

Message from Mr. James Singh, the Chairman of the Board, during the launch of the Chandaria Business Incubation and Innovation Centre at Kenyatta University on 8th July 2011

It gives me pleasure to witness a partnership between my board and Kenyatta University that will go a long way in shaping the next generation of entrepreneurs. We are glad that Kenyatta University has gone beyond training entrepreneurs to supporting them roll out their enterprises through business incubation. That is why we want to be part of this programme by providing support.

Indeed my board has always observed that the challenge of economically engaging the youth is enormous. It should not be left to the Youth Enterprise Development Fund, or indeed the Ministry of Youth Affairs. Notwithstanding the efforts the government continues to make, the youth population is very high and these efforts may therefore take time to touch every youth. All government departments should have a component of youth development in their programmes. We are glad that Kenyatta University has shown that it is possible.

As a Board therefore, we are recommending that youth issues be included in the performance contracts of government ministries and departments. We believe that through this measure the government can leverage on the resources it allocates to youth programmes and that there will be a massive trickledown effect.

I wish to request the private sector to play a greater role in empowering young people to sustain their enterprises. The private sector could do this by way of buying from the youth, running mentorship programmes and providing entrepreneurship training.

The private sector spends huge sums of money annually on corporate social responsibility. We would be glad to see a deliberate focus on youth programmes.

James Gitau Singh

BOARD CHAIRMAN