



**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

**THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT - (SECOND SESSION)**

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR**

*(No. 032 of 2023)*

**ESTABLISHMENT AND RECOGNITION OF THE BI-PARTISAN TALKS  
COMMITTEE IN PARLIAMENT**

**Honourable Members,**


1. I wish to convey the following Communication regarding the establishment and the formal recognition of the *Bi-Partisan Talks Committee* in Parliament.
2. **Honourable Members**, as you will recall, on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2023, the Speakers of the Houses of Parliament issued a Joint Notification informing Members of the National Assembly and Senators about the establishment of the **Bi-Partisan Talks Committee** comprising Members of the Majority and Minority sides of both Houses of Parliament. In the Joint Notification, the Speakers noted that they had received correspondence co-signed by the Hon. George Murugara, MP on behalf of the Majority Party, and the Hon. (Dr.) Otiende Amollo, SC, CBS, MP on behalf of the Minority Party conveying, among other things, the joint decision to establish the Committee, the composition of the Committee, and the respective agenda raised by the parties.
3. Further, **Honourable Members**, the notification provided for the Joint Secretaries to the Committee, as well as the agreed mandate of the Committee and a Framework Agreement for the conduct of the bi-partisan talks as adopted by the Committee, setting out the general structure of the talks and rules of procedure.

4. In this regard, **Honourable Members**, the Co-Chairpersons of the Committee requested the Speakers of the Houses of Parliament to formally recognise the Committee and to support and facilitate its work.
5. **Honourable Members**, as Speakers of the Houses of Parliament, we laud the efforts being made towards strengthening consultation, dialogue and consensus building between the Majority and the Minority Parties. We are convinced that this inclusive approach will ensure an amicable resolution of the issues identified in a bid to have a national conversation for the good of the current and future generations. Indeed, it is commendable that the Committee has adopted a hybrid approach of conducting the talks through a parliamentary process as well as the involvement of experts and other stakeholders outside Parliament.
6. Indeed, **Honourable Members**, under the respective Standing Orders of the Houses of Parliament, a committee of this nature is, by and large, formally recognised through the passage of a joint resolution by the Houses. It is through such joint resolution that the membership of such a committee is outlined and its terms of reference, the timelines within which the committee is to discharge its mandate and report to the Houses are determined.
7. However, **Honourable Members**, as you are aware, at the time of receipt of the communication, the Houses of Parliament were on recess. The respective Standing Orders of the Houses of Parliament require the Speakers to cause the transmission of any message received at a time when the Houses are not in Session to every Member and later report such messages to the Houses when the Houses next sit.

8. **Honourable Members,** in this regard and appreciating the critical task that the Committee is to undertake, the Speakers of the Houses of Parliament jointly resolved to formally recognise the Committee and to apprise the Houses upon resumption of sittings. This was premised on the need to allow the commencement of business of the Committee during the recess period.
9. **Honourable Members,** as you are further aware, in the Joint Notification, we did observe that we had earlier on received a draft Motion from the Leadership of the Majority Party in Parliament seeking the establishment and recognition of the Committee. In this regard, we urged the Leadership of the Majority Party and the Minority Party as a matter of urgency to harmonize the text of the draft Motion to pave the way for issuance of the Notice of Motion and its consideration by the Houses of Parliament as soon as the Houses resumed after recess.
10. **Honourable Members,** to this end, it is expected that the Leadership of the Majority and Minority Parties shall proceed to formalise the recognition of the Committee in the manner prescribed in the Standing Orders of both Houses.
11. In conclusion, **Honourable Members,** I wish to reiterate that as Speakers of the Houses of Parliament, we commit to facilitating the work of the Committee as it embarks on executing this important task. Indeed, we shall, upon the Joint Resolution by the Houses, authorise the respective Clerks of the Houses to facilitate the Committee like every other Committee of Parliament with a secretariat, and any other logistical support, necessary for the effective discharge of the mandate of the committee.

- 12. Honourable Members,** we are also aware that there is ongoing debate that the Committee may also prefer extra-parliamentary processes in conducting the bi-partisan engagements. This is a matter that the Committee may explore and look for ways of finding its place in the Joint Resolution of the Houses.
- 13.** Finally, in the spirit of bipartisanship, I encourage the Members of the Committee to put the interest of the nation ahead of every other consideration when considering matters presented. Indeed, I appreciate the great sacrifice the two co-chairpersons, the Hon. George Murugara, MP and the Hon. (Dr.) Otiende Amollo, SC, CBS, MP, and their respective teams are making to ensure the conclusion of the prodigious task bestowed upon them.
- 14.** In this regard, I quote renowned author James Allen: *"He who would accomplish little must sacrifice little; he who would achieve much must sacrifice much; (and) he who would attain highly must sacrifice greatly."*

I thank you.

  
**THE RT. HON. (Dr.) MOSES M. WETANG'ULA, EGH, MP**  
**SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**  
*Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> June 2023*