



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**STATEMENT H.E. WILLIAM SAMOEI RUTO, PhD, EGH,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA AND
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE FORCES
DURING THE VIRTUAL PLENARY SESSION OF THE
SECOND DEMOCRACY SUMMIT.**

ON

**WEDNESDAY 29th MARCH, 2023
13.10 EAT,**

Your Excellency Yoon Suk Yeol, President of the Republic of Korea,

Excellencies Heads of State and Government,

Leaders of Delegation in Attendance,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

- 1.** In discussing how democracy delivers economic growth and shared prosperity, it has been customary to address the way in which democracy and free enterprise are firmly conjoined and I endorse such a perspective, with the additional observation that the manner in which we exploit the opportunities in the ensuing political economy matters.
- 2.** All of society responds positively to the fact democracy, as a result of which mutually reinforcing institutions of a distinct type and quality take root and grow. A specific set of institutions underpins stability, credibility and legitimacy anchoring the evolution of a proper environment for experimentation, risk-taking, innovation and competition. I submit that these institutions are only viable under a fundamentally democratic dispensation.
- 3.** A governance system which vigorously demonstrates uncompromising accountability, robust checks and balances, total transparency, and participation by the people from the grassroots all the way to the top and centre, or capitals sends the right type of signal and produces incentives that catalyse growth and stability in the economy and politics.
- 4.** Such a system also inevitably creates powerful institutions for channelling solidarity into effective collective action in the pursuit of social justice, ecological responsibility, protection of the vulnerable as well as intergenerational equity. Democratic societies are, by definition, committed to sustainability and inclusion.
- 5.** These institutional attributes are attractive to investment and enterprise because they offer the best opportunities for everyone to actualise their potential. They also guarantee the blossoming of good ideas, testing of inspired risky concepts, and the explosion of pioneering enterprises into highly profitable and impactful large employers.

6. The rule of law and good governance enables a democratic system to endow the people with a qualitatively much better political environment and market than the repression and coercion, monopolies and unilateral, arbitrary policy making, as well as the precarity, which inevitably define undemocratic systems.
7. The promulgation of a new, progressive, citizen-centred and rights based constitution anchored on national values and principles of governance kick-started the implementation of the Vision2030. As a result, Kenya has sustained a strong path of economic development and inclusive growth whereby wealth has been generated, poverty reduced and employment created on an unprecedented scale. Before Vision 2030, we were a 32 billion dollar economy. After Vision 2030, we grew from a 45.4 billion economy in 2008 to 264 billion in 2022.
8. This is not accidental by any means. In deploying the full promise of democracy to unlock political and economic freedom to their fullest extent, Kenya's constitution has enabled us to demonstrate that the nexus between democracy and sustainable development is direct and consequential.
9. Our **commitment** to **democratic principles** and **institutions** is unshakeable. I believe that the purpose of government is to **safeguard the freedom** of every citizen to imagine and pursue better material conditions through work, civic engagement and ecological responsibility. This is our path to **sustainable development**, along which we are already making tremendous progress.

I THANK YOU