



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**NEW YEAR DIPLOMATIC ADDRESS BY HIS
EXCELLENCY WILLIAM SAMOEI RUTO, CGH, PHD,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA AND
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE KENYA DEFENCE
FORCES TO HEADS OF MISSION AND
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

FEBRUARY 10, 2025

STATE HOUSE, NAIROBI

**Excellencies Ambassadors and High Commissioners,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
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1. I thank you for your presence today and hope you are enjoying Kenya's warm hospitality.
2. Not long ago, we gathered to mark 60 years of Kenya's diplomatic journey and the 61st Jamhuri Day - both momentous milestones reflecting our resilience and commitment to international cooperation.
3. Over the years, Kenya has worked tirelessly with many of the nations and organisations represented here to address pressing bilateral and multilateral issues. The New Year Diplomatic Address underscores our foreign policy's focus - not just on advancing national interests but on building bridges, fostering respect, and promoting shared purpose.
4. Your presence highlights the importance of our collective efforts in strengthening diplomatic ties. I am therefore pleased to announce that this New Year Address will be institutionalised as an annual event to reflect on past achievements, deepen collaboration with the diplomatic community and set future priorities. Regular engagement will enhance mutual understanding and strategic alignment.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

5. Kenya's commitment to diplomacy has allowed us to forge strong global relationships. Since independence, we have expanded our diplomatic footprints from six missions to 70. We continue to prioritise regional integration, intra-African ties, economic diplomacy, and global peace and security.



6. To better engage our diaspora, the State Department for Diaspora Affairs was established in 2022 to protect, empower, and support Kenyan citizens abroad.
7. In December, I launched the revised Kenya Foreign Policy 2024, aligning our diplomatic strategy with evolving global dynamics. This policy reaffirms our commitment to international partnerships, regional cooperation, sustainable development, and positioning Kenya as a key player in global affairs.
8. Our foreign policy priorities include deepening diplomatic ties, championing pan-Africanism, expanding international cooperation, enhancing regional stability, fostering economic development, advocating climate justice, addressing global health challenges, and pushing for equitable reforms in international finance and governance.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. Kenya's democracy continues to strengthen, as reflected in our vibrant civil society, free Press and active citizenry. Our Constitution upholds transparency, inclusiveness, and good governance, cementing our status as a stable democracy.
10. Democracy extends beyond elections - it is about national unity and shared responsibility. We have embraced an inclusive governance model that fosters cohesion across political, regional, and social divides.
11. Africa's youthful population presents both opportunities and challenges. We see Kenya's growing youth demographic as a strength. Our policies focus on job creation, entrepreneurial support, and investments in technology and the creative economy.



We are also securing bilateral labour agreements to provide our youth with global employment opportunities, and I appreciate the support of our partner nations in this effort.

12. Our economic recovery efforts are delivering results. We remain focused on infrastructure development, universal healthcare, education, electricity access, job creation, and reducing the cost of living to improve livelihoods. At the same time, we are minimising waste, eliminating inefficiencies, closing avenues and intensifying the fight against corruption.
13. The **Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda** remains central to our development strategy, driving progress in agriculture, housing, healthcare, MSMEs, and digital innovation. Subsidised fertiliser programmes and expanded irrigation have boosted food security, while affordable housing projects are creating jobs and improving living standards. Taifa Care is making healthcare more accessible, and the Hustler Fund has provided over KSh60 billion in affordable credit to small businesses. Kenya is also advancing its digital economy, with over 18,000km of fiber optic connectivity completed and growing investment in the creative industry.
14. Kenya remains committed to clean energy, investing in renewable manufacturing such as solar panels and batteries. As we pursue these goals, I encourage the diplomatic community to explore opportunities for **public-private partnerships, trade and investment so as** to drive mutual prosperity.



Ladies and Gentlemen,

15. Through robust bilateral partnerships, Kenya has secured critical support for transformative projects, attracted foreign investment, and strengthened collaboration in trade, health, education, security, and technology. In 2024, we engaged in high-level State visits, joint commissions, economic forums, and strategic agreements to advance our diplomatic priorities.
16. Looking ahead to 2025 and beyond, we aim to deepen our existing bilateral relations while expanding our global reach through mutually beneficial partnerships, including strengthening South-South cooperation. Kenya has risen to global prominence in a world where Cold War-era divides are giving way to pluralism and diversified diplomacy. Our objective is to forge partnerships that deliver tangible benefits for our people. In this regard, I am eager to explore new avenues of cooperation with each of you.
17. Our approach to regional peace, security, and prosperity is anchored in the belief that unity and integration are essential to unlocking the full potential of East Africa and beyond. This commitment is reflected in our leadership within regional organisations such as the East African Community (EAC), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the African Union (AU).
18. As the current Chair of the EAC, Kenya is dedicated to advancing the Community's objectives by building on past achievements. Strengthening intra-regional trade remains a priority as it holds immense potential for economic growth and job creation. We are also focused on enhancing regional infrastructure connectivity and addressing security challenges within East Africa.



