

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY HON. UHURU KENYATTA, C.G.H.,
PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE FORCES
OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA DURING THE STATE OPENING OF THE
11TH PARLIAMENT, TUESDAY, 16TH APRIL, 2013**

Paper Land
By the Leader
of Majority
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Hon Adam
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on Wednesday
17/4/2013
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Speakers of the Senate and National Assembly,
Honourable Members,

It is a great honour to address this opening session of Parliament combining both Houses. I congratulate Honourable members on your election and nomination to both the Senate and National Assembly.

My congratulations also go to the Speakers of the Senate and National Assembly together with their respective deputies on their elections, the Leaders of the Majority party and Minority Party as well as their respective deputies on being elected to their positions. I want to especially congratulate the record number of women in both Houses – an indication of Kenya’s commitment to achieving gender parity and equity. I commend the last Parliament for the passage of numerous Bills and for meeting constitutional deadlines. I wish all Honourable Members the best as you steer the legislative and policy agenda of this august House over the next 5 years.

We all participated in an electoral process in which we campaigned in different counties and constituencies; contesting for different seats and campaigning as members of different parties and coalitions. Today, we come together with a single purpose—that of promoting the welfare of Kenyans, protecting the rights of Kenyans and giving voice to the many and varied interests of our people. We are here, not for ourselves, but as representatives of the people.

We, today recognize that we sit under the banner of a new constitution; a constitution that the people of Kenya approved as the Supreme Law of the land. As law-makers, our first duty is to be law-keepers – subject to the constitution. I urge all of us to remember that each of us is obliged by virtue of citizenship and the trust placed in us by the people, to respect, uphold and defend our Constitution; each of us is bound, by a solemn oath, to bear true faith and allegiance to the People and the Republic of Kenya and to faithfully and diligently discharge our duties. These duties are conferred to us by the constitution. This is the oath of office we took before God and our fellow citizens.

Honourable Members,

My Government looks forward to working with both Houses, to implement our agenda. I look forward to your support. Although we may not agree from time to time, this should be in an atmosphere of mutual respect and consideration. We should be

able to hold different viewpoints without being enemies. In that spirit, I pledge that my Government will partner with both Houses and both sides of the divide in the work of implementing the national agenda and transforming this nation. The role of a vibrant Opposition is vital to the effective functioning of both Houses. I welcome and respect that role – and look forward to all the members here holding my Government to account.

Our constitution envisages lean and effective Government. This involves not just reducing the number of Ministries but restructuring the entire Government and changing how it works. We will streamline the agencies of government to end the confusing and wasteful overlap of responsibilities and create a Government that is fit for the 21st Century.

Honourable Members;

The world is still engulfed in deep economic crisis, made worse by recession in the West and rising costs in the East. However, here in Africa our economies continue to grow as a young, educated and vibrant population makes its appearance on the economic stage. Kenya is doing well, but not well enough. While our financial and ICT sectors are strong, our agriculture, manufacturing and transport sectors, that should be driving export led growth, are underperforming. As a nation, we still face the challenges of slow growth, unacceptably high levels of unemployment, and pervasive poverty.

My Government's goal is for Kenya to become a middle-income country within a generation. That means attaining and sustaining double-digit growth. The kind of growth rates that will, if we are prudent managers, lead to a better quality of life for Kenyans; as skilled Kenyans are able to find decent jobs and many are lifted out of poverty. This growth will be delivered if we pursue the right combination of policies with a steady hand and determination.

As a priority we must exercise prudent management of the public finances, especially the overall wage bill. Today recurrent expenditure is reaching unsustainable levels, squeezing out resources meant for development. We must keep the public wage bill in check. In the current financial year for example the total estimated wage bill is Kshs 458 billion. This wage bill at slightly over 12% of our GDP, is well above the internationally accepted standard of 7% and accounts for almost half of the revenue collected by Government. This is unsustainable and poses a serious threat to the funding of important development projects, and has the potential to severely affect the country's economic prospects.

All arms of Government must set the example and lead the way in bringing this wage bill down. Our focus both as the executive and the legislature must be on reducing the cost of living and making Kenya much more competitive thereby increasing

opportunities while improving the standard of living. Indeed, that shall be the centrepiece of our Government.

We need to spark an industrial revolution in our country. Within the next few years, we must add value to our produce, and manufacture here in Kenya the finished goods that we increasingly use in our homes and businesses.

