



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

SPEECH DURING THE LAUNCH OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH WEEK (NYW) ON WEDNESDAY 6TH AUGUST, 2025 AT PWANI UNIVERSITY, KILIFI COUNTY

Honored Guests,

All Our Esteemed Partners and Stakeholders present

The Youth of this Great Nation present, both physically and via digital platforms

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

I cannot help but reflect on the wonderful coincidence of today's momentous occasion, in which we are celebrating the launch of the National Youth Week (NYW), a buildup event to the International Youth Day Celebrations set to be held on 12th August, at a time when the national conversation on youth engagement, and the role of the youth in development is at its zenith.

In today's Kenya, the youth are not just watching from the sidelines. They are questioning. They are demanding. They are pursuing their just cause. They are not passive recipients of guidance but are driving change and innovation. They no longer want just a seat at the table; they are taking

over the meeting and setting the agenda. There is no doubt that the youth of today have gone beyond the promise of being leaders of tomorrow. Today is the new tomorrow.

I am therefore happy to join you at this commencement of the National Youth Week (NYW), and the celebration of the young people of this great Republic in this renewal and transformation agenda.

Celebrations are a cornerstone of human civilization – bringing us together in times of joy and solemnity. Any form of celebration is a reflection of what we value, and it is not in vain that we celebrate our young people today.

It is also a pleasure to be launching this week's celebrations against the backdrop of a momentous win for our youthful Harambee Stars team, in the opening match of their bid to win the TotalEnergies CAF African Nations Championship (CHAN). The championship is not only a great moment of communion for all, but also an excellent opportunity and a splendid showcase for the entire world to appreciate Kenya and its co-partner's endowments and, in particular, the legendary hospitality, the vitality and dynamism of its young people. I join H.E. The President in congratulating the team and wish them the very best in the coming matches.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The theme of this years International Youth Day “**Local Youth Actions for the SDGs and Beyond**” is a clarion call for us to delve on our spaces and foster a future beyond the envisioned current development plans. The actions of our youth in their local domains certainly shape the trajectory of our nation. That is why we are called to visualise the infinitive future and shape our current discourses towards sustainable pathways.

In addition, the sub-theme drawn from the main theme for today’s launch is “**Youth Inclusion in Local Governance and Policy for Sustainable Development.**” This sub-theme underscores that though governance is a concept as old as the world, its full actualization remains a moving target. Youth inclusion forms part of the fundamental ingredient for development, noting that they are the national powerhouse to energize every aspect of our economy.

Youth transitions to work and adult life have become more difficult today. It takes longer to establish independence as a young person today than in our times. Many young people remain economically reliant on their families. These failing transitions with repeated phases of unemployment lead in many cases to a decrease in motivation, aspirations and in the hope for a better future.

Youth employment is both an economic and a security issue for this country. This is because with the lack of decent livelihood opportunities, youth despair and are easily recruited into violence or organized crime. Hence finding opportunities for young people is a critical challenge that

must be prioritized. This is a task we are determined to succeed at and which we will spare no effort.

What have we done to deliver on this ideal?

In an increasingly globalized world, spatial and temporal shrinkage is increasingly characterizing the interactions of the global population and thus greatly altering this interaction process.

As policy makers, we have had to think innovatively, act differently, and keep up with this fast-paced generation, to be able to create an environment that will tap into young people's energies and diverse potential and give them the opportunity to positively contribute to the economic development of this country.

We are presently faced with the task of extracting the potential of our young people in its and using it to propel our nation to more prosperity.

To expand access to credit and capital we have created the Hustler Fund to allow young people access interest free loans for the purposes of entrepreneurship which will increase their participation in the economy. Though we note the many unfortunate reports that attempt to disparage the Funds sustainability, we know from Central Bank of Kenya reports that the Fund has been the preferred line of credit especially for entrepreneur farmers seeking to expand production through purchase of inputs, with the

trend only now adjusting back to traditional banking arrangements due to lower lending rates in response to monetary policy easing.

The NYOTA and KJET programmes under the Ministries of Youth, MSME, Investments, and Labour are designed to ensure support for cottage enterprises, building the requisite business skills to youth led businesses. These interventions aim at enhancing the employability and access to income-generating opportunities for young people, and we appreciate the interest so far expressed by our youth in accessing these opportunities.

The government has also launched the Climate WorX Programme that is meant to address environmental challenges while providing employment opportunities for young people. This programme is further augmented by the Young Agriprenurs Programme under the Ministry of Agriculture, in which youth agripreneurs work directly with local farmers, providing critical support to enhance productivity and ensure sustainable agricultural practices within the community.

With the growing demand for maritime trade, the imperatives of seafarers with the requisite knowledge and skillset, to work in international ship-ping lines, cannot be gainsaid. Consequently, the government has put in place appropriate measures and mechanisms that will elevate Kenya's position as a top supplier of world class seafarers for shipping lines all over the world. This includes the enhancement of training and recognition of certification, as well as issuance of seafarer identification documents.

