



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 HANDING OVER OF
DISEASE SURVEILLANCE MOTOR VEHICLES TO
THE 47 COUNTY GOVERNMENTS**

MAY 9, 2025

STATE HOUSE, NAIROBI

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I am pleased to preside over the official handover of disease surveillance vehicles to each of our 47 County Governments. These vehicles not only enhance logistical capacity but also symbolise the National Government's commitment to strengthening public health systems and disease surveillance infrastructure at the grassroots level, in line with the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda.
2. As part of the lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic, Kenya has made remarkable strides in strengthening public health surveillance and emergency response systems through collaborative efforts and strategic investments.
3. Among the key achievements are enhanced preparedness measures, improved traveller screening at points of entry for early detection of health threats, and timely activation of rapid response mechanisms. We have also deployed digitised, integrated disease surveillance and event-based systems in all 47 counties, streamlining processes at both the facility and community levels. Additionally, surveillance officers and frontline responders have been trained and deployed across the country.
4. At the same time, the government has significantly expanded molecular diagnostic capacity and improved referral systems in our regional laboratories. These efforts have reduced turnaround times for case confirmation during outbreaks and enhanced our ability to respond swiftly to emerging health threats.



5. Ladies and Gentlemen, as we continue to confront both ongoing and emerging health challenges, we must remain unwavering in our resolve to protect the health and well-being of everyone within our borders. Counties are the first line of defence in our health emergency preparedness and response efforts. It is through strong collaboration between the two levels of government that we will succeed in building a resilient, responsive, and accountable health system, one that not only responds to crises but is also capable of preventing them.
6. The progress we have made in disease surveillance, emergency response, and diagnostic capacity has formed a strong foundation for the successful rollout of the Universal Health Coverage plan and reinforces our commitment to long-term health system resilience. Since we launched Taifa Care in October 2024, over 22 million Kenyans have enrolled with the Social Health Authority (SHA), with an average of 45,000 new registrations daily, a clear indication that Kenyans are embracing our universal healthcare delivery model.
7. We have allocated sufficient resources to fully fund primary healthcare, ensuring all registered Kenyans can access primary healthcare services free, fully paid for by the SHA. Public health facilities at Levels 2, 3, and 4, along with SHA-contracted hospitals, should not charge Kenyans as SHA is settling payments promptly.
8. Recognising the need for skilled personnel to manage health insurance effectively, I am informed that the recruitment process within SHA is nearly complete, with a strong focus on securing qualified professionals.



As promised, staff from the defunct NHIF have been given priority in the process. Those not selected for positions within SHA will be reassigned to other roles within the Public Service. I assure all Kenyans that no one will lose their job.

9. We have also embarked on a nationwide initiative to improve the availability of essential medicines in our health facilities, ensuring that Kenyans can access the medication they need at health facilities nearest to them. To support this, KEMSA is being repositioned to play a central role in strengthening the medical supply chain. This is part of our broader commitment to lowering healthcare costs and enhancing access to quality care.
10. Additionally, the Government is leveraging digital technologies to make healthcare delivery paperless and more efficient within the next six months, a transformation already underway in six counties.
11. As I conclude, I urge all Kenyans to register with SHA. Let us move away from the burden of harambees and WhatsApp group fundraisers for medical bills. Together, we are building a sustainable, dignified healthcare system that serves everyone without discrimination.

I thank you.

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