



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY, HON.
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PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA AND
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE
FORCES DURING THE SIGNING OF THE FY
2023/2024 MINISTERIAL PERFORMANCE
CONTRACTS**

AUGUST 1ST, 2023

STATE HOUSE, NAIROBI

Good Morning;

1. We are in the midst of the most vigorous national conversation in our country's democratic history. For a few years now, the cost of living has been an oppressive yoke around the necks of most Kenyans, and its most punitive effects have been felt by vulnerable people at the bottom of our socioeconomic structure.
2. The Covid-19 pandemic not only brought home the intense local impact of tremendous external shocks occasioned by the disruption of international supply chains and markets, it also revealed the **limitations of the prevailing economic model** and exposed the full extent of the **context between the state and the citizen**.
3. For those who had jobs, majority of whom were in the informal sector, the prices of essential commodities rose beyond the purchasing power of their incomes, demonstrating the precarity of the majority of our peoples' livelihoods, and serious illness brought with it the ever-present threat of poverty arising from exorbitant medical cost. Although there was opportunity to use the covid-19 'downtime' to increase agricultural productivity, subsidizing farm inputs was not a priority compared to vendor-driven, pandemic-related expenditure which eventually failed due to wastage, corruption, non-performance and delays.
4. Other measures and programmes undertaken during this time exacerbated the suffering of Kenyans at the bottom, and made many people question the priorities of their government. This was the beginning of the national conversation that subsists to this minute and has anchored robust engagements which defined the last election and



subsequent political and policy discourse. The primary bone of contention is: Whom does the government work for?

5. An old and favoured approach to answering this question was to pledge to do more, in fact much more, of the same old policies, programmes, projects and interventions that have failed at such a high cost that poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment are intolerable.
6. The other option was to embrace a bold new vision and undertake ambitious interventions aimed at transforming the country's economy by creating jobs and increasing incomes while ensuring that food, shelter and healthcare are available to everyone, especially the people at the bottom of our socioeconomic structure.
7. We engaged Kenyans all over the length and breadth of our country on the most urgent priorities and the best ways and means of implementing them. Ultimately, it became clear that the new approach to national development was not only going to be ambitious and visionary; it was also going to be radical and transformative.
8. To begin with, the plan was going to turn the national development agenda upside down, from the traditional top-down model that is essentially elite-centric, to a bottom-up model that is citizen-centric. Secondly, the model would aim to positively impact millions of Kenyans at the bottom by focusing interventions where their greatest number find their livelihoods, which is the informal sector and, especially **agriculture** and the **Hustler Economy**. Thirdly, a new model would entail measures to not only create millions of jobs and increase incomes, but also reduce the cost of living by mitigating the cost of energy, transport, shelter and healthcare as a share of household incomes.



9. We agreed with the people that to deliver this transformative model, five sectors would form the core pillars of our agenda to bring down the cost of living, eradicate hunger, create jobs, expand the tax base, improve our foreign exchange balance and deliver inclusive growth, and do so from the bottom-up. These sectors, are **Agriculture, Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (MSME) economy, Affordable Housing, Universal Healthcare Coverage** and the **Digital Superhighway and Creative Economy**. They form the pillars of the **Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda**, which sets out my performance contract with the people of Kenya, that I entered on behalf of the Kenya Kwanza family, to be delivered by the entire government.
10. The terms of the contract are fairly straightforward. In return for paying their due taxes in a timely fashion, the citizens of this country not only expect but are entitled to receive the benefit of all government services in a prompt and satisfactory manner. By virtue of our governing mandate, we are committed to the performance of our part of the contract in full.
11. The robust national debate over the bottom-up economics demonstrated that the people of Kenya are highly engaged with the policies that affect their interests, and are ready to give good policies a chance. The animation which characterised national and parliamentary debate over **Finance Act**, in my view, had more to do with the absence of a consistent culture of promise-keeping in our politics, and of faithful alignment between government policy and the people's aspirations. As a result, there are Kenyans who do not even believe that a government has an obligation to deliver its pledges, and view manifestos



and campaign platforms as empty political performances and meaningless tricks and noise.

