



MOVING KENYA TOWARDS A STRONGER DEMOCRACY

**AN ADDRESS BY
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**THE CHAIRMAN OF THE INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL AND
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**DURING THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE POST-ELECTION
EVALUATION [PEE] WORKSHOP, KISUMU**

ON THE 25TH OF JUNE, 2018

Colleagues from the IEBC
Our Development Partners,
Representatives from the National and County
governments,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Morning!

I am very pleased to see you all here after a long rigorous election process and to welcome you to another workshop of the Post Election Evaluation for the 2017 August General Election and the October Fresh Presidential Election. Allow me to remind you as part of the introduction to my remarks – that as an organization we bear a very important constitutional and statutory mandate to ensure that we midwife democracy. Our mandate is the spring from which our country’s stability and growth stems. It is against this background that we must constantly review our processes and conduct to ensure we strive for the delivery of free, fair and credible elections. It is this aspiration that offers an apt background for the Post-election evaluation for which we are gathered here today.

The theme of this workshop is “**Moving Kenya Towards a Stronger Democracy**”. In tandem with this theme, I trust that our candid deliberations will help us to not only think on what we need to do, but also on how we are going to do it, so that in the end we identify solutions and make recommendations that will improve both the operational and legal environment of the Commission as an enabler of democracy in our country.

At the outset, I wish to thank our Development Partners in their support to assist the Commission in meeting its mandate as stipulated in the electoral cycle. The outcomes of this exercise will not only be shared with the public at a stakeholders’ forum, but also publicized after publication of the final report.

The conduct of any electoral activity cannot be deemed to be over until the post-election evaluation has been concluded. It is at this phase of the Electoral Cycle that we candidly look at the roles played by the various stakeholders, applaud and build on what was done well, highlight and review what did not go well and aim to better subsequent activities from the lessons learnt.

Ladies and Gentlemen it is very important for the Commission, to receive views and recommendations from all our stakeholders during the Post-Election Evaluation. As a Commission we recognize the centrality of our stakeholders in our activities and decisions, and we deliberately structure all our programmes to enable sufficient stakeholder input. Our strategic plan recognizes this as well. We will therefore be looking forward to receiving your views. We will be seeking to answer the following questions:

- How best did we play our individual roles in preparation for the 2017 Elections?
- How best did we execute our mandate and duty to the people of this Nation in a way that strengthens Democracy in Kenya?
- How better can we deliver on our mandate, within the various spheres?

It is now 10 months since the last General Election and 6 months after the Fresh Presidential election. Similarly, it is now 4 years to the next elections. Different stakeholders involved in the electoral process may have conducted their own evaluations, largely stemming from the election observation. Indeed, some have been kind enough to share their reports with the Commission, for which we appreciate and confirm that we will be considering the recommendations set-out therein.

This forum, and similar ones currently underway across the Country, gives us an opportunity to have candid discussions about our performance as IEBC in the general elections and do an evaluation of what worked well, what did not work, weaknesses and failures seen, and recommendations on what can be done to improve the overall conduct, management and administration of elections to make better the next election. This is a forward looking exercise that is meant to assist and strengthen democratic institutions to deliver on their mandate more effectively.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is also a constitutional requirement for the IEBC to submit regular reports to Parliament for purposes of informing Kenyans about the electoral undertakings and other activities that it was engaged in over a period of time. At the end of this exercise therefore, we expect to have a comprehensive Post-Election Evaluation Report which should result in a Strategic Plan that will guide the roadmap towards the next elections.

In conformity with the Commission's current Strategic Plan and the Electoral Cycle activities, I am informed that the PEE has been structured along three thematic areas, namely; Managing Elections, institutional Transformation and Trust, and lastly Participation. These are the three Pillars of our Vision on achieving developing the Commission into "a credible electoral management body committed to strengthen democracy in Kenya. All our electoral functions on the Legislative Framework, conduct of Voter Education and Partnerships, Voter Registration and Electoral Operations, Finance and Operations, Human Resource and Administration, Integrating ICT in the Conduct of Elections, Regulation of Political Parties and Candidates, Communication and Media Management, Managing Risks in Elections, Research and Planning fall within the three Strategic Pillars. The purpose of this workshop is to ensure that each and every thematic area is dealt with exhaustively by way of identifying the gaps (if any) in the functional areas and eventually proposing the best solutions to bridge those gaps.

