Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SUBJECT: HIGH-LEVEL CONSULTATIVE MEETING BETWEEN IEBC AND LEADERS OF POLITICAL PARTIES HELD ON 19TH NOVEMBER 2026 IN NAIROBI

Nairobi, Kenya: 20th November, 2026

1. As part of its ongoing stakeholder engagement programme, the Commission convened a high-level consultative meeting with political party leaders and their representatives on Thursday, 19th November 2026, in Nairobi. The meeting brought together leaders from both the Government and Opposition sides and was intended to provide an open and constructive platform for dialogue on the state of preparedness for the 2027 General Election.

2. The meeting was particularly important for three reasons. First, it provided an opportunity for the Commission to present a comprehensive update on its preparedness, highlighting milestones achieved, activities underway and challenges requiring attention. Second, it offered political party leaders an opportunity to raise concerns, seek clarification and share their perspectives on the electoral process. Third, it provided a platform for the Commission and political stakeholders to identify areas requiring collaboration and agree on practical ways of strengthening confidence in the forthcoming elections.

3. The Commission wishes to thank all the political party leaders and representatives who honoured the invitation and attended the meeting. We particularly appreciate their time, commitment and willingness to engage with the Commission on matters of national importance.

4. In the spirit of inclusivity and accommodation, the Commission made adjustments to the meeting programme, including accommodating a request by Opposition leaders to vary the scheduled starting time. The Commission did so in recognition of the importance of ensuring that all stakeholders had an opportunity to participate meaningfully in the discussions.

5. The Commission, however, regrets that a section of the Opposition leaders opted to leave the meeting after making their preliminary remarks and presenting their demands, before the Commission could make its presentation and

substantive dialogue could commence. Consequently, these leaders missed an opportunity to receive firsthand information on the Commission's state of preparedness, the progress made, the challenges being addressed and the measures being undertaken to deliver credible elections.

6. Equally, the Commission and the people of Kenya missed an important opportunity to hear directly from these leaders on the concerns they represent, including their proposed irreducible minimums and demands for electoral reforms ahead of the 2027 General Election.

7. The Commission recognises that political parties and their leaders have a legitimate role in raising concerns, proposing reforms and holding institutions accountable. Indeed, the Commission is committed to listening to all stakeholders, including those with reservations about aspects of the electoral process. However, we believe that such concerns are best addressed through structured, constructive and sustained engagement, where issues can be presented, interrogated and responded to in a manner that leads to practical solutions.

8. The Commission remains ready to receive formal submissions from political parties on their proposed electoral reforms. Such submissions will provide an opportunity for the Commission to examine the proposals within its constitutional and legal mandate and, where necessary, engage the relevant institutions responsible for addressing matters that fall outside its direct mandate.

9. Walking away from dialogue before substantive discussions begin does not advance the resolution of electoral concerns. It deprives all parties of the opportunity to exchange views, clarify positions and build consensus on matters that are critical to the credibility of the electoral process. We therefore urge all political leaders to remain engaged, exercise restraint and approach future consultations in good faith and with a genuine commitment to finding solutions in the interest of the country.

10. The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) wishes to reaffirm its commitment to conducting free, fair, credible, transparent, inclusive and peaceful elections in accordance with the Constitution of Kenya and the applicable laws.

11. Elections are a fundamental constitutional process through which the people of Kenya exercise their sovereign

power and political rights to determine who will represent and lead them at the various elective levels of government. Under Article 88 of the Constitution, the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission is mandated to conduct or supervise elections and referenda to elective bodies and offices established by the Constitution and any other elections prescribed by an Act of Parliament.

12. Article 81 of the Constitution sets out the principles that must underpin Kenya's electoral system. These include the freedom of citizens to exercise their political rights; the requirement that not more than two-thirds of the members of elective public bodies shall be of the same gender; fair representation of persons with disabilities; and universal suffrage founded on fair representation and equality of the vote. It further requires elections to be free and fair, conducted by secret ballot, free from violence, intimidation, improper influence or corruption, conducted by an independent body, transparent, and administered impartially, neutrally, efficiently, accurately and accountably.

13. The people of Kenya, through the Constitution, established the IEBC as an independent institution to safeguard and facilitate the exercise of their political rights, both as voters and as candidates seeking elective office. Over the years, the Commission has provided Kenyans with opportunities to elect their representatives and has facilitated eligible citizens who offer themselves for leadership to participate in electoral contests. In doing so, the Commission serves all Kenyans equally, without favour or discrimination, irrespective of their political affiliation, status or position.

