



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**OPENING STATEMENT BY H.E. HON. WILLIAM  
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COMMITTEE OF AFRICAN HEADS OF STATE  
AND GOVERNMENT ON CLIMATE CHANGE  
(CAHOSCC),**

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ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

**18<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2023**

**Excellencies Heads of State and Government,  
Colleagues members of CAHOSCC,  
Distinguished Participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. I welcome you to the meeting of the Committee of Heads of State and Government on Climate Change.
2. Principally, we are here to take stock of the state of climate change and its impacts, possibilities with regard to effective climate action, recent developments, both positive and adverse, in the context of COP27 and events planned, expected or projected to occur in the course of the year.
3. I realise that most of us present here attended COP27 in Sharm-El-Sheikh, Egypt, where we not only enjoyed the hospitality of our brother, His Excellency Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, but also took the opportunity to strike consensus and make progress in advancing a uniquely African perspective, to the global discourse on climate change and climate action.
4. With your permission, permit me to convey our collective appreciation of President El-Sisi's superb effort in organising, hosting and conducting COP27.
5. Permit me also, Your Excellencies, to commend the COP27 president, Minister Sameh Shoukry, for the skill and tact with which he navigated complex negotiations through formidable moments, to ultimately deliver historic outcomes and the final consensus document.
6. Much of our discussion here will revolve around the COP27, its outcomes and their implications, but we will also be reckoning the evolving character and magnitude of the reality of the global climate crisis.
7. Yesterday's High Level Meeting on the Sahel offered us a sobering glimpse of the ravages inflicted by climate change on the region. In the Horn of Africa, we are confronting the possibility of a fifth consecutive season of failed rains. The effects of this looming

disaster on already precarious food security, water stress and attendant peace and security implications, are quite dire.

8. Yet as dire as it gets, this situation is further exacerbated by geopolitical upheaval whose disruptive effect have impaired global logistics, driven up energy prices, pushing the cost of basic commodities beyond the reach of millions of severely impoverished people, and further diminishing the resilience of many economies that are still contending with post-pandemic recovery.
9. Our meeting occurs against the backdrop of these daunting circumstances, and the realisation that every material indicator is getting worse.
10. Last year was the 5<sup>th</sup> warmest year in history, and the earth's oceans were the hottest ever recorded. Extreme weather events are becoming more and more frequent, like floods in Niger, Chad and Nigeria and the ongoing drought in Kenya and the rest of the Horn of Africa region.
11. The world's youngest and least polluting continent is also the poorest and most adversely affected by the ever worsening climate change. Yet the climate agenda has become an empty ritual, and climate action, nothing but hollow expression of optimism.
12. In order to radically change the course of events and switch our course back from a headlong rush to the precipice, we must commit as leaders, that CAHOSCC deliberations about our continent are action-oriented, cognisant of the existential magnitude of what is at stake, and animated by a strong sense of urgency.
13. As we ponder our continent's present condition, which is positively dire, let us also consider developments beyond.
14. The world is entering a new industrial age of clean energy technology and clean, green manufacturing. Last year, the European Union, through its climate policy, approved a ban on the sale of petrol and diesel passenger cars by 2035.
15. As we speak, electric car sales reached 79% in Norway, 28% in the EU and over 25% in China.

16. At COP27, several governments launched a coalition to drive global transition to zero-emission vehicles by 2040, while 80 countries supported the phasing down of fossil fuel, in addition to the phasing down of coal, which had been agreed upon in COP26.
17. As matters stand now, it appears that the good news, of progress in innovation, adaptation and resilience, are concentrated in one side of the world: **the wealthy industrialised side**, while the bad news, of worsening vulnerability, increasing ferocity of climate disasters, collapsing resilience, deepening poverty, minimal innovation and adaptation are concentrated on the other side: **the poor, underdeveloped, heavily indebted side**.
18. Global inequality is perpetuating itself in the climate crisis. Africa's contradictions and paradoxes must be reconciled in order to chart a path that will take us out of our present challenges.
19. The world's least polluting continent by far, bears the heaviest burden, of the adverse impacts of climate change, creating the appearance that we are being punished for not polluting.
20. The most abundantly endowed continent in terms of natural resources, including those used to generate clean energy, also has the lowest energy production and access globally, and is home to some of the world's poorest people and most indebted countries.
21. Energy poverty persists in our continent, where 600 million people have no access to electricity, while 970 million live without clean cooking fuels and technologies.
22. Key to unpacking the African paradox is the fact that our continent, organised under a single, active continental community, struggles to find its place on the world stage, and has difficulty being heard in global discourse.
23. We have everything: the people, the land, the resources, youthfulness and institutions, so what are we waiting for?

