



**Ministry of Information and Communications
Republic of Kenya**

**SPEECH BY HON. MUTAHI KAGWE, MINISTER FOR INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATIONS DURING THE PRE-LAUNCH OF ISOC PROGRAMME
“Focusing on the Individual Internet User”
AT GORDON MELVIN HOUSE, NGONG ROAD ON 29th DEC 2005.**

The Director General of CCK / Representative

His Worship the Mayor of Nairobi / Representative

Ambassador Timothy McGinnis

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am delighted to be here today to preside over the pre-launch of the Individual Internet User project. I am also happy to note that this project is being carried out just after we have marked 10 years since the launch of the 1st ISP in the country.

In the 10 years, all stakeholders in the ICT sector have been struggling to deal with a wide variety of issues that arise from the evolving information society.

In this regard, the Government developed a new postal and telecommunications policy in 1997. The policy commenced the liberalization of the sector by proposing the split of Kenya Posts and Telecommunications Corporation into three entities, i.e. Telkom, Postal Corporation and the Communications Commission of Kenya. In addition, the policy provided for the licensing of ISPs and other value added services.

The Kenya Communications Act, which came into effect on 1st October 1998, provided the legal framework for regulating telecommunications, radio-communications, postal and value added services.

The Postal and Telecommunications policy document was revised in December 2001 to, amongst others, allow for increased national and international access through VSATs and to promote investment in ICTs.

In June 2004, we witnessed yet another important milestone in the development of ICTs in the country when the monopoly provisions accorded to Telkom Kenya were removed.

The draft National ICT Policy document, which has so far received comments from many stakeholders in the country, is due to be released soon. The policy will usher in a new era necessary to drive the country into an information society.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Today, the mobile telephone system is predominantly the largest telecommunications platform in the country with over 5 million customers. However, the bulk of internet users still rely on the fixed network for access through dial-up and cyber cafés.

Rapid changes in technology have introduced many other platforms for internet access. Organisations and ordinary users have therefore to choose between many platforms for internet access which include Kenstream, ADSL, WiFi, WiMax, WAP and GPRS and VSAT-based access- all of which have varying cost implications.

We are also aware that as time has gone by, the fears of internet users have increased due to threats which include hackers, computer viruses, pornography and spyware.

As a result of the above, the public, business and even the Government experience many problems ranging from where to obtain affordable services on how to protect themselves from internet-based threats.

The situation has been made worse because many of our people do not know where to obtain services and how much such services cost.

It is because of this reason that my Ministry is happy to be associated with this Internet Society project, which aims to offer free internet-advisory services to the people of Kenya. It is my hope that many other Kenyans will emulate the initiative by ISOC Kenya chapter by venturing into other related activities like the establishment of internet search/directory services, internet-based information services and educational services.

With these few remarks, it is my pleasure to officially launch this project and I take this opportunity to wish you all a happy new year.

Asante Sana (*“Thank you very much”*)

Mutahi Kagwe

