



PURPLE TRIUMPH CONFERENCE

YOUNG WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

“ENGAGING WITH DEVOLUTION FOR DEVELOPMENT”

PRESS STATEMENT

29<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2013

We Young women leaders and county representatives, meeting under the umbrella of **Young Women County Legislators**, wish to address the Nation as follows:

2013 March Elections: Lessons for the IEBC and Political Parties

The 2013 March elections has provided Kenyan people, the Government, the Electoral body and Political Parties an opportunity to address shortcomings that may have arisen and were either unforeseen or not well prepared for. Some of the issues that need to be effectively addressed before the next elections is the high cost of participation by young people in the political process. There is need to ensure that the cost of young people participating in political processes is significantly lowered to encourage more young people to participate. Focus should be particularly given to encourage young women to participate. Challenges such as payment of nomination fees at both the political parties and the electoral body should be waived for youth, and security concerns addressed with regard to young women who are often targeted by hooligans hired by political competitors. Though we acknowledge the strides made so far with the election and nomination of young people in the National Assembly, Senate and County Assembly more needs to be done to have young people in appointive positions such as those of Cabinet Secretaries, Principal Secretaries, and Board Members of the various national organs.

We also urge the Executive, Parliament and the electoral body to introduce the Campaign Finance Bill as soon as possible and encourage public participation on the Bill to prepare the framework to level the political field with regard to competitive elections that has often favoured those with financial muscles at the expense of more qualified leaders.

### Affirmative Action within Affirmative Action

We as Young Women County Legislators and Leaders are also seeking for the implementation of affirmative action within affirmative action. Young women are often locked out of both the youth category and the women category of affirmative action and more needs to be done to increase the participation of young women in both the political and social processes of Kenya's development in line with the principle of inclusiveness and attainment of vision 2030. We however wish to applaud the Jubilee Coalition that after the petition to all political parties to apply affirmative action within affirmative action, they did so. Provide the statistics for all women who were nominated and their parties.

We note that various Bills that were to be introduced to promote inclusiveness and affirmative action such as the Equal Opportunity Bill & the Affirmative Action Bill are yet to be introduced in Parliament. The Bills should be introduced as soon as possible and public participation facilitated to allow for young women, Youth and the marginalized groups to have a say on the bills that would facilitate greater access to opportunities, services and resources for the full enjoyment of their political, social and cultural rights that have often eluded them.

We further note with concern that youth have still not been appointed in key decision making positions and especially those that directly affect their lives. It is still not clear who is heading the Youth Department, the Youth Enterprise Development Fund has no CEO, Board members have not been appointed among other prevailing needs.

### Devolution Implementation

We join our voice on the current debate on devolution and state categorically that devolution is not an option but a constitutional requirement sanctioned by the people of Kenya. Any attempts to dilute or do away with devolution will be against the will of the people as ratified by the referendum that led to the promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya. We urge both the county and national government to fully support the transition of services to the counties and to offer assistance both technical and financial on any teething problems that may occur during the implementation of devolution.

County assemblies as a critical organ of devolution needs to be fully supported as their role in legislating is key to the implementation of national policies and development of the counties. Vision 2030 requires that county assemblies have the capacity to pass sound laws that will aid in the attainment of the goals set by vision 2030.

### Youth Funds

The 6 billion Youth Fund as allocated by His Excellency the President, Uhuru Kenyatta as one of his campaign promises, should benefit the recipients and not to be tied into other developmental concerns. We highly recommend that consultations be held with young people to understand and appreciate their needs, experiences with the youth fund and their most preferred model.

Conclusion

We reiterate our commitment as young women leaders to pursue a leadership agenda and to ensure that opportunities are created and facilitated to ensure the young women, youth and marginalized communities have a greater say in the economic development of the counties.

Signed by Young Women County Legislators