REMARKS TO BE DELIVERED BY HON. JACOB KAIMENYI, FICD, EBS, CABINET SECRETARY MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, DURING ROUND-TABLE CONSULTATIONS PRECEDEING THE CELEBRATIONS TO MARK FIFTY (50) YEARS OF KENYA AND UNESCO COOPERATION, ON 21 OCTOBER, 2014 AT 9.00 A.M. AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
Vice Chancellor, University of Nairobi,
Vice Chancellor, Kenyatta University,
Guest Speaker Professor Bethwell Alan Ogot,
Director UNESCO Regional Office, Nairobi,
The Secretary General/CEO Kenya National Commission for UNESCO,
Senior Government Officials present,
Distinguished panelists,
Distinguished Scholars Present,
Distinguished guests,
Students,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to be here during the round table discussions to mark 50 years of UNESCO’s presence in Kenya and Kenya in UNESCO. I appreciate the fact that this is an important forum where intellectuals will exchange views in the areas of UNESCO’s competence namely: Education, Natural Science, Social and Human Science, Culture and Communication and Information. At the outset, let me take this early opportunity to sincerely thank the University of Nairobi for having accepted to host this worthwhile intellectual event. The presence of Professor Ogot as chief guest is indeed important. Professor Ogot, is
an eminent Kenyan intellectual and has long relations with UNESCO having served as President of the 26th Session of the General Conference of UNESCO in 1981. The wealth of experience which Prof, Ogot has as a result of his long relation with UNESCO will go a long way in providing a basis for exchange of ideas in the five areas of UNESCO areas of competence.

Ladies and gentlemen, the theme of today’s roundtable “Perspectives on Sustainable development for the 21st Century” captures the spirit of the 50 years between Kenya and UNESCO. UNESCO was formed in 1945 and was mandated to promote peace and sustainable development amongst mankind
through its areas of competence. This platform is therefore important for sharing the great ideas in Education, Sciences, Culture and Communication Information. UNESCO’s ensuing overarching objectives include: “attaining quality education for all and life-long learning; mobilizing science knowledge and policy for sustainable development; addressing emerging social and ethical challenges; fostering cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and a culture of peace; and building inclusive knowledge societies through information and communication”
Ladies and gentlemen, the hosting of this event at the University of Nairobi is not accidental but by design. The University of Nairobi has a long relationship with UNESCO dating back from the 60s to date with many activities undertaken during the period under review. It is in record that UNESCO funded a teacher training project and also supported the construction of the education building at the University of Nairobi. It is also worth noting that the UNESCO funded the establishment of a Master Program in Geology at the University. These are just among the many other undertakings between the University of Nairobi and UNESCO some of which were at the individual level.
UNESCO has not only worked with the University of Nairobi, but also other public and private Universities; Kenyatta University in particular has a strong relationship with UNESCO. In the recent past Kenya National Commission for UNESCO has undertaken Student Training Entrepreneurial Project (STEP) and *Bodaboda* riders’ capacity building workshop under Social and Human Sciences Programme. These initiatives have impacted positively and I urge institutions to forge stronger links with UNESCO to optimize on the opportunities available.
Ladies and gentlemen, I appreciate the work UNESCO has done in the area of sustainable development. As a Ministry we remain committed to the ideals of Education for Sustainable development. Regarding Education For All (EFA) agenda, the past Global Monitoring Reports have indicated that many countries in Africa particularly Sub Saharan Africa and the Asia Pacific region may miss realizing the EFA target by 2015. I therefore expect this forum to critically debate and share experiences among countries with respect to employed strategies to meet EFA Goals by year 2015; in addition to giving a critical look at other areas of UNESCO focus.
As you proceed with your discussions, take into cognizance, the five functions of UNESCO which are: capacity builder, laboratory of ideas, standard setter, clearing house for information and a catalyst for international partnerships and cooperation. These are the beacons which the discussion should be anchored along the program areas. The presence of the students is very important as this provides a learning forum. I urge the students to use the platform to make inquiries on any unclear issues with respect to UNESCO Programs and relevant to their respective areas of study.
Finally ladies and gentlemen, I would like to conclude by wishing all of you fruitful discussions where deep and critical thinking will be the order. May I at this point thank the keynote speaker and all the participants for having turned up for this important occasion which precedes the National Celebrations scheduled to kick off at KICC tomorrow on the 22\textsuperscript{nd} October, 2014. It is now my pleasure to declare the Roundtable discussions officially opened.

Thank you and God Bless You.