

SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR. WILLIAM SAMOEI RUTO, C.G.H., PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA AND COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE FORCES DURING THE INAUGURATION OF H.E DR. WILLIAM RUTO, PRESIDENT-ELECT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA AT THE MOI INTERNATIONAL SPORTS CENTRE, KASARANI, ON 13<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2022.

### **A Kenya for Everyone.**

1. This is a momentous occasion for Kenya. Our politics and elections have never failed to be emotive, engaging and dramatic. The most recent installment, however, showcased our most exemplary democratic performance ever. This day comes on the back of a peaceful election following an intense, issue-based campaign, in which major coalitions, made up of strong political parties canvassed their agenda for examination by the people of Kenya. The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) stewarded a transparent and credible election, whose result faithfully reflected the democratic will of the Kenyan people.

2. Dissatisfied parties exercised their right of petition before the Supreme Court, whose proceedings and determination not only gave comfort to the doubtful, but also restored faith in our electoral and judicial institutions. Many countries aspire to have moments like this, and we should not take ours for granted. This is the third election under the Constitution of Kenya 2010 and the second peaceful democratic transition.
3. We have had a robust conversation about the moment we are in and what it demands of us, and we sought to answer whether this was a constitutional or an economic moment. In this process, we have demonstrated the maturity of our democracy, the robustness of our institutions and the resilience of our people.
4. My competitors and I mobilized vigorously to offer the citizens of Kenya the most appealing agenda as well as the best roadmap to achieving it. I remain firm in the conviction that all sides in the last election did their best to present a pathway to actualize the people's aspirations. The just concluded election was a choice between competing agendas towards the Kenya we want. Elections and democracy entail unifying competition, not divisive rivalry.

5. The performance of our security services, the IEBC and the Judiciary was put to severe test. By and large, these institutions lived up to our expectations. We can only aspire to do better in future, and I give my undertaking that my administration shall work to ensure that the bar is raised even higher for the next election.
6. A significant dividend of our electoral and democratic process is the tremendous achievement we made in breaking the glass ceiling by enhancing the participation of women in leadership. 7 women were elected governors, up from 3 in the last election. 29 women were elected as members of the National Assembly up from 23 in 2017. 7 women Deputy Governors and 3 women Senators were also elected.
7. It is very clear that this election had many winners far exceeding those who were actually elected. By far, the people are the biggest winners. We have done well. We have blazed the trail in an increasingly challenging environment where democracy is consistently on trial.
8. We have come a long way in our nation's journey to freedom and going by our most recent performance in the election, we conclude in confidence that we are almost home.

9. Allow me to single out the **Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC)** for special commendation for the courage to do the right thing under exceptionally challenging circumstances. As an institution, they have set a new standard in public service that is uncompromising, professional and exemplary, raising the bar of integrity of our public officials and institutions.

10. It is appropriate to celebrate our **Judiciary** for sustaining its tradition of boldly giving much-needed guidance, especially in allaying post-election anxieties and resolving grievances in a sensitive, credible and authoritative manner. Its articulation of the aspirations and standards enshrined in the Constitution has deepened our democracy and institutionalized the rule of law. Our Judiciary is now, without doubt, Kenya's biggest constitutional dividend. It has successfully arbitrated 3 election disputes and defended the nation against formidable onslaughts on our Constitution. Our Judiciary has demonstrated transparency in its proceedings and decision-making thereby consolidating its independence, authority and legitimacy.

11. I also take this opportunity to say a special word of appreciation to our **security services** for a commendable job at a critical period in our nation. Their service and the heroic sacrifices they have made beyond the call of duty has kept our nation safe. I am aware that our uniformed services effectively resisted concerted attempts to foment unrest and subvert the will of the people.
12. My special commendation to all candidates who contested various positions. Their participation enhanced competition and enriched public debate that underpins democratic choice. Special recognition goes to my worthy competitor and friend, the **Hon Raila Amolo Odinga** and his running mate **Hon Martha Wangari Karua**, who mounted a vigorous and determined campaign.
13. Our special gratitude also goes to millions of Kenyans in the Hustler movement for tirelessly mobilizing for the campaign and executing a historic revolutionary feat, perhaps as great as the daring exploits of our legendary freedom fighters. This includes all our campaign volunteers, agents, mobilizers and those who contributed

whatever they could, in whatever form, to keep the movement going.