- We must establish a first class logistics hub, covering transport, roads, railways, waterways, pipelines, ports, storage & energy.
- We must invest in and modernize our agriculture and open up at least 1 million acres of new land through irrigation in order to end food insecurity.
- We must drive growth by diversifying our exports, adding value, creating new products and opening up new markets
- We must seal the leakages in our revenue collection system and extend the tax base.
- We must drive up value for money from our public procurement so that we get what we pay for.
- We must create a business climate that encourages innovation, investment and growth.
- We must reduce the cost of the ordinary household's basket of goods, including food, housing, energy and transport.
- We must deepen our relationships with our regional partners in order to expand our markets, create jobs and boost growth.
- We must invest in our greatest capital resource – our people and provide what our constitution demands – social protection for every Kenyan

Our overarching goal is the transformation of our economy, so that our exports compete across the world and drive the growth necessary to create jobs for our youth and lift 10 million of our brothers and sisters out of poverty by 2017.

Honourable Members,

We envision a Kenya where every citizen is free to be the very best that they can. Where everyone can fulfill their potential regardless of where they come from, what circumstances they were born into or what community they belong to. That is why my Government will build our work on nine key pillars.

The first is transparency. We will run an honest and transparent government, with public services that are open and accountable to the people who use them while supporting the counties to deliver on the promise of devolution. We will work with the Judiciary in fast tracking and deepening the reforms that are in progress to secure access to justice for all Kenyans and promote a society where every person enjoys

equal protection of the law. We will strengthen the criminal justice system and promote the rule of law.

I will act swiftly to end the scourge of corruption. Corruption makes our country less attractive as an investment destination. It limits access to much needed services, stifles efficiency and eats away at public values. I believe that power is exercised more transparently when it is closest to the people. For too long decision-making has been concentrated in the hands of a few in Nairobi. Devolution is central to my Government's vision for Kenya – it is not optional, it is a constitutional duty, one shared by all of us. Mechanisms for resolving the minor administrative challenges are already in place because my Government is committed to devolution in full.

In protecting the gains of individual rights and freedoms and enhancing transparency and accountability, we will also promote a vibrant civil society enabling them to gain access to public resources while taking legislative measures to ensure transparency, accountability and openness in their work. We will champion the rights of all Kenyans, preserving and defending them not only through good governance and respect for the rule of law but also by extending the right to social protection. We will expand the state pensions system so that all our citizens enjoy dignity in old age.

Our Government is committed to ensuring our citizens live; work and worship in peace. Last year, we deployed our Defence Forces to Somalia in order to deal with a terrorist organization that showed disregard for the sanctity of life; disrespect for human rights and contempt for the law. In doing so we demonstrated to our citizens and to the world that we will deal decisively with any external threat to our citizens. Yet threats to internal security still remain. We will deal with those internal threats with the same single-minded resolve; the same commitment to protecting our citizens. My Government will improve security at our frontiers and progressively improve the ratio of police to citizens across Kenya by bringing it closer to the UN ration of one police officer for every 450 citizens.

This Parliament must progressively put in place measures that will strengthen our police service. We must afford them the dignity that is due to any citizen who risks their life in service to the people and the nation - protecting our lives and our property. In view of this, we will properly equip each police unit in order to increase effectiveness and ensure their rapid response to incidents of crime. This will also include working to ensure that their welfare is protected.

The next pillar we will build on is job creation. 40% of our population is currently without work. Among our youth unemployment is as high as 70%. For far too long this our national resource has received insufficient attention and the energy and time of our youth have been wasted through alcohol and drug abuse. We must work together to put measures in place to harness the time and talents of our youth in order

to grow our economy. My Government will consolidate and harmonize the youth and women's funds and ensure these funds are easily accessible to citizens at the constituency level through basic modeled on the CDF framework.

In line with our policy of streamlining government, we will combine the bodies that promote Kenya in all aspects of the economy to create a single agency with the reach, expertise and profile to represent and promote our country abroad, attracting trade, investment and tourism from across the world. Our Embassies and missions will be remodeled to market Kenya in their respective countries and link directly to this new trade promotion service.

With perhaps one of the best tourism destinations in the world we must increase the sector's contribution to our GDP, increasing investment in its infrastructure, capacity and marketing. Our aim is to double the level of tourism in our country to 3 million visitors a year by 2017.

As leaders who are committed to transforming Kenya's economy, we must promote investment in emerging industries. My Government will foster the Sport and the Entertainment sectors, establishing a National Lottery scheme that will support them both. We will also seek, in consultation with the county governments, to provide for the building of sports stadia in five main towns across the country.

Kenyan's who have received international recognition and nomination for international awards have shown that investing in the arts and entertainment sectors will not only create jobs; it will boost tourism, and promote our culture around the world. To that end we will legislate to increase local content to 60% from the current 40% in local free to air TV channels.

We must deliver on Vision 2030, and continue to build our nation's infrastructure, our roads, railways, houses, ports, schools and hospitals. Through projects such as LAPPSET we will drive economic growth, job creation and deepen our links with our regional partners. In particular, our nation is in desperate need of new housing. To meet the shortage we need to construct 250,000 houses annually but at present we build only 50,000.

