



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**REMARKS BY H.E. DR. WILLIAM SAMOEI RUTO  
CGH, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA  
AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE  
FORCES DURING THE 48TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE UNION OF  
COMOROS**

**JULY 6TH, 2023**

**MORONI, COMOROS**

- **Your Excellency, Azali Assoumani, President of the Comoros and the Chairperson of the African Union (AU), Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government present,**
- **Honourable Ministers,**
- **Excellencies Members of the Diplomatic Corps,**

### **Distinguished Guests,**

1. Honourable citizens of Comoros and esteemed friends from Africa and the entire world, I stand before you today with great joy and pride, representing your brothers and sisters, the people of Kenya, as we gather here to celebrate the 48<sup>th</sup> Independence Day of the beautiful nation of Comoros. I bring you warm greetings, assurances of goodwill and best wishes from Kenya:

Asalaam Aleykum!

Bariza soubhouhi?

Nguawe mnono!

Ye nganyije?

2. It is a momentous occasion that brings us together. Kenya and Comoros are bound by historical ties, shared values, and a commitment to progress and prosperity.
3. On this special day, we commemorate the brave struggle of the Comorian people who fought tirelessly for their freedom, their right to self-determination, and their identity as a proud nation. We pay tribute to the heroes and heroines who



dedicated their lives to the cause of independence, paving the way for a brighter future for the people of Comoros.

Dear Colleagues, Distinguished Guests,

4. Kenya, as a friend and partner, celebrates Comoros' achievements over the past 48 years. We have witnessed your nation's remarkable progress and resilience, as you have overcome challenges and charted your path towards development. Comoros has emerged as a beacon of hope, showcasing the strength and determination of its people.
5. Our nations share a deep bond rooted in history, culture, and trade. Ours is a people-driven bond that is all about relationships, values we hold in common and shared aspirations. Over the years, Kenya and Comoros have built on this robust foundation to foster strong diplomatic relations, promote mutual understanding and cooperation in various fields. We now stand committed to furthering the spirit of collaboration in such areas as education, healthcare, agriculture, and security, always striving to uplift the lives of our citizens and build a better shared future together.
6. Today, this aspiration will be actualised by concluding a General Cooperation Agreement between Kenya and Comoros. This agreement paves the way for the establishment of a Joint Commission on Cooperation to facilitate more robust and sustained collaboration between us. We have also resolved to hold the inaugural session of the JCC before the end of the year.
7. As we celebrate Comoros' 48th Independence Day, let us take a moment to reflect on the values that inspired your nation's heroic freedom fighters, and which even now unite



us: sovereignty, freedom, democracy, the rule of law, the pursuit of economic prosperity and the well-being of every citizen.

8. Both our nations have faced challenges along our path of self-reliance journeys, but through resilience and unity, we have persevered. Through dedicated struggle and sustained commitment, we have drawn and kept that profound lesson which is the heritage of all free people: that the struggle for liberty is the eternal mandate of present and future generations.
9. Today, we stand as partners in progress, committed to deepening our collaboration for the benefit of our peoples. Together, we can harness our shared potential to create opportunities, foster innovation, and build sustainable economies that leave no one behind. Let us embrace the spirit of solidarity and cooperation, as we work hand in hand to address common challenges, such as climate change, regional security, and economic development.
10. Comoros, with its rich cultural heritage and natural beauty, has much to offer the world. We applaud your efforts in preserving your unique and highly admired national cultural traditions, protecting the environment, and promoting tourism. Kenya stands with the Comoros, as a proactive collaborator in these endeavours, including the facilitation of people-to-people exchanges, promotion of investment, and sharing of experiences in sustainable tourism practices.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,

11. It is my honour to congratulate Your Excellency, my brother, President Azali Assoumani for graciously accepting the immense responsibility and momentous mandate of the AU



Chairmanship for the year 2023. You have made the Comoros the first island state to assume the leadership of our continental governing body, and this is a highly exemplary achievement that will give confidence to all the people of Africa irrespective of whether they come from small or big country. I take this opportunity to reiterate Kenya's commitment to support you, and the Union of the Comoros as you lead the African continent to greater heights and confronting the people's day-to-day challenges.