14. The independence of the Commission is a constitutional safeguard deliberately provided for under Article 249(2), which stipulates that commissions and independent offices are subject only to the Constitution and the law and are not subject to the direction or control of any person or authority. This independence is essential to the integrity of the electoral process and must be respected by all individuals, institutions and stakeholders. It does not, however, insulate the Commission from legitimate public scrutiny, accountability or constructive engagement. On the contrary, the Commission welcomes dialogue, scrutiny and feedback that are consistent with the Constitution and the law.

15. It is within this constitutional framework that the Commission continues to discharge its mandate. In the recent

past, the Commission has successfully concluded 32 by-elections across the country. These experiences have continued to inform and strengthen our preparations for the forthcoming 2027 General Election. The Commission is working within its Strategic Plan and Election Operations Plan to ensure that all critical electoral activities are undertaken in a timely, coordinated and transparent manner.

On the Reported Incident of Harassment and Disruption

16. The Commission is concerned by reports of harassment and intimidation of some invited party leaders during the meeting. The Commission strongly condemns any acts of intimidation, harassment or disruption directed at participants attending a lawful stakeholder engagement forum.

17. Such conduct is unacceptable and has no place in a constitutional democracy founded on the rule of law, respect for human dignity and freedom of association and expression. Political differences must never be used to justify violence, intimidation or the suppression of another person's right to participate in public discourse.

18. The Commission expects all political parties - their members, leaders, supporters, security personnel and other associates - to conduct themselves responsibly and to respect the rights and dignity of other stakeholders. No individual or group should take it upon themselves to intimidate, threaten or harass others on account of their political affiliation or views.

19. The Commission will review the circumstances surrounding the reported incidents and take appropriate measures within its mandate, while working with the relevant security agencies to ensure that future stakeholder engagements are safe, orderly and conducive to meaningful participation.

On Compliance with the Electoral Code of Conduct

20. The Commission further reminds all political parties, candidates and their supporters that the Electoral Code of Conduct is in force and must be respected throughout the electoral process. Article 84 of the Constitution expressly requires all candidates and political parties to comply with the Code of Conduct prescribed by the Commission.

21. The Code provides an important framework for promoting peaceful political competition, mutual respect, tolerance

and responsible conduct. Political parties and their leaders are expected to demonstrate leadership by ensuring that their members and supporters uphold these standards.

22. The Commission will not condone conduct that undermines the integrity of the electoral process, threatens the safety of stakeholders or violates the law. Any reported breaches will be addressed through the appropriate mechanisms and in accordance with due process.

A Call for Collaboration and Continuous Dialogue

23. As the country moves closer to the 2027 General Election scheduled for 10th August 2027, the Commission recognises that delivering credible elections is a collective national responsibility. While IEBC has the constitutional mandate to conduct and supervise elections, the success of the electoral process requires the cooperation and commitment of all stakeholders.

24. We, therefore, call upon political parties, political leaders, the Government, civil society organisations, religious institutions, the media, development partners, security agencies, the youth, persons with disabilities and all Kenyans to work closely with the Commission in preparing for the forthcoming General Election.

25. We appeal to all stakeholders to respect the constitutional mandate and independence of the Commission, uphold the equality of all Kenyans before the law and conduct themselves in a manner that safeguards the sovereign will of the people. Every Kenyan, whether participating as a voter, candidate, political party official, election observer or other stakeholder, deserves equal respect and treatment under the law.

26. The Commission wishes to assure Kenyans that it remains open to engagement and will continue consultations and dialogue with political parties and all other stakeholders throughout the electoral cycle, up to and including the successful completion of the 2027 General Election. We shall continue providing platforms for stakeholders to raise concerns, make proposals and contribute to strengthening the electoral process.

27. Our commitment is to ensure that every eligible Kenyan has an opportunity to participate in the electoral process and that the sovereign will of the people is respected. We must collectively protect the integrity of our democratic

institutions and safeguard the peace, unity and stability of our country.

"The 2027 General Election is a shared national undertaking, anchored in the sovereign will, voice and choice of the people of Kenya."



ERASTUS EDUNG ETHEKON, HSC

CHAIRPERSON, INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL AND BOUNDARIES COMMISSION (IEBC)