14. I also appreciate our religious community and institutions for their support, prayers and encouragement. I commend the Church in particular, and in equal measure the Islamic religious leadership, for their considerable support to us and our campaign. We also appreciate them for continuously exploring avenues for inter-faith understanding and solidarity, which have gone a long way to enhance tolerance and cohesion in Kenya. Faith-based institutions continue to play a noble and indispensable role in our communities and I commit that we will enhance our partnership, collaboration and support.

15. At this juncture, it is important for me to speak directly to the youth and especially those who participated, in one way or another, in the election campaigns. I commend them for resisting pressure and enticement to be misused as agents of conflict and disruption during the electioneering period. I also congratulate those who went out to seek various roles within campaigns and election, thus playing their part in keeping Kenya's democracy robust. Even if your candidates did not win, your

participation in the activities of political parties, campaigns and elections is the beginning of political internship. My political journey similarly began as a young campaign volunteer, fresh out of university. Your experience and lessons learnt should form the basis for your leadership journey.

16. We have all, therefore, emerged out of this contest stronger, more united and alive to the issues that are common to all of us. We should remain conscious that we have all been elected to work together in ensuring that our children go to school, our people have food and decent healthcare, our youth have jobs and our workers have dignified livelihoods, for it is our strong belief that every hustle matters.

17. Dreams and ambitions live in the hearts of Kenyans, who struggle daily against daunting odds, often with nothing except stubborn hope. Some succeed, others fail while the others do not even get a decent chance. Before the nation and the world today, I stand with great humility and profound joy, as a living testimony, that with faith in God, willingness to work hard and commitment to a vision, dreams can become reality in the fullness of time. I promise to throw open every door

of opportunity and to keep them open until success stories become the norm rather than the exception and urge all other leaders to do the same, so that we can together expand opportunity and chance for many more.

## **Ladies and gentlemen**

18. We should consolidate our success in the just-concluded elections and enhance the capacity and performance of all our governance institutions.
19. The innovative deployment of technology to secure election results has been the electoral commission pioneering breakthrough. Going forward, we will support IEBC's institutional capacity so as to expand the deployment of technology to cover all elections from the MCA to the President.
20. I also believe that there is tremendous opportunity for IEBC to support electoral processes in our political parties as part of broader democratic development.
21. To consolidate the place of the judiciary in our constitutional and democratic dispensation, my administration will respect judicial decisions while we



cement the place of Kenya as a country anchored on democracy and the rule of law.

22. Our campaign for financial independence of the Judiciary has paid off with the implementation of the Judiciary Fund, on July 1<sup>st</sup> this year. My administration will scale up the budgetary allocation to the judiciary by an additional Ksh 3 billion annually for the next 5 years. These resources will support the bottom-up scaling of justice by increasing the number of small claims courts from the current 25 to 100. We will also work with the Judiciary to build High Courts in the remaining 7 counties, magistrates courts in the remaining 123 sub-counties and support their ongoing digitization program. These interventions will empower the Judiciary to adjudicate and expeditiously conclude corruption cases, commercial disputes and all other matters, thereby enhancing access to justice and efficiency in the Judiciary.

23. To further demonstrate my commitment to the independence of the Judiciary, this afternoon I will appoint **the 6 judges** already nominated for appointment to the court of appeal, three years ago, by the Judicial Service Commission and tomorrow, I shall **preside** over

their swearing-in ceremony so that they can get on with the business of serving the people.

