



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE
CHANGE AND FORESTRY**

**STATE DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT
AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

**REMARKS BY DR. ENG. FESTUS K. NG'ENO,
MIEK, CBS, PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, STATE
DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND
CLIMATE CHANGE DURING THE KGBS
ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2026**

**HYATT REGENCY WESTLANDS
2ND OCTOBER 2026**

SALUTATIONS

- + The Cabinet Secretary, Hon. Alice Wahome;
- + Ambassador Ali Mohamed, Special Envoy for Climate Change;
- + Principal Secretaries and representatives of government;
- + Development partners;
- + Representatives of the private sector and financial institutions;
- + Members of the Kenya Green Building Society;
- + Distinguished Delegates
- + Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning!

1. It is I am pleased to join you for the **Kenya Green Building Society Annual Conference 2026**. This conference comes at an opportune moment when Kenya is working to strengthen climate resilience while pursuing economic growth, affordable housing, industrial development, job creation and improved

public services. The built environment connects all these priorities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

2. Climate change is already affecting our cities and settlements through flooding, extreme heat, water stress, ecosystem degradation and damage to infrastructure.
3. At the same time, urbanization and population growth are creating significant demand for new housing, commercial buildings and public infrastructure.
4. The choices we make today will determine whether this growth increases our exposure to climate risk or become an opportunity to build a more resilient, efficient and competitive economy. We must therefore address both operational and embodied emissions across the building life cycle.

5. This means improving energy and water efficiency in buildings, integrating renewable energy, strengthening climate-resilient design and protecting urban ecosystems. It also means addressing emissions associated with cement, steel, transport, construction processes and other materials used throughout the building value chain.
6. **The transition must be supported by credible standards, reliable data and measurable performance.** It is not sufficient to describe a project, product or financial instrument as green. We must be able to demonstrate the outcomes in terms of reduced emissions, energy and water saved, resilience strengthened, green jobs created and communities served.
7. This is one reason the collaboration being advanced through the **Building the Transition programme is valuable.** Its four pillars recognize that climate policy must connect to industry, finance and implementation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

- 8. Environmental and Climate** objectives must be reflected in building standards, public procurement systems, industrial strategies, financial decisions and the design of actual projects. Institutions must work across their mandates rather than addressing each part of the transition independently.
- 9. Public Procurement** could play a particularly important role. Government is a major purchaser of buildings, infrastructure, construction materials and related services. By integrating appropriate environmental and climate-performance requirements into public procurement, government can help create predictable demand for sustainable products and solutions.

10. However, any such transition must be practical and inclusive. Our standards and procurement requirements must be supported by market capacity, technical guidance, locally available products, professional skills and suitable financing. Small and medium-sized enterprises must also be enabled to participate in emerging green value chains.
11. The private sector has an equally important role. Developers, manufacturers, financial institutions, professional bodies and technology providers must invest in innovation and provide transparent evidence of environmental performance.
12. I commend the **Kenya Green Building Society** for consistently demonstrating that the built environment is an essential part of climate-change mitigation and adaptation.
13. **KGBS** has provided an important platform for bringing together government, the private sector, financial institutions and technical

partners around practical solutions. Its work to strengthen standards, promote measurable building performance, support low-carbon construction and consolidate market information is contributing to the implementation of Kenya's environmental and climate priorities.

14. We value KGBS as an important stakeholder and look forward to continued collaboration in advancing a low-carbon, climate-resilient and resource-efficient built environment.

15. Today's launch of the Kenya Sustainable Built Environment Repository is therefore timely. The Repository can help Kenya address an important market gap by consolidating information on sustainable and resilient projects, products and solutions.

16. It can make progress more visible, strengthen accountability, support policy development and connect credible projects with finance, technology and implementation partners. However, its value will depend on the quality and consistency of the information contributed.

17. I therefore encourage participating institutions to provide credible data, update their information regularly and use the platform to strengthen collaboration and learning.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

18. As we deliberate today, I invite participants to focus on four questions:

-  What policy or regulatory barriers must be addressed?
-  What evidence is required to unlock investment?
-  Which projects and solutions are ready to scale?

 And what specific contribution can each institution make?

19. If we answer these questions honestly and act collectively, the built environment can become one of Kenya's most important platforms for climate implementation.

20. Let us build cities and economies that are low-carbon, resource-efficient, resilient and inclusive for today and for generations to come.

THANK YOU.