

## NATIONAL NEWS

PHOTO JENNIFER MUIRURI



THE permanent secretary in the ministry of Education Karega Mutahi (R) gives a media briefing on the forthcoming 2nd International Conference on ICT for Development Education and Training-E-learning in Africa to be held on May 28 to 30 in Nairobi. He is flanked by Prof Peter Kinyanjui. Addressing the press yesterday, he said negotiations were going on between his ministry, Telkom Kenya and Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK) with a view to enhance information access and reduce the cost of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in the country.

He called for the establishment of a sustainable framework to accelerate the building of ICT infrastructures and capacities

especially in education and training sectors. He said this was meant to cater for the increasing numbers of students who miss opportunities in universities due to limited facilities.

Speaking at the same occasion, the minister for Information and Communication Mutahi Kagwe noted that if well managed, e-learning could greatly supplement traditional methods of curriculum delivery in higher institutions of learning.

He noted that the initiative would provide an opportunity for Kenya to re-examine her achievements in the ICT sector with the vendors from various countries to showcase their e-learning products and solutions that Kenyans can adopt.

He said, "We hope to pro-

vide the opportunity for policy makers and other stakeholders to effectively dialogue on how to exploit the huge potential advanced telecommunications technologies offer."

The conference which brings together ICT practitioners, high level policy makers, industry leaders, as well as research and development experts will take into account challenges, achievements, and strategies as well as opportunities for trans-continental co-operation in the sector.

So far, 80 countries have confirmed attendance.

Mutahi observed that the organising committee has received an overwhelming response to its call for proposals with more than 300 proposals already submitted from 46 countries.

Mutahi added that the ministry will intensify lectures in universities in the country, addressing the importance of e-learning as well as research and topics in technology enhanced education and training.

The initiative also seeks to reverse statistical trends which show that very few African countries participate in e-learning conferences such as On-line Educa-Berlin, the largest e-learning conference in the world held in Berlin every year for the last 14 years now.

The conference, the 2nd of its kind and the largest so far after one held in Ethiopia last year also aims at bridging the digital divide as it shapes the pace and the way forward in ICT-supported learning.

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