



Kenya Diaspora Alliance (KDA)

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5th June, 2019

Hon. Justin Muturi, EGH, MP
Speaker of the National Assembly
NAIROBI, KENYA

OPEN LETTER TO HON SPEAKER: *DIASPORA NI MKENYA AND SO ARE DUAL CITIZENS – NOT A REASON TO DENY MWENDE MWINZI OPPORTUNITY TO BE KENYA’S AMBASSADOR*

For Immediate Release

This is further to our earlier communication dated 30th May, 2019, on the same subject matter.

Firstly, we wish to compliment and thank the Hon Chair and Members of the Defence and Foreign Relations Committee for approving appointment of a dual citizen, Madam Mwende Mwinzi as Ambassador, even though with a rider to renounce her other citizenship.

The Kenya Diaspora Alliance (KDA) considers the matter to renounce other citizenship no longer a “Mwende issue”, but an affront on all diaspora, dual citizens, women, children of diasporas and all future generations of Kenyans residing abroad. Would the same questions being raised pertain if she were a man? Allowed to stand, this decision would have immeasurable negative consequences in the future. It is with that seriousness that we have elected to beseech Hon Members of Parliament (The Whole House) to reconsider and expunge this requirement on Madam Mwende to renounce her other citizenship.

The **Constitution** is the Supreme Law. The stated **Articles 31** and **51(1)** of the **Leadership and Integrity Act**, cited to deny the Nominee her inalienable citizenship rights are oblivious of **Article 234 (3)** which distinguishes ambassadors and diplomatic officers as unique ‘public officers’, with very distinct attributes to those of ‘state officers’. It states in Clause 3, to remove any grain of doubt:-

Clauses (1) and (2) shall not apply to any of the following offices in the public service:-

(a) State offices

(b) An office of high commissioner, ambassador or other diplomatic or consular representative of the Republic.

We call upon the Hon Members of Parliament to use this opportunity to commence a deliberate effort, as espoused in the **National Diaspora Policy**, launched by H.E. the President in February 2015, to mainstream diaspora into Kenya's national psyche. Apart from their immense contribution to Kenya's economy, the skills, talent, intellectual capital and global business networks that diaspora – particularly dual citizens – bring to bear is immeasurable. In financial terms, at KSh 270 billion a year, remittances already supersede earnings from all three leading agricultural exports put together (tea, horticulture and coffee at 240 billion) or two top forex earners (tea and tourism at 220 billion). It is also more than double all foreign direct investments (FDI) in any single year.

We urge Hon Members to seize the opportunity to make these 'Forgotten Kenyans' too to start feeling belonging.

Signed: 
Dr Shem Ochuodho
Global Chairman, KDA

Cc: Hon. Katoo ole Metito, MP
Chairperson, Defence and Foreign Relations Committee
National Assembly