Press Statement 21\textsuperscript{st} March 2017

Misconduct of Nairobi Senator Hon. Mike Mbuvi and the call for political parties to act on errant members

\textit{“I do not want to know his name. You can refer to him as an Albino or whatever.”}

The contemptible reference to Mr. Peter Kenneth as an Albino by Nairobi Senator Hon. Mike Sonko on national television goes beyond the basic tenets of decorum, appropriateness and courtesy by a leader.

The Kenya National Commission on Human Rights is appalled by the unwarranted utterances by the Senator that only serve to endanger persons with albinism in this electioneering period. As a leader who has sworn an oath to abide by the laws of the land, the Senator negated the spirit and letter of National Values and Principles of Governance as articulated in Article 10 of the Constitution of Kenya (CoK).

Article 10 (b) expressly speaks to the principle of human dignity, non-discrimination and protection of the marginalised. Article 54 of the Constitution further safeguards persons with disability by guaranteeing them the right to be treated with dignity and respect and to be referred to in a manner that is not demeaning.

On leadership and integrity, the Constitution under Chapter 6 calls on state and public officers to conduct themselves in a manner that brings honour and dignity to the public office they hold. It is clear that the Senator has gone against these provisions.

The Commission takes great exception to the Senator’s utterances and brings to his attention that persons with albinism in Kenya, and indeed globally, are facing some of the most extreme forms of human rights violations. They face physical abuses and even attacks fuelled by erroneous beliefs about their condition.

We wish to reiterate that leaders who hold public offices such as Hon. Mbuvi, need to be in the forefront to increase public awareness on albinism and initiate policies at Senate level that reduce the stigma, discrimination and violence that persons with albinism continue to suffer at large.

Elections should be about selling policies and manifestos. Not trading insults or exciting sectarian animosities of any kind that may polarise citizens.

As KNCHR, we wish to restate our commitment to working in collaboration with the Albinism Society of Kenya so as to advance the rights of persons with Albinism in Kenya. The daily experiences of persons with Albinism such as the disparaging reference by the Senator is indicative of the fact that a lot still needs to be done by the government and other key actors to reverse this trend.
KNCHR Recommendations:

i. That in the spirit of Article 75 (1) (c) of the Constitution, which speaks to public office holders behaving in a manner that demeans the office, the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights is calling upon the Jubilee Party, to institute disciplinary action against the Senator in accordance with Article 77 (a).

ii. Further, as part of the Jubilee Party’s values entrenched in its Party Constitution of 2016, Article 2: (2.5) (8) which guarantees the welfare of the vulnerable in society, herein among them persons with albinism, we call on the party to discipline the Senator making reference to its code of conduct for its members, specifically Article 16 (1) (B) of Jubilee Party constitution which states that members shall not involve themselves in dishonourable conduct.

In conclusion, The Constitution has placed high premium on political parties, key among them the responsibility to respect the rights of all persons to participate in the political process, including minorities and marginalised persons. We wish to remind the Hon. Senator and other political leaders and aspirants of their obligation to observe the rule of law during this electioneering period.

Ms Kagwiria Mbogori
Chairperson
Kenya National Commission on Human Rights