

Remarks by Hon. Ali Wario, Board Chairman, National Council for Population and Development (NCPD), Republic of Kenya

At the 4th China–Africa Conference on Population and Development Nairobi, Kenya

Chief Guest, Dr. Boniface Makokha, Principal Secretary, State
Department for Economic Planning,
Principal Secretaries Present,
Distinguished Representatives from the African Union, UNFPA, and the
Partners in Population and Development,
Esteemed Delegates and Panelists,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

I am privileged to address you on behalf of the Board and the entire fraternity of the National Council for Population and Development (NCPD), as we gather for the 4th China–Africa Conference on Population and Development here in Nairobi.

This conference—under the theme "*Health-Enabling Pathways for China–Africa Population Development*"—reflects our shared recognition that the health and well-being of our populations remain the bedrock of sustainable growth and equitable progress.

Distinguished Guests,

The National Council for Population and Development (NCPD) stands as a cornerstone institution in Kenya's socio-economic development architecture. Established in 1982, NCPD has, for over four decades, provided leadership, coordination, and technical guidance on population and development matters. Over the years, the council has remained steadfast: to integrate population dynamics into national and county planning frameworks, ensuring that demographic realities inform sustainable policy decisions.

We believe that effective development must be inclusive; that sound data must underscore policy; and that every citizen—especially women and young people—must be empowered to participate fully in shaping our collective future.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Kenya's demographic landscape is dynamic. With a youthful and rapidly growing population, our challenge and opportunity lie in transforming this demographic potential into tangible economic gains—the so-called *demographic dividend*. Realizing this dividend requires sustained investments in health, education, and employment, particularly within the framework of the **Kenya Vision 2030** and the **Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA)**.

It is within this context that the NCPD continues to spearhead efforts to mainstream population issues into development planning through the **National Population Policy for Sustainable Development (2023)**. This policy underscores that population management is not merely about controlling numbers, but about nurturing human capital, promoting health, and safeguarding the social and environmental foundations of development.

Distinguished Delegates,

As the world grapples with shifting demographic patterns, the need for partnership and shared learning becomes ever more urgent. South–South cooperation, particularly among African nations and between Africa and Asia, provides an invaluable platform for exchanging best practices, innovative policy models, and practical solutions.

China's remarkable achievements in health systems strengthening, poverty reduction, and population management offer important lessons for Africa. Conversely, Africa's youthful vibrancy, rich human capital, and commitment to inclusive growth position our continent as a vital partner in shaping the global demographic future.

At NCPD, we view such collaborations not merely as exchanges of knowledge but as instruments for collective transformation. Through platforms such as this conference, we aspire to chart a continental and intercontinental roadmap—anchored in shared experiences, mutual respect, and a common vision of sustainable development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The future of our nations will be determined by how effectively we manage our populations today. Let us, therefore, reaffirm our resolve to invest in people—through accessible health services, quality education, gender equality, and meaningful youth engagement. In doing so, we secure not only our demographic dividend but also the promise of prosperity, stability, and dignity for all our citizens.

On behalf of the NCPD Board, I extend appreciation to our partners, including the Government of China, UNFPA, and all participating nations, for their unwavering commitment to this important cause.

May the deliberations of this conference illuminate new pathways for cooperation and strengthen the bonds of friendship that unite us in the pursuit of sustainable, people-centred development.

Thank you.