



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**PRESS STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY
WILLIAM RUTO, PhD, C.G.H; PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF KENYA AND COMMANDER-IN-
CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE FORCES FOLLOWING A
BILATERAL MEETING WITH HIS EXCELLENCY
EBRAHIM RAISI, PRESIDENT OF IRAN**

JULY 12TH, 2023

STATE HOUSE, NAIROBI

- **Your Excellency, Dr Ebrahim Raisi, President of Iran,**
- **Honourable Members of your Delegation,**
- **Distinguished Guests,**

Good morning,

1. I take this opportunity to once again express, on behalf of the people and Government of Kenya, our gratitude to His Excellency President Ebrahim Raisi and his delegation for honouring us with this visit, his first ever to Africa, and the first stop on his tour of our continent.
2. It is a special privilege to host President Raisi in Nairobi and his presence is testimony of the strong ties between Kenya and Iran. It is also a demonstration of our shared commitment to cooperate for the benefit of the people of the two countries.
3. I am delighted to report that President Raisi and I have just concluded highly productive bilateral discussions on a broad range of important issues.
4. During our meeting, I reaffirmed to His Excellency President Raisi the important place of Iran as a critical strategic partner to Kenya and the value that we place on the friendly and fraternal relations between our two countries. Our historical engagement and areas of cooperation in development include, education, scholarships, infrastructure, health, water, fisheries, agriculture and housing, urban and metropolitan development among other sectors.



5. President Raisi and I had the opportunity to exchange views and share ideas about emerging opportunities to improve the balance of trade between our two nations.
6. Kenya and Iran are strategically situated to be each other's key points of entry into their respective regions, and we have affirmed our joint commitment to capitalise on this unique advantage.
7. I expressed to His Excellency the President our appreciation of our bilateral cooperation in the promotion of trade, particularly in the export of Kenyan products to Iran. More specifically, I sought the President's commitment in facilitating the export of more tea, meat and other agricultural products to Iran and, through Iran, to Central Asian countries. Stronger collaboration with Iran is important for us in delivering the Agriculture value chain of our Bottom Up Economic Transformation Agenda.
8. It is encouraging to note that trade volumes between our countries have been on a steady upward trajectory. Kenya exported tea worth \$28.4 million (Ksh4 billion) to Tehran in the first quarter of the year, which is an eight-fold increase from sales for the same period last year. Kenya attaches great significance to the Iranian market since it is one of the most valued export destinations for our tea.
9. Kenya is also highly encouraged by the great interest shown by Iran in promoting technological and entrepreneurial innovation among Kenyan youth by promoting incubation of Kenyan start ups and creative industries through the Iran House of Innovation and Technology. This is an outstanding intervention that is innovative and directly aligned with our national aspirations towards creating a digital superhighway and a robust digital economy as



primary pillars of the Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda.

10. As a global innovation powerhouse, Iran has made significant progress in the development and deployment of modern technologies in key industries such as agriculture, manufacturing and telecommunications. I have, therefore, invited wider and deeper collaboration in these and other critical sectors in the interest of our shared socio-economic and developmental objectives.
11. Similarly, His Excellency the President and I noted that Iran is already an important partner in Kenya's health services sector and maintains two healthcare centres in Nairobi. To actualise the Universal Healthcare objective, which is a critical pillar of our agenda, we continue to invite and learn from the expertise of countries like Iran, which has achieved a great degree of advancement in medicine and modern medical technology.
12. The Blue Economy is one critical area where we can demonstrate the merits of our plan. To align the undeniable opportunities in the Blue Economy, we must invest capital and technology where it will create more jobs: At the bottom of the economic pyramid. In the spirit to further enhance our bilateral relations, Iran has agreed to boost our exploits and pursuits in the blue economy through research and technology. Iran is a maritime nation with a strong fishing Industry. On its part, Kenya has established a dedicated ministry to exclusively deal with the blue economy.
13. At the same time, I reaffirmed the Government's steadfast commitment to fostering and protecting all investments in the country, both domestic and foreign, through the fair, consistent and effective application of the rule of law. I



have, therefore, reiterated to President Raisi that Kenya remains open and committed to receiving and hosting Iranian investors and businesspeople, and providing them with a conducive business atmosphere across the country.

14. His Excellency conveyed to me information that will be good news for stakeholders in our mechanical and automotive sector, including dealers, engineers, technicians and other workers: Iran's intention to set up a motor vehicle assembly plant in Mombasa to manufacture an indigenous Iranian vehicle that has been given the Kiswahili name – 'Kifaru'. I am confident that the project is as unstoppable as this name suggests.
15. This highly productive visit has been an excellent opportunity for us to renew and reaffirm the strong bonds of friendship and solidarity between the governments and peoples of Kenya and Iran.
16. Today, President Raisi and I have witnessed the signing of five memoranda of understanding on cooperation in Information, Communication and Technology; Fisheries; Animal Health and Livestock Production and Investment Promotion.
17. These memoranda will enhance and further deepen our bilateral relations for sustainable growth and development between our two countries.
18. Once again, I thank His Excellency President Raisi for the tremendous honour for this visit and for the opportunity it has afforded us to undertake fruitful bilateral engagements.



19. Kenya remains committed to advancing and enhancing further engagement with Iran in I our shared commitments to pursue the greater prosperity for our people.

Thank you.

God Bless Iran.

God Bless Kenya.

