



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 SWEARI-G IN OF 15 NEW
JUDGES OF THE COURT OF APPEAL**

JANUARY 28, 2026

STATE HOUSE, NAIROBI

**The Honourable Chief Justice Martha Koome
Deputy Chief Justice Philomena Mwilu,
Judges of the Superior Courts,
Members of the Judicial Service Commission,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. I congratulate the 15 honourable men and women sworn in today as judges of the Court of Appeal, as you assume this high constitutional office in service to our country.
2. Your appointment carries immense responsibility and profound national consequences. In accepting this charge, you join a vital institution whose strength, independence, and credibility are indispensable to Kenya's stability and the health of our democracy.
3. I am encouraged to note that, in recent years, the Court of Appeal has progressively strengthened its institutional capacity through a deliberate and structured appointment process. This reflects a sustained commitment to expanding access to justice, improving appellate efficiency, and ensuring the Court is adequately resourced to fulfil its vital constitutional mandate.
4. In 2022, 11 judges were appointed to the Court of Appeal, four of whom I appointed immediately upon assuming office on 15 September 2022. This appointment of 15 additional judges, therefore, represents one of the most significant single reinforcements of the Court in its recent history.



5. It demonstrates our collective resolve to reduce the backlog of appeal cases, shorten the time required to resolve disputes, and strengthen public confidence in the administration of justice.
6. This expansion also comes at a critical moment. As of December 2025, the Court of Appeal was managing a pending caseload of 14,334 matters, with an overall Case Clearance Rate of 68%.
7. These figures indicate that while progress has been made, existing judicial capacity has not yet fully matched the growing inflow of cases, particularly in high-volume stations.
8. That is why this administration has consistently committed resources to strengthening the Judiciary's human capital, ensuring it has the capacity, skills, and institutional depth required to effectively deliver on its constitutional mandate.
9. In the High Court, a total of 60 new judges will have been appointed by March this year, comprising 20 in December 2022; 20 in May 2024, and an additional 20 through the recruitment process scheduled to begin next week on February 4th.
10. At the same time, the Judicial Service Commission has recruited a total of 168 Resident Magistrates, significantly strengthening service delivery at the grassroots level. These appointments are enhancing judicial capacity where it is most needed and easing pressure across the justice system.



11. Our support for the Judiciary, however, goes well beyond judicial appointments. In the 2023/2024 financial year, we increased the Judiciary's budgetary allocation from KSh18.8 billion to KSh21.8 billion. This commitment has been sustained and strengthened over the past three years, with the allocation rising to KSh26.9 billion in the current financial year.
12. Equally important is the welfare and security of judicial officers. Last year, the Cabinet approved the Judges' Retirement Benefits Bill, which has since passed the second reading in Parliament and is now in the final stages of consideration.
13. Once enacted, this legislation will establish a dedicated pension and retirement benefits framework for judges of the superior courts, providing enhanced benefits, including pensions, gratuities, medical cover, and related protections, to safeguard judicial independence and ensure dignified and secure retirement.
14. Even as we provide this support, we issue a clear and respectful challenge to the Judiciary. With expanded capacity, improved resourcing, and strengthened welfare, Kenyans rightly expect faster case resolution, consistent and coherent jurisprudence, and decisions that reflect both constitutional fidelity and a genuine appreciation of the lived realities of our people.



15. The authority entrusted to judges is immense, and it must be exercised with diligence, wisdom, restraint, and an uncompromising commitment to justice.
16. I reaffirm, without qualification, that this administration respects and will continue to protect the independence of the Judiciary. Courts are constitutionally mandated to interpret and apply the law, to uphold the supremacy of the Constitution, and to protect the rights and freedoms of every Kenyan.
17. That said, it is the nature of democracy that we will not always agree with every decision of the courts, and I have been candid about this reality. On certain occasions, I have questioned judicial decisions that appeared to impede the implementation of critical public policy priorities, and I have raised concerns where some rulings seemed to cross into the realm of judicial overreach, or even tyranny.
18. These concerns were neither expressed lightly nor out of disregard or contempt for the courts; it is out of duty to speak honestly and candidly about the consequences such decisions have on the lives and livelihoods of our people.
19. Even so, and notwithstanding these differences of opinion, this administration has consistently respected court decisions. Where we have been dissatisfied, we have chosen the lawful path of appeal, where available, rather than defiance or disregard of court orders.



20. At all times, and in all circumstances, we remain guided by one immutable principle: That the rule of law must prevail because, without it, no policy, no programme, and no government can endure.
21. Once again, I congratulate the judges sworn in today and assure you of this administration's continued support as you serve the people of Kenya. May your tenure strengthen justice, deepen public confidence in our courts, and reinforce the constitutional foundations of our Republic.

I thank you.

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