



Kenya National Commission on Human Rights

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Compromising the right to education

Article 53 of the constitution guarantees every child the right to right to free and compulsory basic education and also provides that a child's best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child.

We are concerned that in the impasse between the government and the Kenya National Union of Teachers the children's interests in the matter have been relegated to the back burner.

Since 1998 the academic calendar in public schools has been repeatedly disrupted as teachers resort to industrial action to agitate for improved remuneration, the cumulative effect of the Strikes has been to compromise the quality of education. For instance a recent study demonstrated that there is Uwezo Kenya report 2012

Increasingly we are demonstrating to the children that matters cannot be resolved except through conflict. This does not augur well for the inculcation of national values and principles in our children.

As the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights we reiterate that the government has the legal responsibility to ensure the realization of the right to education. As Kenyans we have a collective moral obligation to create a conducive environment for the development of our children.

The government action to improve access to education through the introduction of free primary education and subsidized secondary education became an example to many African countries. It is unfortunate the national dream of universal access to quality education may not be actualized.

The Commission is concerned, that even before children settle back and learning resumes after the protracted strike in the months of June and July we are again faced with threats of an impending strike that has been categorized as 'reloaded.'



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KNCHR intervention

In an effort to resolve this crisis the Commission will be writing to the Cabinet Secretaries of Education and Labor together with the Teachers union with a view of providing mediation services. It is our hope that both parties will respond positively to our offer within the next 7 days.

In the unfortunate event that this offer is not taken up and the matter is not resolved amicably the Commission will exercise its constitutional mandate in the public interest to secure the rights of Kenyan Children.

The end /.....

Commissioner Ann M. Ngugi,

Signed..... Dated.....