



Kenya Diaspora Alliance (KDA)

P.O. Box 58638 (00200)

NAIROBI, KENYA

Cell/KE: 0725-016679

P.O. Box 2805

WASHINGTON, DC, 20005, USA

E-mail: info@kenyadiasporaalliance.org

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1,000 DIASPORA TO MEET IN NAIROBI TO DISCUSS 2017 ELECTIONS

PRESS RELEASE!! FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE!

At an estimated 3-4 million, Kenyans abroad constitute about 15% of eligible Kenyan voting population. In May 2015, the Supreme Court ruled that Diaspora have to be facilitated to vote (<http://www.kdhc.co.ke/conference-downloads.html>), and that the IEBC has to put in place the necessary infrastructure to enable them to register and vote. Little is on the ground to show this happening.

The Kenya Diaspora Alliance (KDA) is a registered Federation of 41 major Diaspora organizations with a nominal combined membership of 250,000 Kenyans across the world. It believes that an election that deliberately and structurally disenfranchises such a large voting population cannot be under any circumstance **credible, free and fair**. If Moses can't go to the mountain, the mountain will come to Moses. The Diaspora have decided to do precisely that. These "Forgotten Kenyans" too have smelt the coffee and resolved not again to be excluded from matters of managing corporate Kenya, in which we should all be equal stakeholders.

From December 14-16, over a thousand Diaspora from diverse parts of the globe will congregate in Nairobi to discuss "**Diaspora Vote and Youth Empowerment**". Several distinguished Speakers are expected, among them H.E. Erastus Mwencha, Vice Chairperson, AU Commission, Amb Dennis Awori, Chairperson KEPSA and Former Ambassador to Japan, and Dr Moses Ikiara, Managing Director and CEO, Kenya Investment Authority (KenInvest), all of them being Diasporians in their own right.

In the 2013 elections, only a handful Diaspora in the EAC region were facilitated to vote, prompting KDA to go to court on behalf of the larger Diaspora community to enjoy these inalienable rights. Being consistently the highest single foreign exchange earner for Kenya over the past 10 years (at US\$ 2 billion annually), and perhaps the only sector to have witnessed a 2 digit growth every year in that period, Diaspora is an important segment of the Kenyan society that should not be neglected. Recent events in Europe with Brexit and last week's elections in North America with Trexit have only emboldened Diaspora's interest in matters of Kenya's governance.

A number of Diaspora candidates including presidential, gubernatorial, senatorial and parliamentary will feature during the event, and so will most of the Presidents/Chairpersons of the various organizations that constitute KDA. A number of local and global firms interested in Diaspora clients, as well as those engaged in empowerment of young people – both abroad and in-country – will also be in attendance.

Signed:



Dr Shem J. Ochuodho

KDA's Global Chairperson