



**REMARKS BY H.E. GOVERNOR SIMON KACHAPIN DURING
NATIONAL TREE PLANTING EXERCISE AT ARAMAKET,
KAPENGURIA, 13TH NOVEMBER, 2023.**

The Chief Guest, Hon. CS Susan Nakhumicha,

P.S Hon. Mary Muthoni,

Esteemed guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning,

It is my privilege to stand before you today as we gather to commemorate the National Tree Planting Day in West Pokot County. First and foremost, I would like to extend my gratitude to our Chief Guest, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Health Hon. Susan Nakhumicha, together with the Principal Secretary, State Department for Public Health and Professional Standards, for gracing us with their presence.

This occasion depicts our commitment to environmental conservation and sustainable development. It signifies a crucial step in realizing President William Ruto's vision of planting 15 billion trees by 2032, as part of landscape and ecosystem restoration. This ambitious goal underscores our dedication to combating climate change, preserving biodiversity, and securing a healthier, greener future for generations to come.

Our environment is not just a backdrop in our lives; it is an integral part of our existence. It sustains us, providing the air we breathe and contributing



to the overall well-being of our communities. Today's exercise of growing trees goes beyond symbolism; it is a tangible stride toward securing a greener and healthier future for generations to come.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

West Pokot, with its diverse ecosystems, plays a pivotal role in maintaining the ecological balance of our planet. From the lush landscapes to the flowing rivers, each element is interconnected, forming the tapestry of life that sustains us all.

Being cognizant of this, we have undertaken deliberate efforts to enhance our conservation endeavours and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Primarily, our focus is on afforestation and reforestation initiatives.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are all aware that trees, as the lungs of our planet, can mitigate climate change, prevent soil erosion, and promote biodiversity. In light of this, my administration, through the department of Water, Environment Natural Resources and Climate Change, has outlined action plans and adaptive measures to boost forest cover and combat climate change. As such, we have raised our tree cover to 20%, and collectively, we aim to bridge the 9% deficit to reach the 30% tree cover goal by the year 2027.

In the last fiscal year, we distributed 186,000 tree seedlings to institutions and farmers, ensuring our efforts reach every corner of the county. And in this current fiscal year, we have already planted 100,000 tree seedlings in



landslide-affected areas like Batei, Tapach, and Lelan, in collaboration with KVDA. I take this opportunity to also extend an invitation to other stakeholders to partner with us in this noble endeavour.

Ladies & Gentlemen,

Through the FLLoCA program, my administration aspires to establish sub-county tree nurseries with the goal of reaching one million trees, emphasizing grassroots involvement. I therefore call upon each and every resident of our county, to actively participate in tree-planting campaigns and take pride in nurturing the green spaces that define our landscape.

Moreover, we are implementing stringent measures to curb illegal logging and unsustainable resource extraction. Our forests and natural habitats must be shielded from exploitation to ensure the beauty and benefits they provide are sustainable for future generations.

To counter illegal logging in Kamatira forest, our largest forest, we have recruited and deployed 36 forest guards, with 16 stationed there. However, there are still cases of destruction being reported, and I would like issue a directive to those residing in Kamatira, Penon, Mtelo, Chepnyal, Kauk, Kalapata, and Lorusuk forests: to vacate those areas with immediate effect. We must promote sustainable land use practices, striking a balance between development and conservation.

Ladies and gentlemen,



Environmental conservation is a shared responsibility that extends beyond the government to each one of us. Therefore, collaboration between communities, businesses, and government entities is essential. Being cognizant of this, my government will strengthen and establish platforms for dialogue and consultation, allowing residents to contribute traditional knowledge and insights to our conservation efforts.

Let us embark on this journey of environmental conservation, with determination and unity. West Pokot has the potential to become an excellent example of sustainable development and we can create a legacy that our children and grandchildren will be proud to inherit.

As I conclude, I would like to thank everyone present, and I urge you to actively participate in today's tree planting activities. May this day be a symbol of our determination to make a positive impact on the environment. May our efforts today contribute significantly to the realization of our goal – 15 billion trees by 2030.

Together, let us sow the seeds of a sustainable future. Your commitment is appreciated, and may the trees we plant today flourish as a testament to our dedication towards a sustainable future.

Thank You

GOOD BLESS YOU ALL,



GOD BLESS OUR COUNTY.



H, E Hon. SIMON KACHAPIN KITALEI – CBS, EGH
GOVERNOR WEST POKOT COUNTY