



ICPAK PRESS STATEMENT

6th July 2017

Ladies and gentlemen of Forth Estate, we are very pleased to welcome you to our press conference.

Our press statement covers four areas:

- a) Need for peaceful campaigns and respect the Rule of Law
- b) Political party manifestos
- c) Labour relations, and
- d) Mutual Recognition Agreement with South Africa Institute of Chartered Accountants

(a) Need for Peaceful Campaigns and respect the Rule of Law

The Country is currently in an electioneering mood. As we prepare for the General Elections slated for the 8th August 2017, the Institute wishes commend candidates for the upcoming elections for conducting peaceful campaigns. However, the Institute is concerned with pockets of incitement and violence being witnessed in some parts of the Country.

We urge politicians to desist from making inflammatory and inciteful remarks during this critical electioneering period. This will ensure a peaceful election on 8th August 2017. As you may be aware, election has been an emotive issue, which if not well handled can degenerate into unwarranted social, political and economic disruption. Studies has shown that Kenya's Economic Cycle tends to follow a rhythmic pattern, whereby once every five years, the country registers low GDP growth and a reduced Foreign Direct Investment inflows. As of today, Kenya has held 10 General elections since independence in 1963. Unfortunately, in the seven (7) of these elections, the rate of economic growth slowed down in the year after the election.

To mitigate these adverse effects, the Institute proposes the following:

- Candidates must uphold peaceful campaigns to assure investors and Kenyans at large that we remain open for business even in an election year

- We must uphold the rule of law as enshrined in the Constitution of Kenya 2010 to ensure peaceful elections
- Stakeholders in electoral process such as the Police, IEBC, media and Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission should maintain their impartiality to deliver a credible election in August.

(b) Political Party Manifestos

The Institute applauds political parties that have launched and made their Manifestos public. Indeed, in the last two weeks, the Jubilee Coalition, National Super Alliance and Third Way Alliance have launched their Manifestos. As you may be aware, Manifestos represent a key cornerstone of Kenya's electoral democracy as it gives the electorates a fair idea of plans of candidates and political parties vying for their precious votes. Even more importantly, it provides a sound basis for judging the performance of the ruling class when given the mandate to govern.

The Institute believes that party manifestos are useful and serve as an important benchmark for measuring the performance and ensuring that governments once elected are accountable to the electorate. As we analyze them, attention needs to be dedicated on the following questions:

- What are the funding mechanisms for the identified priorities in the Manifestos?
- How realistic and measurable are some of the policy priorities?
- Have they factored in the major issues affecting Kenyans such as food security and corruption among others?

The Institute calls upon Kenyans of all walks of life such as professionals, businessmen, politicians, students, clergy and voters to help IEBC conduct and deliver a credible election. We understand politicians are key stakeholders in this process and therefore they should exercise caution by engaging IEBC on issue based concerns. The media should participate by providing a balanced coverage without prejudice. State agencies and civil servants should exercise impartiality during this campaign period. The populace and registered voters should avoid playing into traps of political class by exercising their civic duty to vote credible candidates.

(c) Labour relations

The Institute has noted with concern the ongoing industrial action by professionals drawn from various sectors such as doctors, nurses, lecturers and other university staff members. Whereas the constitution in Article 4 subsection (2) (d) allows workers strike, we strongly feel that such measure should only be used as a tool of last resort and when it becomes necessary to result to such eventuality, such action should always be informed by among others; public interest, vulnerability of users of professional services, and the need to maintain a good public image locally and internationally.

The Institute recognizes the fundamental rights to workers as stipulated by Article 41 of the Constitution of Kenya. However, we are concerned with the increasing trends of industrial strikes in Kenya over the past one year. We all remember the Doctors strike which became the longest strike ever witnessed in Kenya's history (100 days).

The Country has also experienced disruption of services in the education sector when teachers and lecturers went on strike. It is on this basis that we now call upon the government and concerned parties to deal with this matter expeditiously and in the spirit of give and take. The government and trade unions to work towards the development of a solid dispute resolution mechanism between the government and the labour market for the benefit of all Kenyans.

(d) Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) with South Africa Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA)

In pursuit of our mandate to promote the international recognition of the Institute and its members, the Institute has entered into an MRA with the South Africa Institute of Chartered Accountants. The scope of the MRA is guided by the objectives to lessen bottlenecks to full recognition. It strives to address the varied qualification frameworks and registration requirements. Though not a full MRA, it however creates an avenue and mechanisms for recognition of each partie's qualifications.

It is worth noting that by this provision, this agreement provides a pathway for members of the Institute holding Bachelors' degrees and with verifiable work experience a direct route to SAICA

membership. This is very beneficial to the members of the Institute, and a key milestone for the Kenyan profession.

FCPA Julius Mwatu

National Chairman, ICPAK
