Press Statement

12th May 2017

Almost There: The Journey to Actualizing Professional Police Recruitment in Kenya

The role of the Police and their contribution to governance in Kenya cannot be over emphasized. Their responsibility to guard the sovereignty of this nation is one that should be reflected upon at the point to which their recruitment into the service begins.

The Kenya National Commission on Human Rights has thus committed itself to the police reforms journey through monitoring of all recruitment exercises in the last four years to ensure compliance with laid down regulations.

During the 2017 police recruitment process, KNCHR was able to monitor 75 of the 292 centers that were used to vet potential candidates with our observations documented as follows:

1. That the National Police Service and the National Police Service Commission continue to disregard critical sections of their own recruitment and appointment regulations since their gazettement in 2015. For example, the regulation calls for the application of a two-tier process that calls for advertisement of the positions, shortlisting of candidates, call for information on the candidates through the media and aptitude tests.
2. There is need for uniformity in the application of the regulations such as the requirement for a public announcement on the number of candidates to be selected at each center before commencement of the exercise. This was still being applied at the discretion of the heads of recruitment centers.
3. That there is still some level of unpreparedness to deal with medical emergencies that arise from the candidates’ participation in the physical exercise stage. There is need to have adequate on-sight medical services that can prevent any loss of life such as the one witnessed in Webuye where a female candidate lost her life.
4. There is need to put in place concrete affirmative action measures to ensure that more female candidates are recruited into the service. The ratio of successful male candidates remains way higher than that of their female counterparts.

Recorded cases are as follows:
- In Takaba Primary School in Mandera County there were 27 male recruits against 1 female recruit;
In Siaya Stadium in Siaya County the male recruits were 30 while the female recruits were 2;

Kericho Green Stadium in Kericho County recorded 24 male recruits while the female recruits were 2;

Kakuma Airstrip in Turkana County saw the number of male recruits at 32 while the female recruits were only 3;

Kirigiti Stadium in Kiambu County had 15 male recruits while the female recruits were 3;

Kianyaga Stadium in Kirinyaga County had a total number of 18 male recruits while female recruits were 3.

5. There is need for better organization of the medical testing process that made the process in many of the monitored centers to go late in the night. The prescribed rules state that all processes must end by 5 p.m to make the process devoid of malpractices.

The Commission notes the efforts made by the NPS and NPSC at strengthening the integrity of the process as has been demonstrated in the reduced corruption cases, conduct of the panels, and professionalism of the medical panels and the general acceptance of independent monitors at the recruitment centers.

However, KNCHCR remains particularly concerned that despite the gazettement of regulations in 2015 to guide this important reforms process, they are yet to be fully implemented especially the important sections that have a direct effect of making the National Police Service professional. One of the key aspects of the regulations is the inclusion of a process of aptitude tests of the candidates and a public vetting process prior to the physical testing stage. The Office of the Inspector General and the National Police Service Commission must take urgent measures to implement the regulations and commit to have the same in place before the next recruitment process.

The KNCHR shall be submitting a final report to the Inspector General and Chairperson of the National Police Service Commission for the necessary action to be taken based on the requirements under each section.

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Ms Kagwiria Mbogori
Chairperson
Kenya National Commission on Human Rights