When it comes to transport we need new mass transport and commuter networks in our cities and long distance connections to our regional neighbours, as well as improvements to local roads so that our people can move freely across our nation. However, in order to achieve this we need to take measures to increase the pool of domestic capital available for infrastructure development and attract even greater levels of foreign direct investment as well.

A Government's main focus should be on the efficient provision of services to the people, not merely the ownership and management of assets. To this end my focus is to achieve efficiency and effectiveness in the services delivered by my Government.

This Government will ensure food security by investing in and modernizing our agricultural sector. Through improved financing, irrigation, research & development, and the return of extension services we will enable farmers to move from subsistence to commercial farming.

We will support the National Land Commission, and fund the adjudication and titling of land, assisting them in their endeavor to promote land ownership as a factor of production and thereby enhance food security.

This Government is committed to ensuring the highest attainable standard of health. Our policy aims to ensure that all Kenyans have access to well-equipped health facilities and well trained and motivated health care workers, in addition to developing systems to support and expand health care and improved sanitation. Working with County Governments we will progressively roll out our commitment to provide free primary healthcare to every Kenyan by 2020, starting with children, persons with disability, pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers.

Honourable Members, my Government will also focus on education. We all understand that education and employment are inter-linked. We are in a global economy that is knowledge-based and technology driven. My Government intends to propose a sessional paper that will provide for an increase in the number of Institutes of Technology in every county and end the current practice of transforming middle-level colleges to universities.

My Government has committed itself to delivering on the promise of free laptops for our standard one children starting next year. Some have said that this is too ambitious. I say that we cannot afford to leave any of our children without tools to compete in the digital age. Yes, our ambition is great but the scale of that ambition is the only one sufficient to meet the scale of our nation's challenge. As such, I call upon both Houses to work with me to ensure that in future, the laptops we provide are assembled locally.

Our eighth pillar is extending basic services such as water and electricity to every Kenyan. We will increase, year on year the number of people who have access to clean water and sustainable supply of electricity until we achieve the goal of providing access to water and electricity to all Kenyans. Improving the supply and quality of water is central to a range of our policy goals, it will help to open up more land to farming, it will improve the health of our citizens, it will help provide security, especially in Northern Kenya by ending a perennial source of conflict and will protect and enhance our biodiversity.

Kenya has been the victim of perennial droughts and floods, every other year we have a drought or floods. This cycle has an adverse effect on not only our food production but on our infrastructure and our economy as a whole. We have commissioned the relevant ministries to work out a framework for building dams and pans for water retention on a massive scale. Various agencies of government will employ thousands of youth to start this construction immediately. We have the equipment, the knowledge, the personnel and the will to carry out this endeavour.

Argentina, a middle-income nation with the same population as Kenya has 24GW of electricity capacity, while Kenya has just 1.5GW. Energy drives the economy and we will therefore promote investment in new forms of energy generation such as solar, wind and geothermal plants as well as oil, gas and coal. The energy market must be liberalised and opened up to new sources of investment, so that we can expand generating capacity, extend our transmission network, improve the consistency and quality of supply and lower the cost of energy for the Kenyan citizen.

This Government will focus on changing Kenya's place in the world. The nature of our relationships is already changing. We are deepening links with our regional neighbours. We are partnering with our African brothers and sisters to bring peace and stability across our continent. We are seizing the opportunity of our times to drive the world and place Kenya and Africa at the heart of the global economy. My Government will continue this process by ensuring that we move beyond traditional diplomacy towards a new engagement that is based on our economic interests.

Honourable Members,

The clock has officially begun counting down on this Parliament. In less than five years from now we will be evaluated based on how we dealt with the issues facing this country. Today, I am outlining a broad legislative agenda for this session of Parliament. This agenda contains the Bills and Sessional Papers that I wish you to consider. They constitute a promissory note on the pledges we have made and the reforms that the Kenyan people have voted for.

First and foremost, my Government is committed to the speedy completion of the unfinished business of implementing our Constitution. The 5th Schedule of the Constitution dictates that the remaining legislation should be enacted no later than August 27th this year. I will therefore send to Parliament Bills to:

- Entrench civil liberties and protect the freedom of the media
- Support the County Governments
- Enable the public to fully participate in decision making at the County and National levels

- Reform campaign finance
- And to ensure diversity and gender balance in the County Assemblies.

I will also propose the Division of Revenue Bill and the County Allocation of Revenue Bill, which as per the Constitution must be approved by April 30th. I urge Parliament to act swiftly in their consideration of these measures so that we can meet our constitutional obligations.

Finally, as part of our commitment to the implementation of the Constitution we shall continue to review current legislation to ensure compliance with Constitutional provisions. We shall move to engage in urgent consultations with the relevant constitutionally mandated bodies, relevant line Ministries and State Departments, to prepare proposals to align them to the letter and spirit of the Constitution.

