Good morning.

It is my great pleasure to join you all at this auspicious launch in Kenya of the 2013/2014 Education for All Global Monitoring Report (EFA GMR 2013/14). On behalf of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, allow me to thank the organizers of this event and to convey warm greetings to all distinguished participants present here today.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since inception in 2003, the EFA Global Monitoring Report (EFA GMR) continues to provide a timely update on progress that countries are making towards the Education for All (EFA) goals that we agreed to at the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000. Today’s gathering of education stakeholders is a clear testimony that policy makers, education stakeholders, the development partner community and civil society players regard the GMR as an authoritative resource and reference document on education.
This year the theme focuses on “Teaching and Learning: Achieving Quality Education for All” and underlines the pivotal role of teaching and learning to the development in a rapidly changing world. The report explains how investing wisely in teachers, and other reforms aimed at strengthening equitable learning, transform the long-term prospects of people and societies.

In discussing the main theme of the Report, which is how best to strengthen the whole of education system through investment in the teaching personnel for quality teaching and learning, as has been presented to us in detail by the Director of the EFA Global Monitoring Report, let us remind ourselves once again of, and equally focus on, the key messages in the Report namely:

1. Without attracting and adequately training enough teachers the learning crisis will last for several generations and hit the disadvantaged hardest. In many sub-Saharan African countries, for example, the Report reveals that only one in five of the poorest children reach the end of primary school having learnt the basics in reading and mathematics in a third of countries analyzed by the Report, less than three-quarters of existing primary school teachers are trained to national standards;

2. The cost of 250 million children around the world not learning the basics translates into a loss of an estimated $129 billion. In total, 31 countries in sub-Saharan Africa are losing at least half the amount they spend on primary education because children are not learning;

3. Ensuring an equal, quality education for all can generate huge economic rewards, increasing a country’s gross domestic product per capita by 23 per cent over 40 years. If education inequality in sub-Saharan Africa had been halved to the level of Latin America and the Caribbean, the annual per capita growth rate in the period 2005–2010 would have been 47% higher; and

4. To achieve good quality education for all, governments must provide enough trained teachers, and focus their teacher policies on meeting the needs of the disadvantaged. This means attracting the best candidates into teaching; giving them relevant training; deploying them within countries to areas where they are needed most; and offering them incentives to make a long-term commitment to teaching.

Distinguished participants,

As in each year, the GMR 2013/2014 monitors progress towards the six Education for All goals, the Report has noted countries around the world continue to make progress towards attaining equitable,
quality education and lifelong learning for all. Regrettably, evidence indicates that, despite advances over the past decade, not a single goal will be achieved globally by 2015. Positively, the Report also shows that it is not too late to accelerate progress in the final stages. To this end, I am happy to note that my Ministry, through UNESCO’s technical support, has launched two critical EFA initiatives: First, the 2015 EFA National Review process whose aim is to assess progress made towards achieving the six EFA goals in addition to the EFA End Decade Assessment launched in 2012. These assess the extent to which Kenya has kept its commitments made at World Education Forum in 2000. Second, the EFA Acceleration Initiative branded ‘The Big Push’ is aimed at accelerating EFA progress towards 2015 through identification of bottlenecks in achieving EFA Goals, articulation of targeted interventions that are of high impact, realistic and feasible in terms of timeline for and resources. This Big Push Plan in Kenya has been developed as part and parcel of the implementation of National Education Sector Support Programme (NESSP), and I wish to take this opportunity to request all partners and stakeholders to support this Acceleration Initiative so that we can move many steps closer to the target year of 2015.

Distinguished guests,
The thematic section of the Global Monitoring Report looks in detail at the importance of teaching and learning for development. It is noted that an education system is only as good as its teachers. The focus is on improving the quality of education, including through reforming teacher training, deployment and motivation. One strategy illustrated in teacher reform is the development of digital literacy skills demanded by rapidly evolving information and communication technologies and social media. I wish to underline that in our own context, ICT in education policy, set out in the Sessional Paper number 14 of 2012, highlights the importance of education in the 21st as the source of knowledge, innovation and skills development. To this end, the government has launched the 1 laptop per child initiative to integrate ICT in public primary schools. This initiative comprises of ICT infrastructure, capacity development and digital content.

Consistent with the theme, allow me to dwell a little bit more in my remarks on teacher issues in Kenya in order to provoke further discussion for the improvement of the quality our education. We have in the country 22 public and 97 private primary teacher training colleges graduating an average of 11,500 teachers annually. The public diploma teacher training colleges train 1,340 per year within a three year programme, while ECDE teachers are trained mainly through in service programs at certificates and diploma levels. On an annual basis, 10,000 teachers are trained at certificate level while 12,000 are trained at diploma level. Despite the fact that the services of these teachers are
required, the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) is not able to absorb all trained teachers due to budgetary constraints.

During the first Medium-Term Plan (MTP I), 29,060 teachers were employed against 28,000 and on the average, Pupils to Teacher Ratio (PTR) at primary level moved from 44:1 in 2007 to 45:1 2010 against target of 42:1. However, shortage of teachers means that in many schools PTR is above 42:1, with as high as 85:1 ratio in high potential and urban area.

The MTP I target was to recruit 28,000 additional teachers during out of which 21,400 were for primary schools and 6,600 for post primary institutions and target for 2010/11 was to recruit 6,000 teachers. Overall, 29,060 teachers were recruited with 18,020 being on permanent and pensionable terms.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Management of teachers is faced with challenges in registration, recruitment, deployment, promotion, financing, discipline, maintenance of teaching standards and employee satisfaction. There lacks a mechanism to ensure that all persons qualified in education as a discipline and involved in teaching are registered. Implementation of FPE and FDSE, establishment of new schools under CDF and Local Authority Trust Fund LATF outstrips teacher recruitment and weak linkages and inadequate collaboration with post-secondary teacher training institutions also lead to ineffective strategies in mapping out teachers" needs in the country.

Teacher balancing and rationalization and resistance of transfers by teachers pose great challenge in deployment.

Many of these challenges will be addressed through the implementation of strategies in the National Education Sector Plan (NESP). The TSC will maintain a sufficient and qualified teaching force for public education institutions through national equity in teacher distribution and optimal utilization. This will involve improving registration of all qualified teachers who enter the teaching service and appropriate deployment in sufficient numbers based on the cost effective staffing norms to satisfy the agreed teacher pupil ratios and curriculum based establishment.

In conclusion, ladies and gentleman, the report sheds light on policies, programmes and practices that have produced equitable access to quality learning and improved learning outcomes for all. We at the Ministry derive critical lessons from the Report –that is ensuring that the quality of teaching
activities and learning environments is equitable is a challenge that all countries, regardless of their stage of development, have to address.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Finally may I once again thank the organizers in the Ministry, KNATCOM and UNESCO for inviting me to grace and preside over this EFA GMR 2013/2014 launch event. While I look forward to taking part in Panel Discussion that follows this Official Launch, I take this opportunity to wish all the participants fruitful reflections, dialogue and deliberations throughout the day. In my capacity as the Cabinet Secretary responsible for the education sector in Kenya, I very much expect to receive recommendations from the Technical Session within the next few weeks and commit to addressing them consultatively and inclusively. At the same time, I invite all of our partners and stakeholders once again to continue our journey of education sector development together, so that quality education will become a reality for all.

With these remarks, it is now my great honor and pleasure to declare the 2013/4 Education for All Global Monitoring Report: Teaching and Learning – Achieving Quality for All officially launched in Kenya.

I thank you.