REPUBLIC OF KENYA

REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY HON. WILLIAM SAMOEI RUTO, Ph.D., C.G.H., PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE FORCES, DURING THE MURANG'A INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT CONFERENCE

JUNE 13, 2025

MURANG'A

Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. It is a great honour to join you here in Murang'a County for this important international investment conference, an event that reflects the growing recognition of counties as critical frontiers and powerful engines of national economic growth.

2. This conference is a testament not only to the ambitions of Murang'a but also to our collective national vision of transforming Kenya into a competitive, inclusive, and investor-friendly economy, built from the bottom up.

3. Kenya's real strength lies at the grassroots. It is in our counties that comparative advantages in agriculture, manufacturing, energy, ICT, infrastructure, and tourism become most visible.

4. To fully unlock this potential, we must develop strong and competitive value chains. Through the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda, we have introduced a multi-sector strategy to support value addition, particularly in agriculture, manufacturing, and digital services. We are moving beyond primary production to strengthen agro-processing, industrial linkages, and market access for smallholder farmers and SMEs.

5. In support of this agenda, the Ministry of Investments, Trade and Industry is developing investment profiles for key priority sectors. These strategic tools will highlight opportunities, showcase value propositions, and facilitate investor engagement at both local and international levels.

6. I am pleased to report that we now have a comprehensive investment tool for the leather sector. This document outlines the sector's high-growth potential across the entire value chain, valued at $80 million (KSh10.3 billion), from raw hides and skins to wet blue, crust, and finished leather products. Similar tools for the textile and apparel, e-mobility, and Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sectors are also at advanced stages of development.

7. By supporting end-to-end value chain ecosystems, we aim to raise local incomes, create employment for our youth, improve food security, and position our counties as globally competitive exporters.

8. Distinguished guests, achieving this vision requires robust collaboration between the national and county governments. We are strengthening this partnership through harmonised regulations, shared development frameworks, and coordinated investment promotion efforts.

9. For investment to thrive, counties must provide a stable, predictable, and business-friendly environment. This includes improving infrastructure, streamlining regulations, fostering innovation, and lowering the cost of doing business.

10. Land remains a critical enabler of investment. We are working to enhance land tenure security for foreign direct investment and promote optimal land use through public-private partnerships. Murang'a offers significant opportunities in agriculture, housing, and infrastructure development.

11. Murang'a County has equally articulated a clear and compelling investment vision, one that demonstrates ambition, strategic foresight, and alignment with Kenya's broader development agenda. Among its flagship initiatives include the Murang'a Industrial Park, which is being considered for Special Economic Zone (SEZ) designation, and the Export Processing Zones (EPZs) near Del Monte in Thika. These projects aim to connect local producers to global markets and unlock substantial trade potential.

12. Ladies and gentlemen, this conference comes at a pivotal time, as Kenya integrates county-level investment promotion into its broader foreign engagement strategy. A key milestone in this effort is the signing of the EU-Kenya Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), which grants our exporters duty-free, quota-free access to the European Union. This presents significant opportunities for counties like Murang'a in agro-processing, manufacturing, and value addition.

13. To further support county-level investment, the National Government, through the Ministry of Investments, Trade and Industry, has developed the County Licensing Uniform Act 2024 and the accompanying Regulations 2025 to simplify and harmonise licensing. These are currently with the Attorney General for submission to Parliament. We have also created a County Competitiveness Index, which is awaiting validation by the Council of Governors, to guide investors and help counties enhance their competitiveness. Other key tools include County Aggregation and Industrial Parks, aimed at spurring local industrial growth, and a County Investment Conference Guide to standardise engagement, promotion, and follow-up practices.

14. Murang'a is already leading by example. I encourage all counties to adopt this tool to ensure their investment forums deliver tangible and lasting outcomes.

15. Building on this momentum, let me take this opportunity to invite all investors and stakeholders to the upcoming Kenya International Investment Conference (KIICO) in March 2026. This landmark event will bring together investors, financiers, county governments, and development partners from across the globe. Let us carry the momentum from Murang'a to the national stage.

16. I am confident that Kenya's economic future lies in empowering our counties to become vibrant hubs of production, innovation, and enterprise. Murang'a is ready. Our counties are ready. Let us work together, across all levels of government, with the private sector and development partners, to unlock opportunities, uplift livelihoods, and build a Kenya that works for all.

I thank you.

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