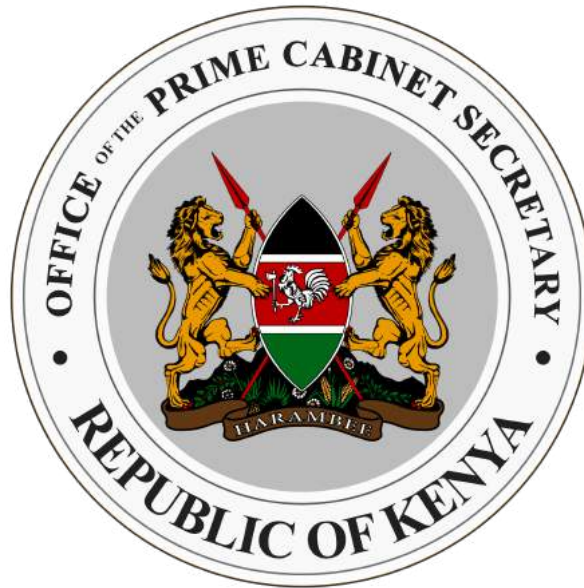




REPUBLIC OF KENYA

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SPEECH BY H.E. HON. DR MUSALIA MUDAVADI, EGH., PRIME CABINET SECRETARY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA DURING THE HIGH-LEVEL WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME (WFP)23 AND LAUNCH OF WFP FINANCE STRATEGY 2027; RADISSON BLUE HOTEL, NAIROBI, KENYA; MONDAY SEPTEMBER 25, 2023.



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KENYA DURING THE HIGH-LEVEL WORLD FOOD
PROGRAMME (WFP)23 AND LAUNCH OF WFP FINANCE
STRATEGY 2027**

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 25, 2023.

RADISSON BLUE HOTEL, NAIROBI, KENYA





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The leadership of the World Food Programme present here, starting with Robert van der Zee, who is now a truly good friend of Kenya;

The Regional Director for Eastern Africa, Michael Dunford;

The WFP Representative and Kenya Country Director, Lauren Landis, another great friend of Kenya;

WFP Directors present;

Esteemed colleagues from around the world;

Kenyan Government officials and WFP partners present;

.....

1. It is indeed an honour to address this gathering of 130 eminent finance leaders from 89 World Food Programme (WFP) Country Offices around the world. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the WFP for the





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gracious invitation to open this Forum. I also have my singular privilege to welcome you to Kenya for this WFP Global Finance Meeting. You have made us proud as a country in choosing to congregate in Nairobi. Feel free to enjoy the joy of Magic Kenya. Savour being in the only city in the world with a wildlife park, that is not far from here.

2. You are gathered here from 88 different nationalities. Your presence reinforces our position as a hub for international dialogue and cooperation. This meeting is proof of the strong and continuing partnership between the WFP and the Kenyan Government. Allow me to say therefore that we are proud, as a people, a Government and a city, to be part of a leadership that is addressing global challenges. To the WFP fraternity, I applaud your unwavering dedication to alleviating hunger, promoting food security, uplifting communities and saving innumerable lives around the world. You





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continue to make the world a better place to be, every day.

3. Over the next couple of days, you will immerse yourselves in understanding WFP's collective finance journey, and appreciating the evolution of WFP's financial strategies. This should offer clarity in steering a freshly refined WFP finance strategic direction. Given the myriad challenges and opportunities in today's dynamic world, I am certain you will maintain a sharp focus on the priority areas that should truly make a difference to humanity in the next 3 years. Own and shape the future of WFP finance for herein lies the power to effect meaningful global change.

4. I share with you the sensation of the importance of this Global Finance Meeting in the context of our current global challenges. Your invite has put me to the test to share;





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Reflections on how strategic alliances between the WFP and host governments can support achieving global food security objectives.

Insights on WFP and the Government of Kenya's relationship in advancing food security.

Thoughts on how WFP can utilise its finance to serve a deserving world better.

In the next few paragraphs, I will respond but in no particular order:

5. The intricacies of global contests brought about by Climate Change and economic disruptions, should give organizations like WFP the motivation and courage to lead from the front, not just as responders, but as drivers of the change the world needs. Save us from international bureaucratic lethargy that has increased market volatility. We all know that conflict, economic shocks, climate extremes and soaring fertilizer prices are combining to create a food crisis of unprecedented proportions. Stand tall and give the world some respite from unproductive contests, be they war or Climate Change truancy.





