



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY WILLIAM SAMOEI
RUTO, PHD, CGH, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF KENYA AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE
DEFENCE FORCES DURING THE DIASPORA
INVESTMENT CONFERENCE**

DECEMBER 13TH, 2023

**KENYATTA INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
CENTRE, NAIROBI**



**Our Partners,
Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
The Kenyan Diaspora,
Distinguished guests,**

Good morning,

1. I am delighted to join you for this important Diaspora Investment Conference where powerful conversations shall take place touching on the core of The Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda. Before I go further, I extend a warm welcome to all of you and, in particular, Kenyans who have travelled far and beyond, karibuni nyumbani.
2. I am also quite proud to witness the culmination of the Government's commitments to our diaspora. For the sake of clear context, I shall set out our commitment in a bit of detail.
3. In our Plan, we pledged to create a dedicated state department for diaspora affairs, whose mandate would be to improve government service delivery, establish a diaspora forum, promote greater local investment by Kenyans living abroad, facilitate, through intentional measures greater access to overseas employment opportunities for Kenyans, foster the transfer of knowledge, skills and technology through strategic engagement, promoting the social welfare of Kenya's diaspora, and leveraging our diaspora to enhance Kenya's international profile.



4. We have been committed to enrich our engagement with our brothers and sisters living and working abroad beyond the asymmetrical preoccupation with remittances. At any rate, the diaspora's contribution through remittances has overtaken the performance of our major exports and now constitutes a major anchor of economic stability and driver of investment.
5. The State Department for Diaspora Affairs is the host of the first Kenya Diaspora Investment Conference, whose agenda is dedicated to facilitating richer conversation, fostering greater understanding and strengthening our partnership in investment promotion across various sectors. This event therefore eloquently testifies to the government's achievement in delivering its commitments to the diaspora.
6. I am encouraged to note that during this conference, you are going to be engaged in robust deliberation on various dimensions of investment, from general experiences to sectoral components like financial services, real estate and strategic value chains like agriculture, manufacturing, healthcare and the creative economies.
7. I am glad to note further that this conference promises to facilitate rewarding engagements on such specialised investment areas as public-private partnerships, the fintech and start-up ecosystems, and that the Kenya investment environment, which has now significantly upgraded its attractive proposition, as well as aspects of social welfare and social protection pertinent to our diaspora.
8. As a Government, and by keeping the promise of bringing Diaspora issues to the centre of our policy, programmes and initiatives, I am happy when I see such events that seek to engage a section of our population that was for long sidelined on matters of national development.



9. However, for the Diaspora to be involved in the socio-economic development back home, they have to be secure and flourishing in their host countries. As a Government, the security and safety of all citizens is our foremost commitment and most fundamental obligation, without which every other endeavour, including investment, is not possible.
10. We shall continue to engage our Diaspora across the globe, with the objective of providing systems and structures to protect the rights and welfare of the Diaspora, while mainstreaming their contribution to nation-building in all sectors of the economy.
11. During my first engagement with the Diaspora in December 2022, I committed to decentralize, automate and digitise as many government services as we can, so that the Diaspora can access them online and do not have to spend hours or even whole days travelling to get consular services.
12. I can confirm that we have expanded digital provision of public services to encompass 14,000 services, and it is our commitment to ensure full digitization, which has not only enhanced efficiency and integrity in the provision of government services but also improved revenue collection.
13. Additionally, we have rolled out the Mobile Consular Service exercise that has now covered 22 countries and served over 9,000 Kenyans abroad at the closest points to where they live.
14. To connect our highly skilled and innovative human capital, with employment opportunities, we have developed the Global Labour Market Strategy that will facilitate Kenyans, especially the youth, to find work abroad.



15. Our objective in implementing all these measures is to create safe migration pathways; a friendly environment to work in the Diaspora; and seamless networks that facilitate, promote and support diaspora investment back home in Kenya.
16. The theme of today's conference, "Tujenge Kenya: Bridging borders, Building Futures" is a call to action, summoning us to make our contribution to the growth and development of our nation and to build bridges across all real and imaginary barriers, obstacles and borders that stand in the way of our progress.
17. This event therefore serves as a platform to strengthen the bond between Kenya and its diaspora, to forge partnerships that transcend borders, and to build futures that are prosperous and inclusive.
18. As a country, we are entering the phase of economic transformation where opportunities abound in every sector, and we encourage you to seize your chance and reap a rich yield.
19. I recognise, appreciate and commend the Kenyan Diaspora for its role in decolonizing, democratising and globalising our economy. I encourage you to leave this conference with a strong resolve to do more and earn more from the opportunities that continue to unfold as we undertake the bottom-up transformation of our economy.
20. Let us embark on this journey to build a nation that thrives on the collective efforts of its people, both at home and abroad. We are keen to work with you; to harness your networks in order to channel more investments to Kenya and create opportunities to move this country forward.



21. I wish you highly enlightening engagements, fruitful deliberations and inspired partnerships, and look forward to many positive outcomes from this conference. The Kenya Diaspora Investment Conference is officially opened.

Thank you.

God Bless you.

