



KURA YANGU, SAUTI YANGU STATEMENT ON THE CHANGES TO THE ELECTORAL LAWS

Kura Yangu Sauti Yangu is greatly concerned with this week's events in the National Assembly regarding electoral laws specifically the amendments to the Elections Law (Amendment) Act of 2016.

The unilateral passing of the amendments to the aforementioned Act by Jubilee parliamentarians is worrying and contravenes the spirit of national dialogue which gave birth to the changes to this Act. Of major concern is the introduction of a complimentary mechanism to be used for voter identification and result transmission if technologies deployed during the 2017 general elections fail. We recall that the electoral technologies were introduced to curb voter fraud and other electoral malfeasance that had been witnessed during the previous elections; but importantly the said electoral technologies were meant to guarantee transparency, accountability and credibility of the electoral process and outcome.

Furthermore, special sitting that occasioned these amendments was accompanied by a media blackout, security deployment and intimidation of the judiciary that undermined our democratic principles at a time when they were most needed. Coupled with the recent worrying statements on inhibiting civic education and questioning the motives of civil society, the electoral environment is becoming alarmingly toxic and must be remedied as a matter of urgency.

As Kura Yangu Sauti Yangu we join other stakeholders in calling for dialogue among electoral stakeholders including the members of public on key electoral issues such as the use of technologies in the 2017 elections. We have consistently called for a multi-stakeholder dialogue process that would be inclusive and transparent to minimise political impasse as we have seen recently. Kura Yangu Sauti Yangu has developed a National Electoral Dialogue Framework attached hereto, and we remain committed to supporting all the political actors to resolve the challenges facing the 2017 General Elections.

1.

Co-Conveners

Finally, we want to reiterate that a national dialogue involving all stakeholders is critical towards a free, fair, peaceful, credible, transparent and accountable 2017 electoral process. Even as CORD plans for mass action come January 2017, we call upon all stakeholders especially Jubilee and CORD to embrace meaningful and inclusive dialogue that can restore the peoples' aspiration and covenant for a constitutional democracy. We now call upon the President not to assent to the amended version of this law and instead call for consultations among key electoral state and non-state stakeholders to resolve the crisis before it escalates any further. Rather than partisanship and political grandstanding, this is a time that calls for statesmanship and leadership that identifies with the principles of public participation, national cohesion and integrity.

About Kura Yangu, SautiYangu

Kura Yangu, SautiYangu is a citizen movement spearheaded by like-minded civil society organisations (CSOs) including the: Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC); Independent Medico-Legal Unit (IMLU); Constitution and Reforms Education Consortium (CRECO); InformAction; African Centre for Open Governance (AfriCOG); CSO Reference Group; Inuka Trust; Katiba Institute; Development through Media; and International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)-Kenya. They have come together to support Kenya's preparations for the 2017 elections with a view to ensuring the country minimises the risks related to the dysfunctional electoral systems and practices of the recent past.

**The Secretariat,
Kura Yangu Sauti Yangu - Coalition**
Kenya Human Rights Commission [KHRC]
Opposite Valley Arcade Shopping Center, Gitanga Road
P. O. Box 41079 - 00100, Nairobi
Website: www.khrc.or.ke
Media Inquiries: mmedi@khrc.or.ke

Co-Conveners

2.