24. It is time to finally rise up and seize our long overdue moment to exercise our sovereign power and grant ourselves permissions to make our resources work for our people. Now, we must claim and exercise our right to liberate our nations and peoples from the shackles of poverty, disease and insecurity by asserting the right to develop. We are literally a few simple decisions away from achieving our aspirations.
25. As Africans, we have consistently demonstrated that climate change, poverty, conflict and insecurity are all tightly connected. For Africa, therefore, climate action, economic growth, peace and security are not just related, they are merely three dimensions of the same phenomenon. This is the key insight that emerged from our collective and individual interventions during COP27 and after.
26. I believe that by becoming more assertive, and pursuing our climate agenda through this unified approach, we will transform the insights arising out of COP27 into concrete actions, to avert a looming disaster and return our continent to the path of prosperity.
27. Permit me to briefly dwell on these actions by sharing a few learnings from our experience in Kenya. Over time, we have emerged among global leaders in clean power generation, which now makes up 92% of our grid. We are committed to attain a 100% clean grid by 2030.
28. It is our intention to proceed beyond greening our grid, to export green energy directly, and also indirectly through green manufacturing.
29. I am aware that several other African countries have embarked on a similar developmental trajectory, which has made them attractive to private sector investment in clean transport, sustainable agriculture, green building and urbanisation, and other enterprises.
30. To achieve our priority agenda of eliminating energy poverty and powering a green, renewable-based economy as set out in Agenda 2063, it is imperative to mobilise and attract adequate financing and investment.

31. However, the present set-up of the global economic and financial system is inequitable and inadequate in the face of the challenges confronting us.
32. An overhaul of the financial system is therefore imperative to connect climate action and development finance, to fund the creation of resilient jobs, design more secure instruments to unlock funding for post-disaster reconstruction, and establish better risk-sharing practices.
33. We are adding our strong voice to the now urgent calls for the reform of international financial institutions and multilateral development banks. These reforms must proceed all the way to the radical overhaul of international financial infrastructure and institutional architectures to make sure that funds are accessible, affordable, mobilise relevant technology, are adequate and most importantly, timely.
34. At the same time, I believe that it is highly appropriate, as we enter a new industrial age of clean energy technology and green manufacturing, to unlock financing from innovative sources like green bonds, climate insurance instruments and the rapidly growing carbon credits market.
35. The rate of growth of African carbon credit markets, outstrips the global rate by 5%, and at 36%, these markets now have the potential to mobilise between US\$ 6 billion by 2030 and U\$ 100 billion by 2050.
36. The robust performance of African carbon credit markets, tells us all we need to know about Africa as the continent of the future and the next global economic power, driven purely by clean, green industrialisation and innovation.
37. At COP27, I announced Kenya's commitment to accelerate the development of carbon markets as the next major export sector, not just for Kenya, but for Africa.

38. Towards this end, we are presently developing a high-integrity, high quality carbon market framework and a robust activation plan, which will soon undergo legislation, in order to provide certainty and clarity for the comfort of investors.
39. In keeping with this pledge to advance opportunities in green industrialisation, as well as the Green Agenda for Africa, I am convening a Climate Action Summit in Nairobi, to take place from 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2023.
40. There is consensus in this meeting that Africa is the continent of the future. It is time to escalate this consensus and propel Africa to join the leadership of the global climate action. This is the momentous mandate that we, as CAHOSCC, must now provide.
41. I will end my remarks here. I look forward to productive and comprehensive deliberation.

**Thank you very much.**