



**SPEECH BY H E SUSAN KIIHIKA,  
NAKURU COUNTY GOVERNOR,  
DURING THE NAKURU JOURNALISTS  
ASSOCIATION GALA DINNER AT  
SAROVA HOTEL ON 5<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER,  
2025**

**Distinguished journalists,  
Media leaders,  
Partners and friends,  
Ladies and gentlemen**

Good evening.

**Opening Remarks**

1. It gives me profound pleasure to join you tonight as the Nakuru Journalists Association gathers to celebrate excellence in storytelling, professionalism, and dedication to truth. I am honoured that you have chosen to invite us—the Nakuru County Government to this important gala here in Nakuru City—your home of hospitality, innovation, and boundless opportunity.

2. As we convene under the timely theme, *“Media for a Resilient Future: Driving Climate Action and Digital Innovation,”* we are reminded that the power of the press has never been more vital. In a world where remarkable breakthroughs coexist with unprecedented threats—from climate change to digital disruption—the media stands as society’s navigator, sounding board, and conscience.
3. Former British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan was once asked what he feared most. His response was famously simple: *“Events, my boy, events.”* He understood that events—expected or unforeseen—can upend nations, economies, and communities. And in these moments, it is you, the journalists, who interpret, decode, and contextualize these events for the nation.
4. But as Mike Tyson aptly put it: *“Everyone has a plan until they are punched in the mouth.”* Crises—climatic, social, economic or political—can strike without warning. And when they do, we turn to you to help society understand what has happened, what must change, and how we can build resilience for the future.

Tonight, we are not simply celebrating journalism; we are celebrating your role as architects of a more resilient Kenya.

## **Media as a partner in Climate Action**

5. Climate change is no longer a distant threat. It is felt here in Nakuru every day—in the drought-afflicted plains of Rongai, in the displaced families of flood-prone Kaptembwa, rising Lake Naivasha waters in Kihoto, and in the shifting agricultural seasons affecting farmers across Kuresoi, Njoro and Subukia. Governments can build policies, and experts can generate data, but without storytelling—without your ability to translate climate science into human experience—these remain abstract issues. It is journalism that transforms statistics into urgency, and urgency into action. You are the voices amplifying the struggles of farmers adjusting to unpredictable rainfall; the guardians highlighting the risk to our lakes, forests, and wildlife; the educators explaining why climate-smart agriculture, renewable energy, and

conservation are no longer optional, but essential.

6. In Nakuru, we are implementing numerous climate-resilient initiatives—from water harvesting projects to aggressive afforestation programmes, from rehabilitating wetlands to promoting clean energy solutions. These are stories that need to be told. Stories that inspire communities to adapt, thrive, and safeguard our collective future. And we rely on you to tell them compellingly, truthfully, and consistently.

### **Digital Innovation: Rewriting the future of storytelling**

7. Today, society no longer receives stories passively. Stories live on phones, tablets, smart TVs, podcasts, social media feeds, and interactive platforms. They are immersive and dynamic. They are shaped, edited, and sometimes challenged by the very audiences consuming them. Digital innovation offers endless opportunities namely:
  - The ability to reach millions instantly.
  - The power to visualize complex issues through data journalism.

- The capacity to use AI, drone imagery, and multimedia to deepen understanding.
  - The chance to engage youth—our largest demographic—on platforms where they feel seen and heard.
8. But it also carries real risks. Disinformation travels at lightning speed. Manipulated images, misleading narratives, and algorithm-driven echo chambers can erode public trust. This is why your role in upholding truth, transparency, and ethical reporting has never been more critical. It is not merely a professional obligation; it is a civil duty.

A resilient future cannot be built on falsehoods. It must be anchored in facts, integrity, and responsible digital innovation. And I am confident that the journalists of Nakuru—and Kenya at large—are ready to lead this transformation.

## **Telling the Stories that Matter**

9. We in Nakuru County welcome the media not as observers, but as partners—partners in development, in accountability, and in aspiration. We believe strongly in the power

of storytelling to spark change. To us, compelling stories are everywhere: They are found:

- In the child from a humble background whose life is transformed by a bursary.
- In the resident of Waseges or Tinet who now accesses quality healthcare within minutes.
- In the farmer whose income has grown because of extension services and value-chain support.
- In the residents of Umoja in Visoi who can now access clean and safe drinking water at their door steps
- In the youths who can now access jobs in the plants coming up at the Naivasha SEZ
- In the elderly person finding dignity in our new social care homes.
- In the youth finding opportunities in our ICT hubs and new investments.
- In the ECDE learner whose face lights up when they receive a nutritious meal under the Uji Programme.

These are not just government activities.  
They are human stories—stories of  
resilience, progress, hope and dignity.  
And you have the unique ability to carry  
them beyond borders and generations.

## **Building Trust in the Digital Age**

10. Trust is the currency of journalism—and we are in an era where that currency is under threat. To rebuild and safeguard it, we must collectively embrace:

- Transparency in storytelling
- Authenticity over sensationalism
- Evidence-driven reporting
- Ethical digital practices
- Community engagement
- Continuous learning and innovation

The people are watching. They are asking difficult questions. They want accountability. And they want stories that not only inform, but uplift and empower.

I urge you not to underestimate the power you hold. Journalism remains one of the most influential tools for shaping public

imagination—and steering society toward a more sustainable, equitable future.

## **Conclusion**

11. As we celebrate tonight, let us also commit ourselves to a shared mission: to build a resilient future for Nakuru and Kenya—one rooted in climate consciousness, digital innovation, and responsible storytelling. Technology will continue to evolve. Climate challenges will continue to intensify. But with an informed, ethical, and digitally empowered media, our society will not only endure these changes—it will thrive.

I believe in you. Nakuru County believes in you. And together, we can tell the stories that will shape a sustainable and resilient tomorrow.

Thank you, and may you enjoy the evening.

**H.E. SUSAN KIIHIKA, EGH**

**GOVERNOR, NAKURU COUNTY**

