



OFFICE OF THE  
DEPUTY PRESIDENT

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**OPENING REMARKS OF H.E RIGATHI GACHAGUA, EGH,  
THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA,  
DURING THE CONSUMERS INTERNATIONAL GLOBAL  
CONGRESS IN NAIROBI, ON DECEMBER 6, 2023**

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**The Cabinet Secretary, The National Treasury and  
Economic Planning, Prof. Njuguna Ndung'u;**

**The State Minister of Trade and Regional Integration of  
the Federal Republic of Ethiopia Hon. Teshale Kefene;**

**The Commissioner, the US Federal Trade Commission,  
Rebecca Slaughter;**

**The Chairperson, Competition Authority of Kenya,  
Shaka Kariuki;**

**The Director- General, Consumers International Helena  
Leurent;**

**The Chief Executive Officer, COMESA Competition  
Commission Dr. Willard Mwemba;**

**The Acting Director-General, Competition Authority of  
Kenya Dr. Adano Roba;**

**Advocates for Consumer Rights;**

**Distinguished Delegates;**

**1. Kenya is honoured to host the 2023 Consumers International Global Congress in Nairobi- the first in Africa since establishment in 1960.**

**It is a mark of confidence in Kenya's strides in advancing consumer protection. On behalf of our President, H.E Dr William Ruto, I say, KARIBUNI SANA Nairobi.**

**2. This is an important conversation taking place in Kenya, when great progress is being made globally in protection of consumers.**

**It is also a time that electronic-Commerce is growing in folds, with estimated sales surpassing 5.7 trillion US Dollars globally. Last year, electronics and media devices, and fashion, commanded 41% and 31% of the market share respectively.**

**It is estimated that our country's e-Commerce will hit 4.2 Billion US Dollars in the next four years.**

**3. This is not unique to Kenya. The Digital revolution is changing how we do business, enhancing customer experience.**

**4. The online experience can only be sustained if we, the policy makers and influencers, go a step ahead of threats and traps in e-commerce including financial fraud, phishing, ransoms, among others.**



**5. It is commendable that Kenya is among the few countries in Africa, which have made substantive progress in establishment and implementation of e-Transaction Laws, Cybercrime Laws, Data Protection Privacy Laws, Consumer Protection Laws, among other key frameworks of protecting consumers in the physical and digital spaces.**

- 6. The Competition Authority of Kenya has made remarkable strides in the protection of consumers through various mechanisms since establishment pursuant to the Constitution of Kenya 2010 and the enabling legislation thereof.**
- 7. While we celebrate this success, a UN and Kenya Association of Manufacturers report indicate that consumers in our country are exposed to exploitation.**

**For instance, two out of five medicines on the shelves are counterfeits, a factor that not only endangers the lives of consumers, but also injures confidence in modern treatment.**

**8. On the other hand, the Kenya Anti Counterfeit Authority indicates that 30% of counterfeit goods are locally manufactured while the other 70% are smuggled into the market.**

**9. Illicit trade negatively impacts investments, reducing job creation and revenue.**

**In 2018, we lost about 155.1 Billion Kenya Shillings in illicit trade.**

**This is not unique to our country. Other countries with gaps in law or enforcement, are in a similar predicament.**

**10. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, out of 142 countries, only 52% of those under the research from Africa have robust e-Commerce protection laws. Globally, there was no data in 52 countries, pointing to an exposure to exploitation of consumers online.**

**11. Because of the global connected-ness of the physical and digital marketplace, harmonisation of the consumer protection laws is key for unified application in various jurisdictions.**

**This is important especially in Africa where countries are at different stages and levels in consumer protection.**

- 12. This is why the theme: "*Building a Resilient Future for Consumers*," is an important conversation to States as they rush to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals and other blueprints like the Kenya Kwanza Plan.**
- 13. Countries like Kenya may boast of strong legal frameworks on protection of consumers.**

**But blossoming of illicit trade points to possible limited awareness among the public. Raising awareness on such threats is critical to consumer protection.**

**14. With violation of consumers evolving with technology, national and transnational legal provisions will be less effective and possibly obsolete if reviews are not updated.**



**For instance, digital payments in Kenya are on the rise, like the rest of the world.**

**The ingenious M-Pesa mobile service has transformed digital payments. As mobile banking and digital payments keep rising, more consumer issues emerge. Relevant laws must be aligned to meet the demands of such developments.**

**15. Further, adoption of Artificial Intelligence to track, arrest and suppress the networks of consumer exploitations across the world cannot be gainsaid. Integration of such technology in consumer protection mechanisms is an assured way of effectively delivering on your mandate beyond the borders in a complementary manner.**

**This is one of the key conversations that needs to be explored comprehensively, to inform outcome of the 2023 Edition of this Congress.**

**16. Drawing from the varied international experience, this gathering is a platform for dialogue, exchange of ideas, good practices and forging partnerships in global consumer protection frameworks.**

**17. On this note, I again express my gratitude to Consumers International for choosing Nairobi as the host City for this significant event.**

**The outcome will have a lasting impact on the global consumer protection landscape.**

**It is now my pleasure to declare the 2023 Nairobi Edition of the Consumers International Global Congress, open.**

**THANK YOU**