



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya
to the United Nations, New York

OPENING REMARKS BY AMB. MARTIN KIMANI

DURING AN INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE ON ACHIEVING TANGIBLE COOPERATION
AND COMPLIANCE TO AVERT CLIMATE CATASTROPHE

CO-HOSTED BY KENYA AND SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES IN COOPERATION WITH THE
AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL LAW (ASIL)

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**Thank you, Ms. Mona Khalil for giving me the floor.
My fellow co-host, Amb. Rhonda King,
Mr. Michael Cooper,
Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,**

First droughts caused famines that took lives in the Horn of Africa. Floods drowned tens of thousands of homes in Pakistan. The weather patterns in the Sahel worsened armed conflicts for resources and allowed terrorists to entrench their brutal campaigns.

Climate catastrophe has faces and places. And the reason, the real reason climate action is not urgent and ambitious enough is because those faces and places are poor.

So let us not use the phrase climate catastrophe in ways that flatten and make invisible the actual, present human costs.

Martin Niemöller wrote the famous statement, with its starting line: “first they came for the communists, and I did not speak out”. Is this to ever be the pattern? For those with a sense of privilege and safety to passively and indifferently watch those more vulnerable go to their ruin without acting?

It was thus in the 1940s, and we built the UN to respond better saying never again to indifference in the face of the suffering of others.

We must therefore find cooperation and compliance in this UN building or it shall be nowhere else. And the climate catastrophe, like the pandemic we have just experienced, or the destructive wars of the past that swept the world, shall eventually visit even the most gilded and protected among us.

The solidarity required to make the UN live up to its promise is not charity, it is positive action for distant strangers so that our families and nations can also be secure.

I want to highlight an important paradox. Despite not being a significant contributor to global emissions, Kenya has taken the Responsibility to Protect the Earth seriously. This duty, embedded in our Constitution, reflects our deep-seated connection with nature. We have committed to 100% renewables by 2030, long before the dated commitments by the countries most responsible for climate change.

Using Kenya as an example of action to avert the climate catastrophe, I wish to underline the crucial role of robust national policy, legal frameworks, and local initiatives in realizing climate cooperation.

Our Constitution, Climate Change Act, and our long-term blueprint, Vision 2030, form the bedrock of our commitment. Our National Climate Change Council, presided over by the President, provides strategic direction. Despite limited resources, Kenya has made a conscious decision to prioritize green energy and environmentally friendly policies, with 93% of our electricity grid powered by renewable sources.

Our commitment to green policies, sustainable development, and environmental conservation underscores our dedication to a greener future.

I implore all of us to commit to development and job-creating sustainable growth as crucial tools in our fight against this impending catastrophe.

Accessing climate finance is critical for developing nations like Kenya that are already bearing significant economic impacts of climate change. We insist, as always, on the fulfillment of commitments from developed countries, such as the provision of \$100 billion annually for climate finance.

In our endeavor to achieve green industrialisation, we need reciprocal commitment from industrialised nations. We urge these countries to facilitate, rather than hinder, trade and investment policies that support our green growth. This isn't just a call for fairness, but for solidarity in our shared fight against climate catastrophe.

As I conclude, let's remember that we are all in this together. Solidarity in climate action is not just a moral obligation but a necessity for our collective survival. As we progress in our discussions today and look forward to the Africa Climate Summit in Nairobi this September, let us remember the urgency of our shared responsibility.

I look forward to hearing from our briefers, Dr. Achala Abeysinghe and Dr. Scott Barrett. We hope to engage in a candid and practical conversation regarding your thought-provoking proposals. Thank you.