REPUBLIC OF KENYA

REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY HON. WILLIAM SAMOEI RUTO, PhD, C.G.H., PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE FORCES, DURING THE KAZAKHSTAN-KENYA BUSINESS FORUM

MAY 20, 2026

ASTANA INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL CENTRE, KAZAKHSTAN

Your Excellency, President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev,
President of the Republic of Kazakhstan,
Distinguished Government Officials,
Esteemed Business Leaders,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. It is a great honour to address you today here in Astana, a city that reflects ambition, innovation, and global connectivity.

2. Allow me first to express Kenya’s sincere appreciation to the Government and people of Kazakhstan for the warm hospitality extended to my delegation and for convening this important Business Forum at such a defining moment in the global economy.

3. Our two countries may be separated by geography, but they are united by ambition, shared purpose, and a common belief in the power of strategic partnership.

4. Today, the world is being reshaped by shifting trade corridors, supply chain diversification, energy transition, food security concerns, and rapid technological transformation. In this changing environment, countries that can provide market access, policy stability, innovation ecosystems, and strategic connectivity will emerge as preferred destinations for investment and enterprise.

5. At such a moment of geopolitical transition, countries that build trusted partnerships across regions and forge stronger networks of cooperation will not merely adapt to change; they will help shape the next chapter of global growth and shared prosperity.

6. Kazakhstan stands today as the largest economy in Central Asia and an increasingly important bridge into Eurasia. Kenya, on the other hand, has established itself as East Africa's leading commercial, logistics, financial, and innovation hub, providing access to more than 300 million people within the East African Community and over 1.4 billion consumers under the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

7. Bilateral trade between our countries continues to demonstrate strong growth potential, driven largely by Kenyan agricultural exports. This demonstrates both strong market demand and the immense untapped opportunity that still exists between our economies.

8. Today, we are turning that shared vision into a practical economic cooperation and investment opportunity. Kenya is open and ready for business.

9. Our value proposition is clear: strategic market access, political and macroeconomic stability, abundant renewable energy, a young and highly skilled workforce, a government committed to private-sector-led growth, and long-term industrial transformation.

10. Our objective is to build a competitive, resilient, innovation-driven economy that creates opportunity while strengthening mutually beneficial global partnerships.

Distinguished Investors,

11. Kenya’s vision is bold and unequivocal: to become a globally competitive, industrialised, high-income economy built on world-class infrastructure, energy security, food security, innovation, and export-led growth.

12. That transformation is already underway. We are executing one of the most ambitious economic modernisation programmes on the African continent, expanding energy generation, upgrading roads, railways, ports, and airports, strengthening logistics corridors, deepening digital connectivity, modernising agriculture, and creating new platforms for industrial growth and capital formation.

13. We are also repositioning infrastructure not as a fiscal burden, but as an investable national asset capable of generating long-term commercial returns through public-private partnerships, institutional capital, and strategic asset mobilisation.

14. To support this transformation, Kenya has established strategic investment platforms, including the National Infrastructure Fund, designed to mobilise long-term private capital into commercially viable sectors, while strengthening national resilience.

15. For investors gathered here today, this means Kenya is not offering isolated projects. Kenya is offering participation in the transformation of one of the world’s fastest-growing economic regions.

16. Kenya is not simply inviting trade. Kenya is inviting a long-term strategic partnership.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

17. The opportunities before us are immense. In energy, particularly, the prospects for Kenya–Kazakhstan partnership are especially compelling.

18. Kazakhstan brings globally recognised expertise in energy production, uranium and nuclear capabilities, grid infrastructure, industrial energy systems, and large-scale resource development. Kenya, meanwhile, is positioning itself as one of Africa's leading green industrial economies, with 93 per cent of our electricity already generated from renewable sources.

19. As we expand national generation capacity toward 10,000 megawatts by 2030, Kenya is opening major opportunities across geothermal development, transmission infrastructure, battery storage systems, smart grids, industrial power solutions, green hydrogen, electric mobility, and climate-smart manufacturing.

20. We also see strong potential for collaboration in peaceful nuclear energy development, energy research, technical training, and industrial energy partnerships as Kenya advances its long-term energy security and industrialisation agenda.