12. I also congratulate you, Your Excellency President Azali Assoumani, for successfully hosting an international conference on the Blue Economy. It is clear that under your leadership, Comoros is emerging as a player on the international stage in its own right, and that is something to celebrate.
13. I am confident therefore, Your Excellency, that under your leadership, the momentum for AU reforms will gather, and that a fit-for-purpose AU that can effectively implement Agenda2063, including entrenching the approach of African solutions to African problems. I look forward to tremendous progress in institutional reforms at the Union, that will enable the AU Commission, AU organs and specialised agencies to rise to their full potential and fulfil their mandate of facilitating the emergence of a union that can effectively participate in global affairs, as part of your historic legacy. Together, let us take the important step of formulating a pathway towards positioning the Pan African Parliament as a key institution in the management of the affairs of our continent.
14. Comoros and Kenya face common challenges, including Climate Change that continues to ravage the world and our continent in particular. As the globe recovers from a horrific



pandemic, it also faces a triple planetary crisis of pollution, biodiversity loss, and climate change, as well as an unrelenting economic crisis fuelled by geopolitical unrest. Consequently, millions of individuals worldwide have suffered negative effects, including threats to their lives and livelihoods.

15. The Blue Economy is the cornerstone of the competitiveness and economic growth of Africa's coastal nations. However, their productivity as well as potential are being jeopardized by unsustainable infrastructural expansion, poor management of natural habitats and resources, and pollution. This vulnerability is being made worse by climate change related phenomena such sea level rise, land subsidence, storm surge, and coastal flooding. How can coastal nations manage their marine and coastal landscapes to promote economic development, combat poverty, and prepare for the effects of climate change? Kenya and the Union of the Comoros are united by a shared commitment to find coherent, effective and sustainable answers to this question.
  
16. It is in these common challenges that we must hold hands and lead our people in finding amicable and lasting solutions. More than ever, we must embrace African solutions to African problems. We must understand that when we talk about African solutions, we are also talking about actual capacity to develop and execute high quality ideas, concepts and strategies that will liberate our people in diverse spheres, including food sovereignty, financial independence and economic freedom, innovation and the freedom to imagine.



17. We must take this commitment to freedom further, and encourage the free movement of people between our countries. On that note, I give you a commitment that Kenya shall abolish the requirement of visas for all persons holding valid travel documents issued by the Union of the Comoros into Kenya, before the end of 2023.
18. To further strengthen our ties in the Education sector, we are working closely to allow students from Comoros to pursue higher education in Kenya and pay the same amount of fees as local students.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,

19. I am also honoured to congratulate Comoros for ratifying the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) earlier this year. Through this platform, Kenya and Comoros have the chance to expand the trading avenues as well as improve economic diplomacy in the entire African continent. Regional and continental economic integration are tides that lift all boats. This is why I am taking this opportunity to also extend an invitation to the people of the Union of the Comoros to join the East African Community, so that we can pursue and achieve prosperity together.
20. I invite all of you to use this auspicious occasion to renew our commitment to strengthen the bond between the people of Kenya and Comoros. As we celebrate Comoros' 48th Independence Day. Let us rededicate ourselves to our shared vision of a prosperous, peaceful, and inclusive future for our nations and the African continent as a whole.
21. May the friendship between our two countries continue to flourish, and may the people of Comoros achieve even



greater heights of success and well-being in the years to come.

22. Thank you, and God bless the Union of the Comoros, Kenya, and Africa.

**Ridjiviwa hakuwu**

**Marhaba mendji!**

**Namrejeyi salama homakizini hanyu!**

**Wasalaam Alaykum!**

