



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY WILLIAM
RUTO, C.G.H.; PhD; PRESIDENT AND
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE KENYA DEFENCE
FORCES, AT A PRESS CONFERENCE WITH HIS
EXCELLENCY NANA ADDO DANKWA AKUFO-
ADDO, DURING A STATE VISIT TO THE REPUBLIC
OF GHANA**

APRIL 3RD, 2024

JUBILEE HOUSE, ACCRA

1. Your Excellency, my Dear Brother, I take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation for extending the invitation to this State Visit. Let me also thank you most sincerely for the warm reception accorded to my delegation and I since our arrival in this beautiful country.
2. Ghana and Kenya have strong and historic ties going back to the pre-independence period when our founding fathers fought for freedom against colonial rule so that our two nations could determine their own destiny. Since then, our partnership has grown in many respects and our two governments and peoples collaborate in many fields, including business, trade and tourism.
3. Before this State Visit, our respective delegations have discussed the elevation of the dedicated mechanism for the conduct of our bilateral relations from a Joint Commission for Cooperation (JCC) to a Binational Commission.
4. During my discussions with President Nana AkufoAddo, we have noted this development as a significant milestone in the evolution of our diplomatic ties, which stand on warm and cordial, dynamic and impactful historic collaborations. We have also agreed that the inaugural session of the Binational Commission will provide us with an opportunity to reaffirm our friendship, deepen our bilateral ties and strengthen the noble cause of African economic integration as espoused by the African Union's Agenda 2063.
5. Kenya and Ghana have enjoyed long-standing cordial relations since the 1960s. This was preceded by pre-independence solidarity between our leaders, who were among the convenors of the Pan-African conferences.



The historical bonds of friendship between our two countries run deep. We are bound together by our shared commitment to Pan-African unity and a common vision for a united and prosperous Africa.

6. It is appropriate that our two nations, which have long played strong roles in fostering Pan-African unity, also make similar contributions to the development of Pan-African trade integration. It is also imperative that we continue to strengthen our relations, enhance solidarity, expand cooperation and deepen mutual understanding to unite and deliver inclusive economic growth for the people of our nations and for the African continent.
7. The Pan-African independence movement inspired many African countries in the freedom struggle and, in due course, they followed Ghana in taking their place among the community of sovereign nations. Once again, in its capacity as the home of the African Continental Free Trade Area secretariat, Ghana is a leading force in economic integration and development of 55 countries within 8 regional economic communities in our continent. I thank you, Your Excellency, for your support to the Secretariat and to AfCFTA Secretary-General Wamkele Mene.
8. Excellency, still on the subject of integration, and especially in accelerating the free movement of people within our continent, I welcome your recent announcement of your commitment to remove entrance visa requirements for all Africans by December 2024. This commitment aligns with one of the goals of the African Continental Free Trade Area to create a single market in the continent to drive economic growth, job creation and poverty eradication.



9. I have informed President Akufo-Addo that, in a similar vein, Kenya recently removed visa requirements for visitors from all countries, with effect from the 1st of January, 2024. This underscores Kenya's commitment to complement Ghana in improving free movement, increasing trade and building a stronger, more united continent.
10. The free movement of people between our two countries has contributed immensely to trade, investment and tourism. In this respect, His Excellency and I noted that trade between Kenya and Ghana is growing. In 2022, Kenya's exports to Ghana were valued at \$10.4 million, and imports were valued at \$4.8 million. We have agreed that there remains great potential to enhance trade between our countries, especially with the numerous opportunities arising from the establishment of the AfCFTA.
11. President Akufo-Addo and I are encouraged that under the AfCFTA, our two countries have taken bold measures to explore these opportunities. We recalled that in October 2022, I flagged off from Nairobi the first consignment of Kenyan tea destined here. On 23rd September 2023, Kenyan-made Chloride Exide batteries worth about KSh9.3 million landed in the Ghanaian Port of Tema, while Little Cab, a taxi-hailing service from Kenya, is now also operational in Ghana.
12. My brother and I also noted that the Ghana Export Promotion Authority facilitated Ghanaian businesses to undertake a Market Entry Expedition to Kenya between May 23-27, 2023. Consequently, the Ghana Trade House was launched in Nairobi. Undeniably, this initiative represents a giant step toward greater trade within and among various regions and countries throughout Africa.



