



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR
ON WOMEN RIGHTS

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY
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RIGHTS,
REPUBLIC OF KENYA
DURING THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY
CELEBRATION 2024 WITH THE FRENCH EMBASSY
AT ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE

08 MARCH 2024

NAIROBI



1. **Your Excellency, Arnaud Suquet, Ambassador of France in Kenya and Somalia**
2. **Mr Charles Courdent, Director, Alliance Francaise**

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and gentlemen.

1. I am excited to participate in this year's International Women's Day whose theme is **"Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress"**.
2. This theme reminds me of Desmond Tutu who once said **"If we are going to see real development in the world then our best investment is WOMEN!"** I couldn't agree more.
3. It is a fact that gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world.
4. Providing women and girls with equal access to education, health care, decent work, and representation in decision-making processes, will fuel sustainable economies and benefit societies and humanity at large. And Kenya is not an exception.



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5. I take this opportunity to thank all the women of Kenya for their resilience against all odds that has enabled the country to achieve great progress.
6. As your champion in government, I stand here not just to celebrate with you but to reaffirm my unwavering commitment to the empowerment of women and girls.
7. The **Office of the Women's Rights Advisor** was established to champion the Women's Agenda across all sectors of government. This office is a tangible representation of the government's commitment to safeguarding women's rights and interests.
8. As we mark this International Women's Day, let us take pride in the achievements we have made to date, but in the same breath, let's remember that a lot still needs to be done.
9. In recognizing the pivotal role of a woman's financial independence, the government has put in place structures to provide quick and affordable credit, and ensure that financial barriers do not hinder the entrepreneurial spirit of our women.
10. The **Hustler Fund** was created to ring fence resources for advancing financial independence and

entrepreneurial endeavors. Through active engagement in counties, we are getting to the core of how the Hustler Fund is serving our women, and identifying any barriers they face.

11. The government has **strengthened the Women Enterprise Fund** by digitizing the process and reducing middle men in access to these funds. The **National Government Affirmative Action Fund (NGAAF)** on the other hand has been increased to **2.9 billion**.
12. The government has signaled its commitment to the **World Economic Forum to establish the first Gender Parity Accelerator** in Sub-Saharan Africa. This initiative goes beyond parity, it will be a launchpad for women-owned Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs). Therefore positioning Kenya as a beacon for gender equality in entrepreneurship and a key anchor to the Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda Plan.
13. Late last year we launched the **Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa (AFAWA) Finance Series in Kenya**. This presents a cornerstone of our commitment to financially empowering Kenyan women. It equips them with financial tools and fosters a culture of entrepreneurship, enabling them to turn their ideas into businesses and shape their own destinies.

14. The government is also **laying the infrastructure and foundations** for greater involvement of women in all spheres. This is geared towards amplifying their role in business investments, particularly in light of the immense opportunities presented by the African Continental Free Trade Area.
15. All these, is being done because we believe that when women are economically empowered, we begin the process of **ending harmful traditional practices like FGM, Child marriage and GBV** as a whole.
16. I am cognisant of the **emerging forms of violations against women** like Technologically facilitated Gender Based Violence . This means we have to invest to accelerate progress in ending all forms of violence against women and children. We must keep all women and children safe in all spaces including in the sports arena.
17. The government has been at the forefront in acknowledging and recognising the **Unpaid Care work that** women do, as caregivers and its contribution to the GDP. I know that we are one of the first countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to conduct a **time use survey** that gives us data on unpaid care and domestic work.

18. The next step will be to quantify this contribution into the national accounts. It is time that we as a nation recognize
d the undocumented work that Kenyan women employed and unemployed contribute to this economy.
19. I am keen on ensuring that the rights of women are not just written but are also realized. Protecting their land and property rights, while **addressing the historical injustices faced by widows and women with disabilities** .
20. In **conclusion**, let us remember that the empowerment of women and girls is **a critical investment in the future of our nation and humanity at large**.
21. I applaud the French Embassy for what you are doing with the Tirop Trust and other civil society organizations represented here.
22. I end by quoting the former President Joyce Banda who said **“The seeds of success in every nation on earth are best planted in women and children”**



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23. Let's all go and **plant those seeds**. As a government we will do our part, please do yours so that we can **tear down barriers that hold women back**.

24. On this International Women's Day, let us not rest until the acceleration of women's rights becomes a reality.

HAPPY INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2024