



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**PRESS STATEMENT BY H.E. HON. WILLIAM
RUTO, CGH., PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
KENYA AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE
DEFENCE FORCES AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE
WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
DJIBOUTI ISMAIL OMAR GUELLEH**

JUNE 11TH, 2023

DJIBOUTI CITY, DJIBOUTI

1. On behalf of the Government and the people of Kenya, I am delighted and deeply honored for the warm invitation extended to me and my delegation by my brother, H.E Ismail Omar Guelleh.
2. Kenya and Djibouti share warm and cordial relations firmly rooted in the Pan-Africanist values of solidarity, subsidiarity, and self-determination. These shared values serve as the pillars for our collective pursuit of prosperity and progress.
3. Our bilateral talks were preceded by the 2nd session of the Joint Commission for Cooperation (JCC) between our two countries that proposed valuable recommendations to strengthen and expand our bilateral relations, especially in strategic sectors such as Health, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Education, Energy and Agriculture.
4. To promote people-to-people interactions, trade, and investment, I am firmly committed to eliminating the barriers imposed by visa requirements for Djiboutian citizens traveling to Kenya. Therefore, Kenya has concluded necessary procedures to enable visa-free visits for citizens of Djibouti to Kenya.
5. In order to improve coordination on labor migration and ensure predictability, we have agreed to accelerate the negotiation and finalization of a comprehensive labor agreement between our two countries. We recognize the immense potential for mutual benefit by harnessing Kenya's skilled workforce. In this regard, I express my gratitude to my esteemed counterpart for hosting over 600 Kenyan professionals in Djibouti. To facilitate this process, we have established a Joint Technical Committee dedicated to these efforts.



6. We have further agreed to expedite the negotiation of a framework that enables the reciprocal recognition of certificates issued by our respective institutions of higher learning. I have informed the President that Kenya is extending an offer of 300 positions in our higher learning institutions to Djiboutian students, at the same fees applicable to Kenyan students.
7. Additionally, we engaged in discussions regarding support for English language training and its integration into Djibouti's curricula. Kenya is fully prepared to provide support and necessary teachers to assist in this endeavor. Conversely, to enhance the language proficiency of Kenyan graduates who seek employment abroad, Kenyan Technical and Vocational Education Training institutions, as well as medical training colleges, will benefit from the inclusion of French language trainees from Djibouti.
8. To unlock the vast untapped potential for expanding the value and volume of our commercial relations, we have taken the initiative to establish a Joint Business Council. This council will work towards synergizing our trade missions and facilitating improved market access. I strongly encourage members of the business community from both countries to actively engage with their counterparts, particularly within the framework of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).
9. A significant impediment to the desired trade between our nations is the absence of direct flights connecting our two countries. As a solution, we have reached an agreement to focus on generating demand from both sides, aiming to resume direct flights; including the review of the existing Bilateral Air Service Agreement, to address existing challenges. This restoration of air connectivity will



undoubtedly have a profound impact on enhancing trade between our nations.

10. Additionally, the establishment of digital connectivity is crucial in fostering innovation and expanding e-commerce. To this end, Kenya will promptly review the proposal put forth by Djibouti Telecoms to sell its undersea cable infrastructure to Kenya's TEAMS, taking into account technological advancements and the requirements of both parties. In furtherance of this objective, our respective institutions will convene in Nairobi within the next two weeks to advance the discussions on this matter.
11. We have signed four memoranda of understanding between our two nations, which are outlined as follows:
12. An MOU to facilitate cooperation in the field of energy development. The agreement entails sharing technical skills, techniques, experiences, information, documentation, knowledge, and materials between the parties through reciprocal participation, focusing on geothermal development.
13. In line with this, I am grateful to my esteemed counterpart, H.E Omar Guelleh, for expediting the negotiation process, facilitating the establishment of necessary infrastructure and equipment, and initiating the implementation of the proposed Hanle Garabbayis project. Under this project, the Kenya Electricity Generating Company (Kengen) will drill two geothermal wells in Djibouti. Kengen has already fulfilled phase one of the contract with the Office Djiboutien De Development De Energie Geothermique (ODDEG) and successfully drilled one geothermal well in the Galla Le Koma project's initial phase.



14. We have also signed an MOU on Technical Cooperation in the Development of Youth Affairs and the Arts, which establishes a collaboration framework in the development of modern state-of-the-art facilities in the fields of sports and arts.
15. Additionally, we have signed an MOU on mutual cooperation in the Foreign Service Academy. Regular consultations and cooperation in the educational and scientific areas will be conducted within the framework of agreed program activities.
16. Lastly, we have signed an MOU to collaborate in the field of tourism. This agreement will strengthen exchanges and partnerships between our two countries, promote sustainable tourism development, and enhance our tourism assets.
17. On the regional front, we affirmed our common goal of promoting peace and stability in the Horn of Africa region. As troop contributing countries to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) we agreed that the upcoming IGAD Summit should address the Somalia transition plan while safeguarding the gains made by AMISOM/ATMIS. The drawdown of ATMIS should align with the capacity of the Federal Government of Somalia's security forces to assume control of the liberated areas.
18. We have also agreed, to work with South Sudan President H.E Salva Kiir, as members of the IGAD High Level Delegation on the ongoing political situation in Sudan, to develop a concrete proposal to help bring an end to the conflict ahead of the 14th ordinary session of the IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government tomorrow.



19. We have underscored the need for continuing consultations to build partnerships at multilateral level and ensure that the agenda of the Horn of Africa is given priority. We stressed the need for the reform of the United Nations and other multilateral organisations to make them more representative, accountable, effective and responsive to geopolitical realities.
20. On the existential climate crisis, we emphasized the urgent need for collective efforts to mitigate the impact of climate change. In addition, I highlighted the importance of moving beyond discussions solely focused on adaptation and loss and damage. It is crucial to engage in open and constructive dialogue on climate finance and investment, as this will unlock our potential for sustainable green economic growth.
21. Similarly, the current global financial system falls short in addressing the complex challenges we face, such as recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic, tackling the climate emergency, and addressing the debt crisis in the Global South. I urged H.E the President to support reforms of the international financial system. These reforms should acknowledge our capabilities and ensure a mutually beneficial outcome, providing affordable, sufficient, and sustainable financing that is delivered in a timely manner.
22. Kenya is taking proactive steps towards establishing a unified African stance on climate change for COP28. To achieve this, we will be hosting the Africa Climate Action Summit from September 4th to 6th, 2023. Once again, Your excellency, I humbly invite your participation, support, and influential voice we advocate for climate investments to reduce the vulnerability of our countries and the region.



23. I appreciate Djibouti's support for Kenya's candidature of Ambassador Nancy Karigithu, as Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organisation.
24. In conclusion, I express my profound gratitude and appreciation to His Excellency President Guelleh, the government and the people of the Republic of Djibouti for the warm reception and generous hospitality extended to me and my delegation.

**I thank you.
God bless you.**

