



PRESS RELEASE
(For Immediate Release)

DESPATCH FROM CABINET

PRESIDENT William Samoei Ruto, Ph.D., C.G.H. has this morning chaired a meeting of the nation's apex policy organ, Cabinet, at State House, Nairobi.

The meeting was convened to consider the progress made in the national response to the ongoing drought situation that **has affected 23 counties**; together with an appraisal of the ongoing humanitarian support and relief food being provided to the families in those areas and the **medium-term and long-term strategies** being developed to **address the food security situation in the country.**

Cabinet considered a broad array of proposals touching on **climate change adaptation**, reducing Kenya's reliance on rain-fed agriculture by increasing irrigation, planting of diverse and drought resistant crops, and the implementation of **early warning and response mechanisms** that are activated at the very start of adverse situations rather than when the situations have escalated into disaster conditions.

As part of the medium to long term responses to the ongoing drought, and as a progressive step towards **significantly redefining agriculture** in Kenya by **adopting crops that are resistant to pests and disease**, Cabinet also considered various expert and technical reports on adoption of biotechnology; including reports of the **Kenya's National Biosafety Authority (NBA)**, World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United States of America's Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).



In accordance with the recommendation of the **Task Force to Review Matters Relating to Genetically Modified Foods and Food Safety**, and in fidelity with the **guidelines of the National Biosafety Authority** on all applicable international treaties including the **Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB)**, **Cabinet vacated its earlier decision** of 8th November, 2012 **prohibiting the open cultivation of genetically modified crops** and the importation of food crops and animal feeds produced through biotechnology innovations; **effectively lifting the ban on Genetically Modified Crops**. By dint of the executive action open cultivation and importation of White (GMO) Maize is now authorized.

Today's decision follows an earlier Cabinet decision made on 19th December, 2019 regarding the **commercialization of *Bacillus Thuringiensis* (BT) Cotton Hybrids in Kenya**; which is a genetically enhanced variety of cotton that is resistant against African Bollworm, the most destructive and pervasive pest in cotton farming.

That earlier approval by Cabinet sought to revamp production of textiles, apparel, feed, and oil-industries towards the realization of the industrialization; and **today's Cabinet decision builds on it and also extends its benefits to other agricultural and manufacturing sectors**.

The nation's apex policy organ was also apprised on the preparations for the **National Examinations for Grade 6, Class 8 and Form 4**; which are scheduled to take place from **28th November, 2022 to 23rd December, 2022**. Cabinet took the opportunity to wish all candidates success as they prepare and sit for their examinations.

Cabinet welcomed the normalization of the education learning calendar with effect **from January of 2023**, noting that it would herald the conclusion of the recovery of learning times lost due to the school closures occasioned by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Cabinet reaffirmed the importance of the ongoing reforms to steer the nation towards an era of Universal Health Coverage through the bold and progressive legislation enacted early in the year on mandatory



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contribution of employers towards NHIF. Cabinet highlighted the importance of the **National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF)** as the anchor of these ongoing reforms; and it urged all eligible Kenyans to register for **NHIF cover**.

Mindful of the shared duty to support our senior citizens and to foster inter-generational equity whilst cushioning all from the **vulnerabilities of poverty in old age**, Cabinet ratified the Administration's seminal proposals geared **towards strengthening Kenya's social security and protection framework** under the National Social Security Fund (NSSF).

Today's Cabinet meeting concluded by noting the steady progress being made to fully establish the Fifth Administration; a process that will conclude with the appointment by **His Excellency the President** of new Cabinet Secretaries, Principal Secretaries, and other senior ranks of the National Executive.

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Monday, 3rd October, 2022