



PRESS RELEASE

(For Immediate Release)

ISSUE NO. 4 of 2024

DESPATCH FROM CABINET

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT has today chaired a meeting of Cabinet at State House, Nairobi. In furtherance of the Administration's effort to conserve our nation's heritage and splendour, the meeting delved into a range of programmes and policies aimed at **catalyzing climate change adaptation within Kenya's terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.**

IN RESPONSE TO the ecological threat of the noxious *Prosopis Juliflora (Mathenge) tree species*, Cabinet considered and approved the rollout of a national strategy and an action plan for the management and control of this invasive tree species. The tree species was introduced in the 1970s to mitigate soil erosion, fuelwood shortages, inadequate livestock fodder, and other challenges associated with bare lands in the Arid and Semi-arid areas (ASALs); subsequently however, it was realized that **its rapid spread leads to loss of biodiversity and farmlands**, increased livestock deaths arising from consumption of its leaves and thorns, and increased spread of malaria.

CABINET OBSERVED THAT the Government had declared the tree species a noxious weed in the year 2006 and banned its introduction outside the already infested areas in the country. **Since 2006, the invasion has manifested in 16 more counties**, with the largest infestation being found in the following eight counties: Turkana, Tana-River, Garissa, Isiolo, Marsabit, Kajiado, Taita-Taveta, and Baringo. Other counties with a considerable presence of the invasive tree species are Kilifi, Samburu, Mandera, Wajir, Kwale, Lamu, Tharaka-Nithi, Meru, Mombasa, Migori, Kitui, and West-Pokot.



UPON CONSIDERATION OF the devastating negative consequences of the tree species on the overall ecosystem, and the livelihoods of pastoral communities and farmers threatened by loss of critical dry season grazing areas, pasture, and cropping areas; Cabinet noted that the extent of invasion had escalated to emergency stage of the national disaster-risk index assessment scale. In that regard, Cabinet **committed the implementation** of the Strategy to the **charge of an inter-ministerial committee constituted of the Ministries of Environment, Agriculture and Energy.**

THE EFFECTS OF climate change were manifest last year as a four-year drought ended with bountiful rains arising from the *El-Nino* phenomenon. As a consequence of the **above-normal rainfall received since October 2023**, and in anticipation of the March-April 2024 rains, it is projected that there will be a **sustained increase in water levels in Kenya's dams**; resulting in improved generation at major hydroelectric plants up to October, 2024. In light of this, Cabinet directed that priority be given to the green generation mix in power dispatch, particularly hydroelectricity. Consequently, it is expected that the **resulting benefits of a more affordable energy mix will offer relief to Kenyan consumers** as their electricity bills will decrease over this period.

CABINET NOTED THAT even as we anticipate a decrease in electricity prices due to the significant rise in dam water levels across the Republic, **a possible negative effect of the same is the potential spill-over risks.** In the eastern region, **both Masinga and Kiambere dams** within the Seven Forks Cascade **are expected to start spilling-over from April 2024**; with further spillage anticipated in June 2024. In the western region, despite notable increases in water levels at Sondu/Sang'aro and Turkwell Dams, spill-over is not projected. However, in central Kenya, the **Karumeno Dam in Kiambu is expected to spill-over.**

THE MEETING FURTHER noted the presence of spill-over mitigation infrastructure and assured the public that there is no imminent danger in the event of regulated spill-overs. Nevertheless, Cabinet **urged all Kenyans residing in close proximity to dams and all road users to remain vigilant.**



TO LEAD THE nation towards sustainable development of the water sector and address capacity needs in the Water, Sanitation, and Irrigation Sectors, Cabinet approved the **Kenya Water Training and Research Institute Bill, 2023**. Upon enactment into law, the Institute as the primary vehicle for research and training will be better positioned to play a pivotal role in advancing knowledge within the water sector and enhancing capacity building for both institutions and individuals.

THEREAFTER, CABINET ADDRESSED the state of national security and foreign relations, recognizing them as crucial enablers to the realization of the Administration's plan for a better Kenya, the **Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA)**.

AS PART OF interventions to fortify our national security, Cabinet considered and approved the institutional framework for the protection of key national installations by sanctioning the establishment of **the Critical Infrastructure Protection Unit (CIPU)**. The Unit's scope will encompass critical infrastructure such as ICT backbone infrastructure, rail, roads, airports, water facilities, energy plants, and power transmission lines.

