

**STATEMENT BY H.E. HON. UHURU KENYATTA, CGH,  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA AND  
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE FORCES  
DURING THE OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONY OF THE  
NATIONAL TRADE WEEK AT THE KENYATTA  
INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE (KICC)  
ON 10<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2017**

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- **My Fellow Kenyans,**
- **Invited Guests,**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good morning. I am pleased to join you here today for the official opening of the Kenya National Trade Week which has opened its doors to the public this morning and will be running over the next two days. The national trade week is a culmination of tireless efforts by the Government, working in collaboration with the private sector to promote domestic and international trade.

The results of these efforts are now manifested in the very promising domestic trade market whose potential is estimated at KES.164billion just taking a small segment of the market that comprise of agricultural and agro-processed products. This domestic trade market potential is courtesy of the free market economy that the Government has promoted and defended through progressive policies that have encouraged free trade.

Further, we have witnessed a double digit growth in exports by 11% between 2013 and 2016 as a result of the duty free market access that the Government has secured through trade agreements as well as preferential trade arrangements with over 50 countries having a combined population of over 1.4billion people in the following

regional blocks: EAC, COMESA, EU and the USA. These markets hold a great promise for Kenya's exports going by revealed trade potential in the products that Kenya is already exporting or has potential to export to these markets. A traditional market like the EU, going by recent statistics of agro-processed products that Kenya has been trading with this bloc, has a potential of over Euro44 billion. Similar story holds in the regional and the USA market where Kenya has opportunity to increase her share of these markets imports from the rest of the world.

The Government is fully engaged, in a bid to broaden Kenya's market horizon in Africa for exports and imports on preferential tariffs, in the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) that collapses EAC, COMESA and SADC market into one big market of 26 countries; and in the Continental Free Trade Area, which embraces free trade across the entire continent of Africa.

**Fellow Kenyans,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The Government has therefore set the stage for further development of Kenya's trade sector capitalizing on the above opportunities. Among the tools that are subject for your sampling during the next two days of the National Trade Week, which are instrumental in catapulting Kenya's trade sector to even greater heights of development include the following: -

- The National Trade Policy that spells out policies to be pursued by both the National and County Governments in promoting trade development;

- The National Trade Facilitation Committee and National Trade Negotiations Committee that ensure Kenya's progressive trade policies and commitments in trade agreements translate to tangible results in form of trade sector performance;
- The Kenya e-Trade Portal that provides all relevant trade facilitation information for ease of business reference, while exporting or importing and profiles Kenya's products in the international market as well as Kenya's suppliers to elicit international as well as domestic trade market links between traders, manufacturers and consumers;
- National Export Development Strategy which is seeking to unleash Kenya's export potential targeting the increase of exports by 30% by 2020; and
- Robust retail trade sector regulatory framework and code of practise geared towards fostering the sector's growth to the Vision 2030 targets.

I am pleased to note the strong nexus between trade, agricultural, industrial and infrastructural development that is espoused by the National Trade Policy, with concrete policy measures that are embraced by both the National and County Governments. This harnesses great achievement that the Government has so far realized in the infrastructural and energy development, clearly gives the country a head start in exploiting the immense trade potential in the domestic and international market. The trade sector, therefore assures the country of high rate of return of current and future investments in the infrastructure and energy sectors, among other sectors, as

the government seeks for singular solution to promoting Kenya as a competitive source of products and services.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,** the panel discussions that have been organized will accord you opportunities to discuss key salient issues as stakeholders to inform our forward movement. In this regard, allow me to thank the organizers for their tireless effort that has gone into mounting this exhibition. I have noted the overall theme that has been selected: ***"Transforming Kenya into a Competitive Export-Led and Efficient Economy"*** and I find it to be quite timely and appropriate for this event. Finally I thank the development partners especially Department for International Development (DFID) and Trade Mark East Africa (TMEA) for supporting trade agenda in this country.

With these few remarks I declare this **'National Trade Week'** officially open and wish you fruitful deliberations.

**May God Bless You.**

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