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6. FAO statistics show that about 29.6% or 2.4bn people from the estimated 8.1bn world population, are moderately or severely food insecure in 2022; actually, that 1bn people live in extreme poverty of under US\$1.25 a day. Further, of these 2.4bn, about 11.3% or 900 million people in the world were severely food insecure. Now, worldwide, food insecurity disproportionately affects women and people living in rural areas. Contrast these with hunger facts where;

16.6% of the world's population is undernourished; Hunger is the cause of 45% of all children's deaths; and;

More than 99 million children under age five are still undernourished and underweight.

7. And where do you find these malnourished people? It is in low- and middle-income countries. Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and South Asia in that order, have the highest prevalence of severe food insecurity. Yourselves, WFP, estimate that from 79 of the countries where you work, **more than 345 million**





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people have faced high levels of food insecurity this year. That is more than double the number in 2020. This constitutes a staggering rise of 200 million people compared to pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels.

8. Let's break it down further and humanize the data: Children with unemployed parents, disabled adults and single-mother households have higher rates of food insecurity. Obviously, stabilizing interventions like food relief are important. But the data is actually telling governments to create more employment opportunities for the people. However, conflict, international economic shocks and Climate Change are raining havoc on the ability of Africa to mitigate food insecurity through economic growth and therefore job creation. This means WFP/Government partnerships should now focus on building resilient communities as a long-term solution to perennial food insecurity.

9. Meanwhile, here in the Horn of Africa, there is no year or season in which the whole region receives normal rainfall and is free from climatic anomalies such as floods or drought. We are just emerging from the worst drought in 40 years. We are expecting El/Nino after a dry spell. Our crops are hardly off the farm. As





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it pours, we don't have enough cereal driers to go around and save on post-harvest losses. Meanwhile, we must prepare for floods. Infrastructure will be destroyed as happened in Libya.

By now you must have realised I am deliberately mapping the scenarios in response to your request for Thoughts on how WFP can utilise its finances to serve a deserving world better.

Kenya/WFP Partnership

10. Kenya and WFP have shared a productive partnership for over 40 years. Together, we have addressed challenges ranging from floods and droughts to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Recently, the WFP provided resources in support of 1.2 million Kenyans during Kenya's most severe drought in the past 40 years. Our cooperation has seen successes in various other areas. We worked together on the school meals programme until Kenya graduated from it in 2018. Another significant initiative has been the





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Cash-Based Transfers program, which offers vulnerable households relief to cater to their specific food and nutritional needs. Currently, the partnership is looking at increasing resilience against Climate Change, re-imagining school meals to climate-related strategies, and exploring innovative financing methods to access needed investments for Kenya.

11. On behalf of the Government of Kenya, I express our gratitude for this consistent partnership with the WFP and assure the Country Office and the whole WFP of our full support. Indeed, we are grateful that Kenya is now a member of the WFP Executive Board. This is not just a privilege, but a responsibility we take seriously. Kenya is uniquely positioned to amplify the collective voice of nations that benefit from the invaluable support of the WFP. We intend to leverage this role to support WFP's leadership in advocacy at global forums, ensuring that food security remains a top priority on the international agenda. Moreover,





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given our experience and understanding of the challenges many countries face, we will be active, and collaboratively and constructively contribute to international policy formulation and strategic direction that will lead to upholding and advancing WFP's mission and objectives.

Freedom in International Food Chain Relations

12. In the face of Climate Change, we call upon the world community to rethink the definition of Global Food Security for regions like the Horn of Africa which is perennially in the throes of recurrent droughts, pest infestations, and inconsistent rainfall patterns. These plagues not only place substantial pressure on food production, affecting the livelihoods of millions dependent on farming but fundamentally distort the planned economic growth paths of affected countries.

13. Indeed, for countries like Kenya, achieving food security is not merely about increasing food production. While we know our multifaceted approach to





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investment in modern farming technologies, robust supply chains, resilient agricultural practices, and targeted policy interventions will bring relief, we also know that without a stable international economic order, our strategy will falter. Furthermore, though finance plays a pivotal role in mobilizing funds for investment in agriculture to ensure farmers have access to the necessary tools, seeds, and knowledge to increase their yield; changing world food chains continue to inhibit food security. And for us it is not about large-scale food production as may be found elsewhere, but more about empowering the small-scale farmers who produce the bulk of our food.

