



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**STATEMENT 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, ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN
GROUP OF STATES AT THE SECOND WORLD SUMMIT
FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

NOVEMBER 4, 2025

DOHA, QATAR

**Madam President,
Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,
Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. On behalf of the African Group, I extend warm appreciation to you, Madam President, and to the State of Qatar for hosting this historic summit; a moment to renew our shared promise, 30 years after Copenhagen, to place people at the heart of development.
2. We associate ourselves fully with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Iraq on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
3. Excellencies, three decades after the first World Summit on Social Development, the world can point to real progress in reducing poverty, improving food security, and expanding education, health, and social protection.
4. Yet, persistent and widening inequality within and among nations continues to erode these very gains. Global systems of trade, finance, and technology remain unequal and exclusionary.
5. Poverty, unemployment, and social exclusion have been - and remain - the defining challenges of our time. Confronting them is not charity; it is justice for our people.
6. Across many sub-regions in Africa and Western Asia, hunger is rising, growth is slowing down, and vulnerability is deepening. Health and education systems are under strain, and energy deficits hold back opportunity.



7. Beyond income, inclusion depends on access to essential services that empower individuals and protect dignity. Universal access to affordable and quality healthcare is not a luxury; it is a right for every citizen.
8. Housing insecurity, manifesting through homelessness, overcrowding, or substandard shelter, continues to breed inequality. As housing costs outpace wages, affordable housing must become a cornerstone of social development.
9. Informal and precarious employment remains yet another of the gravest obstacles to stability and growth, particularly in low- and middle-income countries where millions live close to the poverty line.
10. Ladies and gentlemen, the digital divide is emerging as one of the great barriers of our time. Access to affordable connectivity, devices, and digital skills must become universal. Education must include every learner, empower every teacher, and reach every community, including persons with disabilities.
11. As Africa, we believe that transforming informal sectors, enhancing productive capacity, and expanding access to global markets require stronger international cooperation in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Right to Development.
12. We therefore call for comprehensive reform of the international financial architecture to make it fair, transparent, and responsive to the needs of developing nations and their people.



13. We urge decisive action on debt distress and progress towards a United Nations Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation. We also underscore our call for a UN Convention on Sovereign Debt.
14. Distinguished colleagues, the Copenhagen Declaration gave us a timeless framework built on three pillars: The eradication of poverty, decent work for all, and social integration. Grounded in equity, solidarity, and human dignity, these pillars remain our compass.
15. We therefore welcome the Doha Declaration on Social Development, a renewed global pledge to translate principles into action and to build cohesive and resilient societies for generations to come.
16. We commend the co-facilitators, the Permanent Representatives of Morocco and Belgium, for their leadership in guiding this important process.
17. This summit, distinguished colleagues, must rekindle genuine dialogue, restore trust, and reaffirm multilateralism as the anchor of collective progress.
18. We must amplify the voices of those living in poverty and vulnerability, and ensure that developing countries, most of them in Africa, are fairly represented across all multilateral institutions.



19. Accordingly, the African Group reiterates its demand for two permanent and two non-permanent seats for Africa on the UN Security Council with full rights and privileges.
20. True social development cannot thrive without historical justice and equal representation. The African Union has declared 2025 the Year of Justice for Africans and People of African Descent through Reparations.
21. This is a defining step towards justice and healing for Africa and its diaspora, calling for accountability for the crimes of slavery, colonisation, Apartheid, and exploitation that caused lasting human and environmental harm.
22. We also reiterate the importance of the High-Level General Assembly Meeting in September 2026 to mark the 25th anniversary of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, and invite all partners to support its successful implementation within the Second Decade for People of African Descent.
23. Together, let us envision a future that is inclusive, resilient, and just; a world free of hunger, poverty, disease, racism, and inequality; a world where prosperity is shared, the digital divide is bridged, and trust in multilateralism is renewed.

I thank you.

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