



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY WILLIAM SAMOEI
RUTO, PHD., C.G.H. PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF KENYA AND COMMANDER-IN-
CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE FORCES AT THE
"GALVANISING MOMENT FOR PLASTIC
POLLUTION INSTRUMENT" EVENT**

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NEW YORK, USA

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

1. I am pleased to be here today to speak on the urgent issue of plastic pollution. This moment presents an opportunity for us to rally the political will, build momentum, and drive global consensus towards the ratification of a global plastic treaty by the end of this year.
2. Your presence today is a powerful testament to the commitment we all share in addressing the plastic pollution crisis. I want to take a moment to appreciate your dedication and to thank UNEP and the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution Secretariat for their tremendous work in advancing this cause.
3. Kenya remains firm in its commitment to environmental sustainability. We understand that preventing plastic pollution is important not only for our ecosystems but for the well-being of current and future generations. Over the last 50 years, global plastic production has grown exponentially, and today, plastic waste poses severe threats to both the environment and our economies.
4. While plastic production creates jobs and supports various industries, the costs far outweigh the benefits. Plastic pollution causes the tourism, fisheries, and aquaculture sectors to lose up to \$13 billion annually. Additionally, toxic chemicals released during the production and disposal of plastics harm both ecosystems and human health. Since more than 90% of plastics are made from fossil fuels, their production also drives greenhouse gas emissions, exacerbating the climate crisis.



5. Despite such well-known dangers, global plastic production continues to rise. Over 460 million metric tons of plastic are produced annually, and between 9 and 14 million tons end up in our environment as waste. By 2040, this figure could reach 37 million tons per year. It is, however, heartening to see countries like Kenya taking action to tackle plastic pollution.
6. In 2017, Kenya banned single-use plastic bags and, in 2020, enacted the National Sustainable Waste Management Act to promote eco-friendly alternatives. Initially, there were concerns about job losses and the costs to businesses, but through public awareness and strong government support, the private sector embraced environmental responsibility. Today, we have achieved an 80% success rate in reducing plastic waste, particularly in coastal and protected areas.
7. Building on this success, two weeks ago in Nairobi, I launched - ClimateWorX – a transformative national program to build climate resilience, restore ecosystems, and create 200,000 jobs for Kenyan youth in critical infrastructure and environmental projects. This will also go a long way in strengthening our fight against plastic pollution. This initiative will help further our fight against plastic pollution while strengthening our environmental resilience.
8. Nonetheless, the global fight against plastic pollution remains fragmented. Many countries lack the infrastructure, regulatory frameworks, and coordination necessary to tackle this crisis effectively. Plastic pollution is a transboundary problem, and it requires a united global response with consistent standards and actions.



9. I am encouraged by the progress we are making towards a legally binding global treaty to end plastic pollution. While challenges remain — such as resistance to regulating production and banning harmful chemicals — we must push forward with strong political will to ensure that we succeed.
10. The treaty does not need to ban plastics entirely, but it must regulate production to minimise environmental harm. We must also prioritise banning single-use plastics, which account for 36% of global plastic production and significantly contribute to waste.
11. Kenya is proud to be part of the High Ambition Coalition, supporting a robust treaty that addresses the full life cycle of plastics. Additionally, we have made our bid to host the Secretariat of the Plastic Treaty at UNEP in Nairobi, aligning with the "Future We Want" outcome document from the Rio+20 conference, which calls for consolidating UNEP's headquarters functions in Nairobi.
12. A global plastic treaty will enhance international cooperation, drive investment in circular economies, and create a coordinated response to this pressing global challenge. Let us act with resolve so that in Busan, the global community will deliver the regulatory framework necessary to tackle plastic pollution once and for all.

Thank you.

