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One Hundred Eighteenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Foreign Affairs
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

April 30, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Mr. Speaker,

We are writing to respectfully request that you extend a formal invitation to the President of the Republic of Kenya, His Excellency William Samoei Ruto, to address a joint session of Congress on his official visit to the United States. If invited, President Ruto would be the first Kenyan head of state to address a joint session of Congress, and the first African head of state to address Congress since former Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf eighteen years ago. Such an invitation would underscore the importance of the U.S.-Kenya relationship and send a valuable signal to the people of Africa.

This year, we are celebrating the historic 60-year anniversary of the U.S.-Kenya diplomatic relationship. Kenya has the largest, most diversified economy and a young and growing population. It also has a young, ambitious, and well-educated workforce eager to contribute to the development of the country. These factors have helped the country become a leader in mobile money and information and communication technology.

U.S.-Kenya relations continue to deepen, encompassing strong political, economic, technological, and cultural ties. The United States is among Kenya's largest trading partners and Kenya is one of Africa's most dynamic economies, boasting a top utilization rate of U.S. market access under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). Nearly 100,000 Kenyan-Americans call the United States home. Moreover, the United States maintains an overseas military base at Manda Bay, on the Indian Ocean, to support operations to counter terrorist threats from Al-Shabaab. These are just some examples of the close ties forged between our nation and Kenya over the past six decades.

Kenya's security environment is growing increasingly complex with persistent terrorist threats from Al-Shabaab. The country has played an important stabilizing role in East Africa and beyond in recent years and stands poised to attract significant American investment that can help catalyze African economic growth. It is crucial for members of Congress to understand how

Kenya's active participation in Africa's future and beyond is vital for peace and stability in the region and aligns with the broader economic and strategic interests of the United States.

We therefore respectfully request that, at your earliest convenience, you invite President William Samoei Ruto to address a joint session of Congress when he is in the United States on or about May 23, 2024.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael T. McCaul". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael T. McCaul
Chairman
House Foreign Affairs Committee

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gregory W. Meeks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gregory W. Meeks
Ranking Member
House Foreign Affairs Committee