



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR. WILLIAM
SAMOEI RUTO, PH.D., C.G.H., PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF KENYA AND COMMANDER-IN-
CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE FORCES DURING THE
OFFICIAL OPENING OF MEDS MICROBIOLOGY
LABORATORY**

NOVEMBER 22ND, 2023

SYOKIMAU, MACHAKOS COUNTY

Distinguished Guests;

1. I am pleased to join you today for the launch of a state-of-the-art microbiology quality control laboratory; a facility that will serve and advance healthcare in Kenya and the region.
2. But today is bigger than just the facility because our health system and, more importantly, our shared ambition for Universal Healthcare is interconnected.
3. Universal Healthcare is not just one thing; it is a symphony of many elements coming together efficiently and effectively. It is facilities, research, training, workers, Social Insurance and local manufacturing. Universal Health Care, is the sum total of all these units. It is their synchronous functionality and total alignment that provides results.
4. We are therefore here to mark a forward step towards Universal Health Care, a milestone on the journey towards this national dream of universal access to quality healthcare.
5. As I recently outlined in my State of the Nation Address to Parliament just over a fortnight ago, the government is making tremendous progress in delivering each of the commitments to the people of Kenya contained in the Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda.
6. Every single project in our Plan is essential to the creation of the necessary conditions for our country to shortly begin providing jobs to our youth, feeding our people and keeping them free of disease and putting real money in their pockets.



7. The Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda stands on a number of pillars, which represent the priority interventions that must be undertaken in order to take our economy to the next level. The provision of universal healthcare is one of these fundamental priorities.
8. On Mashujaa Day, I gave a detailed account of the various activities that are ongoing in all parts of the country, being performed by both levels of government in the spirit of partnership and collaboration. The scope of these undertakings is massive: It includes necessary structural and institutional reforms, the transformation of the health commodity supply chain, as well as the intentional development and provision of adequate human resource capacity.
9. This is the context in which we must appreciate recent legislative changes contained in the Primary Health Care Act, Digital Health Act, Facility Improvement Finance Act and the Social Health Insurance Act, which will usher in a robust framework and conducive environment for us to fulfil our constitutional obligation and maximize the people's well-being.
10. As pledged to the people, we have employed 100,000 healthcare workers in the grassroots throughout the country as community health promoters, and enhanced the integration of health information communication and technology systems to make every aspect of healthcare efficient.
11. We are also committed to promote intensive investment in the local production of pharmaceuticals and consumable medical supplies, which account for 20% of the total medical expenditures. In case the scale of the matter remains unclear, this 20% translates to a domestic market of KSh 110 billion, of which Ksh 76 billion, or rather 70%, is made up of imports.



12. We believe in growing our domestic manufacturing capacity all round and are taking measures to accelerate the process. We are certain that local manufacturers can produce pharmaceuticals and other medical supplies competitively and win a greater domestic market while also exporting to our regional markets. The East African Community, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, as well as the Africa Continental Free Trade Area, represent viable frameworks of opportunity that must not go to waste, especially since we have jobs to create and an economy to grow.
13. Our healthcare agenda must always be inclusive, in order to benefit from the unique advantages of diverse stakeholders. This is how we have succeeded in making the sector truly bottom-up within a short time by involving technology, the youth, civil society and faith-based organisations as well as the private sector in serving the people of Kenya. As I have stated before, a whole-of-the-society approach to service delivery will enable us to succeed in ensuring that our Plan is truly bottom-up, and demonstrably transformational.
14. I am familiar with the work that the Mission for Essential Drugs has done for this country during four decades of existence; it is a visionary endeavour inspired by the best values of philanthropy and exemplary selflessness in the service of humankind. The capacity of our healthcare system to provide affordable healthcare to Kenyans in need has been strongly complemented by the outstanding efforts of the Church, through MEDS.
15. I take this opportunity to express my profound gratitude on behalf of the people and government of Kenya for this long-standing partnership that has continued to sustain the promise of transformation in serving Kenyans. I commend the Christian Health Association of Kenya and the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops for congregating faithfully around opportunities



to provide solutions to our challenges. It is much better to do this; to be part of the solution in such a transformative way, rather than to lament in despair about problems and to distract and discourage through groundless negativity.

16. We must remember our noble work as leaders, of giving hope to the people, and then making this hope meaningful through service to improve their well-being and increase their happiness.
17. We appreciate the strong support for our healthcare agenda from critical stakeholders like MEDS, whose global footprint extends beyond Africa and whose experience and capacity is a real asset to our transformative partnership.
18. We are committed to move forward in this spirit and are encouraged by your investment in this microbiology laboratory, which shall go a long way in enhancing the quality of healthcare in our country. Congratulations on this milestone and keep up the noble work.

The Mission for Essential Drugs and supplies' Microbiology Laboratory is now officially opened.

Thank you.

**May Almighty God bless you abundantly,
And may He bless our beloved country, Kenya.**

