

I, the UNDERSIGNED, on behalf of the Pemba People of Kenya;

DRAW the attention of the House to the following: -

- 1. **THAT,** the Pemba community whose population in Kenya exceeds 5,000 people are part of the 16 Swahili dialects of the traditional Swahili of Kenya whose root word *Suhailya* means' 'people residing on the shores of the ocean';
- 2. **THAT,** the Pemba People of Kenya are originally from the eponymous island in the Zanzibar archipelago and were part of the Swahili states from Sokotra all the way to Mozambique and Madagascar;
- 3. **THAT,** the Swahili states as established accorded people not only freedom of movement but also equal citizenship rights to settle, farm, marry and trade freely without restrictions which formed the basis of negotiations between the Sultan of Zanzibar and the British Colonial Government on the administration of the Kenyan Coast Ten-Mile Strip;
- 4. **THAT,** the Pemba community settled within the Ten-Mile Strip which was part of the Sultanate of Zanzibar and therefore under the sovereignty of the Sultan of Zanzibar and not under the British, and which was officially recognized as a Protectorate of Kenya;
- 5. **THAT,** as the British ceded sovereignty over inland Kenya for independence in 1963, so did the Sultanate of Zanzibar cede sovereignty over the Ten-Mile Strip, and subsequently, Kenya became a country comprised of the Ten-Mile Strip where the Pemba community lived as well as the inland protectorate;
- 6. **THAT,** the Pemba People were therefore no longer in the Sultanate of Zanzibar but in the newly formed country called Kenya but were unfortunately not listed as part of the indigenous communities of Kenya which has presented huge difficulties in accessing or replacing identity cards;

PUBLIC PETITION

REGARDING RECOGNITION OF THE PEMBA PEOPLE OF KENYA AS CITIZENS OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA

- 7. **THAT,** majority of the Pemba community reside in Kilifi and Kwale where they live without identity and are stateless because they are not recognized in Kenya and have no nationality in Tanzania either, and while the Government of Kenya has accorded varying degrees of recognition of the Makonde Community as well as the Malakote Community of Tana River, the Pemba People of Kenya have not been accorded similar citizenship recognition;
- 8. **THAT,** failure by the Government of Kenya to recognize the Pemba people of Kenya as citizens continues to cause great anguish and inconvenience to them since they are unable to register their children at birth, they miss out on education, health and other social services, are excluded from employment, are unable to register businesses or to open bank accounts or even to register a phone sim cards, have unrecognized marriages, are compelled to register assets such as land through proxies, and are regularly exposed to arbitrary arrests for falling to carry Identity Cards and for allegedly being in Kenya illegally;
- 9. **THAT,** the continued delay in the recognition and registration of the stateless communities in Kenya such as the Pemba community by the authorities is in clear breach and violation of both the constitutional and statutory provisions on citizenship in Kenya;
- 10. **THAT,** efforts to have this matter addressed by the relevant authorities have been futile;
- 11. **AND THAT,** the matter in respect of which this petition is made is not pending before any Court of Law or Constitutional body.

NOW THEREFORE, your humble petitioners pray that the National Assembly through the Departmental Committee on Administration and National Security: -

- i. Enquires into the matter with a view of securing the urgent recognition of the Pemba People of Kenya as citizens of the Republic of Kenya so as to safeguard their constitutional right as well as recognizing their economic and social contribution to the coastal region and the country at large, and
- ii. Secures the submission of a Report by the Cabinet Secretary for Administration and National Security on measures, including affirmative action programmes, taken by the state to address the plight of stateless persons and communities living in Kenya.

And your **PETITIONERS** will ever pray.

PRESENTED BY HON. OWEN BAYA YAA, MP MEMBER FOR KILIFI NORTH CONSTITUENCY Date....

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