

## **Nairobi to Join in Global Women's Marches on 21 January**

(Nairobi, 20 January 2017)—Women, men and children in Nairobi who support women's rights, human rights and social justice will stand up and be counted on 21 January at the Women's March on Nairobi, a "Sister March" to the historic Women's March taking place in Washington, D.C., on the same day. The march, in Nairobi's Karura Forest, will highlight women's resistance to sexism and gender inequality and their call for more progressive and inclusive governance, in Kenya, in the United States and around the world.

The Women's March on Washington and its Sister Marches – in 370 cities around the world – were initiated largely in response to the US presidential election victory of Donald Trump, who has bragged about sexually assaulting women and repeatedly insulted women based on their looks, and whose administration threatens to roll back the rights of women, racial and religious minorities, immigrants, and other marginalized groups. But the Women's Marches have taken on a global flavor. Participants in Kenya and other countries are mobilizing to make demands of their own governments, while also calling on the new US government to reject policies that limit women's rights.

"In the face of sexual harassment, rape, discrimination, patriarchy, militarization, domestic violence and labour exploitation, we women have managed to stay strong and brave to survive," said Rachael Mwikali, a Kenyan women's rights activist and survivor of gender-based violence who works with the Coalition for Grassroots Human Rights Defenders. "We are marching to stand up against oppression for a cause that is greater than we are as individuals."

The platform of the Women's March on Washington, which calls for reproductive freedom and an end to violence against women but also addresses issues such as police brutality, economic justice, LGBTQ rights and the global migration crisis, resonates with many Kenyans. Kenyan feminists are also using the march to call attention to other issues, such as female genital mutilation, trafficking, and education for girls. And for Americans in Kenya, the Women's March is an opportunity to make common cause with Kenyan women and to reengage with US politics and social justice movements.

"As an American woman living in Kenya, I cannot sit back silently as a government takes the reins in my home country that seems poised to trample on the rights of women and vulnerable groups," said Neela Ghoshal, a member of Progressive Americans in Kenya and one of the organizers of the march. "Affordable health care for women, reproductive rights, refugee rights, and environmental justice are all at great risk, and those of us living outside our country who do not accept these developments must speak out rather than ignoring the new administration's worrisome agenda."

The Women's March on Nairobi kicks off at 10 am on Saturday, January 21, at Karura Forest. Participants will meet at Amani Gardens, across from the River Café, and will march a 2-kilometer route before gathering to picnic, celebrate, and hear speeches and performances from feminist musicians and spoken word artists including Lydia Dola and Valentine Zikki.

The march has been endorsed by a wide range of Kenyan and international civil society organizations and grassroots social movements including Amnesty International Kenya, Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW), the Coalition for Grassroots Human Rights Defenders, the Coalition on Violence Against Women (COVAW), the Gay and Lesbian Coalition of Kenya (GALCK), Her Voice Society Kenya, Human Rights Watch, the Kenya Human Rights Commission, Kenya Sex Worker Alliance (KESWA), Minority Women in Action, the National Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (NGLHRC), TICA, and the World March of Women – Kenya Chapter.

Hashtags for the march include #WomensMarchNRB, #udada, #whyImarch, and #sisttermarch. Participants can RSVP on the “Women’s March on Nairobi” Facebook event page. The march is inclusive and family-friendly, and all are welcome.

**For more information, please contact:**

**Neela Ghoshal, Progressive Americans in Kenya:** +254 729 466 685, [neelajoy@gmail.com](mailto:neelajoy@gmail.com). On Twitter: @NeelaGhoshal

**Nina Henning, Progressive Americans in Kenya:** +254 729 592 098, [nina.henning@gmail.com](mailto:nina.henning@gmail.com)

**Rachael Mwikali, Coalition for Grassroots Human Rights Defenders:** +254 723 764 748, [rachael.m.mwikali@gmail.com](mailto:rachael.m.mwikali@gmail.com). On Twitter: @rachaelmwiks

**Rita Mutheu Kigera, Her Voice Society Kenya:** +254 711 926 552, [ritakigera79@gmail.com](mailto:ritakigera79@gmail.com). On Twitter: @ritakigera

**Diana Gichengo, Kenya Human Rights Commission:** +254 722 264 497

Twitter: @thekhrc

**For the platform of the Women’s March on Washington, please see:**

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/584086c7be6594762f5ec56e/t/5877e24a29687f9613e546ff/1484251725855/WMW+Guiding+Vision+%26+Definition+of+Principles.pdf>