



Kenya National Commission on Human Rights

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Press Statement on the Public Inquiry on Insecurity in the Coast Region and its Impact on the Enjoyment of Human Rights and Freedoms

The Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) is an independent Commission entrenched in the Constitution of Kenya under Article 59 and operationalised by the KNCHR Act No.14 of 2011 with a core mandate of ensuring the protection and promotion of human rights in Kenya.

The Constitution vests in the Commission watchdog and advisory roles so as to ensure the promotion and protection of Human Rights in public and private institutions.

In execution of its mandate; the Commission is here today in Mombasa County to launch and commence the second phase of a national public inquiry into the status of security and its impact on the enjoyment of human rights and freedoms with a special focus on **Mombasa, Kwale, Tana River and Lamu Counties**.

The Public Inquiry will be conducted from today **24th October, 2016 to 11th November, 2016** at the following venues:

- i. Mombasa from 24th to 26th October, 2016;
- ii. Kwale from 27th to 29th October, 2016;
- iii. Tana River in Hola and Garsen from 30th October to 4th November, 2016;
- iv. Lamu from 5th November to 11th November, 2016

Members of the public from these Counties and indeed from all the other Counties in the Coast region will be given an opportunity to present their submissions directly to the Commission either at the public hearings or at the in-camera sessions.

We have also invited other entities such as the duty- bearers in the National and County Governments' ministries, departments and agencies, business entities and

non-state actors such as the civil society, faith based organizations and various community groups within the Coast region.

The hearings are hinged on stakeholders' forums, community dialogue meetings, community empowerment forums, investigations into reported human rights violations, witness interviews, statements recording and consultative meetings.

Key themes that have emerged and that will be articulated during the hearings include:

- i. Violation of land rights;
- ii. Extra judicial Killings;
- iii. Enforced disappearances;
- iv. Drug abuse;
- v. Mushrooming of criminal gangs;
- vi. Harassment and assault by security officers;
- vii. Corruption and extortion by the security agencies;
- viii. Animal-human Conflict;
- ix. Terrorism profiling and intimidation;
- x. Political interferences and electoral violence and
- xi. Inter- ethnic conflict and tension

Prior to these hearings, the Commission has undertaken investigations and has published reports on insecurity; these include:

- i. Twenty Nine (29) days of Terror in Tana River County published in 2012;
- ii. The Era of Fighting Terror with "Terror" in 2015 and
- iii. Assessment Report of the Human Rights Situation – Post Mpeketoni Attacks in 2014

These Commissions' reports detail the spiraling insecurity and its impact in the country and makes far reaching recommendations, including the need to conduct a more comprehensive public inquiry into the matters of insecurity. Therefore, the Coast Region public inquiry on insecurity which we launch today seeks to:

- i. Respond to the systemic nature of insecurity that has been identified in the past;
- ii. Audit the effects and impact of insecurity on the enjoyment of human rights and freedoms and
- iii. Make recommendations on steps to secure appropriate redress and the structures that may be needed to tighten the security situation in the larger Coast region.

The findings, results and recommendations shall be published and shared with key and relevant players in both public and private institutions for remedial action. The Commission shall further submit the report with the recommendations to the National Assembly and the President with a view to inform reforms especially in the security sector.

As the Commission works towards delivering on its constitutional mandate of protecting, promoting and monitoring human rights issues, it calls upon the full public participation of the local communities and groups; and the support of relevant stakeholders and indeed the media in publicizing the hearings, findings and recommendations of the final public inquiry report.

KAGWIRIA MBOGORI

**CHAIRPERSON:
KENYA NATIONAL COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS**