

**The 10th Session of the Science and Technology Ministers' Round Table
Meeting**

6th October 2013

**Enhancing Knowledge Sharing through People in the
Globalizing World**

Your Excellencies Ministers

**Mr. Koji Omi, Founder and Chairman, Science and Technology in Society
Forum**

Distinguished World Leaders

Members of the Diplomatic Community

Representatives of Non Governmental Organizations

Ladies and Gentlemen

Allow me to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all those who have made this forum possible. It is indeed a privilege and honor for me to be invited to participate and discuss issues on enhancing knowledge sharing through people in the globalizing world and efforts to enhance the global mobility of human resources in science and technology.

The development process has people as a key factor to the rise of a nation and so human resource development is essential in enhancing economic growth. Linked to this is the fact that competitiveness of a country is influenced largely by human resource development.

With the current progress in globalization, the internal and external circumstances of developing and developed countries have changed drastically in terms of human resource requirements. This has made it

necessary for countries to encourage highly skilled human resource mobility. Globalization is driving the need for global mobility by increasing the number and variety of international assignments by individuals and institutions.

Globally, the flow of skilled human resources appears to be significantly higher towards rich economies than otherwise. Statistics indicate that in most African countries, a high percentage leave for various reasons resulting in brain drain. In some cases up to 50% of the tertiary professionals educated at government expense leave mostly to developed countries. Apparently, there is a growing shortage of such workers in a number of developed countries and to meet these shortages countries are implementing measures to facilitate the recruitment of foreign skilled workers.

Since global mobility cannot be avoided, the main concern is that this mobility pattern has resulted in an unequal distribution of highly skilled labor, income and living conditions. The results have been professional imbalances in developing countries, Kenya included.

According to published reports by UNESCO and the World Bank, Kenya loses a high number of its trained work force to the developed countries and some upcoming economies with high growth rate such as Botswana and Rwanda in Africa. Higher education is one of the principal conduits of permanent emigration. Young professionals in the health and research sector acquire specialized and postgraduate professional qualifications in the country and are then pulled to greener pastures in pursuit of higher education and economic improvement. In most cases this is looked at by the country as losing its investment in the education of professionals especially where public funding is involved.

To address the situation, the Kenya Government has realised that brain drain can also be looked at positively as world mobility and brain gain in that young professionals who go to these countries get improved training that trickles back directly or indirectly. The National development agenda in Vision 2030 initiatives support programmes that enhance rapid capacity building in a wide range of areas to get the critical mass of professionals needed and enhanced development of science, technology, and innovation (ST&I) in creating new ways of learning, research, production and doing business globally. Through the use of ST&I, more commercial, social, and professional opportunities are being created with worldwide approach through programmes such as business process out sourcing, exchange programmes in learning institutions of different levels, ICT infrastructure improvement and programmes to attract specialize foreign expertise. These programmes have been targeted to ensure change in knowledge dissemination, social interaction, economic and business practices and political engagement within the global village.

Through the implementation of new legislation such as the University Act, 2013 and the ST&I Act, 2013, the Kenya Government has recognised the need for continual scouting for new knowledge, identification of skill deficiencies, technological transfer as well as knowledge and resources. There are initiatives to attract and retain professionals in the research and higher learning institutions through recognition and reward. This is to ensure that the country remains globally competitive.

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