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**PANEL OF EMINENT AFRICAN PERSONALITIES**

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**Statement by the Chair of the Panel of Eminent African Personalities, H.E. Kofi Annan  
On the occasion of the first anniversary of the promulgation of the Constitution of the Republic of Kenya**

1. On behalf of the Panel of Eminent African Personalities, I would like to express my heartfelt congratulations to the people and Government of the Republic of Kenya as they celebrate the one year anniversary of the promulgation of the Constitution.
2. The Constitution which came into effect twelve months ago today, signaled the dawn of a new era of improved governance with a true separation of powers, the articulation of a robust Bill of Rights and the establishment of decentralized government and equitable sharing of national revenue. It is a Constitution that was drafted through a highly consultative process and can be proudly owned by the people of Kenya, who overwhelmingly voted to endorse it at the referendum held on 4 August last year.
3. The milestone being marked today is not just symbolic; it is also an important opportunity to assess progress in the implementation of the Constitution. It is a chance to take stock of the achievements made, the lessons learned and the challenges that lie ahead.
4. It is the Constitution itself that established a timeframe for its implementation by setting out in its Fifth and Sixth Schedules deadlines by which the different branches of Government needed to take action to ensure implementation.
5. I commend both the Cabinet and Parliament for the earnestness with which they have endeavoured to adhere to the mandated deadlines. In doing so, however, I wish to stress the cardinal importance of ensuring that both the letter and spirit of the Constitution are maintained.
6. The process of implementing the Constitution is a collective and collaborative enterprise and I urge all the key actors to remain committed to working together to achieve this end. A fully consultative process is needed to ensure the enactment of quality laws and broad public participation in the implementation process.
7. I wish to highlight that urgent action remains to be taken on the key instruments necessary to ensure free, fair and transparent elections. In particular, the appointment of commissioners to the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission should not be delayed any further.
8. In terms of lessons learned, the transparency with which the appointment of the Chief Justice and Deputy Chief Justice was made has set a valuable precedent by which future appointments to key positions in Government will be judged. Transparency in appointments not only instills confidence in key government institutions and enables important reforms to be undertaken, but also enhances the integrity of good governance.
9. The televised hearings regarding the judicial appointments gave the public an opportunity to participate in the constitutional implementation process. Such opportunities should be strengthened. A sustained nationwide civic education programme is imperative to bring meaning to Article 1 (1) of the Constitution which states that all sovereign power belongs to the people of Kenya.
10. Let me urge the people of Kenya to remain engaged and to support the full and faithful implementation of the Constitution.
11. The endorsement of the new Constitution was without question one of the finest national achievements since Kenya's independence and important steps towards implementing that Constitution have been met, but much more needs to be done.
12. I congratulate the two Principals, members of Cabinet, the Speaker and Parliament as a whole, the Commission for the Constitutional Implementation (CIC), Kenya Law Reform Commission (KLRC) and other civil society organizations for the work they have undertaken thus far, but I urge them to redouble their efforts to ensure that the people of Kenya receive the full benefits of the long struggle which culminated in the anniversary being celebrated today.

**END**