



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY WILLIAM
SAMOEI RUTO, C.G.H., PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF KENYA AND COMMANDER-IN-
CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE FORCES DURING THE
FLAGGING OFF OF OXYGEN CYLINDERS TO
COUNTIES**

APRIL 17TH, 2023

STATE HOUSE, NAIROBI

**Governor Ann Waiguru, Chairperson Council of
Governors**
Governor Muthoni Njuki, Chair, Health Committee
**Mr. Linden Morrison, Global Fund Department
Head, High Impact Africa**
**Dr Githinji Gitahi, Chief Executive Officer, Amref
Health Africa**
**Kenya Coordinating Mechanism Members,
Distinguished Guests**

Good Afternoon;

1. This event is of utmost significance for a number of critical reasons. The most important is, of course, the fact that every intervention in the provision of healthcare to the people of Kenya is of fundamental importance to the government. Our commitment goes beyond the traditional delivery of health services as a public good. The provision of universal healthcare comes out of the recognition of the singular opportunity to intervene radically and make healthcare inclusive, accessible, affordable and of high quality.
2. A healthy nation is a foundational constitutional expectation and the right to the highest attainable standard of health is an entitlement of every citizen. Further, low access to healthcare services due to inadequate infrastructure and high costs has subjected many people to great suffering. Additionally, frequent illness deprives many people of the ability to fully pursue the opportunities of life, including education and gainful employment and even leads to loss of life. Medical expenditure is also a notorious driver of poverty, robbing countless households of incomes and savings.



3. Our universal healthcare commitment is, therefore, an integral component of the Bottom Up Transformation Agenda. This agenda is radical because it commits to deliver bold and ambitious undertakings in the face of tremendous economic challenges and geo-political turmoil in the context of post-pandemic recovery. Consequently, it has become imperative to augment traditional governance with innovation and a strong measure of imagination for service delivery to meet the needs of a new, but difficult time.
4. To achieve our transformational ambitions under the constraints of limited resources, we have opened up the funding mechanism and delivery frameworks to accommodate the participation of various partners, including private investors, development partners, multilateral agencies and non-profit organisations, including the civil society.
5. As we speak, significant programmes and projects under our Plan have been undertaken under the public-private partnership framework. Our Affordable Housing pillar, for example, is primarily going to be delivered this way. We also have bilateral partnership arrangements to execute several important programmes and projects in conjunction with friendly governments. In addition, multilateral organisations and development institutions have come on board to undertake critical projects in many sectors throughout the country.
6. I cannot sufficiently emphasise the magnitude of positive change we have achieved, the opportunities we have identified and the potential to do much more and much better than earlier projected, thanks to our



policy that looks to partnerships as effective project implementation and service delivery frameworks.

7. There is no better way of driving this vital point home than this event. Through a close and strong partnership with the Global Fund, Kenya entered into effective engagements with other governments, civil society, the private sector and affected communities, which enabled us to register remarkable progress in improving public health.
8. In particular, the partnership we have fostered with the Global Fund has contributed hugely to our country's tremendous progress in combating three of the most devastating diseases: HIV and Aids, tuberculosis and malaria.
9. By investing more than 1.8 billion dollars in the past two decades in the strengthening of health service delivery, infrastructure and community systems, the Global Fund has facilitated high-impact strategic health programmes in Kenya. More specifically, there has been a 67 per cent decline in Aids-related deaths since 2013, 85 per cent success in treatment of TB and a major drop in national malaria prevalence from 8 per cent in 2015 to 6 per cent in 2020.
10. Currently, the Global Fund grant to Kenya for 2021-2024 amounts to 441.5 million dollars and is implemented by various partners, including the National Treasury, Amref Health Africa and the Kenya Red Cross. The National Treasury implements its portion through the Ministry of Health, NASCOP, Malaria and TB programmes, National Syndemic Disease Control Council, Health Systems Department, county governments and KEMSA. On its part, Amref



Health Africa implements the grant through 46 community organisations, while the Kenya Red Cross does so through 65 such organisations.

11. While it is undeniable that our partnerships have been remarkably successful, we must look towards an uncertain future, recognise and prepare for the challenges that certainly lie ahead. This realisation is particularly imperative given our post-pandemic outlook. The devastating Covid-19 pandemic was an immense stress test that posed a serious challenge to our health systems and exposed its vulnerabilities.
12. The Global Fund came to Kenya's aid and supported us in coping with the overwhelming systemic burden of the pandemic, with significant financial support. This is appreciated. More significantly, the Global Fund stands with us even now in the pandemic recovery phase as we take robust measures to remedy the systemic weaknesses exposed by the pandemic.
13. A major vulnerability highlighted by the Covid-19 pandemic is the medical oxygen supply chain. Kenya has sub-optimal oxygen supply and poor infrastructure as a result of which it is minimally available in public health facilities. The pandemic drastically intensified demand for oxygen, raising its cost by more than 75 percent. As a result, suffering Kenyans and their distressed families were driven into unprecedented desperation.
14. The Global Fund has been immensely supportive of our efforts to strengthen our national medical oxygen ecosystem and I appreciate the Fund's 41.7 million dollars investment through Amref Medical to support our oxygen supply and comprehensive infrastructure



improvement. This covers refill of compressed and cryogenic oxygen, acquisition of tanks and cylinders, installation of high volume PSA oxygen generation plants and the piping and installation of manifolds as well as oxygen outlets to health facilities.

15. Today, we are here to witness the crowning moment of a highly successful partnership that has seen us through the hardest of times and strengthened us for the future. As we flag off 20,620 medical oxygen cylinders for delivery to the 47 counties, let us reflect deeply upon, but also appreciate with gratitude and celebrate an exemplary partnership that has remained committed and transformative.
16. We are highly encouraged by the success of our partnership and further emboldened in our mission to deliver to the people of Kenya a healthcare system worthy of their aspirations and consistent with our ambitions for socio-economic transformation.
17. I assure all our partners, therefore, of our unwavering commitment and tireless devotion to ensuring that your friendship, goodwill and support yield much more and bring our people closer to the Kenya of our dreams.
18. I also appreciate every actor or stakeholder that has taken part in the partnerships that have implemented our public health agenda, whether they are in government, the private sector, civil society, philanthropy or the communities involved. The implementing partners of various Global Fund grants also deserve special appreciation. We expect uncompromising accountability, transparency and proper utilization of the resources.



19. Finally, I would like to say a special thank you to the Global Fund for the commitment to improve healthcare in Kenya. Together, we have come far and, together, we are going places. Receive our message of gratitude and best wishes from all of us. We look forward to making further progress with you.

**Thank you very much.
God bless you.**

