



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**NATIONAL ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY HON.
WILLIAM SAMOEI RUTO, PhD., C.G.H. PRESIDENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA AND
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE FORCES
ON THE OCCASION OF JAMHURI DAY
CELEBRATIONS HELD ON THE
12TH DECEMBER 2022.**

NYAYO NATIONAL STADIUM, NAIROBI.



1. We come together on this **59th Jamhuri Day** to celebrate our freedom.
2. It is the first national day celebration dedicated to a theme that is relevant to our national aspirations. Our futuristic theme today revolves around Technology and Innovation. The promise of innovation is to enable us connect, innovate and inspire.
3. As we enter the sixth decade of independence, we can proudly cite many achievements and impressive progress made through our own consistent efforts as evidence that our freedom struggle was neither an empty political adventure nor a reaction born of idle resentment.
4. We gather as a nation to commune with our forefathers, who were long suffering innocent victims of imperial plunder and colonial oppression, yet also heroic defenders of our inalienable sovereignty and valiant fighters for our freedom. On Jamhuri Day, we celebrate the moment when Kenya proclaimed itself a free democratic republic. It is also a time to reflect deeply on the founding aspirations of our nation.
5. It is time to re-dedicate ourselves to the fundamental commitment binding three generations of our people. First, we must interrogate, with honesty and courage, whether we have been true and worthy heirs of **our forefathers** proud heritage. Second, we must have a candid discussion whether we have behaved well towards one another, and the extent to which we have been mindful of justice, dignity and freedom **in our time**. Third, we have to evaluate our desire, ability and determination to be faithful trustees of **future generations**.
6. By all human indicators, we have made admirable progress. 82 per cent of our people know how to read and write. Any of them has fairly substantial levels of education, with skills and professional qualifications to make Kenya truly self-reliant in every sector. Life expectancy has risen significantly, and we have eradicated polio, and other diseases which, in the old times, decimated our people by their thousands. More children born in Kenya today live to see their fifth birthday than ever before, and the rate continues to increase at very encouraging figures. We have 32,594 primary schools, 10,482 secondary schools, 12 national polytechnics, 259 technical and vocational education and training institutions and 87 universities. Our country is more secure, with adequate numbers of personnel in our disciplined services.
7. Traditional security threats are under control, with the government making huge strides to eliminate banditry, cattle rustling and urban crime. Our neighbourhood may be rough, but we live in peace and fraternity with all our neighbours, and play our role as a member of the regional and international community. The Kenya Defence Forces continue to demonstrate, through their professionalism, commitment to solidarity, and commitment to humanitarianism.



Ladies and gentlemen

8. Beyond our borders, Kenyan professionals have excelled consistently for decades, enabling organisations abroad achieve their objectives and actualising their career goals in the process. The data on remittances is an object of deep fascination, and not just because we are proud of the Kenyan Diaspora for remitting over Ksh400 billion annually. Remittances are also a reliable indicator of the value of professional contribution and impact of the knowledge, skill and passion of Kenyans abroad. Our **diaspora** comprises our best envoys and demonstrate for everyone to see what we are capable of. By extension, they show to the world how and why a country of meagre natural resource endowments punches above its weight. My administration will work towards making our diaspora remittances reach a trillion shillings. The State Department of Diaspora Affairs has this target to achieve.
9. We are in a situation of unprecedented uncertainty, with many, complex and inter-connected threats arrayed against our shared aspirations.
10. In the midst of this daunting urgency, complexity and threat, we remain ever mindful of our mandate as the stewards of the wellbeing of our present generation, and the trustees of our future. We have a duty to forge the way forward with courage, diligence, unity and imagination. As I stated in the beginning, the challenges that the founding leaders of our republic confronted on the first **Jamhuri Day** were as urgent, as daunting and as complex for their time, as the ones we now face.
11. Mindful of this solemn obligation to do right while laying the foundation of a flourishing nation for future generations, I have pursued several interventions since I took office, nearly three months ago, with the urgency, zeal and focus that the moment demands.
12. On my first day in office, I appointed four Court of Appeal and two Environment and Land Court judges and, just last week, 20 judges of the High Court. We have also escalated the actualisation of the Judiciary Fund that will increase the allocation of resources to match the needs of enhancing access to justice throughout Kenya.
13. On my first day in office, I also executed the necessary instrument to actualise the financial independence of the **National Police Service** in the realisation that this is the substantive enabler of genuine institutional independence. The operational independence of the police is necessary for its efficiency, professionalism and accountability.
14. Since then, we have engaged to successfully re-orient policing operations from a heavy and illegitimate reliance on illegal and extra-judicial interventions, which frequently entail such intolerable violations as abduction, torture, disappearance and murder.



