



**MINISTRY OF LABOUR  
OFFICE OF THE CABINET SECRETARY**

**SPEECH BY  
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**ON THE OCCASION OF EUROPE DAY**

**9<sup>th</sup> May, 2022**

## Your Excellencies Ambassadors of European Union Member States

### Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

Good afternoon,

1. Let me take this opportunity on behalf of our President, the government of Kenya and the Peoples of our great Republic, to wish you a happy Europe day.
2. My Cabinet colleague Amb. Raychelle Omamo, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, also sends her regards to you all as you celebrate this year's **Europe day** with a particular note that we should all make it memorable.
3. At the outset, I would like to thank Amb. Henriette Geigner, Head of the European Union Delegation in Kenya, for your kind invitation to make keynote remarks during this year's Europe Day.
4. EU and Kenya have maintained warm cordial relations over the years since the EU Delegation was established in 1976, and have been cooperating to address challenges which confront the world today, including International Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime, Migration, and refugee issues among others.
5. We remain steadfast in seeking durable solutions to the peace and security challenges in the region and are committed to our efforts against violent extremism, youth radicalization as well as organized crimes in our respective regions

**Excellencies**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

6. Despite the hugely disruptive effects of the COVID 19 pandemic globally, the pandemic has also presented our countries with an opportunity to

bounce back and thus build better and ensure equitable access to the vaccine to each individual at a reasonable cost.

7. These extraordinary times have brought out the best in our bilateral cooperation, enabling us to leverage opportunities as we endeavour to reinvigorate our economies.
8. On behalf of the government of Kenya, receive our appreciation, for being a leading contributor to the COVAX facility. To date, Kenya has received vaccine donations amounting to about 10,706,940 through the Covax facility and about 1,450,800 bilaterally.
9. Kenya appreciates the opportunity given by the **Team Europe initiative** for creating an enabling environment for local vaccine manufacturing during the 6th (Sixth) European Union – Africa Summit in Brussels, held in Belgium on 17th and 18th February 2022.
10. It was against this advocacy, that WHO announced that Kenya would be amongst the six (6) African Countries to benefit from the MRn-Vaccine Technology Transfer through the Hub and Spoke’s model alongside South Africa, Nigeria, Egypt, Senegal, and Tunisia.

### **Excellencies**

#### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

11. Kenya and the European Union have sustained a consistent and long-term partnership and share common interests at multilateral and global levels.
12. This partnership has been strengthened by the High-Level visits between the EU Member States and Kenya. In particular, the visit earlier this year by **H.E. Charles Michel**, President of the European Council and **H.E. Josep Borrell Fontelles**, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security of the European Union and Vice President of the European Commission,

reaffirm the warm and cordial political and vibrant economic relations that Kenya and the EU Member States enjoys.

13. I am confident that our continued engagements will further strengthen and consolidate our existing relations.

14. Every 9th day of May, the world joins Europe in celebrating peace and unity on Europe Day which marks the anniversary of the historic 'Schuman Declaration' that set the ball rolling on the entity known today as the European Union.

15. Europe day celebrations are partly an occasion for the European Union to assess its achievements and setbacks, even as you strategies on the future ahead. **We recognise that Currently You have a challenge of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, but we are sure that this will soon be resolved.**

16. Kenya treasures peace and unity. These are the values that have created a stable and conducive environment to forge solid foundations for prosperity. Indeed, it is on these pillars that the long-standing cooperation between Kenya and the European Union rests and has enabled tremendous progress in our cooperation over the years.

## **Excellencies**

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

15. The spectrum of our cooperation with the EU is vast and multifaceted, covering important sectors such as regional security, the blue economy, climate change, energy, trade, and investments amongst others, with the central pillar being economic partnership which is primarily anchored within our Newly Commissioned Strategic Dialogue 2022-2027.

16. This cooperation, therefore, demonstrates our mutual willingness and desire to work together towards achieving our common objectives within the ambit of a well-balanced, beneficial and durable partnership.
17. For example, the European Union is Kenya's largest trading partner accounting for 17.2% of Kenya's overall trade and is Kenya's second-largest market with average exports amounting to 1.28 billion Euros (144 billion Kenya shillings) and imports amounting to 1.88 billion Euros (213 billion Kenya shillings).
18. The Main Exports from Kenya to the EU market include tea, coffee, horticultural products, and fish. While the main Imports from the EU to Kenya includes; machinery, chemicals, and manufactured goods.
19. While this is commendable, however we also note that the balance of trade continues to be in favor of the EU, and therefore a mechanism needs to be established to actively narrow this trading gap.
20. I urge Member countries to strengthen our trade and economic relations with our private sector players by forging strong partnerships, and joint ventures, to expand the scope and variety of goods and services traded for the mutual benefit of our people.

### **Excellencies**

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21. I note with commendation that in the over 50 years of partnership with the European Union, Kenya has received significant assistance both from the EU and members states in the form of grants for infrastructure, water, governance justice, and laws, ASALS and supported our peace and security process in Somalia.
22. We appreciate the EU Continued support of our economic development efforts, especially around the Big Four Agenda, Kenya Vision 2030, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

23. The Government of Kenya in this light also appreciates that many Kenyan Nationals have benefited from the scholarships offered by the EU Member States over the years.
24. In the East African Community, Kenya would want to see a smooth conclusion of the EAC-EU Economic Partnership (EPA) agreement, which will affirm our commitment to strengthened competitiveness of our bilateral economies.
25. As you reflect on these great milestones, it is necessary to outline the areas that are likely to continue defining Kenya-European Union cooperation.
26. These are; regional peace and security; trade and investment development cooperation; climate change mitigation; land management information system; refugee support; **and safe, regular and humane labour migration.**

### **Excellencies**

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27. In the Multilateral Fora, I note with deep appreciation that we share a common commitment to a strong rule-based ethos, buttressed by multilateralism to secure international peace and security and shared prosperity for all.
28. It is in line with this that I convey my sincere appreciation for the European Union's invaluable support to Kenya's candidature during the United Nations Security Council election, with the assurance that Kenya is a reliable partner that will deliver on its commitments regionally and globally.

29. Kenya seeks to learn from European Member States' tenure at the UNSC, where the EU has built up a formidable reputation within the international community.
30. As we embark on devising new approaches to cooperation beyond the traditional paradigm with discussions centred on our Newly Commissioned Kenya-European Union Strategic Dialogue in the days ahead, there is hardly a better way to celebrate this year's Europe day than with this promise of even better prospects in our cooperation.
31. On its part, the Ministry of Labour would like to thank the EU for prioritizing areas for joint cooperation namely; Labour market intelligence; Gap analysis on the labour laws; Social Protection, Labour and Employment; Capacity building of Public Employment Services; and Child Labour Survey. This area of cooperation is yet another testament to the fruitful engagement that EU has continued to have with our country.
32. In conclusion, I wish to once again congratulate the EU and the Member States on this important day. The EU Integration serves as a role model to EAC Integration and motivates us to consolidate integration further.
33. Kenya is committed to ensuring a conducive environment for cooperation to enable our relations to continue to deepen.

## **Excellencies**

## **Ladies and Gentlemen**

I wishing you all a happy Europe Day!

God bless Kenya! And God bless Europe!

9<sup>th</sup> May 2022