



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY WILLIAM SAMOEI
RUTO, CGH; Ph.D.; PRESIDENT AND
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE KENYA DEFENCE
FORCES, AT THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE
OF AFRICAN HEADS OF STATE AND
GOVERNMENT ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

FEBRUARY 17TH, 2024

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA



Excellences, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;

1. Let me welcome you to the first meeting of the Committee of Heads of State and Government on Climate Change this year.
2. Last year we held three meetings – the first during the AU ordinary Session, followed by the virtual meeting in July in preparation for the Africa Climate Summit, and the final on the margins of UNGA. I hope this year too we can organise similar sessions.
3. Reflecting on last year, I believe it was a successful year for the continent on matters of climate change.
4. In 2023, we realised a strong shift in the narrative and focus on Africa as a solution to the climate challenge, emphasising cost-competitive climate action in Africa, as a driver of inclusive economic growth.
5. This narrative shift from Africa as a mere climate victim needing help to Africa as an integral part of global solutions, and a viable investment destination and indispensable trading and industrial partner to decarbonise the global economy, was cemented in the Nairobi Declaration which was adopted at the inaugural Africa Climate Summit in September 2023.
6. The Declaration embraced Climate Positive Growth (CPG) as the new economic growth and development paradigm for Africa.



7. This forward-leaning, opportunity-focused stance both aligned with and strengthened international efforts for climate action. These include the efforts to reform the international financial system, the discussions France led at the Paris Forum for a New Global Financial Pact and the recently announced Mattei Plan by Italy, which puts strategic collaboration with Africa at the heart of Italy's agenda for its G7 chairmanship in 2024.
8. At COP28, the Taskforce on International Taxation to Scale Up Development, Climate and Nature Action ("Tax Taskforce") and the Expert Review on Debt, Nature and Climate were launched by sponsoring countries from Africa and Europe.
9. In line with this momentum, COP28 saw the launch of various initiatives that put both NorthSouth and Public-Private Partnership at their core. These include the Africa Green Industrialisation Initiative (AGII), which was launched with a pan-African focus at the presidential level, and the Accelerated Partnership for Renewables in Africa (APRA).
10. With the narrative broadly embraced, it is now key to move to implementation.
11. The Nairobi Declaration makes it clear that this requires broadly four categories of action: Two should be led by African countries and two require international collaboration.
12. African countries should lead on:
 - a. Economic growth and development plans focused on realising the Climate Positive Growth opportunities, and



b. Local and regional policy and regulation to enable investments across various pathways, including adaptation and mitigation.

13. International collaboration is needed on:

a. Finance and investment: Securing the right type and amount of finance and investment into African opportunities. This includes creating greater fiscal space and finding solutions to debt and taxation, concessional international finance and domestic capital and private investment mobilisation.

b. Fair and equitable market access: For African cost-competitive solutions to be able to contribute to global solutions, they need to have access to buyer markets. As new instruments and mechanisms are introduced in different jurisdictions, these need to ensure that African providers are not disadvantaged.

14. All these interventions need to be driven by strong collaboration and engagement, both by countries working together with industrialists and investors, and governments working and learning from one another.

15. This calls for strengthened institutions, developing the necessary implementation infrastructure and hence the need for an Africa Climate Summit Secretariat jointly with the African Union Commission.

16. There is a need to establish links with other processes within the AU as well as the G7, G20, COP and various UN assemblies, among others, so as to embed the declaration in wider contexts.



17. As I noted earlier, we presented it at tUNGA, COP, the EU Parliament and even recently at the Italy-Africa Summit. But it has to be a continuous process that keeps the declaration alive and followed up to inform political processes and draw attention to gaps and opportunities.
18. Moreover, the commission should play a more prominent role in the climate change negotiation process and oversee the technical negotiators while providing support to the African Ministerial Conference on Environment.
19. Similarly, to maintain the political momentum and build strategic partnerships for the pan-African events launched the COP28, including the Africa Green Industrialisation Initiative (AGII) and the Accelerated Partnership for Renewables in Africa (APRA), it is important we establish continental steering committees for these initiatives that will provide the required governance and support.
20. The AGII aims to unlock large-scale green businesses and drive economic growth, create jobs and boost trade across Africa. At the launch, the leaders underscored the necessity of collaborative efforts and resource sharing to propel green industrial growth. His Excellency Hakainde Hichilema, President of the Republic of Zambia, articulated the need for African leaders to collectively contribute to a shared pool of resources that would benefit the entire continent. As an illustrative example, he highlighted Zambia's ongoing collaboration with the DRC to process critical minerals such as cobalt, copper and nickel which are essential in the manufacture of electric vehicle batteries.



21. For APRA, I propose to co-host an investment forum with IRENA where companies and financial institutions can explore new investment opportunities and help us shape policy and regulatory environment that works for all.
22. The bold and clear message Africa took to COP28 was that the continent was the destination for green investments and green industrialisation and that Africa's carbon sinks are the solution towards a net-zero world.
23. As the world prepares for the Baku-Belem COP in 2024 and 2025, and the submission of new NDCs by 2025 to incorporate plans for scaling up renewables and transitioning from fossil fuels as agreed in Dubai, let us actualise the message of the Nairobi Declaration and transformative decisions at COP28.

With those few remarks, let me request Commissioner Josefa Sacko to make her remarks.

Thank You.