You will all agree with me that this was a competitive election with a record number of candidates. On 8th of August 2018 a total of 1,882 elective positions were contested for by 16,259 candidates up from 12,776 in 2013. It was also the second elections since the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution that created six electoral positions that must be conducted in one day. Our hope today is to possibly find changes that will further improve on our processes and propel the country towards a stronger democracy.

Let me conclude by saying that I hope this workshop will bring new insights to our work. As usual I am sure that we will use the workshop to share and exchange our experiences but at the same time candidly question our methods of work and the yardsticks we use to measure success. As a Commission, we must purpose to put in place mechanisms to monitor and assess ourselves by applying the reporting and monitoring systems that we have discussed in the past.

As Chairman, I confirm to you that the Commission has a vision to facilitate meaningful reforms within the Commission. We have shared this position with both the National Assembly and the Senate and we will be sharing the same with you within the Post-Election Evaluation for as we interrogate how best to achieve some of these initiatives even as the Commission continuously endeavors to deliver on its constitutional mandate in line with the aspirations of the Kenyan people. These initiatives include:

i. Relocation of the IEBC HQ

- The acquisition of the Commission's own premises would cut recurrent costs through office space rent, hiring of venue for various Commission activities including meetings with stakeholders, nomination of candidates, trainings for staff and stakeholders, storage/warehousing for strategic and non-strategic material. This would in the long run save the Kenyan tax payers financial resources.

- Additionally, whenever there are grievances against the IEBC expressed by way of pickets and demonstrations, often business activities in the Central Business District (CBD) are disrupted taking a huge toll on the city's economy. It is therefore in the greater interest of the city business community and residents to have the operations of the Commission undertaken away from the CBD.

ii. Institutional restructuring:

- The current organizational structure has duplicity of functions, overlapping roles and a culture of silo mentality, thereby creating coordination and accountability challenges. Additionally, the current structure lacks career progression paths.
- There is therefore need to undertake institutional restructuring, to enhance efficiency and coordination in delivery of the Commission's mandate.

iii. Procurement Processes

- As stated earlier, the current cost of elections in Kenya is very high, which could be partly attributed to pilferage and wastage of public resources through procurement of various goods and services at the Commission.
- We propose a review of our internal processes in tandem with the Public Procurement and Assets Disposals Act, 2015, with a view to making them an open forum for enhanced transparency. This will enhance stakeholder participation in the process of procuring goods and services.

iv. Public vetting of all critical IEBC Staff

- In order to enhance the Commission's effectiveness and accountability, as well as restore public confidence. There is need to undertake public vetting of all staff manning critical functions, where stakeholders will be given an opportunity to raise concerns about our staff.

v. Plenary meetings

- To ensure accountability and objectivity in the Commissioners' debates at Plenary meetings, there is need to Implement a Hansard style of recording Plenary proceedings. The Hansard will be available to all interested stakeholders. This will ultimately enhance transparency in the Commission's decision making processes.

vi. Commission's Devolved Structures

- Upon assumption of office, we adopted a resolution to devolve the Commission structures from 17 regional offices to the current 47 county election management offices. This was to align the Commission to the Country's devolved governance structure, and to enhance operations and service delivery.

- The Commission aims to enhance the capacity of our devolved offices, complete with year-long activities on better implementation of our core mandate including continuous voter registration, continuous voter education, electoral reform processes. Similarly, we will undertake strategic activities and address a key challenge of the Commission trust and public confidence including programmes to demystify elections management, cultivate apt democratic culture in schools, facilitate development of political parties [in liaison with the Office of the Registrar of Political parties] and conduct of internal elections.

I wish you all very fruitful discussions and I look forward to the deliberations and recommendations at the end of the workshop. Thank you very much for listening to me. God bless you all and God bless Kenya.

W.W. CHEBUKATI

CHAIRMAN