



The 3-km Mbagathi Way street lighting installed by the Ministry of Metropolitan Development.



Streetlight projects throughout the city are making Nairobi Metro a safer place.

# China to aid transformation of Nairobi city

## Nairobi gears up to become a city of choice for investors and a great place to live

Cities around the world are striving to position themselves in the global economy and Nairobi, Kenya's buzzing capital, is no exception.

A growing metropolis and a hub for East African business, Nairobi is the region's most populous city, with more than three million people living within its 696 sq km area.

Known locally as "The Green City in the Sun", Nairobi boasts modern infrastructure, an excellent social and cultural scene and has gained a deserved reputation as one of Africa's most important cities politically and financially.

The wider metropolitan region of Nairobi contributes 60 percent to the Kenyan economy, and is home to more than 60 percent of Kenya's urban population.

As well as being the African base for hundreds of international companies and organizations, the United Nations Environment Program and the UN Office in Africa, for example, the Nairobi Stock Exchange (NSE) is one of the largest in Africa, ranked

fourth in terms of trading volume and capable of making 10 million trades a day.

As the motors of the national economy, often featuring higher GDP per capita and productivity levels than the country average, urban areas are continuing to make themselves more competitive on a global level, as they fight the inherent challenges of poverty and social exclusion.

### City of choice for investors

It is within this framework that Kenya's Ministry of Metropolitan Development, headed by Minister of Metropolitan Development Robinson Njeru Githae, assisted by Permanent Secretary Onyango Sika, is working to combat Nairobi's challenges so that it becomes the city of choice for investors within the next two decades.

Covering the four pillars of security, transport, sustainable environment and reliable energy, the Ministry's Metro 2030 strategy aims to

make Nairobi a world-class African metropolis within Kenya's broader Vision 2030 blueprint.

At the strategy's launch in December 2008, President Mwai Kibaki announced how the coalition government is putting in place strategies aimed at transforming the city of Nairobi and other major towns into vibrant centers of economic activity for the benefit of Kenyan people.

"Towards this end, we are accorded priority to urban development, and specifically metropolitan development, as one of the driving forces that will propel our country into the status of a middle-income rapidly industrializing country," he said.

### Cities help growth targets

Under the Vision 2030 economic development initiative, the government will create and develop metropolitan regions across the country, acknowledging the pivotal role these cities will play in realizing the growth targets identified under Vision 2030.



Robinson Njeru Githae, Minister of Metropolitan Development



Onyango Sika, Metropolitan Development Permanent Secretary

"Some of these targets include the promotion of social equity and inclusiveness and making our cities yield more in terms of their productive potential," Kibaki said.

The government's decision to begin the implementation of the urban development strategy with the Nairobi Metropolitan region is, according to the President, based on the fact that the capital city is the country's main gateway to the rest of the world.

"It is anticipated that Nairobi's transformation over the next 20 years will require investments of about KSh 33.2 trillion in various programs and projects. The government, local authorities, and other agencies, will need to be innovative in raising these finances from various sources, such as taxes, municipal bonds, and even donations and endowments."

Foreign investment will also be a major factor in bringing Metro 2030's ambitious remit to fruition and the government has pledged to partner with the private sector and development partners in order to raise the resources required. The Chinese government is among those that have been approached.

### Chinese funds lauded

Chinese participation in Kenya's infrastructural projects has been significant in recent years, with various construction firms involved with major highway projects, including the Mombasa Road — in joint partnership with the government — and the Thika-Nairobi super highway which, when finished, will vastly improve the economic and social development of Kenya and neighboring countries.

The eight-lane highway is also expected to improve mobility and transport linkages between the Nairobi Metropolitan area satellite towns along its route.

President Kibaki said: "We are really grateful for what they (Chinese firms) are doing here in Kenya. In recent years, we have been more concerned with internal roads than roads that connect us internationally, but we need to also focus on connecting Kenya to neighboring East African Community countries."

"That to me is very urgent and will greatly increase trade between all of these countries."

During a State visit to Shanghai in May, President Kibaki expressed his gratitude that China remains one of the leading bilateral donors to Kenya and assured China of the government's determination and commitment to boost existing

cordial relations through exchange visits at all levels for the benefit of the peoples of the two countries.

### A unique place in the world

As well as addressing the issues of traffic congestion, security and poverty, the strategy will make the city investor-friendly and thereby create job opportunities for young people, according to Prime Minister Raila Odinga. He called on all stakeholders to support the ministry in its endeavor to attain its vision.

Robinson Njeru Githae, Minister of Metropolitan Development said: "We want to make Nairobi a workable, livable place. The implementation of these short, medium and long-term programs and projects will result in a unique, properly planned metropolis that is functionally interconnected while ensuring a high quality of life."



