

REPUBLIC OF RWANDA



OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

**Remarks by the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister
Dr. Ngirente Edouard**

**At the 5th Partnership for Skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering
and Technology (PASET) Forum**

Kigali Convention Centre, May 20th, 2019

- **Honorable Ministers, here present,**
- **Hon Prof. George Magoha, Chair of the Partnership for Skills in Applied Science Engineering and Technology (PASET) Governing Council and Cabinet Secretary of Education, Government of Kenya,**
- **Dr. Jaime Saavedra, Senior Director of World Bank Education Global Practice,**
- **PASET Governing Council & Executive Board Members,**
- **Development Partners in Private and Public Sector,**
- **Distinguished Participants,**

Good morning.

1. I am very delighted to welcome you all to this 5th Regional Forum for the Partnership for Skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (PASET). I thank the PASET Governing Council for choosing Rwanda to host this important Forum.

2. This Forum is focusing on the implications of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and Digital Economy on Higher Education and Skills Development in Africa.

3. This revolution will offer Africa, opportunities that will accelerate economic transformation into higher rates of productivity and growth. To achieve its goal, the Fourth Industrial Revolution will focus on building high-level ownership of African countries in what regards initiatives and actions that are necessary to prepare Africa's youth for a digital future.

4. It is through digital literacy and advanced skills acquired in Higher Education and TVET that Africa will be able to benefit from the Fourth Industrial Revolution. The ultimate goal is to build all required skills to produce relevant technologies for Africa's innovators, entrepreneurs and future leaders.

5. One of the key principles of Africa's Education Strategy is the consideration of quality and relevant education, trainings and research as core for technological innovation and entrepreneurship.

- **Distinguished participants,**

6. We still face in Africa, the issue of numeracy. As Africans, our ambition should be to consider mathematics as an important tool that will help our students to develop their analytical thinking. In doing so, we should ensure that pupils who complete their primary schools are well equipped with relevant basic numeracy skills while those who complete their secondary schools have a minimum proficiency in Mathematics.

7. In Africa much was done. We continue to see trends where countries are making efforts to promote the teaching of mathematics. It is high time that all African countries as they have done in promoting literacy, also set up strategies that will guarantee teaching of mathematics at all levels of education. Of course languages should not be put aside as they are also the medium through which mathematics and other sciences are taught.

8. A highly educated labour force is the significant catalyst for transforming Africa's economies. Thus, continuous investment in education and skills development is required for the labour force. This will move up the value chain into more job creating manufacturing and service sectors while increasing these sectors productivity levels.

- **Distinguished guests,**

9. Today, many African countries including Rwanda have been fully committed to their membership to PASET. This is one of their key strategies to achieve the goal of quality relevant skills in higher education and research.

10. PASET has many initiatives. One of them is the Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund (RSIF). This fund will play a key role in training a critical mass of highly skilled scientists, professionals and innovators. It will be done through capacity building for research, innovation support and scholarships for at least 10,000 PhD trainings, doubling the number of PhDs in Sub-Saharan Africa in the next decade.

11. For PASET to achieve its objective, all African countries and their partners should support it. Therefore, I urge participants to this forum to advise our continent on how better to:

- share global models and approaches to adapt Higher Education and TVET ecosystems to adapt to changes of the 4th Industrial Revolution and Digital economy;
- mobilizing support for PASET's regional initiatives among African governments, private sector, development partners and donors; and
- exchange knowledge on effective policies and strategies at the level of government, industry and universities/ institutions that can facilitate provision of market-relevant training.

12. Rwanda, as a country that seeks to establish itself as a globally competitive knowledge-based economy, as outlined in our National Strategy for Transformation, 2017-2024, would like to use this opportunity to reiterate its commitment to support all initiatives of PASET.

13. As I conclude, I would like to thank once again organisers of this forum. I also thank all African countries, country partners and the World Bank for their contribution to this Important Forum. I look forward to the outcomes of this 5th PASET Forum, as a major force for accelerating the quality of Higher Education and Skills for the future of the African continent.

I thank you for your attention!