



## FAREWELL LUNCHEON

### WANG'OMBE KARIUKI's FINAL SPEECH

#### AS CAK'S DIRECTOR GENERAL

6<sup>th</sup> JANUARY, 2023

My Dear Colleagues,

1. **The time has come...**to say goodbye. **I am bound** by law to leave you, and we should respect the law.
2. I hereby disembark, not only from the CAK but Public Service, to chart another path...after 30 years of Service.
3. The most comforting reality is that I debark from a **Vessel** that is steady. **MV CAK has been built by the best from the best.** It is equipped with the best Crew, that is you and The Competition Act, accompanying subsidiary legislation including the current Strategic Plan. These are very modern navigational instruments.
4. MV CAK has been built **assiduously** over the last decade. Informed by the best brains, not only in Kenya, but across the whole Globe.

5. **I appreciate the Support and dedication of my friends in this journey.** The numerous meetings we held;- from the banks of the Bosphorus river; 6.30 am Breakfasts; in Serena, Founding Farmers at 1924 Penn Avenue; Workshops at 1818 H Street; 9 Riverside Building, The National Treasury and obviously cannot forget the weekly 5.30 pm briefings here in Safari Park.
6. **These events laid CAK's great foundation.** The women and men who helped me are all in here and others are represented. This is your **success; any failure is mine.**
7. **It is with no doubt** that the foundation laid and the Vision we articulated have shaped the course and speed, leading CAK to becoming a credible and effective Agency.
8. You will agree with me that CAK's resilience has been tested; during the Covid-19 and the subsequent economic downturns. We weathered the storm. CAK's independence has been visible over its lifetime while its enforcement innovativeness is recognized across the Globe.
9. **This was my goal.**
10. **Mr. Chairman, when I assumed this position,** I was guided by the unfettered urge to serve the Public, not to seek glory; build an Agency that is accountable and transparent and an organization that is impactful.

11. The publication you have just launched **Balozi**, confirms that this aspiration has been met.
12. **Nonetheless**, this has not been a Solo act nor a duet performance but an Orchestra Concert. **I have just been a Conductor.**
13. The CAK Boards have been steadfast in supporting me to achieve my Vision. I enjoyed the immeasurable support to the extent that the members appreciated that their contribution is giving back to the Society.
14. At no time did allowances payments or the so-called Board training ever become an issue.
15. I attribute this aspect to the fact that the CAK members are re-known professionals and exhibited this in meetings. In addition, the appointment process was quite consultative.
16. Consequently, we never incurred unnecessary resources in the endless inductions incurred in other State Corporations, and yet CAK's effectiveness and efficiency has been termed as top-notch.
17. **David, Susan, Canon Gikunju, Eunice, Elizabeth, Judith, Abdirizak, Carol, Leila, Stephen**, you are heroes.
18. I also had a group of tremendous friends across the Globe who have been part of this Great Symphony. Wherever you are based; **Graciella Miralles, Martha Martinez, Cecile Fruman, Anabelle Gonzalez, Frederic Jenny, Antonia Capabianco, Antonio Gomes, Andrea Mundt, Olaf Welde, Nigel Caesar, Eleanor Fox, Hardin Ratshisusu, Simon Roberts, Bill Kovacic, Reena Des Nair, Thando Vilakazi, Rafael Meza, Teresa Moreira, Elizabeth Gachuri and Esther Koimet** you all made the Show exciting.