15. There is now consensus that a new policing paradigm is at hand, and it is possible to achieve a high level of security for our citizens and also observe their rights and freedoms to the greatest extent. I, therefore, commend the entire national police service, from the constable on the beat to the Inspector-General, for the enthusiasm with which they have embraced the changes and enhanced our general security through increased vigilance and improved relationships with citizens and their communities. Before the end of the year, I will be appointing a taskforce to review the terms of the police service.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

16. A dramatic revolution is quietly underway, which is transforming the 'who', as well as 'how', of participating in enterprise for rapid socio-economic growth. The bottom-up framework proposes to include everyone, from the smallest possible business unit run by individuals of modest means, to our celebrated captains of industry.
17. I engaged three fintech institutions on the way forward in making mobile loans more affordable. As a result, there was a drastic reduction in the interest charged on the Fuliza service, signaling a new era of affordable credit for borrowers.
18. I also engaged lenders on the need to liberate more than 4 million borrowers from the prejudice arising from being blacklisted under the Credit Reference Bureau framework, which arbitrarily paralyses their business prospects. We have secured an agreement with the lenders to abandon this punitive approach, and to shift to a credit scoring system which incorporates incentives for both lender and borrower.
19. Perhaps more profound was the launch on November 30 of the Hustler Fund, an innovative revolving fund combining credit and savings, to support and empower many Kenyans access affordable credit. The fund is available on digital platforms and accessible to individuals on their own. **As of this morning – the 13th day since the launch - the Fund had disbursed Ksh7.5 billion. At the same time, 15.4 million Kenyans had registered for the fund. Before the expiry of the 14-day repayment period, Ksh 1.1 billion has since been repaid and nearly Ksh400 million mobilised in savings .** It is clear under this programme, that Kenyans have found a platform to save. Clearly, Kenyans know the value of borrowing and paying contrary to the rhetoric of skeptics. By all accounts, this is revolutionary.

Ladies and Gentlemen

20. The rains are finally here. Our farmers are now ready to give Kenya a bumper harvest, improve food supply and drive down the price of food, the single biggest driver of the cost of living. They will achieve these goals using affordable fertiliser and certified seeds.



21. The government, working with the private sector, has engaged suppliers to import 300,000 metric tonnes (**6 million bags**) of fertilizer. A consignment of **two million bags** has already landed at the port of Mombasa, and the remaining 4 million will arrive in the first week of January in time for the long rains. Government will continue to subsidise the price of fertilizer and farmers will buy at Ksh3,500 a bag.
22. Our firm commitment to restore the former glory of our cotton producing regions is the reason behind the government's interventions to revamp the textile and apparel industries, and revive cotton farming by providing high-yielding, disease and pest-resistant hybrid varieties to farmers. We are determined to bring back the forgotten **smiles** of cotton farmers. This will inject billions of shillings to arouse the sleeping giant of Kenya's industrial and agricultural competitiveness.
23. The time has also come for us to liberate our agricultural production from dependence on rainfall patterns and vulnerability to drought and the effects of climate change. We must produce food throughout the year. We have identified 100 dams in various parts of the country to double the land under irrigation from the current 670,000 acres, and progressively increase it to 3 million acres.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

24. Our interventions to uplift the well-being of all Kenyans by transforming production is underpinned by a sound and innovative policy framework, efficient infrastructure and climate-change mitigation mechanisms.
25. We continue our push to intensify national connectivity through road, rail and fibre-optic infrastructure to support production and innovation in every part of the country. We are finalising a framework for centralisation of resources to deal with all stalled infrastructure projects.
26. To combat effects of climate change, we have commenced our plan to grow 15 billion trees on 11 million hectares in every part of Kenya by 2030. Our objective is to increase the national tree cover from the current 12 per cent to 30 per cent over that period. This programme will be implemented through the Ministry of Environment in collaboration with county governments and many other stakeholders, local and foreign. Working with the County government of Nairobi, we will recruit at least 11,000 young people to grow a minimum 1.5 million trees in the city's open and public spaces as part of the big dream of greening the city of Nairobi.
27. I have also directed the Ministry of Interior to ensure that all Regional Commissioners, County Commissioners, Deputy County Commissioners, Assistant County Commisisoners, Chiefs, Assistant Chiefs and Nyumba Kumi officials, mobilize the public drive for National Tree Planting Culture. The exercise will be coordinated at locational level and cascaded downwards.



