



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY WILLIAM SAMOEI  
RUTO, C.G.H.; PhD; PRESIDENT AND  
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE KENYA DEFENCE  
FORCES ON THE OCCASION OF OFFICER CADET  
COMMISSIONING PARADE**

**MAY 31ST, 2024**

**KENYA MILITARY ACADEMY, LANET, NAKURU**

**Cabinet Secretary for Defence,  
Cabinet Secretaries present,  
Chief of The Defence Forces,  
The Vice Chief of The Defence Forces,  
Service Commanders,  
General Officers,  
Senior Officers,  
The Commandant Defence Forces, Recruits Training  
School,  
Our New Soldiers and Families,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. It gives me great pleasure to preside over today's Commissioning Parade for Officer Cadets who have successfully completed their training at the Kenya Military Academy.
2. At the outset, I wish to pay tribute to the late Chief of the Defence Forces, General Francis Omondi Ogolla, and the officers and service members who died with him in the recent aircraft crash while on duty. As we participate in this auspicious occasion and witness the commissioning parade, we are reminded of the sacrifices these gallant soldiers made for Kenya. We are summoned to reflect on the full implications of a soldier's life, especially the demands they must rise to beyond the call of duty. Their dedication, selflessness, and courage in the line of duty exemplify the highest ideals of professionalism and patriotism in service to our beloved nation. May their legacy inspire and guide you as you commence your journey as commissioned officers. We will never forget their sacrifice, and their memory will live in our hearts. May God continue to rest their souls in eternal peace.



3. On behalf of our fellow Kenyans, I convey deep gratitude to all the parents, families, and guardians, both present here and at home, for supporting, nurturing, and mentoring exemplary youth and encouraging them to defend our motherland as their professional calling. Your efforts and sacrifices in providing a strong moral and intellectual foundation for them were not in vain. We applaud you for your contributions, which have shaped them into responsible citizens, gallant warriors, and devoted patriots.
  
4. To the graduates, I join you in rejoicing on this day that you have all looked forward to with joyful anticipation, even as you underwent rigorous preparation, challenging tests, and difficult exercises. The journey of becoming a military officer is not easy. It is fraught with challenges that only the very best can overcome. Each of you standing before us today has endured thorough training that tested your limits and pushed you beyond what you thought possible. By excelling in gruelling military exercises and meticulous work, you have demonstrated physical and psychological resilience, discipline, and focus, as well as strong devotion to your chosen path. Today, you emerge stronger and ready to take up your responsibilities. Congratulations.
  
5. It is a matter of great pride for us all to note that the Kenya Military Academy also trains cadets from many allied countries in our region and across our continent. I am confident that after this ceremony, the Commissioning Officers from Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, and Tanzania will return to their countries properly equipped with first-class training from this premier military institution. The allied countries represented by cadets in different cohorts within the Academy include Egypt, Burkina Faso, Malawi, Mozambique, and Sierra Leone. More importantly, I am confident that the friendships established among yourselves will contribute to strengthening our bilateral ties and accelerating Pan-African unity and integration.



The diversity of the cadets enrolled in this Academy affirms my confidence in our bonds and our collective capacity to respond effectively to present, emerging, regional, and global security challenges.

6. I, therefore, congratulate all of you, the Commissioning Officer Cadets, for successfully launching your journey on the path to becoming future leaders of our defence forces and those of the allied countries represented here. The holistic approach to training embraced by this Academy sets our officers apart, equipping them not only with the skills and knowledge necessary for their roles as leaders and commanders of the 21st century but also with the moral capacity to lead with integrity, courage, and honour.
7. As you take your oath today to commission into the esteemed officer cadre of the Kenya Defence Forces, always remember that the path you have chosen transcends a mere career. The soldier's way is a noble vocation, and you are called to dedicate your life to service and sacrifice. Today, you are not merely graduating; you are embracing a sacred calling to lead, command, and manage troops and resources of the Kenya Defence Forces with sound judgment, even in situations of extreme hardship. Your most important duty is the accomplishment of your mission and loyal, committed, and considerate attention to all the soldiers who will be placed under your command. As future leaders of our Defence Forces, you must bear the responsibility of protecting our sovereignty and defending our borders with grace and fortitude. I call upon each of you to execute this responsibility with total dedication and commitment, ensuring the safety and security of our people.



8. The multiplicity, magnitude, and dynamism of security challenges in today's globalized and interconnected world demand a robust strategic mindset capable of constantly keeping risk at bay through innovative and proactive approaches. Kenya in particular grapples with a range of threats, including terrorism, transnational organized crime, cybersecurity threats, the security-related impacts of climate change, banditry, and cattle rustling. Without exception, these challenges pose grave threats to the safety and security of our citizens and have the potential to undermine our economic development and national stability.
9. The country looks to you, the Kenyan contingent in this cohort, as future leaders of the KDF, to be at the forefront of devising imaginative and efficient strategies to combat these threats effectively. Cattle rustling, a significant concern in some parts of the country, leads to loss of life and property and perpetuates cycles of conflict and instability. As young thinkers, leaders, and commanders, your role must extend beyond merely responding to these challenges to anticipating and preventing them through creative and pragmatic approaches which focus on root causes, leverage technology, foster community engagement, and implement targeted interventions. The point is that your ability to innovate and adapt will become increasingly critical in safeguarding our nation's security. I, therefore, encourage you to maintain a culture of scholarship and evidence-based decision-making, enhancing clarity and focus to keep pace with the complex contemporary security landscape facing our nation and the world.
10. I commend the commandant, staff, and all members of the Kenya Military Academy community for their excellent work in producing competent and capable officers. Your collective efforts and commitment to excellence have enabled the Academy to produce officers of the highest standards of professionalism.



11. I also extend special gratitude to Kenyatta University for its invaluable partnership with KDF in designing and implementing the curriculum for a Bachelor of Science in Military and Security Studies, which has now served 11 cohorts of General Service Officer cadets. This commendable collaboration has prepared our officers to effectively promote our national interests. Additionally, I welcome the transition from the Kenya Military Academy into the National Defence University Kenya, which will now offer cadets a Bachelor of Science degree in Defence and Security Studies, marking a new chapter in the academic and professional development of our officers. With the debut cadet cohorts under the National Defence University set to commission next year, I am confident that the university has seamlessly built upon the foundation laid by Kenyatta University and elevated the academic program to new heights of excellence.
12. Once again, I extend congratulations to all our newly commissioned officers. As you embark on your careers in your respective Services, formations, and units, be mindful of the weight of expectation resting upon your shoulders. Appreciate your duty towards your superiors as well as the soldiers who will serve under your command, not as pressure but as motivation to excel at all times. Your loyal followership, exemplary leadership, and sound mentorship will make a huge difference. I therefore call on you to uphold the highest standards of professionalism, discipline, and integrity, and live up to the values and principles instilled in you during your training.
13. May you have long and illustrious careers in the service of our beloved motherland. Go forth with pride, knowing that you carry with you the hopes and aspirations of a grateful nation. I will pray for your success. May the Almighty God bless the work of your hands and every step of your feet.

**God bless you,  
I thank you.**

