



PRESS RELEASE

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SUBJECT: IEBC RELEASES POLICY FOR DIASPORA VOTER REGISTRATION AND VOTING IN KENYA

NAIROBI, KENYA: November 9, 2015 - The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) has adopted a new policy that sets out the framework for voter registration and voting as well as the criteria for setting up of polling stations in foreign countries where Kenyans reside.

The policy comes against the backdrop of the 2014 Supreme Court ruling on the progressive realization of the democratic rights of Kenyan citizens who reside outside the country as stipulated in the 2010 Constitution. The Court directed the IEBC to initiate "progressive voter registration" and put in place "infrastructure for comprehensive registration so that the number participating shall increase progressively over time".

Diaspora Kenyans have been clamoring to vote in the 2017 General Election. The policy proposes that they will only vote for President and in a referendum, and not all the elective positions. The Policy recognizes the challenge of establishing the actual number of Kenyans living abroad or their locations because many do not register with the missions. The decision on the number and countries where polling stations will be set up will be based on the number of those who express interest to register as voters. The policy sets a minimum of 3000 registered Kenyan citizens per county and the existence of a Kenyan diplomatic mission or consulate as some of the criteria to be used in determining provision of electoral services. Diaspora Kenyans will cast their vote individually at the same time as the voters back at home.

The Commission expects the government to provide facilitation through a multi-sectoral agency to enable it carry out voter education, registration and polling for Kenyan Diaspora. The details of all the stages of the exercise, including the polling centers, vote tallying and transmission will be gazetted and governed by a Kenyan law.

The comprehensive policy is part of the Commission's preparations for the next General Election to be held in 2017. "The Policy on Voter Registration and voting for Citizens

residing outside Kenya" can be downloaded from the Commission's website, www.iebc.or.ke.

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