



**MINISTRY OF HEALTH**

## **Talking Points**

**For**

**Mr. Julius Korir, CBS; Principal Secretary**

**During the Official Opening**

**Of the**

**Kenyatta University Reproductive Health  
Conference**

**And**

**International Day to End Obstetric Fistula  
(IDEOF)**

**23rd May 2017**

**Nairobi, Kenya**

- **Your Excellency, Dr. Margaret Kenyatta; First Lady of the Republic of Kenya;**
- **Distinguished guests;**
- **Ladies and gentlemen.**

It is my pleasure to join you in this first Reproductive Health Conference with a focus on obstetric fistula. The theme of the conference “**Ending Obstetric Fistula in a Generation**” is critical, bearing in mind the suffering brought about by this condition. The International Day to End Obstetric Fistula (IDEOF) will also be commemorated on the sidelines of this Conference.

This Conference is expected to examine challenges and opportunities that can be used to reduce obstetric fistula. These include treatment options, community initiatives, technological advances and research. In addition, the Conference will generate knowledge on how obstetric fistula can be prevented.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Despite the progress made in improving access to obstetric care services, there still exist disparities among women of various demographic characteristics. Obstetric fistula, which is a devastating condition that should not have happened in the first place in this time and era, happens mostly to vulnerable and marginalized women in our society.

Due to the stigma associated with this condition, many women suffer the indignity quietly from a condition that has been virtually eliminated in the industrialized world.

Nonetheless, significant strides have been made in eliminating fistula in the world and more so in Kenya. The Government of Kenya recognizes maternal mortality as a key indicator of health system effectiveness. Consequently, we have put in place structures to accelerate the availability and use of universally accessible quality health services including those related to maternal health services which are critical for reducing birth complications. This is done through strengthening health systems with a view to reaching the sustainable Development Goals and other targets and national goals like Vision 2030.

Further, the Ministry of Health in collaboration with Development Partners, has formulated initiatives for improving quality of care for mothers and new-borns. Specifically these initiatives are geared towards the delivery of safe, effective, timely, efficient, equitable, and people-centred maternal and new-born care during childbirth.

We also call upon partners, health care workers of all cadres in both the public and private sectors and communities, to work together and ensure universal access to reproductive health services.

We are privileged to have partners who have supported the National Program including Teaching institutions, Hospitals and Organizations in the areas of capacity building of health workers, community mobilization, provision of hospital equipment, funding fistula repair and rehabilitation of the fistula survivors.

**Your Excellency,**

I cannot conclude without highlighting your commitment to maternal and child health in this country. You have led by example to ensure that no woman or child should die from preventable conditions.

The Beyond Zero platform has sensitized the citizens and the leadership on various health aspects including dealing with issues of stigma and discrimination for conditions like reproductive fistula and HIV. I wish to assure you of the Ministry's cooperation and support to further drive this noble initiative.

With those few remarks, it is now my pleasant duty to invite Her Excellency, the First Lady of Kenya; Dr. Mrs. Margaret Kenyatta, to give the keynote address.

Welcome Your Excellency!