

## **PRESS STATEMENT ON 31ST JANUARY 2025**

### **SUBJECT: WOMEN STANDING WITH THE JUDICIARY**

**PREAMBLE:** The Women of Kenya representing various women's rights organizations and individuals join other Kenyans of goodwill in to express our unwavering support to the Judiciary and denounce the ill-intentioned attempts to undermine the Judiciary at the highest level and the person of the Chief Justice and President of the Judiciary. Women of Kenya and indeed all Kenyans are well aware of the important role the Judiciary plays as the Third Arm of Government, working for the protection of the citizen, and their rights and safeguarding the integrity of our Constitution and Nation.

Coming at a time when the country is experiencing unprecedented lawlessness with forced disappearances, abductions, murder of citizens, and femicide to name but a few, we see the affront to the Judiciary as a danger to the sustainment of the rule of law and safety and security of the citizenry.

Women recognize that these unwarranted and vicious attacks against the Chief Justice, The Justices of the Supreme Court seeks to discredit the Judiciary and cause Kenyans to lose faith in it. Such a situation would lead to anarchy. As Women, we can no longer remain silent.

We appreciate that the Judiciary, under the leadership of the Hon. Chief Justice, Kenya's Judiciary has been extremely progressive and responsive to the needs of Kenyans. Hon. Martha Koome has steered a Judiciary that is practically ensuring that justice is accessible, affordable and close to the people especially the marginalized and vulnerable like women, children, people living with disabilities, and others living in hard-to-reach areas.

Despite allegations that under CJ Koome the Judiciary is inefficient, clueless, and useless, the country is not lost to the achievements during her tenure which include:

- i. Establishment of Gender Justice Courts
- ii. Expansion of Small Claims Courts:
- iii. Promotion of a Multi-Door Approach to Justice
- iv. Countrywide Rollout of E-Filing
- v. Expansion of Court Infrastructure
- vi. Mahakama Popote Initiative
- vii. Securing a Permanent Home for the Kenya Judiciary Academy
- viii. Operationalization of the Judiciary Fund
- ix. Systemic Audit of the Judiciary by the EACC
- x. Reduction in Case Backlogs by 27%; and,
- xi. Judicial Accountability and Integrity

The above results have been achieved in the last Four Years of Hon. Martha Koome. Indeed, the Lady Justice Martha Koome has a record and legacy of being efficient, focused, accountable, accessible incorruptible.

In view of the foregoing, we, the Women of Kenya state as follows:

**AWARE** of the ongoing onslaught against the Chief Justice the Hon. Martha Koome, and the Judges of the Supreme Court as well as the victimization campaign orchestrated by ill-intentioned personalities seeking the destruction of the very fabric of the Judiciary by petitioning removal from office of all the Judges of the Supreme Court and

**CONCERNED** that the persons orchestrating this onslaught have publicly and persistently disparaged the person of the Chief Justice and the Judiciary calling her useless, clueless, and other unprintable words completely disregarding the tenets that guide the relationships between the Bar and the Bench and further undermining the public perception of the Judiciary

**DISTURBED** by the ongoing trend to destroy almost every women leader who rises to the high level of leadership and decision-making such as the Hon. Chief Justice has risen to become the President of the Judiciary and the Head of One of the Three Arms of the – a feat that no other women have ever attained before in the Republic of Kenya.

**OUTRAGED** at the constant haranguing and use of extremely uncivilized and abusive language against the Hon Chief Justice Martha Koome and the Judiciary

**CONCERNED** by the trend by some sections of our society of normalizing insults, abuse, and damaging the reputation of women leaders; and

**ALARMED** by the orchestration to undermine and destroy the very fabric of the Judiciary with intentions of hounding CJ Martha Koome and the other Judges of the Supreme Court out of Office

#### **CONCLUSION.**

In view of the foregoing, we, the Women wish to appeal as follows:

1. We urge the Petitioners to consider immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the Petition for the removal of the Hon. Chief Justice Martha Koome and the other Judges of the Supreme Court;
2. We urge women across the country and across the political divide including female Governors, Senators, members of parliament, and Women Members of the County Assemblies and indeed all Kenyans of goodwill to raise their voices to this ill-intentioned campaign against women's leadership. We remind women of the warning Esther in the Bible received from Mordecai: *'You live in the King's Palace. But do not think that just because you are there*

*you will be the only who will escape!*' Again, we remind ourselves the words of Martin Niemöller. He once said:

***First, they came for the Communists. And I did not speak out***

***Because I was not a Communist***

***Then they came for the Socialists. And I did not speak out***

***Because I was not a Socialist***

***Then they came for the Trade Unionist. And I did not speak***

***Because I was not a Unionist***

***Then they came for the Jews. And I did not speak out***

***Because I was not a Jew***

***Then they came for me. And there was no one left***

***To speak for me***

Today, the attacks are on the Judiciary and the Hon. Martha Koome. Tomorrow, it will be You and I. Women leaders and Kenyans cannot, must not keep quiet.

3. We call upon all women rights defenders and women rights organizations regionally and nationally to object to the pulling down of the Hon. Chief Justice Martha Koome and other women leaders.
4. We urge religious leaders, professional groups, media, civil society groups, private sector and all Kenyans of good will to

defend the independence of the Judiciary even as we continue to demand for judicial accountability.

5. Finally, we caution Kenyans that any attempts at destabilizing the Judiciary will not augur well for our country.

Signed by the Women of Kenya as undersigned:

Prof. Jenny N Riria		Prisca
Prof. Amb. Maria Nzomo		Yvonne
Hon Dr Zipporal T Kithany	CSO OGW	Kithany
Brenda Nabututu	EWDN	BD
Jenny Andany	CRANN IRUOI	Jenny
Meraj Jelimo	CRANN	Meraj
Bilha Joyce	Rising widows	Jane
Dr Juliet Kimemia	AAWORD Kenya	Juliet
Naomi Njoroge.		Naomi
Hon Roseidah-K. Andambi		Andambi
GRACE MUSTOKA	CCGD	Grace
Senators Ches	Diamond women	Ches
Mary Njuguna	ENA	Mary Njuguna