



**MINISTRY OF INVESTMENT, TRADE AND INDUSTRY  
OFFICE OF THE CABINET SECRETARY**

**SPEECH BY CABINET SECRETARY MINISTRY OF INVESTMENTS, TRADE AND INDUSTRY HON. LEE KINYANJUI DURING THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE SIDE EVENT ON THE SIDELINES OF THE DEVOLUTION CONFERENCE 2025 ON 14<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2025 AT RAILA ODINGA STADIUM, HOMABAY COUNTY**

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**Salutations**

- **H.E. Gladys Wanga, Governor of Homa Bay County and host of this year's Devolution Conference.**
- **Chair of the County Executive Committee Members Trade Caucus and other Members present;**
- **Business Leaders and Captains of Industry;**  
**Distinguished Guests ladies and gentlemen**

We are gathered here today to reflect on and chart the next steps in a transformative journey that has defined Kenya for more than a decade, the journey of devolution.

This remarkable shift in governance has reshaped the relationship between our two levels of government, influenced the private sector, and most importantly, touched the lives of our citizens, who remain the true pillars of our development agenda and the ultimate beneficiaries of the gains we pursue.

I commend the County Government of Homa Bay, our development partners, the event organizers, and all participants for creating this important platform. I consider this forum the beginning of an impactful engagement that will accelerate our country's trade and investment agenda.

The theme of this side event, *Unlocking County Trade Potential by Strengthening Local Value Chains for Inclusive Growth in Kenya*, comes at a pivotal moment in our economic transformation.

It speaks directly to the ambitions of Kenya's Economic Transformation Agenda, which seeks to improve livelihoods through inclusive, sustainable, and broad-based growth.

Homa Bay County has demonstrated leadership and innovation in positioning itself as a critical player in Kenya's economy. The county plays a leading role in the blue economy, with fishing, aquaculture, and lake transport forming the backbone of its economic activity.

It is also on track to become Kenya's first commercial palm oil production zone, a development that promises to reduce our dependence on imported edible oils. Investments in fish processing plants, palm oil refineries, and marine transport infrastructure are not just numbers on a page; they represent real opportunities to transform livelihoods, create employment, and enhance regional trade linkages.

These initiatives will position Homa Bay as a model for counties seeking to combine local resource endowment with strategic investment.

### **Ladies and gentlemen**

In our interconnected world, trade is more than an exchange of goods and services. It is a catalyst for sustainable growth and the foundation of our economy. Trade connects farmers to markets, manufacturers to distributors, service providers to clients, and innovators to opportunities beyond our borders.

Counties, once seen as passive recipients of national policy, are now active players shaping their own development paths. This shift has enabled them to harness unique resources, cultural heritage, and geographical advantages to stimulate local economies and contribute significantly to national growth.

From diverse agricultural produce to untapped fisheries, from emerging manufacturing hubs to thriving tourism and digital sectors, our counties possess the resources and potential to build vibrant value chains.

When nurtured effectively, these value chains can generate jobs, raise household incomes, and reduce economic disparities across regions.

One of the most significant initiatives supporting this transformation is the **County Aggregation and Industrial Parks** programme, implemented by the Ministry of Investments, Trade and Industry in collaboration with all 47 county governments. These industrial parks bring together aggregation centres and industrial facilities within a single location, creating hubs where products can be collected, processed, and marketed efficiently.

The programme is jointly funded by the national and county governments on an equal basis, ensuring shared ownership and commitment. Its objectives are to grow manufacturing through agro-industries, enhance agricultural competitiveness, create decent jobs, increase farmer incomes, expand foreign exchange earnings, promote new value-added products, and reduce post-harvest losses.

Phase one counties include **Busia, Bungoma, Nakuru, Trans Nzoia, Migori, Homa Bay, Siaya, Kisii, Nyamira, Meru, Garissa, Mombasa, Machakos, Nandi, Uasin Gishu, Kirinyaga, Murang'a, and Embu**. I am pleased to commend Homa Bay for the progress it has made in constructing its industrial park.

This investment conference is the perfect platform to attract investors into projects that will strengthen agro-industrial growth, value addition, and other key sectors. Our focus has now moved beyond simply building physical infrastructure to bringing in investors who will operationalize these facilities and create tangible benefits for communities.

In addition to infrastructure, we are strengthening partnerships for agro-processing and manufacturing investments. This involves attracting new investors to set up operations in counties and supporting existing businesses and cooperatives to access affordable financing for machinery and expansion.

Through the **Kenya Development Corporation (KDC)**, we are enabling long-term loans at low interest rates to help cooperatives and enterprises acquire modern processing equipment. We know that financing has been one of the biggest barriers to value addition, and we are determined to address it.

We are also streamlining investment approvals and enhancing investor support services through our national one-stop centre, making it easier and faster for investors to establish and grow their operations.

## **Ladies and gentlemen**

For counties to fully realize their trade potential, we must address bottlenecks that limit efficiency and competitiveness.

Overlapping licensing requirements, frequent roadblocks that disrupt the free movement of goods, and non-compliance with weights and measures standards create unnecessary costs and hinder access to markets.

These are not abstract problems; they have a direct impact on farmers, traders, manufacturers, and transporters. Addressing them requires collective action by both levels of government, working closely with the private sector.

The opportunities for counties to diversify and grow are immense. By fostering a business-friendly environment, simplifying regulations, and investing in critical infrastructure such as roads, energy, water, storage facilities, and market spaces, we can unlock value chains in horticulture, dairy, livestock, fisheries, textiles, tourism, mining, hospitality, and other sectors.

Each of these areas has the potential to stimulate localized growth while contributing to national economic performance.

Public-private partnerships will remain central to this transformation. They combine the innovation, expertise, and capital of the private sector with the development priorities of county governments.

Such collaborations can accelerate technology transfer, expand vocational training, promote sustainable business practices, and enhance productivity and competitiveness in key industries.

Kenya's integration into regional and global value chains will not happen by chance. It demands deliberate and coordinated action between county and national governments, aligning policies, coordinating investments, and fostering partnerships that promote productivity, support value addition, and improve market access for local producers.

The national government will continue to provide the overarching policy framework for coherent economic planning and investment, reducing policy overlaps, supporting counties with strategic projects, and ensuring our trade, manufacturing, agriculture, and infrastructure sectors work in harmony to meet both domestic and international market needs.

This gathering is more than a discussion; it is a platform to lay the foundations for Kenya's shared growth and prosperity. It brings together thought leaders, policymakers, industry players, and development partners to exchange ideas and commit to collective action.

The future of trade in Kenya depends on strong, coordinated partnerships between national and county governments, grounded in trust and mutual benefit. It depends on our ability to turn potential into opportunity and opportunity into lasting benefits for our people.

Let us embrace this moment with unity of purpose and a shared vision, to build a Kenya where trade is not merely a set of statistics, but a driver of improved livelihoods for all. The time to act is now, and together we can shape a more prosperous future for our nation.

**Thank you**

**Hon Lee Kinyanjui  
Cabinet Secretary  
Ministry of Investments, Trade and Industry**