24. As required by Article 245 of the Constitution, the Inspector-General of Police is mandated to exercise independent command over the National Police Service. The services' operational autonomy, however, has been undermined by the continued financial dependence on the Office of the President. This situation is going to change.

25. As I address you, I have instructed that the instrument conferring financial autonomy to the National Police Service by transferring their budget from the Office of the President and designating the Inspector-General as the **accounting officer, be placed on my desk for signature.**

26. Financial independence to the police will give impetus to the fight against corruption, and end the political weaponization of the criminal justice system; an undertaking I made to the people of Kenya.

27. I understand the deep fissures and low morale in the public service. The intimidation that was visited on IEBC commissioners and staff during the last election was also meted on various other agencies and staff in the Public Service. This is now in the past. I assure all public officers that my administration will respect their professional service, and no public servant, even chiefs and their assistants, will be required to run political errands so for any political party or formation.

28. Ladies and gentlemen, we anchored our campaign on the platform of the economy premised on job creation and the well-being of the people and we have been working continuously on the measures to bring down the cost of living.

29. Our people are confronted daily with increasingly unaffordable prices, especially food and transport. In our economic forums across the country during the campaign, citizens consistently shared their anxiety, pain and fury on this matter. It calls for an urgent and decisive resolution.

30. The interventions in place have not borne any fruit. On fuel subsidy alone, the taxpayers have spent a total of

Ksh144 billion, a whopping Ksh 60 billion in the last 4 months. If the subsidy continues to the end of the financial year, it will cost the taxpayer Ksh 280 billion, equivalent to the entire national government development budget. Additionally, there was an attempt to subsidize Unga in the run up to the election, a program that gobbled up Ksh 7 billion in one month, with no impact. In addition to being very costly, consumption subsidy interventions are prone to abuse, they distort markets and create uncertainty, including artificial shortages of the very products being subsidized.

31. The cost of living challenges are related to production. Our strategy to bring down the cost of living is predicated on empowering producers. The forecast for maize harvest this year is below 30 million bags against the normal production of 40 million bags. The main cause of the decline in production is the high cost of inputs.

32. Our priority intervention therefore, is to make fertilizer, good-quality seeds and other agricultural inputs affordable and available. For the short rain season, we have already made arrangements to make 1.4 million bags of fertilizer available at Ksh3,500 for a 50kg bag down from the current Ksh 6,500. This will be

available from next week. I appeal to county governments in Eastern, Central and Western regions, to work with us in making sure that the fertilizer is available to farmers. Additionally to cushion tea farmers, we have made arrangements with KTDA to immediately supply tea farmers with fertilizer at Kshs 3,500 down from Kshs 6,500. This is our initial intervention, we will be doing more for the medium term and the long term.

33. We are alive to the challenges of drought that face seven counties, which are now at ‘alarm’ and 13 that are at alert stages respectively. We are determined to ensure that no county slips into the emergency phase and will coordinate with county governments, which are the first line of response. We are mobilizing resources to reverse this situation.

34. Our goal is not just to provide relief and recovery to restore the situation, but to invest and unlock the huge economic potential of the rangelands that constitute two-thirds of our country.

35. Jobs is our other priority. It is time for us to stem the tide of **youth unemployment**. Every year, **800,000** young people join the workforce and over **600,000** of

them do not find opportunities for productive work. Moreover, our young people in cities and towns face very hostile environments, many times treated as a nuisance and their hustles criminalized. Those who seek to set up formal businesses are faced with the bureaucratic monster that is multiple licences.

36. Our immediate agenda is to create a favourable business and enterprise environment, decriminalize livelihoods and support people in the informal sector to organise themselves into stable, viable and creditworthy business entities. This is the essence of the bottom-up economic model, which creates a path for traders and entrepreneurs to build linkages, experience safety, and enjoy security. We will work with county governments to create frameworks that provide secure trading places in our cities and towns.