IN PURSUIT OF the Administration's commitment of securing the health and well-being of all Kenyans, Cabinet was apprised of the progress made in the nationwide enforcement measures aimed at **addressing access and consumption of killer brews, narcotic drugs, and psychotropic substances**.

CABINET RATIFIED THE 25-point enforcement measures; the notable one of which is the **twenty-one-day suspension of all 52 licenses** and permits issued by the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) and the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) to **manufacturers and distillers of second-generation alcohol in the country**. The enforcement measures also include a review of the legal framework applicable to the sector, as well as the imposition of penalties on public or private officials who contribute to death or material injury of persons through the sale of dangerous alcohol, drugs, or other substances.

TO GIVE IMMEDIATE effect to these measures, Cabinet directed that **any public official including a security officer who abdicates**



their solemn duty to the people of Kenya should not be transferred to a different duty station **but should instead be retired in the public interest.**

IN RESPONSE TO public concerns arising from the **alarming increase in crimes against persons, including murder**, within short-term lease facilities such as **furnished residential apartments, lodgings, and Airbnb rentals**; Cabinet sanctioned a raft of measures to enhance security in such premises. These measures include:

- I. Maintaining Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) Cameras in all common areas and ensuring that the footage is recorded, stored, and can be retrieved if the need arises;
- II. Maintaining an updated register documenting the verified identity of persons entering and exiting the premises as supported by proper identification documents; together with the time of entry and exit from the premises;
- III. Maintaining a current and accurate log of all vehicles, rickshaws, and motorcycles entering or departing from the premises;
- IV. Ensuring that the premises are guarded by a properly registered private security service provider; and
- V. Maintaining a security occurrence book to record daily significant incidents and notable events relating to the safety and security of residents, guests, and services providers.

TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS towards realization of the Administration's Plan on the **Universal Health Coverage (UHC)** as part of the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), Cabinet approved the roll-out of the Building Resilient and Responsive Health Systems (BREHS). The programme will support in improving utilization of quality **health services at the primary care level in all the 47 counties** and will be delivered in **partnership with the World Bank.**



TO CEMENT THE place of Nairobi as Africa's leading diplomatic hub, Cabinet considered and approved the revised guidelines and criteria applicable to **Host Country Agreements between Kenya and International Organizations and External Agencies**. The guidelines enhance accountability in the process of granting Host Country Agreement status, and are in keeping with **the Privileges and Immunities Act** (Chapter 179 of the Laws of Kenya) and **the Foreign Service Act** (Chapter 185E of the Laws of Kenya). The policy direction by Cabinet is expected to facilitate the expedited consideration of applications by a wide array of international organizations that have **expressed interest in establishing their regional, or continental headquarters in Kenya**.

TO FURTHER KENYA'S contribution to **the world's digital future**, Cabinet considered and approved an investment cooperation framework between the **Republic of Kenya** and the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** on the **development of Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) ecosystems, including Data Centres**. This seminal undertaking is expected to offer Kenya's ICT professionals immense opportunities across the entire digital sphere.

AS PART OF State interventions to enhance skills development in the country while enhancing integration of international occupational standards, Cabinet approved a framework to **operationalize World Skills Kenya activities**. Under this framework, Kenyans undertaking vocational training courses will have an opportunity to **participate in international competitions** offering pathways for employment opportunities and career advancement.

IN AFFIRMING KENYA'S leading role in the **promotion and use of renewable energy** as well as the growing place of Nairobi as a **financial services hub**, Cabinet approved the hosting of:

- I. The **Ninth Global International Energy Agency (IEA) Efficiency Forum** to be held in Nairobi in April, 2024; and
- II. The **World Bank's International Development Association (IDA) 21 Replenishment Drive** Summit to be held in Nairobi in April, 2024.



THE WORLD BANK'S International Development Association (IDA) works with a large network of global, regional, and local partners to reach vulnerable people and to deliver sustainable development. In that regard, **Kenya will have a championing role in the IDA 21**, which is a summit expected to bring together distinguished African Heads of State and key development partners in **advocating for substantial enhancement of the IDA envelope.**

TO ENHANCE THE nation's ease of doing business index by **addressing the legal and institutional challenges in the management of Economic Zones**, as characterized by varied regulatory regimes, different fiscal incentives, and diverse market access quotas for **Export Processing Zones (EPZ) and Special Economic Zones (SEZ)**, Cabinet **sanctioned the merger of the two public entities.** In the intervening period, **the EPZ Scheme will be recognized as a scheme under the SEZ.**

CABINET OFFICE
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Wednesday, 13th March, 2024