13. I congratulate you, Your Excellency, for being appointed African Union Champion for the establishment of the African Union Financial Institutions. These include the African Central Bank, the African International Monetary Fund, the African Investment Bank and the Pan-African Stock Exchange.
14. My brother President, the establishment of these financial institutions has always been at the centre of the African integration agenda. The Abuja Treaty of 1991 and Article 19 of the African Constitutive Act of 2000 provide for the creation of these financial institutions and is part of AU's Agenda 2063.
15. These institutions would be critical in the mobilisation of resources globally and the enhancement of Africa's financial sector.
16. Excellency, I wish to express utmost appreciation to the organisers of the business forum that our respective private sectors have organised today. This forum, Your Excellency, creates the opportunity to connect with one another and to drive our continental trade agenda forward.
17. During our meeting, Your Excellency, we have noted that peace and security is fragile not only in Africa but also across the globe. Internal strife, conflicts and wars, compounded by terrorism and violent extremism, are a major obstacle to peace, security and stability.
18. Statistically, the number of people killed and forcibly displaced by crises in Africa has been increasing over time. As of 2023, over 37 million people had been forcibly displaced in Africa, and six countries accounted for 64% of forced displacements. The increasing number of conflicts calls for concerted urgent action.



19. Kenya appreciates and commends efforts by Ghana, through the Accra Initiative and ECOWAS, towards the fight against terrorism and in addressing the resurgence of unconstitutional changes of government in the Sahel and West Africa region. As a nation, Kenya looks forward to receiving continued support from Ghana in addressing terrorism and other threats so as to guarantee peace and security in Africa and the world.
20. I informed His Excellency that Kenya has been engaged in supporting peace initiatives in the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region, including the DRC, South Sudan, Sudan and Somalia. Kenya stands in support of all efforts aimed towards fostering peace and security in Africa.
21. It has become clear in our discussions that we have to redouble our efforts to silence the guns in Africa as a vital condition for the establishment of economic growth. We also have no choice but to endow the African Union and our Regional Economic Communities with greater capacity to do more in pursuit of peace and stability.
22. Climate change is a global problem that is escalating out of control and requires urgent global action. However, we noted that Africa continues to endure the most of this crisis. The first-ever Africa Climate Summit held in Nairobi in September 2023 served as a platform for the African leadership to define and project a clear common position in the global climate action discourse in the run-up to COP28 and beyond. Subsequently, the Nairobi Declaration at the Africa Climate Summit and COP28 laid the ground for a swift, just and equitable transition underpinned by drastic reduction in emissions and significantly enhanced climate financing.



23. Excellency, I take this opportunity to thank you for the support Kenya received from you before, during and after the summit. Your attendance underscored the unity of African leadership in formulating interventions and other commitments aimed at mitigating the rising impact of climate change by implementing homegrown solutions for the prevention, mitigation and recovery in respect of disasters arising from climate change.
24. His Excellency and I discussed and agreed that reforms are needed to give Africa a fit-for-purpose institution for the effective implementation of Agenda 2063. This includes the need to restructure the African Union organs, the concluded division of labour between the AU Commission Organs, Specialised Agencies and Regional Economic Communities, as well as the need to streamline the agenda of the Assembly to cover strategic issues among others. These reforms are key to ensuring that the African Union Commission lives up to its founding aspirations. I assured President AkufoAddo that I will work closely with Ghana to deliver on this mandate of reform that has been bestowed upon me by fellow African leaders at the last AU Summit.
25. On 15th March 2024, the African Union Executive Council unanimously decided that candidates for the position of the next Chairperson of the Africa Union Commission would be nominated by the Eastern African regional States in accordance with the Statute of the AU Commission, the Rules of Procedure, the African Union policy organs and the decisions of the Assembly of Heads of States and Government.
26. Your excellency, my Dear Brother, I thank you most sincerely for accepting to support Kenya's candidature for the position of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (2025-2028), which has been initiated following a comprehensive Stakeholder engagement process across government.



Kenya's candidature is informed by our leading role in enhancing and sustaining the Pan-African Agenda in terms of independence and sovereignty, peace and security, development and prosperity, as well as sustainability and climate action. We hope to work with all as we try to achieve Agenda 2063.

27. On our part, I have assured His Excellency that Kenya will support the Republic of Ghana for the candidature of Hon Shirley Botchwey, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, for the position of Secretary-General of the Commonwealth for the period 2024-2029. Excellency, this presents an opportunity for Kenya and Ghana to collaborate.
28. I take this opportunity to assure Your Excellency of my personal support and the commitment of the Republic of Kenya to working with you and the Government of the Republic of Ghana to further strengthen the bond of friendship between our two countries.
29. I wish Your Excellency and the great people of Ghana the best wishes and prosperity.

Thank you.