28. Every Chief shall dedicate at least one day per week for a public Baraza cum tree planting drive in which the public will be mobilised to plant and grow at least 3,000 trees weekly, within their respective locations. This weekly deliverable will be a shared responsibility among the Chief, his/her assistant Chiefs and Nyumba Kumi officials. Each Assistant County Commissioner, Deputy County Commissioner, County Commissioner and Regional Commissioner shall file monthly returns on these targets to the Ministry of Interior.
29. Free seedlings will be provided to the public through Chiefs, schools and other public institutions by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

30. The cost of housing is a heavy burden to the majority of Kenyans and is the major factor driving the proliferation of slums. We are committed to make housing more affordable, enable more Kenyans live in safe and dignified **homes** and create millions of **jobs** and entrepreneurial **opportunities**.
31. Through our programme to increase the supply of affordable housing at the rate of 200,000 new units every year, we will lower the cost of living for urban dwellers, make the dream of home ownership possible for the majority of Kenyans with units available at monthly installments of between Ksh2,500 and Ksh10,000.
32. This programme will generate millions of jobs for all categories of workers and thousands of SMEs as suppliers..
33. We will be intentional about job creation in our economy. The Kenya Industrial Estates will provide intensive coaching and mentorship to 100,000 entrepreneurs and provide information and networking opportunities to 250,000 youth.
34. The Kenya Revenue Authority is now implementing our new tax administration policy, which has seen manufacturing firms earlier shut down over tax disputes, re-opened, injecting much needed revenue to the economy and returning thousands of workers to their jobs. We urge all Kenyans to continue supporting our efforts by paying taxes.

Ladies and Gentlemen

35. We undertook to **review** the **Competency-Based Curriculum** following the concerns of many stakeholders, especially parents and teachers. As you know, we set up the Presidential **Working Party on Education Reform** to engage stakeholders, report and recommend measures to be taken.



36. In fulfillment of our undertaking to increase teacher to learner ratio in our primary and secondary schools, the government has embarked on the single largest recruitment of teachers in independent Kenya by providing resources to the Teachers Service Commission to recruit 30,000 teachers.
37. Our determination to live as one indivisible national family cannot be compromised. Our pursuit of inclusion is irrevocable. We must continue to resolve injustices of a historical character that have unfairly relegated people to the margins of statelessness when their inalienable rights of citizenship are guaranteed under the Constitution. The government of Kenya has commenced the process to confer citizenship to the Pemba people living in Kilifi County.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

38. We are proud of Kenya's consistent record of leadership to advance the cause of peace, cohesion, security and stability in our region. Under various regional and continental frameworks, and with the support of international partners, we are deploying our position as a regional anchor State for the benefit of our neighbours and region.
39. My predecessor, **President Uhuru Kenyatta**, working under the aegis of the African Union is engaged in mediation efforts to restore peace and stability in Ethiopia's Tigray region and, under the EAC initiative, to restore normalcy in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.
40. Our interests are nested in a dense network of reciprocal diplomacy, which helps our **agenda** to attract investments, forge partnerships and create markets for our exports and employment of our youth locally and overseas.
41. In the past 3 months, we have aggressively sustained our pursuit of mutually beneficial endeavour with friends and partners all over the world. We have engaged productively with EAC member States, the governments of South Africa, the United States, United Kingdom, Spain, Qatar, Germany and South Korea, to scale up bilateral ties and to explore avenues for collaboration in multilateral fora. We have forged agreements on mobilising investments and financing in a wide variety of sectors. We will continue to engage the international community as we implement our plan.

Ladies and Gentlemen

42. It is time to innovate our way into the future. It is for this reason that, on this Jamhuri Day, we as a nation are staking our claim by rallying Kenyans to begin the work of designing a world much richer, safer and freer than we have known.



43. Innovation is frequently associated with technology, and we must avoid the pitfalls of viewing technology and innovation as pre-occupations with things at the expense of people. The most consequential breakthroughs in technological innovations have greatly enhanced human well-being.
44. The platform which supports all the transactions on the Hustler Fund was developed locally, and has opened up access to affordable credit, liberated millions of hustlers from the vicious grip of shylocks and other predatory lenders, and enabled Kenyans of all walks of life to mobilise savings.
45. This revolutionary technology is a continuation of Kenya's illustrious tradition in pioneering innovation in the financial technology sector.
46. Among the Innovation Week's champions are the winners of the **2022 Hult Prize, EcoBana**, from St Paul's University, who employed the concept of green and circular economy to produce biodegradable sanitary pads from banana fibre. I have asked the Ministry of Education to work with these young innovators on the delivery of our pledge to provide sanitary pads for schools.
47. The Kenya Innovation Week attracted large global technology firms, whose senior leaders made their way to Kenya to witness firsthand the magnitude of the innovative potential of the Silicon Savannah. We have agreed on partnerships to support local organisations in providing opportunities for young Kenyans to acquire training and skills on the various aspects of digital productivity.
48. We are also exploring ways of making the benefits of monetisation of online activity available to Kenyan content creators on more platforms. I have spoken directly to Meta, the parent company of Facebook, Whatsapp and Instagram, to monetise content for our digital entrepreneurs that will exponentially multiply incomes and create employment opportunities for others. I am impressed and encouraged by the power of monetisation and remote jobs. This is the way to the future.
49. **If I was not a State officer, I wonder what the content on my small facebook page, with 2.3 million followers, would earn me daily.**
50. As we have all witnessed today from the performances that have given us thrilling entertainment, our creative sector is ready with thousands of highly talented and promising youth waiting to seize opportunities to stream high quality content for monetisation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

