

The Trust Summit 2026: A Milestone, Not an End Point

Nairobi, 21–23 October 2026. How can trust be rebuilt between citizens and institutions, between nations, and in the global economy? Under the banner "Nairobi Dialogue on Global Trust", leaders from government, international organisations, the private sector, academia, civil society and youth came together in Nairobi for the first Trust Summit. The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Kenya was proud to support the Summit as a convener.

The first day, "Trust at the Frontline", focused on the relationship between government and the people. Opened by Dr. Abraham Korir Sing'Oei, Principal Secretary of the State Department for Foreign Affairs, and with contributions from Head of Public Service Felix Koskei, Chief Justice Martha Koome and voices from county government, civil society and business, speakers agreed that trust cannot be built through words alone, but only through accountability, transparency and inclusion. As entrepreneur Sean Karanja put it: "Give your word and keep it."

On the second day, "Trust Beyond Borders", the focus shifted to trust between nations in a multipolar world. Attorney General Dorcas Agik Oduor stressed that "trust cannot be proclaimed, it must be earned," while representatives of the African Union, UNDP, AUDA-NEPAD and the diplomatic community discussed equal respect, fair representation and partnership as the foundations of international cooperation. Sessions on finance, trade, investment and climate showed that citizens and investors alike need fair and predictable processes. In the Climate Baraza, German Ambassador H.E. Sebastian Groth highlighted Kenya's leadership in renewable energy and the potential for German–Kenyan cooperation on green hydrogen.

The final day, "From Promise to Proof", asked how commitments can be turned into results. After a debate on trust in the digital age and AI, Mathias Kamp, Country Director of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Kenya, spoke together with former Prime Minister of Mali H.E. Moussa Mara in the session on "The Global Order We Need, and Accountability on Promises Made". Mathias Kamp described the Summit as a milestone in a long process: the task now is to build a coalition of the willing, of state and non-state actors alike, that goes beyond the low-hanging fruit. Speaking for a foundation committed to promoting democracy, he underlined what trust means for citizens: "Trust requires transparency, accountability, inclusion and participation. I want to see results. That's when I trust you. I want to see that you keep your promises. I want to see the institutions perform on our behalf and deliver." Moussa Mara called for humility and for Africa to speak with one voice on the challenges facing the continent.

In his closing synthesis, Rapporteur General Amb. Maurice Makoloo summarised the

Summit's message: trust is an economic asset and a global public good, and it is about following through, by setting measurable milestones, publishing progress and reviewing delivery. Trust Summit CEO Awel Uwhanganye then presented the Nairobi Call to Action, built on a hope "that we can believe in".

For KAS Kenya, the Trust Summit is not the end of a conversation but its starting point. Trust in democratic institutions, in multilateral cooperation and between citizens and their leaders lies at the heart of our work. We look forward to continuing this dialogue with our partners and to being part of the Trust Summit in the years to come.