



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY WILLIAM
RUTO, C.G.H., PhD; PRESIDENT AND
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE KENYA DEFENSE
FORCES, DURING A RETREAT ON THE
INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS OF THE AFRICAN
UNION**

JUNE 25, 2024

NAIVASHA, NAKURU COUNTY



**Your Excellency Moussa Faki, Chairperson of the African Union Commission,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. At the onset, let me take this opportunity to warmly welcome you and your team to this beautiful resort town of Naivasha.
2. I also take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation to my fellow African Union Heads of State and Government for their confidence in assigning me the task of finalising the outstanding institutional reforms of the African Union. I recognise the admirable effort and progress made by my predecessor in this noble task and sincerely thank His Excellency Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda, for the exemplary delivery of the reforms so far. I am honoured to have this chance to build on his good work and commit to expeditiously advancing the remaining reforms to their logical conclusion.
3. Africa is endowed with abundant potential that largely remains untapped. This denies the continent immense opportunities in various economic sectors, including agriculture, renewable energy, manufacturing, mining, and climate action. Under the African Union Agenda 2063, we have a coherent pathway to unleash this potential and propel the continent into the league of highly developed societies within a few generations. To do so, we must intentionally align our foremost Pan-African institution with the continent's aspirations and reconfigure it to become agile and responsive in delivering the same. This is the work set out for us.



4. We have a historic opportunity to reform the African Union and make it fit for purpose in light of our collective developmental objectives. We must execute these reforms with resolve and a sense of urgency commensurate with the magnitude of our challenges, potential, and ambition. Africans are highly enterprising, educated, skilled, and youthful and are ready to do their part in developing our continent. We must not let them down, and we must not keep them waiting.

5. I appreciate the effort that has gone into achieving the reforms made so far in the AU. As a result, decision-making at the AU Assembly has been streamlined to achieve significant clarity and economy. Similarly, the structure and mandates of the senior ranks of the Commission have been realigned and cemented with rationalised selection modalities. Additionally, the AU's Commission, organs, and specialised agencies have also been restructured. The New Partnership for Africa's Development has been transformed into the African Union Development Agency, ushering in a new era of ambitious pursuit of shared prosperity. Likewise, 42 out of 55 institutions have been analysed and reviewed, while the structure of the Commission has been fully reviewed and approved by the Executive Council.

6. A new AU for a new era is beginning to take shape, and the next phase of the reforms, which I am privileged to lead, will complete this exemplary work. A critical reform that I shall focus on is the division of labour between the Member States, AU, and Regional Economic Communities, as well as the AU Specialized Agencies.



7. Particularly, there are functional overlaps that urgently need resolution to enhance our Union's operational efficiency. Economists have predicted another year of slow growth in the world in 2024, meaning that budget constraints will continue to limit our capacity to execute the AU Agenda 2063. There will be no resources to waste, and greater efficiency is imperative: we cannot afford to spread our meagre resources too thin across institutions that perform overlapping functions.

8. As I said during the IDA21 Replenishment Summit in Nairobi: as African Heads of State and Government, we are strongly committed to reforming the African Union Commission to make it fit for purpose and to empower it with the capacity to engage the rest of the world on behalf of Africa. At the same time, it is time for us to reform the Pan-African Parliament to enable it to exercise oversight over the AU Commission to make it more accountable and to finally establish an African Court of Justice.

9. Faced with the relentless challenge of climate change and escalating instability and economic shocks, African nations must find strength in Pan-African unity. Despite the many daunting forces working hard to divide us, the AU must be able to keep us united and focused on the fundamental objectives of delivering inclusive prosperity throughout Africa, contributing to global development, security, and stability, and safeguarding the future of our humankind and the diverse life forms that share our planet.



10. Many of the threats and challenges we face are complex, dynamic, and global in nature, calling for collective action on an unprecedented multilateral scale. Africa is committed to making its critical contribution not only to human progress but also to efforts to find solutions. Because of our unique and abundant resource endowments and productive potential, our continent offers a viable and transformative pathway to a future of prosperity for all humanity. We bring to the table multilateral strategic deliberation and global problem-solving the promise of unlocking an unprecedented era of global economic growth and prosperity.

Your Excellency Chairperson,

11. I have had the occasion, in a number of forums across the continent, to outline the outstanding reforms which, in my considered view, shall be key areas of focus for me to deliver on my mandate efficiently. However, this outline is firmly indicative and I remain open to consultation and deliberation. I am confident that you have deliberated vigorously and exhaustively on various priorities and I am interested in tapping into your extensive operational experience in AU institutions to enrich and refine our reform agenda and to explore innovative and inclusive ways to take the AU to the next level.

12. I intend to be highly systematic in building on the substantial work accomplished by His Excellency President Kagame. Further, I shall focus on establishing a robust and sustainable funding mechanism for both the AU regular and program budgets.



13. Let us work together in recognition of the importance, urgency, weight of expectations and the transformational implications of the work of reforming the institutions of the African Union. I am confident that I can rely on you, individually and collectively, to contribute meaningfully to taking the reform agenda forward and actualising the dream of an African Union for our time and for generations ahead of us. I wish you success as you continue with this historical work.

**Asante sana,
Thank you,
God bless you,
God bless Africa.**

