



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

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OF KENYA AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE  
KENYA DEFENCE FORCES, DURING THE ITALY-  
AFRICA SUMMIT**

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## **Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen, Good Afternoon.**

1. Let me begin by appreciating President Sergio Matterella, Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and the Government of Italy for convening this Summit. I have previously noted that an invitation extended by one country to all 54 African nations did not necessarily serve Africa's best interests.
2. But those of us present at this conference, representing our colleagues, find it different and inspiring due to the pragmatic approach you, have taken, Madam Prime Minister.
3. At COP28, you emphasized that "Africa does not need charity" but rather a cooperation that rejects "paternalistic and predatory approaches." This messaging resonates well with us, and we warmly welcome the announcement of the ambitious Mattei Plan, with its cornerstone being energy security for Africa and the Mediterranean nations.
4. In this room, we are acutely aware of the challenges, the world faces, each complex, but also deeply interconnected. New and renewed conflicts are causing widespread human suffering and deepening divisions, precisely at a time when global collaboration and unity are of paramount importance. The high cost of living, fiscal strain, and migration are undermining international solidarity, while the severe and escalating impacts of climate change are affecting us all.
5. 2023 witnessed numerous record-breaking events that we don't want to and cannot afford to repeat. It marked the hottest year on record, the wettest year in some regions, and the driest in others. Harvests were impacted, livestock lost, while floods and forest fires wreaked havoc on human and animal life, resulting in unprecedented material damage.



## **Energy Security and Transition: A Kenyan Perspective**

6. Energy is intricately connected to these global challenges, serving as both a source of difficulties and potential solutions.
7. As we move forward from COP28, we are entering a new era of energy. Collectively, we recognized that transitioning away from fossil fuels and tripling renewables by 2030 is our best bet to stay on a climate-safe path.
8. The way Africa embraces this challenge will have significant regional and global ramifications. For Kenya and the African continent, the shift towards renewable energy represents a crucial opportunity for our people and economies to access modern energy services, propel industrialization, and transform into a green powerhouse contributing to global decarbonization. By investing in our young population, Africa can create a vibrant, self-sustaining economy, offering its youth compelling reasons to build their futures at home.
9. During the inaugural Africa Climate Summit in September 2023, we laid the groundwork for realizing this ambitious vision. The Nairobi Declaration outlined a comprehensive strategy to transform the continent in a climate-positive manner. Among other things, we set a goal to increase Africa's renewable capacity from 56 GW today to at least 300 GW by 2030.
10. While these targets may seem modest compared to the global goal of 11,000 GW, it is crucial to understand that this is not due to a lack of ambition. Rather, it reflects the historical structural and systemic challenges that have limited our participation in the green revolution. Out of the USD 3 trillion invested over the past two decades, only USD 60 billion reached our continent. Energy security remains a distant reality for approximately 600 million people in sub-Saharan Africa lacking access to electricity.



This staggering number, often cited, represents half of our continent's population and exceeds the entire population of Europe by 150 million. Additionally, 1 billion Africans still lack access to clean cooking, emphasizing the urgent need to reshape our energy landscape for dignified lives and livelihoods.

11. We are determined to change this reality. Kenya's vision for the future is encapsulated in our ambitious goal to increase our current energy capacity from approximately 3 Gigawatts to 100 Gigawatts of entirely renewable power by 2050. This bold objective is grounded in the vast, yet largely untapped, renewable resources our country possesses.
12. This untapped potential is not merely a national asset; it constitutes a crucial piece in the global decarbonization puzzle. In this era of transformation, the energy trajectories of Europe and Africa are becoming increasingly interwoven. The discussion on energy transition and security has evolved to include the diversification of value chains. The manufacturing of renewable energy technologies, the development of green hydrogen, and the extraction of critical materials are now at the forefront of the energy dialogue. Africa's abundant renewable resources are key to decarbonizing and diversifying global supply chains. Additionally, the continent's rich deposits of critical materials, essential for the development of modern technologies, present a unique opportunity for collaboration with Europe.
13. Africa's renewable energy potential and natural resources can aid in meeting Europe's energy needs while fostering economic growth and technological advancement on our continent. Realizing this vision requires commitment and a collaborative approach, leveraging the strengths and resources of each region.



14. Our discussions on beneficial partnerships must now translate into action. With 2030 rapidly approaching, it's crucial that COP28's positive outcomes don't exacerbate the decarbonization gap. Africa's ambitious renewables goal requires enhancing our industrial capabilities, presenting a mutually advantageous opportunity. We are taking tangible steps.
15. At COP28, we launched the Africa Green Industrialization Initiative (AGII), aiming to attract green investments to the continent. We also launched the Accelerated Partnership for Renewables in Africa. We invite Italy to partner with us, including in the upcoming Investment Forum we will co-host with IRENA, where Italian companies and financial institutions can explore new investment opportunities and help us shape a policy and regulatory environment that works for all.

### **Excellencies, Friends, Ladies, and Gentlemen,**

16. Africa's ambitious goal to transform into a green industrial powerhouse hinges on securing the right type and amount of capital, particularly in the realms of renewable energy and infrastructure.
17. But African countries pay five times as much for our debt, driven by both real and perceived risk factors. We must accelerate reform measures to the Global Financial Architecture, including adjustments to debt treatment. This was a major theme in Paris, Nairobi, and COP28, where Kenya and other countries launched a task force on climate finance through new taxes and levies, and an independent expert group to look into debt, nature, and climate sustainability. We invite Italy to lend its support to these critical agendas also in its role as the G7 Presidency.



18. However, capital investment alone is not enough. Market access stands as a crucial complement. As the EU builds out its Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism and other regions look at similar measures, it is imperative that these measures do not exclude the locations most suitable to rapidly and affordably decarbonize global production.
19. Finally, Let me address the elephant in the room. A discussion on energy security would not be complete without addressing gas. Africa has abundant untapped gas reserves, and Europe desires to diversify its gas sourcing. It is an important industry for Italy.
20. I firmly believe that no African country can be asked to halt the exploration of its natural resources, including fossil fuels.
21. But that does not mean that it makes economic sense to build a dependency on fossil fuels in our economies. The most recent IEA publication reminded us that renewable energy is also an economically rational choice, and here, Africa has global solutions to offer while providing energy to all Africans. We are home to 60% of the world's best solar resources, and abundant wind, geothermal, and hydro potential.
22. True non-predatory cooperation should ensure that African countries are not left with a stranded asset. I believe gas remains a temporary solution, primarily for export and only with fair and equitable deal structuring. The urgent and sustained focus should be on renewables.



23. The path ahead demands unwavering determination, anchored firmly in the values of equity, cooperation, and solidarity. Reflecting on the visionary legacy of Enrico Mattei, who championed an agenda rooted in equality and mutual respect, I am deeply convinced that today marks the beginning of a new era of mutually beneficial cooperation. I look forward to the unfolding of the next chapter in the Italy-Africa story, one that I believe will be characterized by strengthened ties, collaborative successes, and shared prosperity.

**I thank you all.**

