



15<sup>th</sup> May 2016

## PRESS RELEASE

### KURA YANGU SAUTI YANGU

A coalition of like-minded civil society organizations, who have come together to proactively support Kenya's preparations for the 2017 elections with a view to ensuring that the country minimizes the risks related to dysfunctional electoral competition which the country has experienced in the recent elections, launched a citizen initiative dubbed **Kura Yangu Sauti Yangu**.

**Kura Yangu, Sauti Yangu** seeks to provide a platform for a political dialogue, input and answers to six key electoral issues that need political interventions and to encourage public discussions around those issues, collect proposals from all electoral stakeholders and encourage the implementation of such proposals. The dialogues are to help address issues that could lead to challenges towards the 2017 general elections as were experienced in 2007 and 2013 general elections.

The coalition has identified and not limited to, the following issues;

- 1. Leadership and governance in the management of elections:** There is need for a political discussion to provide guidance on how the transition within IEBC should be managed. The IEBC has also faced unresolved accusations of bribery involving some of its members, which have an effect on its standing and integrity. At the same time, the management of resources that the IEBC had in its control of the 2013 elections faced challenges with independent watch-dogs making findings that the IEBC did not make the most prudent budgetary decisions for the 2013 elections. Assurances would need to be provided that the resources to be made available to the IEBC for the 2017 elections will not meet the same fate.
- 2. Security in electoral governance:** The threat of violence marred voter registration and turnout in certain parts of the country during the 2013 elections. Measures to prevent a repeat of this occurrence need to be agreed on before the 2017 elections. Importantly, there is need to have a discussion around measures that the government can put in place to ensure that the 2017 electoral process is peaceful.

Media Inquiries: Catherine Kamatu / CKamatu@khrc.or.ke/0728815266

- 3. *Discrimination in electoral governance:*** There is need to have political discussions around the implementation of the 2/3 gender rule and the political participation of other special interest groups. Further there is need to begin to deconstruct the deeply entrenched concept of ethnic mobilization of voters.
- 4. *Dispute resolution in electoral governance:*** The Judiciary is a key player in electoral process. However, the Supreme Court faces significant internal challenges which if not addressed will reduce public confidence in the preparations for the 2017 elections. A collective reflection on how to manage the internal challenges facing the Judiciary and, in particular Supreme Court, is necessary as part of the preparations for the 2017 elections.
- 5. *Coordination among public agencies working on elections:*** Public agencies working on elections need to find ways of working together, rather than in silos, and also need to demonstrate their capacity to work together, as a confidence building measure. There is need for a discussion around the extent to which key government institutions working on elections are coordinating their work and there is a need to develop measures through which this can be demonstrated for greater public confidence.
- 6. *The credibility of the electoral governance process:*** The 2013 elections faced challenges based on the failures that were experienced in the technologies used to manage the elections, the management of the voter registration process including the voters' roll. In view of this, there is need for a discussion on the role of technologies in the 2017 elections, and what guarantees are available that there will be no repeat of the previous failures; and discussions around what constitutes a voter register in Kenya, and valid votes vs. votes cast. This will entail having political discussions around the use of technologies in elections, the management of the registration process, the management of the register of voters, and the tallying of presidential results.

**ENDS**

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](http://www.khrc.or.ke)

Media Inquiries: Catherine Kamatu / CKamatu@khrc.or.ke/0728815266