



**SPEECH BY H E SUSAN KIHKA, NAKURU COUNTY GOVERNOR,
DURING THE OPENING OF THE 2ND SUSTAINABLE ENERGY
CONFERENCE AT OLKARIA, NAIVASHA HELD ON 17TH SEPTEMBER,
2025**

**Hon Opiyo Wandayi, Cabinet Secretary for Energy and Petroleum
Mr Alex Wachira, Principal Secretary, State Department of Energy
Hon Alfred Agoi, Chairman, KenGen Board
Eng Peter Njenga, Chief Executive Officer, KenGen
Mr Geoffrey Odundo, Chief Executive Officer, Nation Media Group
Private sector partners,
Development agencies
Distinguished guests
Ladies and gentlemen**

Good morning,

1. It is both a privilege and an honour to join you today at this Second Sustainable Energy Conference—a forum that brings together leaders and stakeholders who are shaping the future of Kenya’s energy landscape. I commend the Kenya Electricity Generating Company (KenGen), the Ministry of Energy and the Nation Media Group for organizing this important gathering.
2. At the onset, I am proud to welcome and host you here in Nakuru—the County of Unlimited Opportunities and what is rightfully the home of geothermal energy in Kenya. Olkaria, within our county boundaries, is not just a national asset—it is a regional powerhouse that fuels growth far beyond our borders. The steam beneath our soil keeps Kenya’s lights on, powers our industries, and contributes significantly to our efforts toward carbon neutrality and climate resilience.
3. Geothermal energy is clean. It is renewable. And more importantly, it is abundant right here in Nakuru County. As we seek to advance Kenya’s clean energy agenda, we must also ensure that the communities who live around these natural resources—particularly those in Olkaria and its environs—are not left behind.
4. Development should never be extractive. It must be inclusive and transformative. And that is why today, I want to speak to the urgent need for shared prosperity. Nakuru must not only be the home of geothermal energy—we must also be its primary beneficiaries.

Ladies and gentlemen,

5. KenGen has done commendable work over the years—not only in powering the nation, but also through various Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives. However, we believe the time has come to deepen and expand this engagement.
6. Our local communities, especially those directly affected by the geothermal operations, deserve more robust and sustained investment in key social amenities—education, healthcare, water, and infrastructure. They deserve employment opportunities, skills training, and enterprise support to meaningfully participate in the energy value chain. In particular, I wish to highlight three critical areas:

Community Benefits and CSR Investment

- We acknowledge existing CSR initiatives including school support, water projects, and road maintenance. In health, we acknowledge KenGen for constructing a new Outpatient Block at Naivasha Level 4 Hospital at a cost of Sh300 million. But we must aim higher. KenGen and the Ministry of Energy must work closely with the County Government of Nakuru to develop a **Community Benefit Framework** that is transparent, accountable, and tailored to the real needs of the people. This includes scaling up scholarships, expanding access to quality healthcare, and supporting community-owned enterprises.

Land for Basic Public Facilities

- There is a dire need for land to be set aside for essential services—schools, dispensaries, recreational areas, and even small-scale agricultural projects for local sustenance. We urge KenGen to collaborate with the County Government in identifying and allocating suitable parcels of land to support the provision of these vital facilities. Land must not be a barrier to dignity, opportunity, and wellbeing for the host communities.

Employment and Skills Development

- We want our young people—from Hell’s Gate to Mai Mahiu, from Gilgil to Naivasha—to have the chance to build careers in this sector. Let us establish training programs, internships, and mentorship initiatives to prepare our youth for jobs in geothermal science, plant operations, engineering, and renewable energy innovation. Let us also promote local content in the procurement of goods and services to ensure our SMEs and contractors in Nakuru are empowered to grow.

Ladies and gentlemen

7. Sustainability is not only about energy—it is about people. It is about partnerships and policies that ensure no one is left behind. As Nakuru powers the nation, the nation must also power Nakuru. We must never allow a situation where communities living closest to geothermal plants remain furthest from basic services. That is not just an injustice; it is a contradiction to the very principles of sustainable development. Let us remember that every megawatt produced here represents a promise—not only of energy security but of equity, prosperity, and opportunity for all.
8. In conclusion, let us use this conference as a launching pad—not just for new energy projects, but for a new social contract between the energy sector and our local communities. As the County Government of Nakuru, we stand ready to work hand-in-hand with KenGen, the Ministry of Energy, and all partners to ensure that geothermal energy becomes a true catalyst for inclusive growth..

Thank you

H E SUSAN KIIHIKA, EGH

GOVERNOR, NAKURU COUNTY