37. Financial inclusion and access to credit are critical in addressing the fundamental factors of the cost of living, job creation and people's well-being. We shall take measures to drive down the cost of credit. Our starting point is to shift the **Credit Reference Bureau (CRB)** framework from its current practice of arbitrary, punitive and all or nothing blacklisting of borrowers,

which denies borrowers credit. We will work with Credit reference bureaus a new system of credit score rating that provides borrowers with an opportunity to manage on their creditworthiness. This will eliminate blacklisting.

38. In our engagements, traders also complained about the onerous burden involved in cash transactions exceeding Kshs 1 million. Many have reverted to storing money under their mattresses at great risk, which is clearly not the intention of the anti-money laundering regulations. While we remain fully committed to mitigating this risk, we believe that there is scope to make compliance less burdensome on genuine business transactions. I have been assured by the Central Bank that work on how to ease this burden without compromising the security of the financial system is underway.

39. We shall implement the **Hustler Fund**, dedicated to the capitalization of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises through *chamas*, *saccos* and cooperatives to make credit available on affordable terms that do not require collateral.

40. To implement all these interventions, we shall establish a Ministry of Cooperatives and SME Development mandated to ensure that every small business has secure property rights, access to finance and a supportive regulatory framework.

41. Furthermore, to deal with the huge challenge of youth unemployment we will roll out our social and affordable low-cost housing program, targeting an average of 250,000 units a year. This will create opportunities in the entire job market. We will engage TVET institutions to provide necessary skills to enable the *Jua Kali* industry supply standardized products for our housing program. We will leverage on our competitive advantage in leather and textile to roll out our labor intensive Agro-processing industrialization program. This will start with the Dongo Kundu and Naivasha industrial parks.

42. This afternoon, I will be issuing instructions for clearing of all goods and other attendant operational issues to revert to the port of Mombasa. This restore thousands of jobs in the city of Mombasa.

43. Ladies and gentlemen, we must stabilize our public finances. This year, we will spend 60 per cent of our



revenues to service our debt. We are faced with Ksh 600 billion in pending bills for goods and services supplied to the government. Clearly, we are living beyond our means. This situation must be corrected. I am aware that many individuals, families and their companies have been driven to ruin and forced to shut down, over government unpaid bills.

44. We shall give priority to the expeditious resolution of our **pending bills** so that the government can meet its obligations and facilitate better economic performance. In the coming weeks, we shall advise government creditors on the mechanism for the resolution of their outstanding payments. We are committed to ensuring that they are paid in the shortest time possible.

45. Additionally, we urgently need to expand our tax base. Our job-creation agenda and the capitalizing SMEs will go a long way in broadening our tax bracket.

46. We will make KRA more professional, efficient, responsive and people-friendly. I urge taxpayers to respond by undertaking their patriotic duty and pay taxes.

47. In furtherance to this, oversight institutions such as the Auditor-General and the Controller of Budget will be adequately funded to execute their mandates.
48. On the matter of gender parity, I am committed to the two-thirds gender rule as enshrined in the Constitution. We will work with Parliament to fastrack various legislative proposals and establish a framework that will resolve this matter expeditiously. The participation of women in our governance does not make us lesser; it makes us greater. And their role can no longer be nominal; it has to be substantive.
49. Ladies and gentlemen, our health agenda is premised on fundamental reform in the way healthcare is financed and provided. We shall reform the National Health Insurance Fund to make it a social health insurance provider, improve procurement of medical supplies, deploy an integrated state-of-the-art health information system and most importantly, provide adequate human resources at all levels. Contributions will now graduated and will now be based on income.

50. There is a robust conversation in the country on education, in particular the implementation of the CBC curriculum. Public participation is critical in this matter. We will establish an Education Reform Taskforce in the Presidency which will be launched in the coming weeks. It will collect views from all key players in line with the constitutional demand of public participation. We are particularly alive to the anxieties of parents on the twin transitions of the last 8-4-4 class and the first CBC class in January next year. I assure that there will be a solution to the matter before then.

