



SPEECH BY H E SUSAN KIIHIKA, NAKURU COUNTY GOVERNOR, DURING THE KENYA INSTITUTE OF SUPPLIES MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE IN NAIVASHA HELD ON 2ND DECEMBER, 2025

Salutations

Good morning.

1. It is my singular honour to address you today at this year's conference held here in the scenic environs of Naivasha in Nakuru County. On behalf of the national government, I warmly welcome you all — delegates from across Kenya's counties, members of the business community, civil society, and our esteemed colleagues in procurement and supply-chain management. Nakuru County's rich offerings — from the tranquil waters and birdlife of Lake Naivasha, to the dramatic escarpments of Hell's Gate National Park and the majestic slopes of Mount Longonot — provide a fitting backdrop for a gathering dedicated to shaping the future of our nation's public procurement. I trust many of you will find time to appreciate this land's natural beauty, its vibrant flower farms, and its warm communities.
2. The theme for this year's conference — "Future-ready Procurement and Supply Chain Professionals as Catalysts for National Transformation" — could not be more timely or more critical. As a government, we are entrusted with the stewardship of public resources and with fostering economic advancement. We acknowledge the central role that professional bodies such as the Kenya Institute of Supplies Management continue to play in our national progress. At this earliest opportunity, I wish to express my deep appreciation to KISM and its leadership for organizing this important conference. I am confident it will yield positive outcomes and inform policies that accelerate our socio-economic development.
3. Over the past two decades, procurement in Kenya has evolved significantly — from being viewed as a back-office, transactional function to becoming a strategic pillar of governance and public service delivery. In my tenure, I have witnessed how supply-chain management increasingly serves as the vital link between policy and real-world impact; between resource allocation and the welfare of our citizens. When procurement is reformed and elevated to professional standards, it becomes an instrument of inclusion, accountability, and sustainable national prosperity.
4. Yet, despite the progress and many reforms — including robust legal and institutional frameworks, wide-ranging digital innovation, and a youthful, dynamic population energizing our collective effort — persistent challenges endure. Among them: the crisis of pending bills, integrity deficits, exclusionary practices, inefficiency, corruption, delays, and a pressing need to mainstream sustainability and climate action across our systems. In the 2023/2024 fiscal year alone, procurement accounted for over 60% of total government expenditure, with more than Sh1.2 trillion channelled through public procurement processes. And yet, as the latest reports from the Office of the Auditor-General reveal, irregularities and unsupported expenditures remain widespread, underscoring the urgent need for systemic reforms and enhanced compliance enforcement.
5. We cannot allow inefficiency, corruption, leakages, or delays to erode the immense potential embedded in our procurement function — not at a time when public debt has surpassed Sh11 trillion, and when the trust of our citizens is at stake. The stakes have never been higher, and the onus is on all of us — as stewards of the public interest — to ensure that every shilling

expended through public procurement becomes a catalyst for service delivery, productive employment, and national cohesion.

6. As Government—both National and County Governments—we commit to supporting and empowering procurement professionals to rise to this challenge. But we also believe that the professionals assembled in this room — supply-chain practitioners — have a responsibility to lead. The theme of this conference rightly places the spotlight on you, the people. Laws, systems, and platforms are only as effective as the calibre and integrity of those at the helm. I therefore urge each one of you to embrace your role as stewards of integrity, champions of innovation, and architects of Kenya's future.
7. As County Governments, we expect this conference be a catalyst for you to adopt best practices, accelerate payment of pending bills, and build transparent, sustainable procurement systems. To supply-chain professionals: seize this moment to champion integrity, performance, inclusion, and innovation. And to the national government: we reaffirm our commitment to support reforms, strengthen oversight, and provide frameworks which allow procurement to serve as the backbone of development.
8. Ladies and gentlemen — let us collectively embrace the promise of this conference. Let the theme guide our deliberations, our partnerships, and our actions. Let us harness procurement and supply-chain management as catalytic forces for national transformation. And let us ensure that every shilling reaches its rightful purpose, touches lives, builds infrastructure, empowers citizens, and reinforces public trust.
9. I thank you all for your presence, and I wish you a fruitful conference, insightful discussions, and enduring commitments to excellence.

Thank you.

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