21. In mining and critical minerals, the potential for collaboration is especially significant. Kazakhstan is globally respected for its expertise in uranium production, rare earths, mineral processing, geological exploration, metallurgy, and strategic mining infrastructure.

22. Kenya, meanwhile, is accelerating exploration and development across a range of critical minerals essential for the global energy transition, including rare earth elements, titanium, graphite, lithium, niobium, and other strategic resources.

23. This partnership can extend beyond extraction into refining, industrial manufacturing, research collaboration, skills transfer, and the development of integrated regional mineral value chains.

24. In agriculture and food processing, Kenya offers globally renowned tea, coffee, horticulture, and fresh produce, while Kazakhstan brings strengths in grain production, fertiliser value chains, agricultural financing, and large-scale farming expertise.

25. Together, we can build resilient food systems through irrigation cooperation, fertiliser production, agro-processing, commodity logistics, and export-oriented value chains serving African and Eurasian markets.

26. Kenya is also investing heavily in irrigation, water security, and climate resilience to expand productivity and strengthen long-term food security.

27. In logistics and infrastructure, the Ports of Mombasa and Lamu and our modern aviation networks are opening major opportunities in shipping, warehousing, transport logistics, and connectivity linking Africa to global markets, even as we continue to expand and modernise our infrastructure to meet growing regional and global demand.

28. Along these strategic corridors, Kenya has developed Special Economic Zones and industrial parks designed to attract export-oriented manufacturing, value addition industries, and regional distribution hubs, providing attractive opportunities for investors seeking efficient access to African and global markets through competitive fiscal incentives.

29. In technology and digital innovation, Nairobi has emerged as Africa's Silicon Savannah, one of the continent's most dynamic centres for fintech, digital innovation, and venture capital.

30. Kenya is also a global leader in mobile money innovation and digital financial inclusion, with M-Pesa and our broader fintech ecosystem transforming how millions of people and businesses transact, save, invest, and access financial services.

31. We are implementing one of Africa's most ambitious Digital Superhighway programmes, including nationwide fibre expansion, digitisation of government services, and the establishment of digital innovation hubs across the country.

32. Through our expanded e-Citizen platform, thousands of government services have been digitised, making it faster, easier, and more transparent for businesses and investors to engage with government.

33. Kenya continues to attract leading global technology and digital services companies, reinforcing Nairobi's position as a regional hub for innovation, software development, business process outsourcing, and digital commerce.

34. We also see enormous potential for cooperation between the Astana International Financial Centre and the Nairobi International Financial Centre as strategic financial gateways into Eurasia and Africa, respectively.

35. Together, these institutions can help facilitate cross-border investment flows, infrastructure financing, private equity partnerships, sovereign investment cooperation, and new channels for capital formation linking our regions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

36. The future of global prosperity will be built through strategic partnerships, stronger connectivity, and shared opportunity.

37. Kenya and Africa were once spoken of as markets of future promise. Today, we are the growth frontier of our time.

38. This is why Kenya and Kazakhstan matter to one another. Together, we can build a new economic bridge between Africa and Central Asia, powered by trade, industrialisation, innovation, and shared prosperity.

39. Today, I encourage the business leaders gathered here to move beyond dialogue to deal-making; beyond networking to investment; and beyond ambition to transformative partnerships that create jobs, expand industries, and unlock long-term growth for our peoples.

40. We must also move beyond good intentions toward actionable outcomes that deliver tangible benefits for businesses, investors, and our peoples.

41. The agreements signed between our institutions must now translate into factories, infrastructure, technology platforms, logistics corridors, industrial parks, and sustainable prosperity.

42. Kenya is ready for investment, ready for partnership, and ready to work with Kazakhstan in shaping a new era of economic cooperation linking Africa, Central Asia, and global markets.

43. I encourage the business leaders gathered here today to actively explore Kenya's vast opportunities across energy, mining, infrastructure, logistics, agriculture, technology, and industrial development as we deepen economic cooperation between Africa and Central Asia.

44. Let this Forum mark the beginning of a lasting partnership between our nations and regions.

I thank you.

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