12. In fact, there are even leaders, including members of the clergy who have been sympathetic and tried, with the best intentions, to suggest ways of enabling the government and myself to free ourselves of the commitments we made in the agenda. Consequently, some Kenyans are suspicious that we are implementing revenue measures without any intention to deliver any public services at all, let alone the elaborate agenda set out in the Kenya Kwanza BETA Plan.
13. While I appreciate the goodwill and concern, I wish to state in no uncertain terms, in order to clear any confusion and give comfort to all Kenyans that its administration is fully committed to the implementation of the pledges contained in the bottom-up economic transformation agenda. We promised that our government would defend the Constitution and constitutionalism, institutionalise issue-based, performance-oriented politics, and implement a **Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda** . We shall not run away from any of these commitments.
14. This is the context in which we have negotiated, developed and are today going to witness the signing of the first-generation Ministerial Performance Contracts for the financial year 2023-2024.
15. Performance contracting in the government of Kenya is now in its 20th year of continuous implementation and over that time, the performance contract has evolved into a robust tool employed by government for measuring the performance of ministries, departments and agencies in serving the people of Kenya. The performance contract has also been critical in enabling government identify, collect, collate and analyse vital information connected with the



performance of public agencies. The overall result of this is that government decision-making has become increasingly evidence-based, and public officers have become increasingly aware of their accountability for actions and omissions, achievements and mistakes.

16. We have resolved to enhance the overall performance management framework and to leverage its tremendous potential by incorporating the actualisation of the **BETA plan** the government performance contracting and delivery mechanism. Our objective is to achieve the highest levels of **efficiency and effectiveness** in the delivery of public services, ensure **accountability** in the utilization of public resources, improve the mechanisms of service delivery, re-align public agencies with their **core mandates** and accelerate the **completion** of programmes and projects.
17. We are here to declare our intention to implement our commitments, serve Kenyans and to do so in a highly systematic manner. Our performance shall be robust, our progress measurable and our delivery, effective. Our purpose is to make sure that the stewardship of public authority and resources will be responsible, transparent and accountable. We desire to actualize the twin mandates of citizen's rights and government's obligations by governing well, in a people-centric, results-oriented way.
18. We have made sure that every ministry, department and agency has aligned their programmes and policies with the Forth Medium-Term Plan (of the Kenya National Vision2030), which now incorporates key government priorities under the 5 BETA pillars. It is now a fundamental duty of cabinet secretaries, principal secretaries, chief executive officers of state corporations and the principals of tertiary education institutions, to implement obligations



under their performance contracts by taking every measure to execute key government priorities on time, and with the allocated resources.

19. In keeping with our commitment to deliver, the performance contracts have been perfected through a rigorous process of vetting key priorities and ring-fencing their funding through the National Treasury. Every instrument that shall be derived from these contracts for implementation by MDAs must replicate this model and it shall be the duty of Cabinet Secretaries to ensure full conformity.
20. As I stated in April during the lanch of the performance evaluation report, performance management shall be implemented throughout government and no public institution funded through the exchequer shall be exempt.
21. You will recall that in our manifesto, we set out the principles that would guide the implementation framework of the **Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda** : prioritization, sequencing and financing. Today, we are translating these aspirations to actionable instruments and at the same time unpacking them into the following commitments.
 - a. **Absorption** of allocated funds including externally mobilized resources
 - b. Measures to reduce the level of **pending bills**
 - c. **Digitisation** of government services
 - d. Demonstrable and measurable **productivity**
 - e. **Completion** of projects
 - f. National Tree Cover Restoration Campaign
 - g. Youth **internship** and industrial **attachments**



- h. Access to government procurement opportunities by the **youth, women and persons living with disability**
 - i. Promotion of **local content** in government procurement
 - j. Promotion of the **national values and principles of governance**
22. As I mentioned before, many Kenyans have been disappointed by endless cycles of unfulfilled pledges. Because of our long history of white elephant projects and corruption scandals. Some see these commitments as vendor-driven kickback rackets disguised conspiracies to embezzle public funds. A political culture of poor promise-keeping, as well as endemic corruption has done significant damage to our social fabric by eroding trust in government and widening the gulf that separates citizens' aspirations from government policy. We cannot afford to wait and see where this road may lead, because it has already brought us to a terrible place. It is time to call an end to it once and for all.
23. Under our new bold vision of radical transformation we must simultaneously implement policies, programmes and projects to achieve inclusive growth and at the same time undertake robust measures to eradicate corruption, wastage and inefficiency. I have given my solemn undertaking to protect public resources during my term in office. I shall be held to account for the good government of our country, delivery of our commitments and the stewardship of public resources. I intend to give a good account on each of these mandates.
24. In order to do this, I shall hold every officer serving in government, beginning with you, to account for both their performance in service delivery and stewardship of public



resources. I shall deal with cases of negligence, misappropriation, embezzlement, theft or other misconduct or corruption in relation to public resources summarily and decisively. You are hereby duly notified.

25. I have high expectations of you, because I am confident that by now you are familiar with the workings of government, accustomed with our work rate and fully aware of our intention to implement all our commitments. I therefore remind you to pursue and maintain the highest professional standards and observe the principles and values of the Public Service under Article 232(1) of the Constitution. Also keep a copy of your performance within sight at all times to anchor your reflections and focus your deliberations. I wish you success in your work, and look forward to presiding over the release of the results of your performance at the end of this financial year.

Thank you.
God Bless Kenya.

