



INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL AND BOUNDARIES COMMISSION

IEBC BRIEF DURING THE LAUNCH OF VOTER REGISTRATION

EXERCISE AT KICC

(19TH NOVEMBER 2012, KICC)

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Observe all Protocol....

Your Excellency Sir, we are here this morning to witness the official launch of the fresh voter registration exercise using the Biometric Voter Registration (BVR). It is indeed a great honour to the Commission to have you as the first registered voter in the fresh voter registration exercise under the BVR system. This is a great milestone towards the **March 4th 2013 general elections**.

Your Excellency Sir, we all recognize that election is a process and not a simple event of casting votes on the polling day. We first had to put the Legal Framework in place, and the subsidiary legislation that gives effect to this legal framework has since been gazetted. What remains now is for the players to learn the game and play fairly.

It is no secret **Your Excellency Sir** that we have had our challenges as a country and as a Commission. The newly procured BVR kits are now here

and ready for use. What remains now is for citizens to exercise their democratic right to decide on the governance of our beloved Kenya.

Your Excellency Sir, a lot has been said about the capability of the BVR System. We would like to continue assuring Kenyans of the performance and accuracy of the system. We further wish to assure the country of its safety on the health of the users. The system poses no effect on the voters whatsoever. We therefore wish to dispel any misconceived fears and myths about the effects of the BVR Kits. The system simply captures a person's biometric features; such as the face and fingerprints – these features are unique to that person. The system is certified by the international quality standards and it has been used all over the world. One key feature of the system is its ability to detect multiple registrations from a person's biometrics. This is indeed one sure way of guaranteeing a credible Voters Register, which is the first step towards credible elections.

Your Excellency Sir, all the Voter Registration Officers and Clerks have been properly inducted on the BVR system and its operations. We have put all contingency measures to ensure that everything runs smoothly as planned. We appeal to Kenyans and all our partners to support us through this critical process.

On the issue of capacity of the BVR kit **Your Excellency Sir**, the Government procured 15,000 Kits to be used across the country. The Commission will commence the registration exercise for a period of **30 days** starting today. As you register **Your Excellency**, similar exercise will be going on across the country. One kit has the capacity to register a voter at

the average of 5 minutes. The exercise will go on every day during this period from 8:00 – 5:00 p.m. Special considerations will be made to have the registration from 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. in urban centers.

Your Excellency Sir, we wish to appeal to all Kenyans, particularly the youth, persons with Disability and women to come out and register in large numbers. This would be a step forward for these special interest groups to realize their right place under the new Constitution.

For voters who have a disability **Your Excellency Sir**, we wish to note that the BVR system allows the Registration Officer to note the nature of disability of the voter. This is important information that will allow the Commission to make special arrangements for different categories of voters during polling.

For the youth **Your Excellency Sir**, we have worked closely with them when we were IIEC and this partnership has continued to date. It is through the ingenuity of the youth and their frequent interaction on the social media that is keeping the Commission on its toes.

We wish to assure Kenyans **Your Excellency Sir**, that the Kits are sufficient to register the targeted **18m** Kenyans and beyond. The exercise will go on everyday including weekends. We also appeal to all employers to allow their staff time to go out and exercise their constitutional right. **Your Excellency Sir**, we wish to urge Kenyans to come out and register in large numbers and not wait until the last days causing tremendous jam at the registration centers.

Your Excellency Sir, we all know the security challenge we have been experiencing as country. The Government and the Commission has held several consultations on this matter, particularly during the voter registration exercise and through the electoral process. **Your Excellency Sir**, We have indeed worked very closely with the security agencies at the national, county and even district levels. The Provincial Administration has been instrumental at the regional levels where the Commission has been frequently consulting with the District Security & Intelligence Committees. These liaisons have been very useful in the planning of the Commission activities, especially in areas where insecurity has been rife.

This partnership with the Provincial Administration **Your Excellency Sir**, together with other partnerships with other stakeholders such as political parties, the civil society, the media and other Government agencies has been significant in steering the work of the Commission. It is only the conduct of elections that is the mandate of the Commission, while the entire election process is for everyone and each one of us has a critical role to play in ensuring that it is a free, fair and credible process.

Your Excellency Sir, it is common knowledge that the law provides the manner and conduct of elections. For one to be registered as a voter, the law dictates that one must present his or her National Identity Card or a valid Kenyan Passport. This identification document is critical for purposes of identifying an eligible voter. The Commission recognizes the challenge of the issuance of the National ID Cards, particularly to the youth, who form the bulk of the country's population and therefore critical target as voters.

Your Excellency Sir, the Commission has been working closely with the Ministry of Immigration in ensuring the issuance of National ID Cards, which have been applied for but not issued, or some that are still awaiting collection. **Your Excellency Sir**, to this end, the Provincial Administration has been very instrumental in sensitizing the public through Chief's Barazas for applicants to collect their National ID Cards. We wish to urge Kenyans who have applied for the National ID Cards to follow up on their collection in order to be able to register as voters. We also urge the Ministry of Immigration to fast-track issuance of already applied IDs.

We wish to emphasize **Your Excellency Sir**, that the Second and Third Generation National ID Cards or valid Kenyan Passports are the Identification Documents for purposes of voter registration. It is worthy to note that, everybody who wishes to vote in the next general elections must register afresh as a voter. This is regardless of whether one has been registered previously. The previous Voter's Card will not be used for any elections. It is no longer a requirement under the law. Upon registration **Your Excellency Sir**, a voter would be issued with an **Acknowledgment Slip** bearing the voter's details and the details of the county, constituency, ward and registration Centre. This voter will not be required to present the slip during the polling. All he or she needs is the document of identification that he or she used to register with, be a National ID Card or a Passport.

Your Excellency Sir, we wish to emphasize to Kenyans that registration should be where one intends to vote. As much as the system allows one to register anywhere, a lot more time would be required to collate and de-

duplicate the data. We are all cognizant of the time constraints we are currently working with. We therefore reiterate **Your Excellency Sir that** Kenyans would vote where they register. Time will not allow for transfer of registration.

Your Excellency Sir, public campaigns on the voter registration exercise have been going on the Radios, TV and print media. In addition, public sensitization on the use and understanding of the BVR system were carried out across the country. A lot of questions were asked and misconceptions clarified.

Your Excellency Sir, the Commission accredited several organizations to assist in the voter education exercise. In addition, the Commission recruited **2 voter educators** for every County Assembly Ward to sensitize the public on the voter registration exercise and the electoral process in general.

Your Excellency Sir, as we continue with the preparations for the upcoming elections, we continue to inform the stakeholders and the general public of the various activities on the election calendar through various medium and regular consultative forums. We continue to seek for the support of our partners as we head towards the general elections.

As I conclude **Your Excellency Sir**, I wish to recognize the support of the Government, Parliament, the State Law Office, the Government Printer and all other agencies, which have been working closely with the Commission in achieving its mandate.