



**Kenya
National
Committee**

**SPEECH BY
EUR. ING. JOAB L ODENY,
PRESIDENT, KENYA NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE IEC
ON THE OCCASSION OF OPENING OF
THE AFSEC CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP
THE REDCOURT HOTEL, NAIROBI
5TH SEPTEMBER 2011**

AFSEC President, Mr Claude Koutoua,
ARSO President, Dr Kioko Mang'eli,
AFREC Executive Director, Mr Hussein Elhag,
KEBS CEO & IEC Affiliate Coordinator - Africa, Mrs Eva Oduor,
AFREC Executive Secretary, Mr Paul Johnson,
ARSO Secretary General, Mr Andrew Maiyo,
IEC Central Office Representative, Mr Jack Sheldon,
AU COM Representative, Mr Phillippe Niyongabo,
AU COM Representative, Mr Atef Marzouk,

***Distinguished Guests and Experts,
Ladies and Gentlemen...***

My present task is light, namely to open this workshop and set you on an important journey towards inauguration of AFSEC Technical Committee regime; but first please allow me to make a few remarks.

Let me again extend my warmest welcome to those of you who are visiting Kenya, some for the first time. Please make time to enjoy our beautiful land

and the company of its warm and friendly people. If possible, stay behind for a while to get the best appreciation of it all.

At the outset, let me also congratulate AFSEC, through its Council and the Management Committee (ably represented here by the President and the Executive Secretary) for a commendable job well executed. It is only three years since AFSEC was established and yet today we are witnessing a working organisation with definite pointed goals and a growing membership and collaborators. It takes a lot of effort and good will especially in standards work to assemble and execute such a programme, and for that I am sure you will join me in saying a big “Thank you!” to AFSEC and to its many willing partners and sponsors that have jointly made it possible for AFSEC to walk.

At AFSEC, players all over the continent of Africa will have a home for an enhanced drive towards relevant standardization efforts in electrotechnology that the local publics are yearning for. The full benefits of standardization can, however, only be realised if we all pull hard and together from our various countries and regions and everywhere else in the world. The operative words are **Coverage**, **Consensus**, **Cooperation** and **Collaboration**. Standards do work best through linkages. “The world is a village”, they used to say; but if

truth could be surpassed, we must accept that the statement is truer today than ever before. With global trade having taken a firm root in our lives and technological advances in communications, manufacturing and transportation having condensed months and days into minutes and seconds, the world has truly become one place which must be held together by the commonness of the standards you seek to develop.

The technologies that drive these changes to bring better and more comfortable life to the ever increasing population are firmly in your grip. They are the reason for your existence, as they are indeed for all of us in the standards industry. Our duty is to make sense of it all and produce systems and documents that are practical, foolproof and easy to execute. We share similar concerns about safety, efficiency, degradation of the environment and cost of living. Through standardization we can protect Mother Earth and its populations. One mistake or omission can severely threaten life, peace and property and cause heavy erosion of confidence in the delivery of services or products. Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant accident in North East Japan six months ago is a fresh reminder. Here the reactors withstood a heavy 9.0 earthquake and the resultant high gush of tsunami waters. The cooling pumps at the plant, however, did not run under flood conditions. Thus an otherwise


“small” matter became the cause of a major disaster which is still hounding not just Japan but other countries far a field that operate nuclear power stations. This is an example of the seriousness of our responsibilities both in development and conformity assessment of electrotechnical standards.

I am pleased to note that AFSEC puts the need for cooperation and collaboration at the top of its agenda. As the IEC, we fully understand and cherish those values too and the IEC has extended partnership to AFSEC in many spheres and at all levels through a cooperation agreement. This is geared to minimize duplication of effort to achieve as much as possible congruence and harmony of the products. AFSEC will in turn be able to fast track its work as they sail in well chartered waters under the canopy of IEC whenever and wherever such cooperation becomes necessary and beneficial. The collaboration efforts between AFSEC and CENELEC are much a source of joy because CENELEC is a true mirror of AFSEC in Europe and already CENELEC has many well developed and working relationships with IEC. The United Nations recently endorsed IEC as the world’s best practice model for the verification of conformity to international standards with regard to its standard on Explosive Atmospheres. The challenge for both the IEC and AFSEC is to work hard and achieve more recognition and accolades in other

spheres. At the local level, we remain open and cooperative. Any Technical Committee of AFSEC's that will be domiciled in Kenya will be sure to receive our best attention.

**With these remarks, I now declare the AFSEC Nairobi 2011 Workshop open.
May you deliberate with dedication and conquer all hurdles in your way!**

Thank you for your time.



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