19. I wish to respectfully recognize **the Japan Fair Trade Commission and Japan International Cooperation Agency**. They moulded me, at the very early life of my career, and **inculcated the Kaizen culture in me**. This has guided me throughout my career journey.
20. **Not to forget my humble parents** who taught me the science of budget making and prioritizing at a very early stage of my life. **My late Sister** instilled in me, that no situation is insurmountable while my family's selflessness led them to literally donating me to CAK. **These have been the CAK's real drivers**.
21. The CAK's Staff contribution in this journey has been unwavering. You have supported me to literally fly near the sun. Most of you seem to have enjoyed the altitude but a few seem to have been affected by the immense heat.
22. **I salute you all and I pray that you continue** supporting my successor with this level of dedication. It would be quite fatuous if your support and for that matter fear, was for Wang'ombe and not the institution and the law. **For the ones who were affected by the heat**, just take it that it is a process of transforming you into diamonds. Therefore, I do not need to apologize.
23. **At this juncture**, I appreciate the presence of some of CAK's former staff. I will never forget your support in the formative stages of CAK. I thank you also, for **the continued ambassadorial role you have played**. I recognize that some of you left because the field was too small and others left because they may have been hurt in the match. I have always considered these to be just career milestones; nothing more, nothing less.

24. **Ladies and Gentlemen**, you will all agree with me that over the years CAK has set very high standards and expectations to our Stakeholders. I never blinked in delivering these expectations. I never sought scapegoats nor escape goats but always driven by an insatiable desire to achieve more with less. I endeavored to infix this culture in CAK.
25. **Mr. Chairman**, time will tell if I succeeded.
26. The CAK's last Strategic Plans and culture have resonated very well with the objectives of the major development partners. We have partnered in deepening competition and consumer protection in various sectors of our economy and also in the region. These initiatives have led to CAK being honored at various forums.
27. **Nonetheless**, over the last 12 months, **Mr. Chairman**, conscious of my sunset date, which is today, I deliberately excused my direct participation in interaction with our development partners. This was aimed at ensuring smooth transition and creating ownership of CAK's activities with the development Partners by my Successors.
28. Cognizant of dwindling resources, my unsolicited advice is that **the CAK's engagement with development partners should be accelerated.**
29. **Fortunately**, my friend Tania Begazo of The World Bank Group, will always pick your call and accept a meeting at any time so long as you mention competition enforcement. While Tamara, of Financial Services Deepening Programme, will drop everything else when you mention Financial Inclusion.
30. **However**, reciprocity in terms of turn-around and thought process is important in all these engagements.

- 31.**Mr. Chairman**, as highlighted earlier, accountability and transparency has been the hallmark of CAK's enforcement process. CAK has continuously engaged the traditional media and at the same time informed and educated the stakeholders through social media and our website.
- 32.This is aimed at creating regulatory predictability which is of paramount importance to investors; whether SMEs or Multi-nationals. The accountability agenda has also included preparation of very detailed Financial Statements and Reports to the National Assembly. Not to mention the Memorandums CAK has presented wherever it appears before Parliamentary Committees.
- 33.This approach has facilitated CAK's requests for law review to be attended to within a short period when Tabled.
- 34.**In addition**, it is important to note that CAK's advisory opinions to the government over the last 10 years have been adopted and implemented to the letter. The opinions have been in relation to professional services; tea Sector; cement sector and also government procurement. This indicates the efficacy of CAKs opinions and Briefs in the eyes of the policy makers.
- 35.**Mr. Chairman**, this is the CAK I hand over today: A credible, independent and effective agency, well-resourced in terms of vibrant and skilled staff, respected nationally and globally and void of any governance issue.
- 36.**Balozi**, I will not be **an honest Man** if I do not appreciate how you handled the transition from David's Boards to your Boards. Subsequently, you have always deployed your diplomatic skills and Public Service ethos in Board meetings.

37. Let me wish you well with your current Board **and invite you ALL, gently,** to continue with the **collegiate and servant spirit** of the CAK's Boards.

38. And to you, **CAK staff,** the only gift I seek from **All of You today,** is a commitment that you shall continue with this upward projectile. It is my justified expectation that when time comes you will hand over an improved CAK than bequeathed to you, in any position you shall be holding.

39. **To conclude,** allow me to paraphrase **Jay-Z,** in his song *Empire State of Mind*; my departure should

*make you feel brand new; and let it*

*let it inspire you;*

40. And as **Puff Daddy, Faith Evans and 112** said in their memory to **Christopher Wallace:**

*...let memories give us strength we need to proceed.*

41. Thank you very much, God Bless You.