

STATEMENT

BY

NGHIDINUA DANIEL

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF

SHELTER AFRIQUE

ON OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE

RICHLAND POINTE HOUSING PROJECT

21ST MARCH 2019

The Hon Governor of Kiambu County,

Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps

The Chairman and Members of the Board of Directors of Housing Finance Group

The Managing Director and Senior Management of Shelter Afrique

Distinguished Guests,

Members of the Press

Ladies and gentlemen

I am very delighted to have been invited to officiate at this important event.

Director of proceedings

Esteemed ladies and gentlemen

Kenya like many other countries in Africa is characterised by high rates of population and urbanisation growth. These high growth rates have given rise to a surge in the demand for urban infrastructure and housing in urban areas. Unfortunately urban planning and investment in housing are often lagging behind resulting in housing deficits.

The surge in the demand for housing in turn has driven up housing prices and often push quality housing out of reach for the majority of those who are in need, especially the poor, low and middle-income households. This is often compounded by lack of affordable housing finance, high costs of urban land and weak tenure security, rising construction costs and a growth in slums.

As a result of the challenges that I have just outlined, owning a decent house is still dream for many African households.

Ladies and gentlemen

We are here because the Government of Kenya, Shelter Afrique, Housing Finance Group and our development partners have a shared conviction that, while the housing backlog is a challenge, it is not insurmountable. Indeed we believe this challenge represents an opportunity for coordinated action and investment by us all – Government, the private sector and the community.

Like Robert South we at Shelter Afrique believe that and I quote *“Problems can become opportunities when the right people come together”* (end of quote). Here at home in Africa we draw inspiration from an African Proverb that says and I quote: *“The load is lighter when two people carry it”*.

In this connection, we at Shelter Afrique pay tribute to our leaders who collectively through the African Union and through individual country national policies on housing such as the 500,000 Affordable Homes Programme in the case of Kenya continue to give prominence to the provision decent and affordable housing to their citizens as a basic necessity. These commitments and

efforts are encapsulated in the Africa's Agenda 2063 which is premised on the higher ideal and recognition that decent and affordable shelter is an important vehicle for addressing poverty and inequality as well as for bringing about social harmony and political stability on our continent and the world over.

Director of ceremonies

Ladies and gentlemen

Shelter Afrique's partnership with the Housing Finance Group and joint investment in housing development is important in many ways. First, this is exactly what SHAF was established do to namely to finance the development of urban infrastructure and affordable housing in Member States. Secondly, this is in line with our strategic goals of providing tangible value and impactful development to our shareholding member states as well as that of catalysing viable partnerships and private sector investment in housing development.

The partnership between the two institutions goes beyond this housing project whose official inauguration we are witnessing here today. The two institutions co-financed the development of Komarock Phase 5A in 2012 which consists of 155 housing units to the tune of KES 647 million as well as a KES 930 million financing of Phase B of the same project in 2014.

With the KES 770 million co-financing of this project at Richland Pointe, our partnership has resulted in a total investment in affordable housing in Kenya in the amount of KES 2.3 billion. This is no mean feat and is commendable.

It is acknowledged that this project became a reality due to the valuable contributions from many other partners and role players – namely the joint venture partners, project managers, , architects, mechanical and electrical engineers, quantity surveyors, the masons, the carpenters and the cleaners, just to name a few. I hope to have the opportunity to meet you at the side lines in order to shake your hands in appreciation of the good job that you done.

Director of proceedings

Ladies and gentlemen

While we have a reason to celebrate here today, we are however mindful that there are many more fellow brothers and sisters in other parts of our Continent, Africa, and here in Kenya who are still in dire need of proper shelter. We at SHAF remain steadfast and poised to reach out and work with Governments and private sector players in our member states such as the Housing Finance Group in exploring viable win-win strategic partnerships and investments.

To beneficiaries of this project I have the following message to you:

You also have an important role or responsibility in ensuring that the goals and desired outcomes of this project are fully realised and sustained. My message to you in this regard is summarised in the following quotes:

The first quote says, *“A house is a home when it shelters the body and comforts the soul.”*

The second quote says. *A Home is ‘a safe place,’ a place where one is free from attack, a place where one experiences secure relationships and affirmation. It’s a place where people share and understand each other. The people in it do not need to be perfect; instead, they need to be honest, loving and supportive:*

While you enjoy the benefits of safety, freedom and ownership, please remember that you also have a responsibility to your fellow countrymen and women who are also in need of a home and who depend on you honouring your mortgage payments, which payments will be re-invested in the development of new homes for others. It is equally important for you to look after and maintain your new home for your benefit and that of your next generations.

In conclusion, I renew my appreciation for the invitation and for your kind attention, Asante Sana