



**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AND DIASPORA AFFAIRS**

**PRESS STATEMENT**

**BY**

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CABINET SECRETARY**

**WEDNESDAY, 19<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2023**

**Distinguished Members of the Media,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Good afternoon,**

1. I wish to thank each one of you for finding time to be here over other competing priorities.
2. Since the Government of Kenya Kwanza took office ten months ago, H.E. President William Ruto has engaged the international community and greatly succeeded in promoting Kenya as an attractive trade and investment destination. The net effect of this has led to array of new opportunities that are having a positive impact on our economy.
3. Last week, Kenya hosted over ten Heads of State and Government to discuss new frontiers for the promising African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Just this morning, H.E. the President met with Ambassador Katherine Tai, the principal Trade Advisor and Spokesperson on US trade policy. At the Ministry Headquarters, I have just signed a Host Country agreement with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation that makes Nairobi the regional Headquarters of one the largest philanthropic organizations and held meetings with diplomats from the United Nations and bilateral partners.

**Kenya is open for business.**

4. As a government, we continue to position our country as the preferred trade, investment and tourism destination. However, these efforts are being derailed by economic saboteurs disguised as protests against the cost of living.
5. The economy and the people of Kenya are the ultimate victims of the so called 'maandamano.' We need to stabilize our economy, create new jobs and opportunities for our young population. This will only happen under a secure and stable environment devoid of propaganda and political opportunism.

6. It is, therefore, unfortunate that on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023, the Spokesperson of the Office of the United Nations Human Rights (OHCHR) in Geneva issued a media statement on protests in some parts of Kenya, in which he alleged 'widespread violence' and 'unnecessary or disproportionate use of force'. He further alleged that 23 people have been killed and dozens injured in the demonstrations. This statement was not only inaccurate, but misleading and appeared to have been written in support of a propaganda campaigns by people opposed to the democratic will of the people.
7. The Ministry has protested to the office of the Spokesperson on his unsubstantiated statement. We will be engaging through appropriate channels to ensure that the international community is not sucked into conspiracies that are aimed at destabilising our nation.
8. These violent actions by a few paid goons have been politically instigated by known architects of violence and therefore cannot be categorized as peaceful assembly as alleged by the spokesperson. Far from it, what we have witnessed are violent protests with those involved carrying all manner of crude weapons. We have seen goons destroy a highway with no police around.
9. These violent demonstrators have attacked innocent members of the public, looted and destroyed private property, attacked and injured police officers who were on duty to ensure law and order. Why is the UN Human Right Spokesperson blind to all these? Is that office fallen prey to propaganda and being used to lay ground for a smear campaign?
10. The wanton looting of private premises, illegal obstruction of economic activities, and extensive damage of critical public infrastructure (*Road, Bridges, Power and Internet Cables* etc.) attests to the violent nature of these demonstration, which borders on economic sabotage and thus warrants intervention by security agencies.
11. The Government of Kenya endeavours to protect the rights of individuals engaged in peaceful assembly and peaceful protests whilst

maintaining public safety law and order in line with the constitution of Kenya, and as provided for in the UN Declaration of Human Rights

12. Kenya is keeping a close eye on the current architects of the violence and looting experienced in the last couple of days and will take appropriate actions, consistent with our national and international obligations. We also urge our international friends to closely scrutinize the architects of insurrection and anti-democratic elements when they wish to visit their countries and not to allow some of them to go and taint their democratic principles.
13. As we speak, many people are visiting Kenya. We are receiving many requests for official and state visits because they have faith in our country. As a government, we remain focused on ensuring that Kenya remains an attractive destination of trade, investment and tourism.
14. Only economic growth will guarantee the well-being of the Kenya people and we condemn in the strongest term possible those bent on derailing the economic plans of the country.
15. I also wish to assure Kenyans in the diaspora that the government is committed to the welfare of all Kenyans. I also caution them to be weary of fake and outdated videos that are not reflective of the current situation in the country. There is a lot of propaganda being peddled around with old videos being recircled.

**JULY, 2023**

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