

Africa's Leadership Must Legislate Development of STI

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Nairobi, April 1 (Awumah)-The Kenyan government has taken a giant leap by developing a new STI policy, legislation and innovation systems to guide entrench the policy into the national development agenda.

As part of the policy strategy, university and tertiary education and training has similar boost towards the implementation of sound STI to spearhead development.

Professor Margaret Kamar, Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Kenya disclosed this to WFSJ at the first Africa Forum on STI for Youth Employment, Human Capital Development and Inclusive Growth in Nairobi, Kenya.

She believed this strategy will reposition the country to survive in the fast growing globalized knowledge-based world.

“We believe these strategies will broaden the scope, policy, strategy, quality and quantity of teaching and learning of STI towards the continent's rapid growth.”

She is optimistic that “resolutions adopted at the end of the sessions will move Africa forward.”

“This is the time to move from declarations, resolutions and models to real action. I hope the resolutions to be adopted will move Africa forward.”

“STI has the capacity to move the continent's aspiration to the next level and the economic imperatives will be determined on how we held the youth and contain them,” Aida Opoku-Mensah, Director ICT, Science and Technology Division, UNECA says.

“Africa should invest its own resources in achieving the needed growth. This is time to be in the driving seat and refrain from depending on the agenda- setting of development partners,” she cautions stating that mindsets of academia, politicians, civil society groupings should change towards mainstreaming STI for accelerated development.

Kamal El Kheshen, Vice President AfDB said “The continent ought to be knowledge producers and consumers of Africa's contents than consumers of foreign products in all spheres.”

He called for scaling up and collaboration of STI across board to engender social inclusiveness, competitiveness to help the informal sector to leapfrog and lead socio-economic development of the continent.

Gretchen Kalonji, Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences, UNESCO said his outfit is championing strategies to support inclusive growth, employment opportunities and sustainable development in Africa.

Jean-Pierre Ezin, Commissioner for Human Resources , Science and Technology, AUC challenged the African Association of Sciences and the African University Associations to

lead the STI crusade, fashion out a common strategy in order to network skills and resources to achieve accelerated development.

“Priority in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) is driving the 2015 consolidated plan of action, which seeks to bring radical changes into the STI landscape in Africa.”

The three-day forum is aimed to fast-track the development and implements sustainable solutions to Africa’s development challenges and mainstreaming entrepreneurship, SME development and innovation into STI concept.