



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Kenyan Specialty Tea Farmers Gain Direct Access to Premium Global Markets in Landmark Offtake Deal

- *Under the deal, Palais des Thés will purchase Kenyan specialty purple teas and promote Kenyan tea through its global retail and education platforms.*
- *The partnership is expected to strengthen farmgate earnings and encourage a shift towards higher-value specialty tea production.*
- *The deal was facilitated by Equity Group Holdings Plc through its Africa Recovery and Resilience Plan (ARRP).*

Nairobi, Kenya – May 11th, 2026 – Kenyan specialty tea farmers and producers are set to gain direct access to premium international markets following the signing of a landmark offtake and promotional agreement in Nairobi ahead of the Africa Forward: Africa–France Partnerships for Innovation and Growth Summit - witnessed by both French President H.E Emmanuel Macron and Kenyan President H.E Dr. William Ruto. The agreement brings together Palais des Thés, a leading French specialty tea house, Gatanga Industries Limited, a Kenyan producer of premium specialty teas including indigenous purple tea cultivars, and Equity Group Holdings Plc.

The deal is expected to unlock new income opportunities for smallholder farmers by positioning Kenyan purple and specialty tea within high-value global consumer segments, particularly in Europe. Under the arrangement, Palais des Thés will procure Kenyan specialty teas comprising Purple White, Purple Golden, Purple Simba, and Purple Black varieties, strengthening Kenya–France specialty tea trade linkages and expanding global visibility for Kenyan-origin teas.

In addition to the offtake arrangement, Palais des Thés has committed to promoting Kenyan specialty tea through its international retail and educational platforms, showcasing its origin, cultivation methods, and unique quality attributes to global consumers.

The agreement spotlights Kenya’s position as a source of premium specialty teas, with purple tea, an indigenous cultivar, developed by Kenya tea research institute, rich in antioxidants and known for its distinctive flavour profile, emerging as a key value-added export product.

The deal was facilitated by Equity Group Holdings Plc through its Africa Recovery and Resilience Plan (ARRP), which focuses on strengthening trade linkages, supporting value addition, and integrating African producers into global supply chains. The Group introduced the parties and supported the engagement process that led to the conclusion of the agreement.

Speaking during the signing of the agreement, Equity Group Managing Director and CEO Dr. James Mwangi said the partnership directly advances the Group’s mission of connecting farmers to global value chains.

“This agreement is about transforming the livelihoods of our small-scale tea farmers. By linking them to premium global buyers, we are not only expanding market access but also ensuring that



value addition begins at the source, where farmers are fully integrated into global trade opportunities,” said Dr. Mwangi.

He added:

“Our focus is to ensure farmers and agribusinesses are not just producers, but active participants in global value chains. This partnership demonstrates how the right ecosystem support can unlock sustainable income and growth for agricultural communities.”

François-Xavier Delmas, Founder and CEO of Palais des Thés, highlighted the company’s commitment to showcasing Kenyan tea globally.

“Kenyan purple tea is not only an exceptional product in terms of quality, but also a compelling expression of origin, climate, and craftsmanship. Our role goes beyond procurement; it is about elevating its story on the global stage and positioning it within a category of teas that consumers value for authenticity and distinction. We are proud to bring this product to international consumers and to share the richness of Kenya’s tea heritage through our global platforms,” the representative said.

The Chairman of Gatanga Industries Ltd O’Karanja Kinyanjui welcomed the partnership as a milestone for producers and farmers.

“For a long time, our farmers have been growing a unique crop without clear access to buyers who fully understand its value. This agreement changes that. It tells the farmer that what they grow belongs in the highest-value markets. For us as their immediate partners, it also strengthens our ability to support better pricing, consistency, and long-term stability for the communities behind this tea,” the representative said.

Tea remains a major source of income for millions of households in Kenya, particularly in rural highland regions where smallholder farmers depend on it for daily livelihoods. By opening access to premium international buyers and specialty markets, the agreement is expected to improve farmgate earnings, strengthen income stability, and encourage a gradual shift towards higher-value tea production.

– ENDS –