

REMARKS BY H.E ISAAC RUTO, CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS, DURING AN AGRIBUSINESS DINNER HELD ON 20TH MARCH 2014 AT SAFARI PARK HOTEL

Honourable Cabinet Secretaries, fellow Governors, Chair of the Action Platform (Mr Vimal Shah), distinguished leaders of agribusiness and banks, farmers and support organizations, invited guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Good evening!

It is my great honour to be part of this auspicious occasion as the Chairman, Council of Governors and to see so many important stakeholders in agricultural sector present today.

This well thought out Symposium is the beginning of great things to come that will revolutionize the agriculture sector in Kenya. I would like to sincerely appreciate Kenya Agribusiness and Agroindustry Alliance (KAAA) and Enterprise Solutions to Poverty (ESP) having done a great job by bringing all these critical stakeholders together to map out the future of agriculture in Kenya.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Agriculture is the key driver of our economy and is critical for us to achieve Vision 2030. It has been identified as a key pillar to achieve Vision 2030 so we should maximize its potential fully.

I have been informed that as a prelude to this Symposium, students of Harvard Business School, Egerton University and Strathmore University, conducted substantial research in the various counties to identify key potential agricultural areas and crops that Kenya can maximize on their potential. As pilot projects, the group conducted 'deep dives' in Kisii, Embu, Muranga, Bomet and Nairobi. The team has also conducted preliminary research in other counties with an intention to determine their potential on certain key commodity goods including: coffee, dairy, maize, oilseeds, tomatoes, bananas, and potatoes.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As leaders of Government, agribusinesses, banks, producer organizations and farmers, may we deliberate on the key gaps and opportunities in each of these commodity groups. I hope that we shall commit to concrete actions in building company actions, collaborations and joint initiatives including public-private partnerships.

Moreover, as we interact as key stakeholders in agriculture may we have in mind the needs of the 'mwananchi' and the farmers in the various counties.

County Governments as envisioned in the Constitution of Kenya (2010) were put in place to serve the interests of the 'mwananchi'. As the leaders of the County Governments if we do not improve the lives of Kenyans during this five-year term we have been elected, we will have failed in our mandate.

This alliance between the private sector and the counties is critical for there to be progress in agriculture which will uplift our economy. Agriculture is the backbone

of our economy and is one of the major functions of the County Governments. We must therefore pull together as stakeholders of agriculture as this Symposium will result in a win-win situation for everyone. We also hope to build consensus in roles of Central Government, County Governments and the private sector to ensure growth in the agricultural sector.

The Council of Governors pledges its support 100% to this project and to any resolutions arrived at during this Symposium

Hope you have a lovely interaction and enjoy the rest of your evening!