14. Therefore, an enhanced supply chain, from storage facilities to efficient transport systems that ensure food reaches markets while still fresh and nutritious and reducing post-harvest losses, is the antidote for local food insecurity. In addition to these, policy interventions are crucial. However, **for policies that**





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favour sustainable agricultural practices to succeed, we call for a reduction in the international cost of research and innovation exchange and greater participation of friendlier private sector participants in the food systems.

15. Still on the International scene, in the face of persistent global challenges, **the solution lies not just in resource allocation, but in resource integration. The path forward must be co-forged, seamlessly blending local knowledge with international expertise. It's not about transplanting solutions from one part of the world to another but co-designing initiatives tailored to the specific needs and strengths of a partner.** Our local farmers, with generations of knowledge, bring to the table an understanding that's deeply rooted in the land they till. When this is complemented by the technological and





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research-backed insights from international partners, we harness the power of synergy.

WFP Facilitating Role

16. The WFP sits at a unique position globally, to set the pace in these matters. You understand the global vulnerabilities, possibly better than any other organization. Looking at finance for food as a theme, the WFP sits at a unique intersection of finance and food systems. You understand the grave repercussions of underinvestment in our food architecture. The cost is, unfortunately, measured in lives lost. From this vantage point, the WFP should become a vocal advocate, stressing upon the global financial system the imperatives of investing in what supports our very existence. It's more than just funds; it's about directing those funds to strengthen the roots of our local food systems.

17. The other unique strength that WFP as an organization has, which I personally emphasize is on





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supply chain. **WFP's expansive experience and intricate networks position it perfectly to guide nations in crafting resilient and efficient supply chains. This isn't just about moving produce from point A to B; it's about the establishment of state-of-the-art storage facilities and improving transportation networks that ensure produce remains fresh, losses are minimized, and markets are readily accessible. On markets, WFP should aid in unblocking constraints in the international food-chain system on the movement of food from food-surplus to food-deficient countries, at an affordable price.** This will be a WFP pivotal role in ensuring that every plate across the globe has some food and at the right time.

Back to Climate Change

18. Climate Change is an overarching shadow against attaining food security. The worsening situation of Climate Change is exacerbating the vulnerabilities of





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our food systems like never before. We therefore emphasise the pressing need for Climate Finance for investment in climate-resilient food systems. **Acceptance that though the spectre of Climate Change is universal, its repercussions are felt most severe in regions like ours must be supported by compensation. On this, Kenya has been a proactive agent of change, leading from the front in rallying the African voice. But we are not begging; our fate is tied for commitments that must be honoured.** Our continent, rich in diversity and spirit, has long held a shared perspective on the climate crisis. The recently concluded first Africa Climate Summit here in Nairobi was a testament of this unity. **The Nairobi Declaration a not just a symbol of our collective resolve and vision for a sustainable future; but an affirmation that we deserve better for our pains in sheltering humanity.**





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19. We need the Nairobi Declaration amplified for its echoes to resonate and influence the next course of universal action on Climate Change. This is why we turn to our trusted partners, like the WFP. You have walked with us, understood the intricacies of our challenges, and have been integral to our journey. **It's time to raise our voices together, to ensure that the Nairobi Declaration is not just heard, but acted upon. Again, our collective future hinges on our ability to convert commitments into actions,** and Kenya stands ready, with partners by our side, to lead this charge.

20. Meanwhile, as we acknowledge the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead, I remain deeply inspired by our progress and optimistic about our shared future. Through innovation, collaboration, and strategic alignments, we are not just envisioning but actively forging a path towards a world free from hunger. As finance professionals in **WFP, ensure every dollar,**





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every cent, and resource is channelled effectively and efficiently to make the greatest impact for our shared mission - a world without hunger. Together, let us strive to reduce the effects of hunger and achieve a world where no child goes to bed hungry; where every farmer reaps the fruits of their labour; and where sustainable food systems are not just an ideal, but a lived reality.

21. I urge you to remember the faces behind the numbers. Every statistic you work with represents a life, a dream, a family, a living entity. Let that be your guiding light as you navigate the complex world of humanitarian finance. The people of Kenya, and indeed the world, are counting on your expertise, your dedication, and your compassion.

It is now my pleasure to declare the **WFP Global Finance Meeting** opened and **WFP FINANCE STRATEGY 2027** officially launched.

ASANTENI SAANA!





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