



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY WILLIAM RUTO,
C.G.H.; PHD; PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER-IN-
CHIEF OF THE KENYA DEFENSE FORCES, AT THE
TEAM KENYA PARIS 2024 SUMMER OLYMPIC
GAMES STATE RECEPTION**

AUGUST 15, 2024

STATE LODGE, ELDORET

Ladies and gentlemen,

1. We gather here this morning in Eldoret—the City of Champions—united in celebration as the heroes of the Paris 2024 Olympics return to their homeland, Kenya—the veritable Land of Champions.
2. When I commissioned you, Team Kenya, to go and represent our country at the Paris 2024 Summer Olympic Games, I reminded you that you were both our best and the world’s finest athletes.
3. Today, I am extremely delighted to welcome you back from your successful mission in Paris. You understood the calling and the burden of shouldering our collective aspirations and dreams as a nation on the global stage, and you did not disappoint.
4. In Paris, our athletes once again demonstrated to the world that when it comes to endurance, determination, and the unshakable will to succeed, we are at the top of our continent and can match the best in the world. At position 17 out of over 200 participating nations, with an impressive haul of 11 medals, including four gold, two silver, and five bronze, and attaining second place in the Athletics program—just behind the superpower USA and leading the African continent—we have every reason to celebrate your remarkable achievements.



5. Leading this remarkable feat were our golden stars: Faith Kipyegon, who continues to rewrite history with her third consecutive Olympic gold in the 1500m and a silver in the 5000m; Beatrice Chebet, who not only conquered the 5000m but also brought home gold in the 10,000m, marking her place as a true queen of middle distance running; and Emmanuel Wanyonyi, who brought home gold in the 800m—a victory that cements his status as a rising star in Kenyan athletics. We also celebrate Ronald Kwemoi, who secured bronze in the 1500m, while Hellen Obiri and Benson Kipruto brought home bronze in the women’s and men’s marathons, respectively, reminding us that even in the face of challenges, our athletes never lose sight of the finish line and will fight for glory to the tape.
6. Your victories are not just medals that you carry on your shoulders; they are symbols of our national character, a testament to what we can achieve when we believe in ourselves.
7. On behalf of every Kenyan, I am profoundly proud of and grateful to you, Team Kenya, for taking the heart, soul, and spirit of your fellow countrymen to Paris and shining for your motherland.
8. But our pride doesn’t end there. As a country, we have set our standards and expectations extremely high when it comes to global sporting championships and tournaments. While we acknowledge your impressive performance, we also recognize that our potential remains underexploited.



9. Our athletics are increasingly under encroachment from countries that have studied, learned, and perfected our skills, to our detriment. The Government, at both national and county levels, will upscale its deliberate collaboration with all stakeholders, such as sports federations, to develop a sports policy framework that will address these gaps and hinder our progression across the sports ecosystem.
10. As we honour these heroes, it is only fitting that we do so here in Eldoret—the City of Champions. For it is from these very highlands that many of our greatest athletes have been nurtured. Elevating Eldoret to city status is not just a recognition of its past; it is a bold statement about its future.
11. Eldoret City is not just a title; it is a brand that resonates with excellence. It represents the journey of a young athlete who, with nothing but a dream, a pair of running shoes, and the support of a community, can rise to become an Olympic champion. It is here in Eldoret that the heart of Kenya’s athletic success beats strongest, and it is here that we reaffirm our commitment to nurturing the next generation of champions.
12. As we celebrate both our Olympic champions and the birth of the City of Champions, let us remember that we are all part of this incredible journey. Together, we will continue to soar to new heights, for Kenya is, and always will be, the Land of Champions.

Asanteni, and Hongera Mabingwa!

