

WELCOMING REMARKS BY DR. ROSALIND NYAWIRA, DIRECTOR NATIONAL COUNTER TERRORISM CENTRE DURING THE SECOND NAIROBI CAUCUS

**The National Security adviser, Amb Dr. Monica Juma,
Excellencies, Ambassadors and High Commissioners
Distinguished Colleagues from across the region
Ladies and Gentlemen**

We are truly honoured that you could join us for this Second Caucus. Our common front in confronting the shared challenge of terrorism.

This Caucus is a framework born of the understanding that terrorism and violent extremism are a shared, complex and constantly mutating challenge that is best addressed through concerted, collective efforts that are locally inspired and locally owned. We seek to complement existing efforts by providing a strategic yet practical solutions to the dynamic ways terrorism and violent extremism is manifesting in our specific context.

Ladies at Gentlemen,

As part of the outcomes of our First Caucus last year which focused on StratComms, delegates highlighted terrorist exploitation of technology and communication as an area of core concern.

In response to this call by members, the *Second Nairobi Caucus on Preventing the Exploitation of Technology and Communication for Terrorist Use* is conceived as a context specific examination of how terrorist groups are exploiting technologies and communication platforms in our region.

We hope to create a shared understanding and how to respond to ways by which terrorists are leveraging on technology and using communication platforms to commit terrorist acts in the region. Over the next two days, we hope to:

- a) Create awareness of technological and communications vulnerabilities being exploited by terrorists and violent extremists;

- b) Build partnerships among stakeholders to prevent the exploitation of technology and communications for terrorist use; and
- c) Enhance capacity, disseminate tools and share expertise to disrupt the terrorist misuse of technology and communication platforms.

Dear Colleagues,

This growing exploitation of technology and communication calls for sustained and innovative approaches in our counter terrorism efforts. At this critical juncture, it is incumbent upon us to build capabilities, partnerships and mobilise the resources necessary to address this evolving vulnerability.

Terrorist groups active in our region have demonstrated an affinity for technology including unmanned systems, digital currencies and informational tools necessary for communication, recruitment and incitement.

We are witnessing a resurgence of terrorist operated websites, the development of sophisticated moderation evasion tactics, increased decentralisation, enhanced dissemination techniques. This enhanced ability to circumvent moderation efforts points to moderation blind spots among infrastructure and service providers including language and a limited understanding of the indigenous attributes of terrorist activity specific to East and Southern Africa.

These are challenges that we have to address collectively, and which can only be sufficiently degraded if we mobilise all stakeholders; creating synergies, building capabilities and deploying resources to deny terrorist an information advantage and free reign over high-risk technologies. We have to walk a tight balance between safety, free speech and privacy.

We recognise the presence of tech companies and the academia and indeed value them as partners in this conversation and action. With them, we hope to carry out research on the new technology and its impact on security, and co-create responses.

Esteemed Colleagues,

In these two days we hope to make the strategic considerations but also together come up with practical steps to keep pace and get ahead of this evolving threat. The resources and networks gathered here are invaluable towards realising these objectives.

Finally. It is my distinct honour to invite our National Security Advisor and Chief Guest, Amb. (Dr) Monica Juma to deliver the keynote address and launch the Caucus. Amb. Juma is a consummate diplomat, a leading strategist and a great friend of the Caucus.

Karibu Waziri.