



For Immediate Release

7th June 2012

PRESS RELEASE

5TH WORLD ACCREDITATION DAY CELEBRATIONS

ACCREDITATION: Supporting safe food and drinking water

The Deputy Prime Minister, Hon. Musalia Mudavadi, EGH, MP on behalf of His Excellency Hon. Mwai Kibaki, CGH, and President of The Republic of Kenya has today opened the World Accreditation Celebrations at the KICC Tsavo Ballroom from 9.00am.

The World Accreditation Day is marked on 9th June annually, however in Kenya the official celebrations are being held today. The World Accreditation Day is a Global initiative jointly established by the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) to raise awareness of the importance of accreditation-related activities. This year's theme focuses on the role that accreditation plays in supporting the provision of safe food and clean drinking water.

There are issues with respect to food production ranging from safety to authenticity hence the need for conformity assessment activities. Conformity assessment is used to check that products are fit and safe for consumption against a standard, a code of practice or regulatory requirements. Conformity assessment therefore provides a means for preventing unsafe, unhealthy or environmentally harmful products from entering the market place. Regulators can set overall Policy requirements or detailed technical requirements and rely on laboratories, inspection bodies or certification bodies to check for compliance.

What is the Role of Accreditation?

Accreditation is the independent evaluation of the conformity assessment bodies against recognized standards to carry out specific activities to ensure their integrity, impartiality and competence. This gives government, procurers and consumers confidence in test and calibration results, inspection reports and certifications provided.

In Kenya, the organization mandated to offer accreditation services is the Kenya Accreditation Service (KENAS). KENAS was established under the States Corporations Act, Cap 446; vide Legal Notice No. 55 of May 2009 as the Sole National Accreditation Body. It gives formal attestation that Conformity Assessment Bodies are competent to carry out specific conformity assessment activities. KENAS is an associate member at the International Laboratory Accreditation

Cooperation (ILAC) and an associate member applicant to the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) which are apex organizations that oversee global accreditation activities.

KENAS' expectations are that:

1. Regulators can set Policy requirements to detailed technical requirements and rely on accredited laboratories, inspection bodies or certification bodies to check for compliance. This will help in targeting their inspections more effectively.
2. Use of accredited services can moderate the need for additional legislation as well as reduce the risk of unintended consequences.
3. Accreditation reduces the cost of doing business since it eliminates need for re-testing or re-inspection.
4. Accreditation demonstrates equivalence and hence opens up the global market.
5. Accreditation provides a reliable monitoring tool to support the work of food safety and drinking water agencies.
6. Consumers' confidence can be gained from goods or services that are accompanied by a certificate from an accredited conformity assessment body.

The KENAS Mandate:

1. To provide accreditation to conformity assessment bodies: Certification Bodies (Management Systems ISO/IEC 17021:2011, Products ISO Guide 65 and Personnel ISO/IEC 17024:2003), Testing and Calibration Laboratories (ISO/IEC 17025:2005), Medical (ISO 15189:2007), Inspection and Verification bodies (ISO/IEC 17020:2012), Proficiency Test providers (ISO/IEC 17043:2010)
2. To develop, regulate and review the criteria or requirements for accreditation of conformity assessment bodies.
3. Promote competence and equivalence of accredited bodies.
4. Establish and nurture relations and cooperation with regional and international organizations that it may consider desirable for the purposes KENAS was established.
5. Promote accreditation as a means of facilitating regional and international trade and enhancing economic performance and transformation.
6. Participate in the formulation of regional and international guidelines and Standards to facilitate the accreditation process
7. Raise awareness on the importance and purpose of accreditation.

For Inquiries

Kenya Accreditation Service

Longonot Road, Upper Hill, Embankment Plaza, 2nd Floor

www.kenyaaccreditation.org

E Mail: info@kenyaaccreditation.org

Mobile +254 725227640, +254 787395679