



INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL AND BOUNDARIES COMMISSION

SPEECH BY THE CHAIRMAN, INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL AND BOUNDARIES COMMISSION DURING THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION NATIONAL BRIDGE CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP AT HOTEL LA MADA, ON 24TH JUNE, 2013

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The Regional Director for International IDEA, African Program – Amb. Mustaq Moorad, AU Representatives, IBEC Commissioners, facilitators and Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First, I want to take this opportunity to thank the co-sponsors of this workshop and International IDEA for the efforts they have done to ensure that the workshop takes place as planned. Secondly, I want to thank them for having chosen IEBC among so many other Election Management Bodies in Africa that also deserved such a workshop for their staff.

I am indeed glad to be here today with the sponsors, facilitators and participants in the beginning of this important workshop. The workshop is not only important to the Commission but also to our country, since it is coming at the time when the Commission is nearly winding up its post-

election period and preparing to start another pre-election-period of the electoral cycle.

As you are all aware, we recently went through the General election in which we experienced some challenges despite having put in a lot of effort in the preparations. It should be noted that in some circumstances challenges can be linked to human factors. These are the factors that can be partially minimized through capacity building. Thus, a workshop of this nature is quite important.

As a Commission mandated to run elections in the country, there is need to re-evaluate ourselves from all fronts to ascertain where we excelled and where we did not. Workshops of this nature can to an extent provide such a forum. In this vein, therefore, workshops of this type will be very important if only they will not be meant for increase in knowledge and skills but also help participants design a specific output. This can be a strategic plan; an outreach campaign; a draft law or even a code of conduct.

I am not saying that what you are covering is less important. I have had a glimpse of the five day program for the two workshops and I am happy with what you are covering. Electoral Integrity; Stakeholder management; Access; Voter and Civic Education; and Sustainability and Election administration are pertinent issues. Having knowledge and skills in these topical areas among others is a panacea to the Commission's success.

Capacity building in any Electoral Management Body is very important in an election cycle and any democratic system. It is only through continuous capacity building that an EMB can be able to successfully overcome challenges. I need to reiterate here that challenges camouflage themselves in different forms. Having all round knowledge in different activities that do happen in the election cycle is a weapon to the malady.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we congregate here to start-off these two workshops, I am encouraged to note that IEBC has so far made commendable progress as regards to putting in place essential structures and systems meant to strengthen the electoral processes. This structures and systems cannot run devoid of the human resources. This is the underlying rationale behind these two workshops that have only 48 participants who are our field election coordinators.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This means that the number of participants in this workshop is less than a quarter of the total number we have in the field. Currently, we have 290 field coordinators and 17 Regional elections Coordinators. Out of this numbers, very few have undergone BRIDGE training either here in Kenya or outside the country. In view of this, I call upon African Union, GIZ and International IDEA, to provide more of this assistance to our electoral body whether inside or outside the country.

Further I also kindly urge you that as you source for funds you will consider IEBC in terms of supporting its plans in capacity building endeavors not just once in a year.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To the facilitators and participants, I want to urge you to amicably look at issues under discussion from a broad perspective, reflect over them in relation to your daily undertakings. I also urge you to share the knowledge and skills you will acquire in this workshop with your colleagues down there in the field. Remember that if you will conceptualize and master the knowledge and skills in the modules you are covering in this workshop, then it will be an advantage to the commission. You will become authorities in such modules and when such an opportunity comes-by again, your colleagues will benefit by being taken through other modules and which they will also share with you.

Finally, to our partners, AU and International IDEA, you have made a mark in sponsoring IEBC in several capacity building workshops. And as IEBC we are very proud that we have partners that we can rely on. Remember that this is the second BRIDGE workshop we are having here in Kenya and which AU and International IDEA have played a major role.

I do promise that we will continue to cultivate these partnerships with all other stakeholders in the Electoral reforms and processes for the purposes of creating mutual understanding.

With these few remarks, it is now my pleasure to declare this workshop opened.

Thank you and God bless you all