiency, reliability, and a supportive environment.

Because in today's industry, *a great location attracts attention—but a great experience secures return.*

We are therefore enhancing our role as a facilitator—ensuring seamless coordination, clear processes, and a conducive environment for productions. At the same time, we remain committed to supporting local content, because *no nation becomes a global film hub without first believing in its own stories.*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Film is more than entertainment. It is influence. It is identity. It is economy.

It creates jobs, attracts investment, promotes tourism, and contributes to national development. We must therefore approach it not just as an art, but as a business with immense commercial potential. Because *when we invest in film, we are not just telling stories—we are building industries.*

We continue to strengthen partnerships with global studios, streaming platforms, distributors, and fellow film commissions to open markets, enable co-productions, and attract investment into Kenya's creative economy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we grow this industry, we must also recognize the ecosystem that sustains it. I wish to acknowledge the various film festivals and Awards across the country—Kitale Film Week, Women in Film Awards, Mombasa International Film Festival, the NBO Film Festival, and many others. We also celebrate the new kid on the block—the Embu International Film and Creative Arts Festival.

I further recognize the guilds, associations that tirelessly advocate for industry growth, as well as organizations such as the Female Filmmakers in Kenya Association, whose work in promoting and empowering women in film is both commendable and essential. *An industry grows stronger when every voice is given space to be heard.*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Kalasha Market is more than an event—it is a marketplace of ideas, partnerships, and opportunity. It is where stories find partners, and where creativity meets capital.

I encourage all participants to fully utilize this platform. For our creatives, this is your moment—tell your stories boldly and confidently. For our international partners, this is your opportunity to discover Kenya’s unique stories, diverse locations, and growing talent.

If you are looking for fresh narratives, Kenya is where new stories begin.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a Board, we remain committed to building capacity, nurturing talent, and strengthening the entire value chain. We will continue to work closely with Government and stakeholders to ensure the right frameworks are in place for sustainable growth.

In conclusion, I reaffirm our commitment to making Kenya a global hub for film production. This vision is within reach, but it requires collaboration, investment, and a shared commitment.

Let us use this platform to build partnerships, unlock opportunities, and position Kenya firmly on the global film map.

Because the future of film in Kenya is not something we wait for—it is something we build, together.

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

Thank you, and God bless you all.