



INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON LAND AND SECURITY

Enhancing land and water governance for resilient communities in
the dry lands of the North Rift

12-15 APRIL 2016

Rift Valley Hills Resort, Kabarnet, Baringo County

This Dialogue is organised and supported by



H.E BENJAMIN C. CHEBOI, EBS GOVERNOR BARINGO COUNTY OPENNING REMARKS
DURING THE INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON LAND AND SECURITY 12TH – 15TH APRIL,
2016 IN RIFT VALLEY HILLS HOTEL-KABARNET, BARINGO COUNTY.

H.E Alex Tolgos, Governor Elgeyo Marakwet

H.E Deputy Governors Present

Prof. Mohamed Swazuri, Chairman National Land Commission

Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia, Senior Advisor on conflict Resolution, Peace and Social Cohesion,
Office of the President

Dr. Peter Rundell (UK & Zimbabwe) Initiatives for Land, Lives and Peace.

Dr. Alan Channer (UK & France) Initiatives for Land, Lives and Peace.

Meera Shah (UK & Kenya) Initiatives for Land, Lives and Peace

Patrick Worms (Belgium) World Agroforestry Centre

Hassan Mohamed (Sweden & Somalia)

Initiative of Change Representatives

Organizations represented

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good evening! I am Delighted to be with you to share in this important forum where issue of sustainable development is at the focus of our discussion.

I do appreciate your confidence in us (Baringo County) to host an event of such magnitude. May I take the earliest opportunity on behalf of the North Rift Economic Block (NOREB) County Governors and citizens to welcome you to the County of Great Diversity.

Land as a fundamental factor of production and environment at large form an integral part of the ecosystem upon which all our socio-economic and political development depend on. The theme of this conference “enhancing land, and water governance for resilient

communities in the dry lands of the north rift” resonates well with the fact that Land has continued to be central on issues surrounding livelihoods, climate change and security in the region. Therefore, the role of land management and environmental conservation cannot be overemphasized when it comes to sustainable peace, security and development.

Land restoration, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction are drivers of peace, development and climate change mitigation. This has been the focus of discussion in the post 2015 development agenda- Sustainable Development Goals, and the Climate Change Global Summit COP2 in 2015 parish.

Over 50% of the Kenya Gross Domestic Product is contributed by environmental dependent sectors. For instance agricultural contributes 26%, tourism 11% and trade and industry 7%. The contribution of forests in water catchments is critical to Kenya’s rural and urban water supplies, noting that approximately 70% of power is hydro generated.

The Government efforts are elaborate on issues of land, security and environmental conservation and protection. CoK, 2010 under article 60(1) clearly emphasizes on quality and access.- land resources, sound conservation and protection of ecologically sensitive areas. Article 42 expounds on the right to clean and healthy environment.

Further, the social pillar of Kenya Vision 2030 envisages a just and cohesive society enjoying equitable social development in a clean and secure environment through legislation, increasing and sustainably maintaining the forest cover at 10%.

However, implementation of these initiatives still remains a global challenge. Statistics show that 32 Million acres of forest land is lost annually through human activities in the world. In Kenya the annual per-capita wood consumption is 40 million M³ but our annual sustainable yield stands at 30 million M³ leaving us with an annual deficit of 10 million M³. The resultant is decreasing forest cover, fuel wood shortage, decreasing river flows, increased soil and water erosion.

Again, it is worrying that despite its immense contribution to the National GDP little emphasis in terms of budgetary allocation is on environmental protection.

The world is currently in an environmental degradation trap. Statistics show that nearly 25% of the world’s productive land and 10-25% of dry lands are degraded. What this

means is that communities must relocate to fertile land for agriculture and pastoralists will venture further to seek pasture.

Competition for the dwindling pasture and water resources piles pressure on the land holding capacity, worsening the degradation. The consequence is devastated environment and perennial community conflicts.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

The NOREB region just like the rest of the country is faced with enormous challenges of land degradation. These have had far reaching effect on peace and security in the region. Over 60% of the region is ASAL and rely mainly on agriculture and livestock production accounting for over 50% of the livestock population in Kenya. The region is also regarded as the granary of Kenya. Further, the region is rich in Tourism and Energy.

The scenario in Baringo County on impact of environmental degradation, and land management is a real life issue. This perhaps would be the reason why Baringo is chosen to host this international Conference. We are delighted to share our experiences but most importantly implement the lessons learnt.

Poor land management, and convention methods of agricultural and livestock production practices have since resulted to dwindling water and pasture resources for pastoralists and environmental degradation posing serious hazards responsible for frequent disasters like floods, landslides, perennial droughts and insecurity –cattle rustling.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

A clear transformation in approach to land, and environment conservation and management is a requisite to attaining sustainable peace and security. It start with me and you.

You agree with me that “we cannot change the world without changing ourselves”. We need social re-engineering and change our mind-sets, we need cultural transformation and we need the right education.

As I conclude, may I reiterate that we all have a cardinal responsibility to make the world a better place to live. In this forum we do have a host of policymakers, scientists, scholars,

activities and the community. It is therefore my sincere hope that this forum will explore on innovative and sustainable land management reforms that will lead to sustainable peace and security.

With all these many remarks, it is my pleasure to declare the International Dialogue on Land and Security Conference 2016 officially open.

THANK YOU

MAY YOU HAVE AN INTERACTIVE AND FRUITFUL DELIBERATIONS.