



ADDRESS: H.E. UHURU KENYATTA,
C.G.H,
PRESIDENT AND
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF
KENYA DEFENCE FORCES

OCCASION: PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS
ON ENHANCED MEASURES
IN RESPONSE TO THE
COVID-19 PANDEMIC

VENUE: STATE HOUSE, NAIROBI

DATE: 6TH APRIL, 2020



Fellow Kenyans,

1. As you are aware, the entire world is going through an **extraordinary emergency**. The last time the world faced a disease of such rapid and dire impact as Coronavirus (**Covid -19**), was a century ago when an influenza pandemic claimed tens of millions of lives.



2. A few decades prior to it, a terrible sleeping sickness epidemic wrought havoc in this Eastern part of Africa. I must and will do everything in my power to ensure that **we, as a nation, shall **not suffer such terrifying outcomes** as a result of COVID-19.**

3. As the pandemic sweeps through the nations of the world, Kenya has not been spared. Never has our national interest been threatened to this extent before.



4. Our families, our schools, our way of life, the way we worship, our economy, our businesses, our workers, every single Kenyan stands threatened by **this invisible, relentless enemy that is COVID-19.**

My fellow Kenyans,

5. As of this morning, we have tested a total of 4,277 persons, with an additional 16 persons turning positive today. In that regard, the total number of all persons who have positive for COVID-19 currently stands at 158.



6. We note with gratitude that 4 persons have fully recovered from this disease.

7. We as a nation pray for the quick recovery of those undergoing treatment as we condole with the families and friends of the 6 that we have regrettably lost to the pandemic.

8. The virus is unforgiving, and its rate of growth if not arrested is exponential. Yet because it cannot be seen or smelt, it is an enemy that can easily convince you that life can continue as normal.



9. While the majority of people who get it recover, most without showing severe symptoms, if it spreads to large numbers, it can lead to unprecedented pressure on our medical facilities which will lead to unprecedented loss of life. **I will therefore go to any lawful length to respond to this pandemic.**

10. Governments all over the world, including our own, are taking unprecedented steps to arrest the spread of this pandemic and to flatten the curve.



11. Different measures are being taken across the globe depending on every country's unique circumstances. **But** what is clear from their experience is that the pandemic is likely to continue **spreading with lethal effect without drastic action.**

12. There is **a choice we were asked to make as Government and as a people:** to carry on as normal or to treat this like the extraordinary emergency it is and to fundamentally change how we act.



13. We chose the latter because even as we pray for the best, **we must be ready for the worst.**

14. It is in moments like this that **the character of a people and the destiny of a nation are clarified. Fellow Kenyans,** we are being called by our children's children to show the greatness in us by how we respond to **COVID-19.**

15. If we act like the fingers folded into a fist, we will stop the damage this pandemic would cause.



Our greatness will not be revealed by soldiers in uniform this time. It will show in the sacrifices we each make to protect one another.

Wearing your mask and washing your hands will save lives.

The bravery and dedication of our medical personnel, should this pandemic continue to escalate, will demonstrate our mettle.



I have faith in Kenyans, I know how we struggle through pain and tears to be there for our families.

16. Now is our time to turn out, for the duration of this global pandemic, **for our country** by taking the following measures and sticking with them:

Wearing a mask when outside the home.

Cleaning your hands with soap for at least 20 seconds several times a day.



Avoiding all areas with people who will be closer to you than 1.5 meters.

Heeding and complying with government directives.

Taking extra care not to expose those who are over 58 Years and have chronic ailments.

17. Having received advice from our medical professionals and experts, Kenyans should wear face masks whilst in public places.



18. There will be thousands of tailors all over the country who will also look to make masks.

19. The Ministry of Health, Ministry of Industry & Trade should ensure that these tailors are provided the right information through the National Government Administrative Officers on the materials required and the proper method of piecing the fabrics together to make the face masks.



20. The success will need you as individual citizens to comply with the different directives, and we as a people to be united. **This virus is in nearly all countries and territories on the Globe.** It does not care about your religion, the colour of your skin or the size of your wallet.

21. It is not infecting members of one tribe while staying away from another. **Defeating it will require us to put aside our usual differences and to face this enemy standing side by side.**



22. Our unity is demonstrated by each Kenyan going the extra mile to ensure that **our personal conduct does not endanger others. It will show in the decisions by business owners to do their utmost to support their employees.**



Fellow Kenyans,

23. Make no mistake, we are at war and we must win. I recognise the good work being done by our Ministry of Health and all the other Government Ministries and Departments in this fight. **I** believe that we must escalate our response even more to safeguard the nation.



24. As you are aware, the spread of the covid-19 disease is through human contact. On the declaration of the global health emergency, in accordance with World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines we enhanced surveillance at all points of entry into our country to avert the contact of the disease. Unfortunately, notwithstanding our interventions that included the closure of the Kenyan air space and mandatory quarantine of all inbound passengers, the few persons who had contracted the virus from abroad transmitted it locally.