51. We have elevated our diaspora to be the **48<sup>th</sup> County**. The complaint has been that the diaspora has not received the attention they deserve. The focus has been on remittances, while their fundamental rights as citizens have been neglected. To correct this oversight, I pledge to:

- a. Elevate diaspora issues at a ministry level.
- b. Strengthen diaspora services in all embassies.
- c. Work with parliament to set up a committee that will exclusively deal with diaspora issues.
- d. Set up a mechanism for public participation by the Diaspora.

e. Work closely with the IEBC to expand and enhance diaspora participation in elections.

52. **Ladies and gentlemen, devolution and sharing of power and resources** is not just a national value and principle of governance in the Constitution, but it is the crown jewel of our constitutional dispensation and the proudest achievement of the citizens of Kenya. Every part of the country has experienced the positive impacts of this invaluable institution and Kenyans yearn for a better performance of devolved units.

53. One of the best ways of accelerating national development is through collaboration with county governments. As Deputy President, I witnessed first-hand the tremendous potential of inter-governmental synergy and look forward to scaling up our capacity to harness these bountiful possibilities.

54. Because of this realization, I have no hesitation in accelerating the **transfer** of outstanding functions to counties, together with the attendant resources.

55. To promote budget efficiency and minimize disruptions and delays in devolved service delivery, my administration commits to take necessary measures to

secure the **timely disbursement of revenue** allocations to county governments.

56. The success of devolution depends on **sound inter-governmental relations**. There is a template which incorporates lessons from successes as well as failures in past engagements, and we stand a stronger chance of making devolution work better.

57. Kenya will continue to be a dedicated partner to peace, security and prosperity in the East African region. We look forward to deepening our integration. We welcome our newest member, the DRC, whose entry now extends our region from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic. Kenya is fully committed to the implementation of the EAC treaty and its protocols of free movement of people, goods and services. Equally important is our commitment to the full actualization of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

58. Ladies and gentlemen, Kenya will continue playing its key role in international diplomacy at the bilateral and multilateral levels, appreciating that we are host to major international agencies, including the United Nations.

59. Among the central concerns of my government will be climate change. In our country, women and men, young people, farmers, workers and local communities suffer the consequences of climate emergency. It is not too late to respond. To tackle this threat, we must act urgently to keep global heating levels below 1.5C, help those in need and end addiction to fossil fuels.

60. Africa has the opportunity to lead the world. We have immense potential for renewable energy. Reducing costs of renewal energy technologies make this the most viable energy source. Kenya is on a transition to clean energy that will support jobs, local economies and the sustainable industrialisation. In Kenya, we will lead this endeavor by reaffirming our commitment to transition to 100% clean energy by 2030. We call on all African states to join us in this journey.

61. As members of the international community, we shall support a successful Climate Summit in Africa in November, by championing delivery of the finance and technology needed for Africa to adapt to climate impacts, support those in need and manage the transition.

62. My administration is ready to work with global partners to fight pandemics and other health emergencies. We are also committed to promoting Kenya's **vigilance** and **efficacy** in responding to emerging public health challenges. We stand ready to play our role in the collective efforts to keep the public safe. I call upon countries that have developed vaccines to make them accessible.

63. Ladies and gentlemen, my government commits to create a business-friendly environment, eradicate barriers that hamper business development and growth, and make Kenya one of the most compelling and attractive business destinations.

64. We are an open, democratic society founded on freedom and justice. We take pride in receiving visitors and offering them our legendary hospitality. Kenya is a land of immense natural beauty and unforgettable delights.

65. Ladies and gentlemen, I stand here on my Day One as your President. I make a commitment that, in the days ahead, I will make pronouncements that are going to better define the trajectory of my administration. I

promise to make every Kenyan proud and ensure the economic well-being of all.