



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**REMARKS BY H.E. DR. WILLIAM SAMOEI RUTO,
CGH, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA
AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE
FORCES DURING THE ASSENT TO THE PERSONS
WITH DISABILITIES BILL 2025**

MAY 8, 2025

STATE HOUSE, NAIROBI

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. It has been my singular honour and duty this morning to sign into law the Persons with Disabilities Bill 2025, a progressive piece of legislation that reaffirms the dignity and rights of all persons living with disabilities (PWDs) in Kenya.
2. This community constitutes a significant segment of our population. According to the 2019 National Housing and Population Census, the number of individuals with disabilities above the age of five stood at just under one million, about 2% of our total population, while globally, it is estimated that they represent 15% of the world's population.
3. Although this group forms a critical part of every nation's demographic, they continue to face systemic barriers, including challenges in accessing education, healthcare, employment, and basic social services. Some of these hurdles are rooted in structural, social, political, and cultural systems. Others stem from institutional and attitudinal barriers that lead to exclusion and unequal access to opportunities.
4. Assenting to the Persons with Disabilities Bill into law concludes the long journey of repealing the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 14 of 2003, and marks the beginning of a vital progression towards promoting and safeguarding the rights of citizens with disabilities.
5. This law is both comprehensive in scope and progressive in vision. It affirms the rights of persons with disabilities to education, employment, healthcare, political participation, and access to buildings and built environments.



It also mandates stronger enforcement mechanisms, clearer accountability, and enhanced representation of persons with disabilities in both national and county governance structures.

6. Beyond giving fuller expression to Article 54 of the Constitution, the highlights in the new framework include a restructured National Council for Persons with Disability, devolution of functions related to persons with disabilities, recognition and support for caregivers, greater access to justice and enhanced legal frameworks in respect of PWDs, and robust economic safeguards. These include exemptions and incentives for the benefit of PWDs to foster greater economic and financial resilience and to mitigate vulnerability.
7. Additionally, the law fortifies the legal framework protecting the rights of persons with disabilities by offering clearer definitions, strengthening protections against discrimination, and mandating the implementation of affirmative action measures across various sectors.
8. With the signing of this law, Ladies and Gentlemen, the real work now begins. Its full promise cannot be realised by the National Council for Persons with Disabilities or the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection alone; it will require collective action by all stakeholders, including the National and County governments, legislators, civil society, the private sector, and all Kenyans of goodwill.
9. I assure you that the Government is fully committed to translating the provisions of this law into tangible improvements in the lives and welfare of persons with disabilities. As part of our efforts to strengthen disability inclusion in the public sector, I direct the Public Service Performance Management Unit at the Public Service Commission to reinstate the Disability Mainstreaming Performance Indicator in performance contracts.



This indicator is crucial for evaluating and holding institutions accountable for their inclusivity, making disability mainstreaming a measurable and essential component of institutional performance.

10. Finally, let me express my gratitude to all who contributed to the finalisation of this Bill, including Members of Parliament in both chambers, and the organisations and individuals who tirelessly championed this cause. You have made history. I also extend my appreciation to Kenyans with disabilities, who have waited patiently for this moment. Your relentless advocacy has borne fruit, and today, you can rightfully savour the rewards of your efforts.

I thank you.

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