51. My administration recognizes sports and the arts as a mega industry that can employ millions of our youth and help grow our economy. This is why we have moved with speed to get our football back, to protect Kenya's proud athletics



pedigree from doping, and to streamline collection and distribution of royalties to our artists.

52. Through the revolutionary **'TALANTA HELA' Plan**, we will rebuild and monetise our sports and creatives industry. As part of this plan, I have accepted to champion a grassroots football development program that will see national government work with county governments to invest heavily in youth football. Arrangements are at an advanced stage to launch a Bottom-up football tournament to be contested by under-19 teams from all 47 Counties. We will work with our governors for each County to build a team right from the ward level.
53. This is the first step in our Football Vision 2030 where we target to see Harambee Stars play at the 2030 World Cup and Kenya host the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations. Together, let us build Kenyan football Bottom-up, from the grassroots of our villages to the grand stage of the World Cup.
54. We are ready to take our place as the digital workforce of the world. Our commitments, under the Digital Superhighway component of our Plan, were intended for this specific purpose.
55. To underscore our intent, we are today unveiling several cohorts of graduates whose training was supported under arrangements between the government and the private sector. **Safaricom** re-trained a number of university and TVET graduates to meet the digital industry needs in software engineering and data science.
56. Also graduating today are the **Presidential Digital Talent Programme**, a class of talented youth selected by the **Information and Communication Technology Authority** for training through internship. Additionally, it is a big day for the beneficiaries of the **Kenya Commercial Bank Tujiajiri Programme**. Finally, the **Google Hustler Academy**, who underwent an intensive and interactive training programme, are ready to begin their journey in a world of work and opportunity that is now familiar territory.
57. I now request all these graduates, present today, to rise.
58. **Fortune rewards the bold.** I congratulate the young people who followed their curiosity and passion to explore new ideas and possibilities, and are now at the threshold of a new chapter in their lives and careers. I can say that through this disruptive graduation, you have now been granted the power to create, connect, innovate and inspire. I wish you success and God's blessings. Congratulations and **you can now take your seats.**
59. We also congratulate 29 year old, Nelly Cheboi, the founder of Techlit Africa who this morning was declared the CNN hero of the year, for her work in creating computer labs for Kenyan children to access the opportunities in the digital world. Congratulations Nelly for connecting and Inspiring thousands of Kenyan children.



60. As promised, everyone present in this stadium today will get a free scholarship on global entrepreneurship and innovation from the Thunderbird School of Global Management at Arizona State University. It is now time to keep the promise. There is a QR Code near you. Scan and access the scholarship now. A 16 unit course that would have cost you ksh 100,000, is now accessible to you for free, courtesy of the **Innovation Jamhuri**.
61. I also appreciate the firms and organisations which have stepped forward to support our vision to make Kenya the Hotbed of Innovation. We will continue to do our part and make such partnerships bigger in future, and you are always welcome to be part of Kenya's journey to greatness. As part of this endeavour, Konza has started the distribution of 23,000 virtual desktops to TVETS to enable students exploit remote job opportunities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

62. We are committed to support young Kenyans in re-establishing this country as the republic of ideas and the home of innovation. Through a dedicated **Start-up Fund**, government will support the most innovative ideas each year to scale up into viable enterprises and commercial brands that will provide employment and drive economic growth.
63. The government will work with our academia to establish the Kenya Open University within the next one year. I urge our scholars and intellectuals to play their part in democratising education, and open the way for anyone and everyone to quench their thirst for knowledge, education and training.
64. In line with the new focus of our National Celebrations, Embu County will host the 2023 Madaraka Day celebrations, under the theme of Universal Healthcare.
65. In conclusion, it is our time to make a contribution that will define Kenya for posterity as the envy of nations and a country that we, our children and their children will be proud to call home. We also have a task of preparing the nation for its future by equipping and empowering our youth to take charge as leaders in a brave new world through innovation.
66. Let us, therefore, rally and join our efforts in the timeless spirit of Harambee to exploit the opportunities at hand and hasten our progress into the future.

Thank you and God Bless You.

