

Kmdj and Kenya Diaspora Representatives

Press conference: On change of Chapter 6; article 78(2) of Kenya constitution. Held on 19/07/15.

At: The Chalvey Community Centre, The Green, Slough. Berkshire SL1

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Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen and thank you for coming. The purpose of calling for this press conference, is as a result of deliberations that have been championed by Kenyans living abroad – “The Diaspora and their children” in conjunctions with the Kenya Movement for Democracy & Justice (KMDJ), and other Diaspora bodies whose consensus is on agitation to amend Chapter 6 Article 78(2) of the Kenyan constitution. As representatives of Kenyans living in the Diaspora we have birth, citizenry and moral rights to shape our country’s future.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

At a meeting with representatives of Kenyans living in the United Kingdom held on 5th July 2015 in West London, The

community leaders deliberated on the need to revitalise and connect Kenyan Diaspora and their children with good leadership representation focusing in enhancing leadership participation within their area of jurisdiction in Kenya.

In particular, the meeting expressed strong misgivings regarding the previous lack of engagement between Kenyans and institutions that genuinely have the background of reforming politics, governance, Kenyans plight and economy. Present members welcomed the desire to engage than before with Kenya via genuine political avenues, and praiseworthy initiatives of members present to work more closely with the community to harmonise and develop cordial and warm working relationship with identified institutions which harmonises communities throughout the country.

Having listened attentively to the views of the community representatives there was a general consensus, in our wisdom, observation that Kenyans both at home and in the global Diaspora and their children had a shared interest in the wellbeing and socio-economic progress of the nation and should work in partnership with each other as joint stakeholders in the development of the nation.

We recognise that over the years there has been a substantial migration of Kenyan citizens to Europe, North America, Middle East, other African nations and beyond and though they move away due to various different reasons, one thing they all have in common is a very strong commitment to their mother country. They continue to be patriotic to their homeland through remittance, investments, knowledge transfer and goodwill ambassadors to Kenya and seek out ways to be part and parcel of various initiatives

advocating for good political leadership in Kenya. Diaspora remittances amounted to USD \$1.47 billion in the 12 months leading up to May 2015.

As community leaders in UK under the umbrella of KMDJ-Diaspora Alliance we have agreed that our primary objective is to promote and enhance democracy in Kenya, with the main focus being to protect democratic ideals, promote human rights and urge for equitable exercise of the rule of law and due process. KMDJ-Diaspora Alliance will provide Kenyans in the Diaspora with an opportunity to participate in projects that enhance democratic politics in Kenya. In the years to come the Alliance will provide forums where Kenyans living in the Diaspora and their children and particularly in UK can work together closely to provide united efforts as they seek and present opinions and solutions on matters of democracy and governance. Seminars, debates, lectures and workshops will be held with like-minded people and organisations abroad and in Kenya, all seeking to support and promote effective leadership and form interactions that can develop result-oriented development programmes and establish effective, constructive, meaningful and long-lasting political initiatives in Kenya.

We will work with Kenyan companies, so that we can organise forums where the companies can be able to showcase the investment opportunities to Kenyan Diaspora and their children.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

KMDJ-Diaspora Alliance wish to declare today CHAPTER 6; Article 78(2) of the Kenya constitution flawed and

unfavourable to Kenyans in Diaspora and their children due to its demerit in refraining Kenyans of dual citizenship the chance to serve their country as elected or state officers.

For reference the article states that "***A state officer or a member of the defence forces shall not hold dual citizenship***"

It cannot be over emphasized the many skills and experience that the Kenyan Diaspora and their children have acquired that can be useful for the development and progress of their motherland both now and in future.

Many Kenyans from Diaspora tried to participate in the last general elections but could not be allowed due to the provision of this Chapter.

We believe in the due process of the law and as a result we have we have instructed our Lawyer, Gitobu Imanyara, and his team to take up Diaspora petition to the constitutional court immediately in a view of amending the clause as a matter of urgency because Kenyans in Diaspora would want to participate in leadership positions in Kenya.

We must laud our brothers particularly those in America for petitioning through the Kenyan courts so that we can be allowed to vote in the future elections. God bless KDA members for this bold step. We commend Kenyan courts for their diligent practice and impartiality in arriving at this decision that offers the Diaspora the opportunity to participate in elections and national referendums.

We are appealing for support of the Kenyan parliament, the government, civil societies and the opposition in this agenda of repealing this discriminative, flawed and unfavourable Chapter in our constitution in order to enable the Kenyan Diaspora and their children to participate in the development and advancement of their homeland.

In addition, we welcome like-minded political parties for negotiations in order to evaluate their political ideals so that we can form an alliance in a view of Diaspora political presentation in Kenya and in which Kenyan Diaspora and their children can use as a political vehicle to vie for elective positions in their respective counties.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

This process that has begun today is rooted to the Kenyan Diaspora and their children's keen interest to participate in development of Kenya politically, socially and economically. We will therefore be calling upon all Kenyan Diaspora to sign up a petition in support of this process as we seek to gather 1million signatures.

We will set up an e-petition webpage to achieve this.

Thank you God Bless you, and God bless Kenya

