



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY WILLIAM RUTO,
C.G.H.; PhD; PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER-IN-
CHIEF OF THE KENYA DEFENCE FORCES, DURING
THE NATIONAL DEFENCE COLLEGE (NDC)
GRADUATION**

MAY 30TH, 2024

NATIONAL DEFENCE COLLEGE, KAREN

1. I am delighted to be here at this momentous gathering of the National Defence College community, celebrating the completion of rigorous academic training for the graduates and marking the dawn of a new chapter with opportunities to distinguish themselves in service to our nation and allies.
2. I am immensely proud of the achievements, growth, and development of the National Defence College (NDC) over time, enabling it to become a pivotal institution shaping our national security agenda since its inception in 1997. Through world-class training and research in National Security and Strategy, this college has consistently contributed to our nation's strength and stability.
3. I congratulate each graduate on completing your studies at the National Defence College. I commend your families for their loyal support during your year-long preparation for vital national responsibilities, and encourage them to continue supporting our officers to serve with confidence and resilience.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. It is pleasing to note the National Defence College's steadfast commitment to developing and promoting professional leadership skills, upholding high standards of quality, and demonstrating integrity in managing national security policy and strategy. This dedication has been instrumental in fostering peace and security in our country, the region, and beyond.
5. For over two decades, the NDC has attracted participants from the Kenya Defence Forces, and their counterparts from Africa and beyond.



Each year, more government agencies choose the college to train senior public officers, enhancing their competencies and understanding of national security imperatives and strategic thought, embracing the Whole of Society Approach. This collaborative spirit fosters essential synergy and integration among government agencies to address the everevolving and complex security landscape.

6. The NDC's commendable growth is evident in its diverse student population and expanding international reach, particularly in Africa. I am gratified to see the increasing number of female officers among participants each year. This commitment to gender inclusivity reflects the Ministry of Defence's dedication to fostering diverse and capable leadership. I urge the Kenya Defence Forces and the NDC to continue this trend to cultivate a deep pool of outstanding female military and security sector leaders.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

7. Be proud and inspired by the fact that many alumni of this college have risen to serve in critical and high-level positions of leadership and management, both in Kenya and abroad. Notable among them are distinguished military officers who eventually ascended to the position of Chief of Defence Forces, including Generals Jeremiah Kianga, Julius Karangi, Samson Mwathethe, Robert Kibochi and the late Gen Francis Ogolla.
8. Numerous alumni have also become principal secretaries and heads of disciplined services such as the National Police Service, Kenya Prison Service, and Kenya Wildlife Service. Internationally, the former Tanzanian and Ugandan Chiefs of Defence Forces attended this prestigious institution.



NDC alumni significantly shape policies that harness national capacity and devise practical means to achieve critical national objectives through a whole-of-society approach.

9. To build on this legacy of excellence, I urge all ministries, departments, and agencies to seize the opportunities provided by the NDC to develop a critical mass of likeminded senior officials capable of influencing policy and generating home-grown solutions at the strategic level. This is essential for sharpening the strategic mindset and capacity for efficiently executing the bottom-up economic transformation agenda.
10. I am delighted to announce that the Ministry of Defence, in collaboration with the United States government, is building a new tuition facility for the college in response to the growing demand for NDC's esteemed courses. It is crucial that the NDC maintains the capacity to meet the educational needs of our future leaders.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

11. As we reflect on the significant contributions of the National Defence College and its illustrious alumni, it is important to highlight major advancements within our broader defence education ecosystem, particularly the establishment of the National Defence University-Kenya (NDU-K), marking a pivotal development in our strategic educational framework.
12. Since its inauguration, the National Defense University has established itself as a specialized degree-awarding institution of national strategic importance.



It is a befitting culmination to a long-held ambition of successive generations of military commanders who envisioned a platform for enhancing scholarly capacity and integrating it into strategic thinking to keep pace with the evolving dynamics of national, regional, and global defence and security.

13. Committed to producing leaders equipped to address contemporary security challenges, the university graduated its first cohort in November last year. At the last graduation, I challenged this college to embrace a holistic approach to defence and security, focusing on innovative solutions through research and academic discourse.
14. I am encouraged to have received a strong and positive response on this in the form of a policy report on bottom-up strategies to combat cattle rustling in Kenya's North-Rift region, utilizing multidimensional approaches. This report is a commendable return on investment, showcasing the practical impact of NDU-K's research capabilities in addressing security challenges.
15. As we celebrate yet another achievement by this institution, I appreciate the dedicated leadership and exemplary organizational management that are the hallmarks of the National Defence College. Such progress would not have been possible without the strong commitment and strategic vision instilled in our leaders through the NDC's rigorous training and education programs.
16. I extend my gratitude to the entire KDF fraternity, led by the CS Defence, the CDF, and their officers, for their dedication and sacrifice in serving our nation.



17. I also congratulate the College Advisory Board, under the stewardship of the Principal Secretary of Public Service, the Vice Chief of Defence Forces, and the Commandant, along with his entire faculty and staff, for advancing NDC as a regional center of excellence.

18. To the graduates, remember that your journey of learning and leadership has just begun. You will face complexity, difficulty, uncertainty, volatility, and adversity. Have confidence that your education in strategic thought and management has prepared you to perceive and utilize opportunities with fortitude and integrity. Face uncertainty with courage, confront adversity with resilience, and seize opportunities with unwavering commitment. Work and lead with integrity, inspire with your actions, and strive to excel in all your endeavors. Congratulations again, and I pray for your success as you carry the torch of hope and resilience to every corner of our nation and the world.

**God Bless You All,
God Bless Kenya.**