**We want to make Nairobi a workable, livable place. The implementation of these programs will result in a unique, properly planned metropolis that is functioning interconnectively while ensuring a high quality of life."**

ROBINSON NJERU GITHAE  
MINISTER OF METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT

"It will give incentives and returns for investing while having stable public finances. It will be responsive to the needs of investors, while respecting the need for neighbors. It is economically vibrant on a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week basis and will be a unique place in the world."

Set up in 2008, the Ministry for Nairobi's Metropolitan Development has already done much to ensure a safe, secure, and prosperous Nairobi Metropolitan Region.

Within a region that covers the wider Nairobi area, taking in 15 local authorities and covering 32,000 sq km, the Ministry is committed to good governance, tackling public transport, affordable housing, planning and zoning regulations, and transforming Nairobi into a global competitive metropolis for investment and tourism.

In short, Nairobi is on a mission to be the best managed metropolis in Africa.

"Our first priority is security: we want to have an educated, well-trained metropolitan police service," Minister Githae said. "We want to install closed-circuit television cameras on all the major roads, junctions

and in buildings, and have a central commander and control post where this can be controlled and monitored. We are going to implement a metropolitan street lighting program that will promote safety and security and be self-sustaining."

### Innovative approach

The strategy addresses the city's traffic issues. According to Permanent Secretary Onyango Sika, the population of Nairobi during the day is four million and at night three million, "so every day we have a million people coming into the city and at night a million people leaving. That obviously puts a strain on transport. To this extent, we are trying to formulate a reliable, cheap and comfortable public transport system. We want to have dedicated bus lines and also rail systems in and out of the city."

The strategy will also create a solid waste management authority that uses modern practices to replace the current dumping sites which are polluting the ground and water.

"We want to have waste sites that work in a scientific manner with an underground lining to prevent leakage," Minister Githae said. "We also need to have reliable, regular, potable and inexpensive sources of water. The government has put a

## Kibaki committed to improved bilateral ties

Kenya's long-term development blueprint to create a globally competitive and prosperous country with a high quality of life within two decades, Vision 2030 will be the anchor by which bilateral relations between Kenya and China continue to develop.

The wide-ranging framework, which aims to develop Kenya into a middle-income country by 2030, identifies flagship projects in key sectors like agriculture, education, health, water, the environment, and infrastructure.

During a three-day visit to Kenya in January this year, Yang Jiechi, China's Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Kenya's Minister of Foreign Affairs Moses Wetang'ula signed a Kenya Sh551 million grant agreement to help Kenya develop.

With reference to Vision 2030, Yang Jiechi confirmed that China and Kenya share a similar vision and a common approach to important global issues.

This optimistic start to the decade demonstrates how Kenya and China's bilateral cooperation is continuing to go from strength to strength and was a significant boost for Kenya's foreign policy.

One of Kenya's leading development partners especially in the area of infrastructure development, China has provided accumulative official development assistance to the tune of \$5.46 billion.

It is currently funding the construction of Thika road, a major artery serving Nairobi City, and the renovation of the Mombasa Rd-City Center-Gigiri road jointly with the Kenyan government. There are more projects in the pipeline.

Having given priority to infrastructure development, which has in turn triggered economic growth and massive job creation across the country, President Mwai Kibaki-



Minister Githae presents new ambulances to districts within Nairobi.



**China is a genuine development partner and a critical ally in Kenya's economic revival that has led to major infrastructure development in the country."**

MWAI KIBAKI  
PRESIDENT OF KENYA

held productive bilateral talks with His Excellency Hu Jintao, President of the People's Republic of China, during a five-day state visit to Shanghai in April in which he reiterated his government's formal request for Chinese partnership for the following projects:

\* Development of a railway network from Lamu through the northern parts of Kenya to southern Sudan and Ethiopia.

\* Development of the first three berths and associated infrastructure of the second port of Lamu.

\* Construction of a standard gauge railway from Mombasa to Malaba.

\* Mass transit light rail system for the Nairobi Metropolitan.

### Showcasing Kenya

During his Shanghai visit, President Kibaki opened the Kenya Stand at the African Pavilion at World Expo 2010, thereby showcasing and marketing his country as a preferred destination for trade, investment and tourism.

Kenya's participation in the expo also aims at increasing exports of tea, coffee, cut flowers and pyrethrum and to promote joint ventures between Kenyan and Chinese companies to enhance the former country's brand and positive image.

During the visit, President Kibaki said: "China has proved to be a genuine development partner and a critical ally in Kenya's economic revival that has led to major infrastructure development in the country." The President affirmed that through Vision 2030, the government has adopted a pragmatic approach that would transform the country into a middle-income economy by 2030.



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