



**OFFICE OF THE
DEPUTY PRESIDENT**

**REMARKS OF H.E RIGATHI GACHAGUA, THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA, EGH, DURING THE
PARLIAMENTARY ENGAGEMENT ON COFFEE REFORMS
BREAKFAST MEETING AT THE DP'S OFFICIAL RESIDENCE IN
KAREN, NAIROBI, ON AUGUST 25, 2023**

The Cabinet Secretary, Agriculture, Mithika Linturi;

The Cabinet Secretary, Cooperatives, Simon Chelugui;

Members of the Parliamentary Caucus on Coffee Reforms;

Members of the Senate Standing Committee on Agriculture and Cooperatives;

Members of the National Assembly Departmental Committee on Agriculture and Livestock Development;

Members of the National Assembly Departmental Committee on Trade, Industry and Cooperatives;

The Leader of Majority, the National Assembly, Kimani Ichung'wah;

The Leader of Majority, the Senate, Aaron Cheruiyot;

Other Honourable Members of the National Assembly and the Senate;

Today is one of the most important occasions for the coffee farmer. It is a culmination of engagements with various stakeholders in the Coffee Subsector on reforms that will put more money into the pocket of the farmer.

This farmer has endured perennial losses due to, among other impediments, skewed structures in the production chain, in favour of cartels and profiteers.

From the engagements, among other measures, the farmer and other stakeholders of good will proposed a review of legal, policy and operational frameworks to buttress actual and sustainable reforms. The Meru Coffee Reforms Conference in June was one of the highest engagements.

This meeting, therefore, is to cement the desire of the farmer to have a streamlined coffee production value chain as proposed.

Honourable Members;

Over the last two months, we have condensed the recommendations into frameworks as per the outputs of the rigorous consultations. We now have a solid way forward.

Last week, the lead committee on reforms shared with me key documents, which, upon implementation, will trigger systematic actions from various agencies.

The documents include:

- 1. The Meru Coffee Reforms Conference Metrics and Roadmap;**
- 2. Draft Sessional Paper No.1 of 2023 on Sustainable Quality Coffee Production for Food Security and Wealth Creation;**
- 3. The Coffee Bill 2023;**
- 4. The Draft Co-operatives Bill 2023;**
- 5. The Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2020 on the National Co-operative Policy;**

This meeting with Members of relevant Departmental Committees and other Members of the Senate and the National Assembly, is to review and consolidate our position on these documents and any other pending matters.

We are concluding the journey of positioning the farmer at the rightful place in production and management of the Coffee Subsector value chain.

Honourable Members;

In this regard, the Coffee Subsector Reforms have entered the Homestretch. Nothing will stop us.

After this meeting, we will have a solid way forward to making the necessary legal, policy and operational adjustments through Parliament, to usher in a new era.

We are calling on you Members, to move swiftly and make the necessary amendments to the Bills, Acts and any other relevant regulations to provide the legal backing in fully rolling out the reforms.

In two to three months, we expect to have the instruments in place. The farmer cannot wait any longer; the farmer should not suffer any longer; the farmer wants to see results; and results mean more money in their pockets.

Honourable Members;

While we understand the urgency in the reforms, I urge the farmer to be patient. It is not a smooth sail. It may take longer than the farmer expects.

Naysayers and cartels are working hard against us. Since the Coffee Conference in Meru County, the market has been disrupted to majorly sway the farmer's trust in the reforms.

I want to reassure the farmer that we will not be intimidated to cow in. We have put in place measures to cushion farmers in case the market is negatively affected as we undertake this radical surgery.

With the political goodwill from President William Ruto, the farmer has nothing to worry about.

We are also exploring more markets alongside diversifying products of the coffee for better earnings from the farmer.

Our business is about the farmer; our business is about commensurate earnings to their sweat.

Honourable Members;

In our strategy to ensure the farmer benefits, we are working to reduce the cost of production. This it through subsidy and zero-rating on various farm inputs. In the ongoing distribution of subsidised fertiliser, farmers are accessing the commodity at KSh2,500 per 50kg bag.

The Ruto Administration's policy is lowering the cost of production. In this regard, I appeal to you, as the People's Representatives, to work with the counties on the last mile distribution.

Further, we invite you to join us in raising awareness among farmers on the availability and importance of fertiliser.

For better planning and interventions, we are rolling out another round of registration of farmers across the country. Again, I encourage you to mobilise our farmers to register through the National Government Administration Officers.

On this note, I invite you to this discussion as we strike the last straw of the reforms.

ASANTENI SANA