**VC’s WELCOME REMARKS DURING AIR POLLUTION IN THE CITY OF NAIROBI: BRIDGING EVIDENCE WITH POLICY**

**GEOHealth Hub for Research and Training in Eastern Africa (University of Nairobi) and Kenya Air Quality Network Stakeholder Engagement Workshop**

**Rm 401, University of Nairobi Towers, Main Campus, Harry Thuku Road, Nairobi**

**Mr.Zephaniah Ouma, representing the CS environment and forestry,**

**Mr.Abdi Abdullahi, Environmental Analyst, Ministry of Energy and Petroleum,**

**Eng. Elijah Muthusi, Kenya Urban Roads Authority,**

**Eng. Michael Muchiri, Senior Principal Superintending Engineer, Ministry of Transport.**

**All partners, present physically and those online,**

**All invited Guests,**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

I am pleased to join you in today’s forum which has been convened to share with key stakeholders the findings of research on air pollution in the city of Nairobi and the effects of air pollution on human health and the environment.

Quality of air is an important determinant of public health for a city. In Nairobi City, this has been of particular concern due to unregulated vehicular, industrial, and solid waste burning emissions.

The University of Nairobi is part of a consortium known as Global Environmental and Occupational Health (GEO Health) Hub for Research and Training in Eastern Africa.

GEO-Health EA is one of the seven hubs funded by the National Institute of Health (NIH), of the USA, around the world.

University of Nairobi is working in partnership with Addis Ababa University, Makerere University, University of Rwanda, Columbia University, University of Southern California, and Colorado School of Public Health in this venture.

Over the last 27 months, the University of Nairobi (UoN) has been undertaking research initiatives on air pollution, following the erection of a Beta Attenuation Monitor (BAM 1022) at its Parklands Campus.

The BAM is a designated Federal Equivalent (Gold) Monitor that facilitates data validity and accuracy to standardize the low-cost sensors (LCS).

UoN has 10 low-cost sensors high precision fine particles monitors – the E-Samplers, distributed in 10 primary schools within Nairobi to establish long term exposure of schoolgoing children to the fine particulate matter (PM2.5).

The schools are:

* Embakasi
* James Gichuru
* Baba Dogo
* Heshima Road
* St Bakhita
* Nairobi Primary
* Olympic
* Karen-C
* Riruta
* Moi Avenue

In line with our core mandate of teaching, learning, research and community service, we continue to engage in cutting edge research that contribute to the transformation of the community. In this respect, The University has built the capacity to generate scientific evidence on daily and seasonal changes in air quality as well as the spatial distribution of pollutants.

Science does not lie. I am therefore convinced that the information generated from this research will be important for policy makers from national and county government and agencies to plan intervention mechanisms that will improve air quality in our city.

This capacity is available to support other air quality monitors to calibrate their sensors.

Let me also take the opportunity to recognize and appreciate partner institutions that are collaborating with us locally. We are working with six major hospitals in the city to determine respiratory and cardiovascular disease morbidity and mortality in Nairobi. The hospitals are:

* Aga Khan University
* Mama Lucy Kibaki
* Mater
* Mbagathi
* Metropolitan
* Nairobi

The information will be subjected to microenvironmental modeling based on Monte Carlo sampling techniques to determine impacts of the air pollutants on diseases burden in the city.

Today, we invite the key stakeholders to show case our study but also the policy makers to chart a way forward on how we can collaborate to develop appropriate interventions.

Our stakeholders today include members of the Kenya air Quality Network, students from the UoN and TUK, Teachers from our collaborating schools, staff from our collaborating hospitals, Stockholm Environment Institute, the Nairobi County Government, NEMA, Kenya Urban Roads Authority, the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Petroleum and Energy, Ministry of Transport.

I take this opportunity to invite to you all to this workshop and wish you fruitful deliberations.

It is now my pleasure to invite Mr Zephania Ouma, who is representing the Cabinet Secretary for Environment & Forestry to give a keynote speech and make an official opening of the workshop.

Prof Stephen Kiama

Vice-Chancellor

University of Nairobi