19. Beyond the EAC, Kenya remains an active member of the AU, playing a key role in peacebuilding across the continent. I am honoured to serve as the Champion for AU reforms, a role aimed at enhancing the Union's ability to respond effectively to Africa's challenges. Recently, I hosted a retreat for African Heads of State to advance the AU reform agenda, critical steps that will ensure the Union is better equipped to address conflict resolution, economic development, and good governance.
20. Kenya is also proud to nominate our distinguished pan-Africanist, former Prime Minister, Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga for the position of Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC). His candidacy reflects Kenya's broader vision of strengthening African institutions to better serve our continent's people.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

21. Peace and security remain central to Kenya's vision for a stable and prosperous region. Over the years, we have played a key role in mediating conflicts and addressing some of the most complex security challenges in the region. Kenya remains a reliable partner in regional and international peace and security efforts.
22. Over the weekend, I was in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, co-chairing the first-ever EAC-SADC Joint Summit on the security situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Together with other leaders, we called for an immediate ceasefire, humanitarian access, and a peaceful resolution through the merged Nairobi and Luanda processes. It is regrettable that diplomatic missions and peacekeeping forces, including SADC and UN personnel, have come under attack in the DRC. We urged the DRC government to ensure the safety of diplomatic staff and peace missions.



23. Peace initiatives such as the DRC process require sustained funding. However, many efforts falter due to inconsistent financing, leading to delays that create vacuums and risk further violence. To prevent this, we must establish a structured and predictable mechanism for funding peace initiatives. I urge States and international organisations to work together to guarantee adequate resources for effective peacebuilding.
24. To this end, we proposed that EAC and SADC ministers convene a joint meeting to establish a Joint Technical Team under the two regional secretariats. This team would develop a coordinated strategy for financing, ensuring accountability and mobilising support from partners, including those gathered here today. A structured approach to funding and international engagement is essential to sustaining the EAC-SADC peace initiative in the DRC.
25. As EAC Chair, I echo the calls of the AU, SADC, UN, G7, European Union, Britain, the United States, and others for all parties in the DRC conflict to prioritise negotiations and commit to achieving lasting peace.
26. Kenya's peace and security efforts extend across the continent, from the Tumaini Initiative, which is aimed at fostering dialogue and reconciliation in South Sudan, to our contribution towards stabilising Somalia. We urge our international partners to support these missions to ensure their success. In late January, I met Sudan's Foreign Minister, Ali al-Sadiq Youssif and discussed the terrible situation in Sudan that will be the next frontier for regional peace efforts.
27. Beyond Africa, Kenya is also contributing to global security through the Multi-National Security Support Initiative in Haiti, demonstrating our commitment to pan-African solidarity wherever it is needed.



I invite the diplomatic community to encourage their governments to join us in these vital humanitarian and multilateral efforts.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

28. Kenya remains steadfast in its commitment to multilateralism, recognising international cooperation as essential to addressing global challenges. As the host of the only UN headquarters in Africa and the Global South - the UN Office in Nairobi, alongside UNEP and UN-Habitat - Kenya continues to champion multilateral engagement. Our leadership in environmental and climate diplomacy is guided by the outcomes of the Africa Climate Summit 2023, which emphasised the need for increased climate adaptation and mitigation financing. These commitments continue to shape our priorities in 2025.
29. We are actively working to enhance Nairobi's position as a hub for multilateral diplomacy by ensuring international organisations enjoy necessary privileges, expanded infrastructure, and bolstering security.
30. However, the evolving global landscape calls for urgent reforms to make multilateral institutions more responsive to the needs of all nations. Kenya strongly supports UN reform, particularly greater representation for Africa. With 54 Member States, 28% of the UN's membership, Africa must have a stronger voice to uphold fairness and equality in global decision-making.
31. We hold similar views regarding international financial institutions. Kenya supports efforts to reform the global financial architecture, ensuring fair debt restructuring, climate financing, and development support. I urge our esteemed partners to back these necessary reforms for a more equitable and just economic system.



Kenya's efforts to secure concessional funding through the IDA window of the World Bank, championed during the IDA 21 replenishment summit in Nairobi, resulted in raising \$100 billion—the highest amount ever.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

32. On environmental matters, inaction and geopolitical divisions only heighten the risks we all face. Climate threats do not recognise borders; they demand a collective global response. I urge nations and world leaders to recognise climate action as an imperative for survival and shared responsibility. Kenya remains committed to collaborating with like-minded nations to push the climate agenda forward.
33. Domestically, Kenya has made remarkable progress in transitioning to a green economy, with over 93% of our grid electricity generated from renewable sources such as geothermal, wind and solar. Our National Tree Growing Restoration Campaign, targeting 15 billion trees by 2032, is on course. In 2024, our efforts led to the planting and growing of 750 million trees.
34. As we approach COP30, we call on international partners to honour their climate financing commitments. Kenya will continue leading by example, advocating equitable climate financing and ensuring that Africa's voice remains central in global climate discussions. I urge your support in this endeavour.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

35. I commend the diplomatic missions and international organisations in Kenya for their cooperation, goodwill, and support.



Your contributions in trade, investment, health, education, technology transfer, infrastructure development, capacity building, and security are invaluable. Kenya deeply values the expertise and resources you bring to our shared efforts.

36. The diplomatic community serves as a vital bridge between nations, fostering dialogue and cooperation. I invite you to engage freely with my government on matters of mutual interest. Kenya remains your dependable and committed partner in bilateral, regional, and global affairs.
37. As we embark on this new year, I extend my warmest wishes for a prosperous and impactful year ahead. Let us strengthen our partnerships to ensure that our collective efforts translate into meaningful progress for our people and the world.
38. Once again, thank you for your continued support and collaboration.

I thank you.

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