25. A majority of the persons who have contracted the disease are residents of Nairobi metropolitan area and the Kenyan coastal strip. **The** few confirmed cases outside Nairobi and Coastal Strip can be traced to persons who have travelled from the nation's capital or Kenya's Coastal Strip.



26. In that regard, to halt this worrying trend, the Cabinet Secretary for Health issued declarations under the Public Health Act, in which COVID-19 was declared a **Notifiable Disease and a **Formidable Epidemic Disease**.**

27. Therefore, fully conscious that:

(a) 82% of Kenya's reported cases of COVID-19 have been in respect of residents of the **Nairobi Metropolitan Area; and**



(b) 14% of Kenya's reported cases of COVID-19 have been in respect of residents of the counties of **Kilifi, Kwale** and **Mombasa.**

28. The Cabinet Secretary for Health has further declared the **Nairobi Metropolitan Area** and **the counties of Kilifi, Kwale and Mombasa** as **COVID-19 infected areas.**



29. Accordingly, to contain and limit the spread of the disease to other parts of the Country, the **National Security Council** has sanctioned and caused the issuance of the following additional measures, as follows:

I. That there shall be **cessation of all movement by road, rail or air in and out** of:

(a) the Nairobi Metropolitan Area;

and

(b) the counties of Kilifi, Kwale and Mombasa.



II. The cessation of movement within Nairobi Metropolitan Area shall be for an **initial** containment **period of 21 days;** with effect from **7:00 pm** on **Monday, 6th April, 2020.**

III. The movement **within** the Nairobi Metropolitan Area and the Counties of **Kilifi, Kwale** and **Mombasa** shall continue subject to the nationwide curfew.



IV. The cessation of movement within the counties of **Kilifi, Kwale and Mombasa** shall be for an **initial containment period of 21 days;** with effect from **7:00 pm on Wednesday, 8th April, 2020.** In the intervening period movement in and out of the counties of **Kilifi, Kwale and Mombasa** shall be restricted and supervised by the Kenya Police.



V. The Nairobi Metropolitan Area is designated as *Nairobi City County, Part of Kiambu County up to Chania River Bridge (Thika), including Rironi, Ndenderu, Kiambu Town; Part of Machakos County up to Athi-River, including Katani; Part of Kajiado County including Kitengela, Kiserian, Ongata Rongai and Ngong Town; and all other areas as set out in the Order.*



VI. Any person, passenger carrying bicycles, motorcycles, scooters, automobiles, vehicles, vessels, railway wagons or aircrafts **shall not be allowed in and out** of the **Nairobi Metropolitan Area and the counties of Kilifi, Kwale and Mombasa.**

VII. The movement of **food supplies and other cargo** will continue as normal during the declared containment period **through road, railway and air.**



VIII. Any cargo-carrying vehicle or vessel shall be charged to **a single driver and designated assistants;** all of whom shall be designated as such in writing by the owner or operator of the said vehicle or vessel with reference to that vehicle or vessel.



IX. These additional measures do not in any way vary the existing restrictions and measures, including the daily **Nationwide Curfew** from **7:00 P.M. to 5:00 A.M.**, in the entire territory of the **Republic of Kenya.**

Fellow Kenyans,

30. I issue these enhanced measures, well aware that they will complicate and inconvenience many Kenyans.



31. However, not doing it will lead to even greater suffering for the people of Kenya.

32. I thank all Kenyans for their shared understanding and urge our law enforcement officers to be mindful and sensitive as they enforce the Curfew and the additional measures we are taking today. **They must however remain firm, fair and strictly** abide by the dictates of the law.

33. We must make a stand here, before COVID-19 starts to spread out of control, and **we must be ready to go even further if necessary.**



34. As we face this deadly enemy, I want every Kenyan to recognize those who are going to be so crucial to our victory.

35. Our emergency services providers, medical officers, nurses and doctors, and those who clean and cook in hospitals will face one of **the greatest health challenges our country has ever faced.**



36. Alongside them are all other Providers of Critical or Essential Services, including our security personnel; Administration Officers; our Electricity, Water, Sanitation, Telephony, Banking and Retail Sector Workers; and our farmers and food transporters. **O**n behalf of a grateful nation, we appreciate all that they have done and are doing for Kenya.



37. I am deeply appreciative of each and every one of us who is adhering to the laid-down guidelines and protocols, who is abiding with the current nationwide curfew, those practicing physical and social distancing, those that are **facilitating our efforts to get ahead of the curve,** and those that are **making the necessary sacrifices today** to ensure that **we have a bright tomorrow.**



Fellow Kenyans,

38. As we emerge from the peak of the health threat, we will need to be united to **rebuild our economy and to **face the other major challenges** we have as a people.**

39. This extra-ordinary health challenge calls for Kenyans to tap into the creativity of our people. I laud all County Governments for waiving local fees for trade in food items.