These shall include legislation and amendments touching on:

- The National Police Service
- National Government Coordination
- County Governments and Devolution
- Medical supplies management
- Education Management.

There is much to do beyond the implementation of the Constitution. I am proud to have submitted to the electorate the most detailed, specific and comprehensive manifesto in Kenya's history. That manifesto was endorsed by the people of Kenya - and I intend to fulfill those promises. My Government will, therefore, move to propose our legislative agenda in line with the commitments in the Jubilee manifesto. I will bring forward measures to protect the family and improve the quality of life for the Kenyan people.

Furthermore, we will seek to entrench the rights and freedoms that are the hallmarks of a truly democratic society by proposing the Access to Information Bill and the Data Protection Bill.

This government is for all Kenyans whether they live here at home or abroad. We recognise the Diaspora's contribution to the economic life of our country but more than this they are members of the Kenyan family. We will therefore institute measures to facilitate their fuller participation in public life.

I will act decisively to boost development and harness our potential for growth specifically my Government will present measures to:

- Promote and enhance the Tourism sector

- Review and amend the Public Procurement and Disposal Act to establish a legal obligation on Government to buy Kenyan first and create procurement quotas for youth and women
- Bring together the separate funds for youth & women and create a powerful new fund that is administered at the constituency level
- Promote and regulate the minerals and mining industry
- Promote, expand and modernise the agricultural sector and enhance food security
- Review the laws covering companies and other associations to improve the business environment, reduce red-tape and provide a predictable regulatory framework for business
- Facilitate the participation of the Diaspora in Kenya's public life.

We are stewards of our environment, holding in trust this earth for future generations of Kenyans. We have a sacred duty to protect it, our wildlife and our landscape. That is why I will propose legislation to strengthen the protection of the environment. These will include Bills to:

- Overhaul our nation's Environment management and conservation
- Improve and expand Water Management and Water Harvesting
- Promote the expansion and management of our energy and petroleum sectors
- Reform the regulation of mining, minerals and resource exploitation to increase the participation of Kenyans in the sector
- Respond to the urgent threat posed by climate change
- Protect our nation's wildlife and flora.

While in the last 10 years our country has seen major developments in our national infrastructure, few Kenyans have seen the benefits in their day to day lives. It is time that all Kenyans shared in the fruits of our prosperity. I will therefore bring forward for your consideration Bills to:

- Improve the quality and access to education
- Expand and promote maternal, child and primary health care services
- Promote and expand sports, arts and entertainment sectors and establish a national lottery.

Honourable Members,

My government is determined to provide solutions to land issues so that land once again can be seen for what it is: a factor of production among many. We will propose Bills to address:

- Eviction and resettlement of Internally displaced persons and squatters

- Management and Adjudication of Community land
- Leasing and Public asset management.

Other areas in which I will be proposing Bills for your consideration include:

- The future of State Corporations
- Improving Coroner Services
- Regulating the Private Security industry.

Honourable Members;

Our work begins with immediate effect, within the next 100 days, we will:

- Release the money already allocated to stock health centres and dispensaries with drugs and equipment
- Abolish fees that are currently charged for using public dispensaries and health centres
- Abolish all charges for women giving birth at public hospitals
- Present legislation for this Parliament to pass to ensure that no child is out of school or a training institution until they reach the age of 18
- Establish a framework to ensure that every child entering Class 1 next year does so with a laptop
- Establishing a framework for youth and women to access interest free loans at the grassroots.

Honourable Members,

If we implement the measures I have outlined of today, I am confident that we shall support our children and our families; honor the hopes of our fore bearers and secure the future of Kenya. I, therefore, urge all Parliamentarians to prepare themselves for the work that is ahead.

I welcome and urge all citizens to take their place in the legislative process – as agents of accountability. As per our constitution, all sovereign power belongs to the people of Kenya and I therefore say, fellow Kenyans - this is your Government. These are your elected representatives. We are here to defend your rights. If we act together, remaining steadfast in our deliberations, I am confident that our prospects will be limitless.

May you remain firm in hope; true to your oaths, unfettered by self-interest; undaunted by challenge; undistracted by success and unyielding in service. May you

be instruments to bring peace where there has been strife; security where there has been fear; unity where there has been division and prosperity where they lack, until the dream for one indivisible, democratic and sovereign nation is realized - in accordance with our constitution and national aspirations.

God bless the citizens of this Republic and God bless and guide this 11th Parliament as you pursue the noble goals outlined above.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Uhuru Kenyatta', written in a cursive style.

**HON. UHURU KENYATTA, C.G.H.,
PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
OF THE DEFENCE FORCES OF
THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

