

**TALKING POINTS BY H.E. HON. WILLIAM SAMOEI RUTO, EGH,
DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA, WORLD
HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT, 24th MAY, 2016 ISTANBUL, TURKEY**

**HIGH-LEVEL ROUNDTABLE ON NATURAL DISASTERS AND
CLIMATE CHANGE— MANAGING RISKS AND CRISES DIFFERENTLY**

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. As highlighted in the background note for this Roundtable, between 2008 and 2014, a total of **184 million** people were displaced by disasters; that is an average of **26.4 million** people annually.
2. With the ever-increasing vagaries of climate change being witnessed worldwide, disasters are increasing in frequency and intensity.
3. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimates that over the last six months, the humanitarian situation in the **Horn of Africa** and the **Great Lakes** region has deteriorated.
4. Over **20 million** people have become dependent on humanitarian assistance; many of them having suffered the negative effects of *El Nino*.
5. It is estimated that over the last **20 years**, disasters caused by natural hazards have claimed **1.35 million** lives and affected an average **218 million** people per year, mostly in developing countries.

6. The deaths were as a result of air-pollution, exposure to dangerous chemicals, drinking unsafe water and effects of other human activities that degrade the environment
7. At least one in every four deaths of children aged 5 years and below can be traced to environmental impact. **This, Your Excellences, is unacceptable in this day and age.**

2011 Drought & Impacts on refugee influx into Kenya

8. The 2011 famine in the Horn of Africa, occasioned by severe drought was the world's worst humanitarian crisis in recent times. It was also Africa's worst food security crisis since Somalia's 1991 and 1992 famine.
9. **By September 2011, the Dadaab Refugee Camp in Kenya had received over 160,000 new Somali refugees.**
10. In Kenya the vagaries of climate change is aggravated by environmental degradation caused by refugees in the fragile ecological system of North Eastern Region.
11. Since 1991 when the first batch of refugees from Somalia was hosted in Kenya, there has been systematic destruction of vegetation and decimation of wildlife through poaching.
12. The consequences of environmental degradation has greatly impacted on the subterranean geological system which is manifested by a drop in the water table from 50 to 400metres; 8 times more, which is equivalent to sinking boreholes half a kilometer deep. The dwindling resources has led to protracted local conflicts over pasture and water.

13. Over time, the Government of Kenya has been forced to re-allocate human resource and funds at an average of **140million US dollars** per year to address the issues of environmental restoration and security within the refugee camps. This is in addition to Kenya's contribution of **100million US dollars** per year to the African Mission in Somalia (**AMISOM**).

Repatriation and restoration of fragile ecological systems

14. Repatriation of refugees should not be perceived as punishment but should be seen in the broader context of giving them a chance to go and reconstruct their country while at the same time easing pressure on fragile ecological systems in refugee camps. This is one of the **key** reasons Kenya has decided to close Dadaab Refugee Complex.

I thank you all.