



OFFICE OF THE
DEPUTY PRESIDENT

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS OF H.E RIGATHI GACHAGUA, EGH,
DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA
DURING THE 30TH INSTITUTION OF ENGINEERS OF
KENYA ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION AND
18TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF WORLD COUNCIL OF CIVIL
ENGINEERS ON NOVEMBER 15, 2023 AT PRIDE-INN
PARADISE BEACH RESORT, MOMBASA COUNTY**

**The Cabinet Secretary for Roads and Transport,
Kipchumba Murkomen;**

**The Principal Secretary for Roads, Eng. Joseph Mbugua;
Chairman of Engineers Board of Kenya, Eng. Erastus
Mwongera;**

**President of the Institution of Engineers of Kenya, Eng.
Erick Ohaga;**

**President World Federation of Engineering
Organisations Eng. Shehu Mustafa;
President of World Council of Civil Engineers Eng. Jorge
Emilio;
Incoming President, Federation of African Engineering
Organisation Eng. Refilwe Buthelezi;
President of the European Council of Civil Engineers Eng.
Andreas Brandner;
Engineers;
Distinguished Guests;**

It is a pleasure to address Engineers, a gathering of great minds. Our President, H.E Dr William Ruto sends his greetings and best wishes. We welcome our Guests to Kenya.

We are delighted to host the 18th General Assembly of World Council of Civil Engineers under the theme: *Engineering a New World.*

Engineers, Distinguished Guests;

We are discussing Engineering a New World because we want to do things differently.

Kenya is hosting this international conference when the country is deep into El-Nino, a phenomenon that has disconnected and destroyed infrastructure, especially roads.

Nature is telling us to rethink our strategy and thus, rethink our engineering.

For instance, El-Nino is reminding us that the same technology of building roads is not the Engineering of a New World. This is important for Kenya and Africa, a region that is rapidly developing.

Engineers, Distinguished Guests;

To rethink our engineering, there must be a paradigm shift, especially in the education system to groom and nurture new talent and skills.

In Kenya, for instance, we are implementing the Competence Based Curriculum, which focuses more on nurturing skills and talents.

In such a system, students gifted in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects will be helped to sharpen their skills for better results.

Considering that Engineering is one of the most expensive courses, we have revised the funding model for tertiary education to enable students from poor economic backgrounds access the course of their choice. In our commitment to deliver reforms in the Education Sector, we allocated over 27.4% of our National budget in the current financial year.

Engineers, Distinguished Guests;

World Bank notes that Africa heavily relies on imported expertise in engineering, resulting from poor quality of education and minimal numbers of graduates from learning institutions.

Thousands of our students are studying abroad on scholarships and other exchange programmes in our bid to strengthen the local capacity for sustainability.

This is largely true for most of our African peers. We will continue to deepen the collaboration with our development partners in enhancing local expertise in various ways, as we seek to close the over 7,000 gap of engineers in the country.

We are ready to work with the IEK in addressing this gap.

It is a call that we share with our Sister States in Africa if our continent is to actively contribute to development.

May I take this opportunity to emphasise that Engineering for a New World must be driven by barrier-breaking innovation.

Generating new knowledge means we sharpen the existing expertise through intensified Research and Development.

Companies and organisations have no option but to heavily invest in Research and Development.

As the saying goes, a machete that is not sharpened often, rusts.

Engineers, Distinguished Guests;

We note with admiration that Africa is undergoing rapid transformation through multi-billion US Dollar Projects. Certainly, Africa is the Continent of today, not the future as often said.

There are immense opportunities of investment in various sectors ranging from Agriculture, Manufacturing and Industry, Digital Technology, Affordable Housing, Affordable Health, among others.

We are excited that partners are working with us in investing in these areas.

On the other hand, Kenya has just emerged from one of the longest droughts in four decades.

A number of countries in Africa are facing crises linked to Climate Change, a factor that is negatively impacting socio-economic growth.

While we are implementing massive development projects, Environment-Conscious Approach in engineering is inevitable. People-Centred engineering is environment-focused.

That is why engineering is about improving quality of life, not driving humanity to extinction.

Engineers, Distinguished Guests;

Engineering is a critical enabler to realisation of SDGs, Agenda 2063 of the African Union, and Kenya's Vision 2030 as underpinned by the Bottom Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA). BETA is our Government's Plan of socio-economic transformation.

As we Engineer a New World, rapid urbanisation in Kenya and Africa has been put to test, especially in collapsing of buildings, bridges and other infrastructure.

We lose people to collapsing buildings and substandard roads mostly linked to unqualified or uncertified practitioners in the industry.

This puts the reputation of the profession under question over competency of members. We are ready to work with the Engineers Board of Kenya and other relevant agencies in clamping down quacks. Through the line Ministries, we invite you for an engagement on legal and policy reviews.

Besides monitoring and regulating education and training, eliminating intruders is one of the ways of restoring dignity to the Engineering Profession.

On this note, I declare the 30th Institution of Engineers of Kenya Annual International Convention and the 18th General Assembly of the World Council of Civil Engineers officially open.

ASANTENI SANA