

**A SPEECH DURING THE CLOSING CEREMONY FOR THE CERTIFICATE TRAINING IN MEAT HYGIENE
AND QUALITY ASSURANCE AT IGAD SHEIKH TECHNICAL VETERINARY SCHOOL, SOMALILAND**

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By Prof. Jackson N. Ombui,

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- Minister for Livestock, Dr. Abdi Aw Dahir,
- Governor, Sahil Region, Mr. Ali Mohamed Elmi,
- Mayor of Sheikh District, Mr. Ibrahim Abdilahi Absiiye
- FAO Field Office Manager, Mr. Mohamed Jama Gahayr
- Regional Veterinary Officer (Sahil), Dr. Ali Mohamed Guleed,
- Acting Principal ISTVS, Mr. Nuh Haji Abdi
- Course participants, invited guests, ladies and gentlemen.

It gives me great pleasure to stand in front of you today in this closing ceremony for the Meat Hygiene and Quality assurance training. This shows that the training has been successfully completed and I congratulate participants for the work well done.

I know it had taken long to see the start of this training which made some of the prospective participant to move on to do other things after they became impatient waiting. For those who managed to wait, I must thank you for your patience without which, the training could not have taken place. I wish to thank the Ministry of Livestock through you Mr. Minister for deciding on quick replacement of those who had moved on in order to retain the planned number of trainees.

I wish to thank FAO-Somalia for giving the University of Nairobi this opportunity to train Meat Inspectors for Somaliland. This confirms the confidence FAO has for the University of Nairobi. I know there are many other Universities in the region who could do this but you chose the UON. This opportunity has given our lecturers an opportunity to travel to Somaliland and Puntland and experience the living conditions of the people in these regions. The opportunity has also enabled the University of Nairobi to think of possibilities of accrediting ISTVS to offer some of its programs. Recently, an accrediting team from the University of Nairobi visited ISTVS to assess it for accreditation.

I also wish to specifically thank Mr Ali Shaqale for efficiently coordinating the training at the School, coordination of flight schedules for lecturers and local transport for lecturers and course participants to various destinations where they were taking their lectures, practical and field training.

I wish to extend my gratitude to Mr. Ibrahim Absiiye, the Mayor of Sheikh District for allowing us to use the slaughter slab in the Municipality, and the management of Maandeeq and Burao slaughter facilities for allowing us use their facilities for practical and field training.

The certificate course in Meat Hygiene and Quality assurance is University of Nairobi Senate approved program. All candidates enrolled for the course and who will attend and successfully pass their examinations will be awarded a University of Nairobi Certificate in Meat Hygiene and Quality Assurance.

The skills acquired from this program is adequate to enable participants successful carry out meat inspection and implement a functional meat quality assurance system. However, they will need to have personal commitment and passion for the profession and be firm in their decisions in order to succeed in implementing what is expected of them such as condemning and appropriately disposing off any carcass or organ that is not fit for human consumption. This is because they will encounter a lot of resistance from butchers, meat dealers and animal owners as they will see any condemnation as an economic loss on their part.

The Ministry of Livestock and the Government in general will need to assist meat inspectors to enforce the requirements of the meat hygiene code which was recently approved by the state organs. There will also be need to upgrade most of the existing slaughter facilities and supply the same with adequate water and electricity to facilitate proper hygiene and meat inspection. In addition, training of more meat inspectors will be required in order to obtain a critical number of qualified inspectors to implement the meat hygiene code across the country. In this regard, I wish to state that the University of Nairobi is willing to continue to support training of meat inspectors until such a time when there will be enough personnel with the required skills to properly enforce the requirements of the meat hygiene code.

There is need for the Ministry of livestock to create public awareness of the importance of consuming inspected meat. A number of health problems are associated with consumption of uninspected meat. The implementation of meat inspection program can be facilitated through public education on the health and economic benefits of meat inspection.

Last but not least, let me take this opportunity to sincerely thank the Minister for finding time from his busy schedule to preside over this important occasion. I also wish to thank the Governor, the Mayor and all other guests for finding time to attend this function.

Thank you very much.