This administration has been unambiguous in its recognition of the role that TVETS can play in meeting the objectives of the Bottom Up Eco-nomic

Transformation Agenda (BETA). Our targets in the priority pillars, whether in agriculture, the digital superhighway, affordable housing, or manufacturing are premised on the actualization of training and deployment of TVET trained youth to industries across the identified sub sectors. Over the past two years, we have made significant strides in reforming the sector to ensure that it is aligned with global trends, industry standards, and the needs of our growing workforce.

The Government has approved the Dual Training Policy which marked a historic milestone in the TVET sector. The long-awaited policy is designed to solve the historical skills mismatch, integrating theoretical instruction TVET institutions with practical, hands-on training in industries.

Our Affordable Housing and Markets Programmes have become the first port of call to actualize the concept of dual training, with TVET students based in facilities that are proximate to AHP/Market Sites being facilitated to receive industrial attachment, and post training internships on a priority basis. Imagine the possibilities of expanding this partnership in road construction projects, CAIPs programmes, ICT/Youth Empowerment Hubs, Grade 9 classroom and laboratory facilities, or the multiple County Government infrastructure projects un-der implementation nationally.

The Government is also keen on ensuring that the Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET) curriculum which was rolled out in TVET institutions in September 2023 is absolutely and effectively implemented. Through CBET, TVET trainees will not only be knowledgeable but also highly skilled in the areas most needed by industries.

The Government has also remained committed to equipping TVET institutions with the necessary resources. We have increased investment in the recruitment, training and development of TVET instructors to ensure that they are well equipped with the skills needed to teach new technologies and methodologies. Substantial investments have also been made in upgrading the infrastructure of TVET institutions, including the provision of modern equipment and learning tools.

As part of our efforts to make education and training more inclusive, we have implemented the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) framework, which allows individuals who have gained skills through work experience or informal learning to have their competencies recognized formally through TVET assessment centers. By doing so, we are helping more people gain access to further formal education. So far, over 6000 skilled workers have been certified under the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) framework.

Over 280 ICT Hubs have been operationalized, establishing a platform for digital jobs such as content creation and software development gigs. The Talanta Hela, Kikao Mtaani, Film Empowerment Programme are among various initiatives designed to meet the socio-economic needs of our young people, aligned with the Government's Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA).

Over and above this it is the policy of this government to continue the internship programme under the Public Service Commission, and the

reservation of 30% of all public procurement opportunities to the youth, women and persons with disability.

The Government undertakes to strengthen the youth space with policy, legal and institutional frameworks so as to ensure that they are locally engaged and globally connected. We welcome the participation of our young people in these interventions, not only to confirm their currency and viability in solving the unemployment challenge, but also to redesign what may not be appropriate or relevant. We also invite our young people to participate in the policy and legislative recommendations that are under consideration to further augment our vision.

These include the review of the **Kenya Youth Development Policy, 2019 and the National Youth Council Act No. 10 of 2009**. Finalization of the **Youth Bill, 2025** which will give effect to **Article 55** of the Constitution that seek to promote youth development and participation, and support in the development of the **Creatives Economy Policy and Legislation**

To our Youth,

I know that there remain key concerns relating to Government interaction with the youth, and the need to continually engage in ensuring that we are responsive to the needs and concerns of your generation.

Employment is not the only concern for youth. Like all Kenyans, the youth demand for transparency and accountability, and integrity in public service is not taken for granted.

We do not intend to brush over the concerns raised so far. Indeed, securing spaces for dialogue and continuous consultation is paramount to reinstating trust in the institutions that serve you all. This we intend to enhance even as we commit to delivering on the promises highlighted.

But we must do so with decorum, and with respect. In recent years, we have witnessed how digital transformation has profoundly impacted various aspects of life, from education and food security, health, to employment opportunities. We have also seen the negative effects including cyberbullying, mental health issues, exposure to harmful content, and online sexual exploitation

We firmly believe that the youth will play a major role in the Kenya's social transformation by actively participating in developing innovative solutions to societal problems. But let us do so in partnership rather than confrontation. Showing respect for others doesn't always mean compliance or agreement. One can disagree and respectfully communicate their disagreement.

Let me reiterate that the hope of Kenya just like any other nation is in the talents, strength, focus and energy of its young people. We urge you to participate in activities that promotes good governance in a manner that

does not infringe on the right of other people. Our society respects the provisions of **Article 37** with all its privileges. However, there is need to note that your human rights end when they conflict with the rights and freedoms of others.

Let me end my remarks with a quote from Koffi Annan (former UN Secretary General) that "***Young people should be at the forefront of global change and innovation. Empowered, they can be key agents for development and peace. If, however, they are left on society's margins, all of us will be impoverished. Let us ensure that all young people have every opportunity to participate fully in the lives of their societies.***"

It is now my pleasure to officially launch the 2025 National Youth Week (NYW). We look forward to your outstanding participation at the apex of this celebration on International Youth Day (IYD) scheduled for **Monday, 12th August 2025** at **Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST)** in **Kakamega County**.

Asanteni na mungu awabariki nyote

KITHURE KINDIKI
DEPUTY PRESIDENT