

**Welcome Note by
Hon. Prof. George Saitoti, Minister for Education, Kenya**

The Ministry of Education and Kenyan Government are indeed pleased to invite and welcome you to participate in the upcoming *eLearning Africa* conference to be held in Nairobi, Kenya, 28th – 31st May, 2007.

eLearning Africa was launched as an annual Pan-African event in May 2006 in Addis Ababa. With more than 800 participants, it immediately established itself as a landmark for capacity building, networking, and collaboration for Africa, and we expect that in 2007 in Nairobi, we shall match these achievements for the benefits of all experts coming from the Continent and from abroad.

For us in Kenya, *eLearning Africa* is not just another event. Hosting this large-scale conference in Nairobi gives us the unique opportunity to benefit from the hundreds of experts convening and spending some extra time in our country. In keeping with the event theme “Building Infrastructures and Capacities to Reach out to the Whole of Africa”, we will make it possible for Kenyan teachers, professors, administrators, and students - in fact for the entire educational sector - to benefit in one way or another from the capacity-building activities. Major guest lectures in universities, held by visiting conference experts, and break-out workshops in remote regions before and after the conference are just two chosen mechanisms that will ensure a maximum impact on the knowledge building within our educational system.

eLearning Africa is key to Kenya as it comes at a critical time when the country is gearing towards making economic strides to boost its economy. Our government has formulated a dedicated national ICT policy. We aim at making ICT an integral part of society for efficient and effective service delivery, access, affordability, and equitable distribution. The Ministry of Education in collaboration with the private sector through the *Kenya ICT Trust Fund* have developed a *National ICT Strategy for Education and Training* aimed at making ICT integration possible at all levels of education and training. A number of initiatives have been implemented in Kenya including adoption of eLearning systems in the tertiary institutions, the rollout of eSchools including the NEPAD initiative, and the use of simple text-messaging techniques to share information among teachers and to capture education management data. ICT integration, capacity building, and localisation of digital content are being considered for implementation towards ensuring access, equity, and quality education.

Against this background, Kenya is ready and eager to host *eLearning Africa*. I am looking forward to seeing you in Nairobi in May 2007. “**Karibu Kenya 2007**”