

2nd June 2026

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THE REPORTED PLANS TO EXCISE PARTS OF UHURU PARK AND CENTRAL PARK FOR THE EXPANSION OF UHURU HIGHWAY

The Green Belt Movement (GBM) has received alarming reports that portions of Uhuru Park and Central Park may be excised to facilitate the expansion of Uhuru Highway in Nairobi. We have further established that survey beacons have already been placed within sections of these public parks, raising legitimate concerns that preliminary steps towards the project may already be underway.

These reports come at a time when public green spaces in Kenya continue to face increasing pressure from infrastructure development, commercial interests and changing land use. The loss of urban green spaces threatens biodiversity, climate resilience, public health and the constitutional right of every Kenyan to a clean and healthy environment.

The Green Belt Movement reminds all public authorities that Uhuru Park and Central Park are protected public land under Article 62(1)(l) of the Constitution and gazetted public recreational facilities held in trust for present and future generations. Any proposal to excise, alienate, reduce or change the use of these parks must strictly comply with the law, including approval by the Nairobi City County Assembly, public participation, gazettelement, approval by the National Land Commission, an Environmental Impact Assessment and licensing by the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), as well as the necessary survey and land registration processes.

We therefore call upon the Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA), Nairobi City County Government, the National Land Commission (NLC), NEMA, the Ministry of Roads and Transport and the Ministry of Lands, Public Works, Housing and Urban Development to publicly disclose whether any approvals, assessments, consultations, surveys or administrative processes relating to the proposed acquisition of land from Uhuru Park and Central Park have been initiated or completed.

Specifically, we call upon:

KeNHA to clarify:

1. Whether there are plans to acquire, excise or utilize any portion of Uhuru Park or Central Park for the expansion of Uhuru Highway.
2. The exact acreage proposed to be acquired from each park.
3. The legal basis and justification for the proposed acquisition.
4. Whether any environmental, social or feasibility assessments have been undertaken and to make such reports publicly available.

Nairobi City County Government to disclose:

1. Whether any public participation process has been conducted regarding the proposed project.
2. The dates, locations and records of any public consultations undertaken.
3. Whether the County Assembly has considered or approved any proposal affecting the size or status of these parks.



The National Land Commission to clarify:

1. Whether it has received or approved any request relating to the acquisition, excision or change of use of land within Uhuru Park or Central Park.
2. Whether it has undertaken any investigations, reviews or consultations regarding the proposed project.

NEMA to disclose:

1. Whether any Environmental Impact Assessment study has been submitted for review.
2. Whether any environmental licences or approvals have been issued or are under consideration.

The Constitution of Kenya is unequivocal that public participation is not optional. Decisions affecting public land and public resources must be undertaken transparently, lawfully and with the meaningful involvement of citizens. Kenyans have a right to be informed and consulted before decisions of such significance are made.

The Green Belt Movement is particularly concerned because the struggle to protect Nairobi's public parks has been long and hard fought. Uhuru Park remains a powerful symbol of environmental justice and democratic participation. It was preserved through the courage and determination of citizens led by Professor Wangari Maathai, who understood that public green spaces are essential to the well-being of current and future generations.

We also note with concern that public access to Central Park remains restricted despite court orders directing that the park be reopened to the public. This continued disregard for public access rights underscores the urgent need for stronger protection and accountability in the management of Nairobi's public green spaces.

Kenya cannot afford to lose more public parks. Instead, government agencies should be investing in their protection, restoration and expansion. At a time when cities around the world are increasing urban green cover to address climate change, improve public health and enhance quality of life, Nairobi should not be moving in the opposite direction.

The Green Belt Movement wishes to make it unequivocally clear that any proposal affecting Uhuru Park or Central Park must be subjected to full public scrutiny, strict legal compliance, comprehensive environmental assessment and meaningful public participation. These parks are public assets held in trust for all Kenyans and future generations.

We therefore urge all Kenyans, civil society organisations, professional bodies, environmental defenders and concerned citizens to remain vigilant and demand transparency, accountability and adherence to the law. The Green Belt Movement will continue to closely monitor developments and will take all appropriate legal, advocacy and civic action necessary to safeguard these critical public spaces.

Issued by:

The Green Belt Movement

Nairobi, Kenya

communication@greenbeltmovement.org | www.greenbeltmovement.org

Pictorial evidence of beacons set for the excision