40. Additionally, I applaud the County Government of Nakuru for offering Afraha Stadium as an open air-market in line with the social distancing guidelines.

41. Similarly, I encourage our traders and farmers in fresh produce to continue with their agricultural activities, so as to ensure continued supply of the farm produce to our markets. **Such farm produce embody the diversity of Kenya includes; Rice, Beans, Maize, Potatoes, Cabbages, Miraa, Tomatoes, bananas and other food items.**



42. No one should be denied the ability to carry on with their legal trade within the boundaries of the protocols set out by the Ministry of Health.

Fellow Kenyans,

43. Now more than ever before, I am pleased to see Kenyans stepping up for each other in all our Communities.

44. At the National level, I last week established the Covid-19 Emergency Response Fund.



45. Even as we confront the current health challenge, our war on corruption continues to bear fruit. Indeed, over the last year our state agencies charged with this national endeavour were able to make significant recoveries.

46. In that regard, as we scale up our interventions against the current health pandemic, I direct the National Treasury to utilize the **KSh. 2 Billion of already recovered corruption proceeds** to support the most vulnerable members of our society, especially the needy in our urban areas. **O**ur fight in this area continues.



47. I acknowledge all the State and Public Officers who have followed my lead and taken voluntary pay-cuts in order to support our fight against the Coronavirus.

48. In sharing the heavy burden of the current pandemic which has led to lost opportunities, I applaud the members of our society who have risen to the call for support and shared in the bounty of their blessings with their fellow countrymen, helping many to cope with the fears weighing on their minds to provide a decent living for their families.



49. I note with appreciation that some property owners have reduced monthly rent to help provide a roof over the heads of our vulnerable brothers and sisters. In that regard, I urge others to emulate these acts of personal and financial sacrifice. This is a time for compassion and understanding.



Fellow Kenyans,

50. Every shilling we save in salaries and allowances is one we shall use towards face masks, medical supplies and specialised equipment, to support the most vulnerable members of our society through provision of water and food items and in support of any other initiatives needed by our Nation in this war against **COVID-19.** To that end, I direct the Nairobi Metropolitan Service, to not only continue but expand their provision of free water to all our informal settlements.



51. In that regard, I direct The National Treasury to appropriate all domestic and international travel budgets for all State Agencies within the Executive, the Judiciary, the Legislature and the County Governments; and to re-allocate them to combating **COVID-19**.

52. In order to protect jobs for our people and to provide some certainty for both employees and their employers, **I reiterate the measures** we have undertaken to offer relief and increase disposable income to the people of Kenya, through:



- **100 % Tax Relief** for persons earning gross monthly income of up to **Ksh. 24,000;**
- **Reduction of Top Income Tax Rate (Pay-As-You-Earn) from 30% to 25%;**
- **Reduction of Resident Income Tax (Corporation Tax) from 30% to 25%;**
- **Reduction of the VAT from 16% to 14%, effective 1st April, 2020;**
- **Reduction of the turnover tax rate from the current 3% to 1% for all Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs);**



- **Appropriation of an additional Ksh. 10 Billion** to the **elderly, orphans** and other vulnerable members of our society through cash-transfers by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, to cushion them from the adverse economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic;

Fellow Kenyans,

53. For the Government to continue to provide critical public services, we must honour and dutifully pay our taxes. **I**, therefore, encourage all of us to honour our obligations so as to safeguard and guarantee the delivery of public good.



54. Thank you all for being a beacon of hope and for being a steadfast soldier in our Nation's war against the COVID-19 Pandemic.

55. Even in the circumstances, this fight will not dampen the spirit of the Kenyan people, we will creatively deploy our talents in all fronts to conquer the current challenge even as we collectively fashion the destiny of our nation.



56. As a Government, we will continue to take the necessary measures to cushion Kenyans against the impact of the current pandemic. In that regard, I am pleased to note that the interventions we had committed to undertake in my inaugural address to the nation in the beginning of the year **2020 are paying dividends.** As a beginning of many firsts, our agenda to empower our youth and foster sustainable livelihoods is gaining momentum. Today, our local Artists have begun drawing higher royalties.



57. I am pleased to announce that the Ministry of ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs, in collaboration with Kenya Copyright Board, Collective Management Organizations (CMOs) have established a framework to ensure full transparency for artist's earnings. My Administration has projected that a total of **Ksh. 200m every month will be paid to musicians through the system and other platforms. This translates to over **Ksh. 2 billion going into the pockets of Kenyan artists.** These payments will begin this week in line with the pledge I made in **January.****



58. I further direct the Ministry of Sports, Culture, & Heritage to avail an additional support of **Ksh. 100 M** from the Sports Fund to our artists, actors and musicians, during the period of the covid-19 pandemic.

Thank you and May God Bless You All.

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