**ICPAK STATEMENT ON THE CIVIL SERVANTS WHO WERE SUBJECTED AND CLEARED THROUGH THE JUST CONCLUDED VETTING PROCESS**

**Introduction**

The Institute commends His Excellency the President’s decision to subject procurement and accounting officers to a vetting process in order to ascertain their suitability to hold public office. Indeed, in address to the nation during the Madaraka day celebrations , the President announced plans to vet all procurement and accounting officers. The exercise was meant to exorcise the ghost of corruption and graft which continues to haunt our public institutions.

As a profession, we respect the process which took about a hundred days before it was concluded, and the verdict given on each of the concerned officers. About 300 officers were given a clean bill of health and allowed to resume their duties accordingly.

The government should now strive to gain trust from targeted officials. In as far as the government has an uphill task of explaining why it became necessary for these officials to step aside while previous vetting of judges and magistrates as well as that of law enforcement officers were entrenched in statutes and these officers were never requested to step aside during the vetting process, the heads of procurement and accounting units equally are professionals who have acquired their skills through a rigorous process. It is only fair that they are accorded the much-needed decorum even after being subjected to the vetting process.

However, having gone through this noble process, we must now be guided by our Constitution, international best labour practices, rules of natural justice and all other existing laws regulating employer-employee relationship. We must guard against turning this well-meaning process into a witch-hunt expedition.

The Institute would like to express its concern on the way those who have already been cleared are being treated by their employers. They are being treated as culprits, yet they were never found culpable of any wrong doing. The process must also navigate away from the pitfalls of personal vendetta and outright witch-hunt. If this process is not insulated from these pitfalls, it can turn into another witch-hunting debacle akin to what transpired in the dark ages in the continental Europe or better still Josef Stalin’s purges in the former Soviet Union.

We must appreciate and give honor to these officers who endured a tormenting over one hundred days. As much as we respect the right of the employer in this case the government, these officers are being denied access to their previous offices or being redeployed to unrelated departments which are not in line with their professional skills and expertise.

**Appeal to the President**

The Institute would wish to appeal to Head of Public Service to oversee that institutions reinstate these officers to their official roles or deploy the officers to the matching roles. The ministries and state corporations concerned should adhere to the dictates of the constitutionalism and all prevailing labour laws and regulations. It will be unwise to pass judgement on these officers who have been subjected to this rigorous process and found fit to hold office. They should not be subjected to ridicule and humiliation. In criminal law, Blackstone’s ratio holds that, *“It is better to let a guilty man go free than to let an innocent man go to jail.”*

Therefore, professional accountants who have been cleared should be left to resume their professional services without any form of hindrances and intimidation.

**Conclusion**

At the same time, the Institute would like to reiterate its commitment in enforcing professional codes among its members. In this regard, we request the concerned parties to provide us with details of officers who may have been found liable for Institute to embark on our internal disciplinary mechanisms.

**CPA Edwin Makori**

**Chief Executive Officer**