



**REPUBLIC OF KENYA
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL PROTECTION**

CLOSING REMARKS

BY

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DURING

**THE SECOND EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR RELATIONS ANNUAL
SYMPOSIUM AND EXHIBITION (ELRASE 2)**

ON

TUESDAY, 17TH SEPTEMBER, 2024

AT

**THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI CHANDARIA AUDITORIUM
NAIROBI, KENYA**

- **Hon. Lady Justice Philomena Mbete Mwilu, MGH, Deputy Chief Justice and Vice President, Supreme Court of Kenya.**
- **Rt. Hon. Amason Jeffah Kingi, EGH, Speaker of the Senate**
- **Hon. (Dr) Justice Smokin Wanjala, CBS, Supreme Court Judge and Director Kenya Judiciary Academy**

- **Hon Justice Byram Ongaya, Principal Judge ELRC**
- **Hon. Kennedy Kandet, Registrar of the Employment and Labour Relations Court,**
- **All Judges, Magistrates and Registrars present,**
- **Court Users Committees present,**
- **All distinguished Guests,**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good afternoon!

First and foremost, let me take this early opportunity to appreciate the Judiciary particularly the Hon. Chief Justice and the President of the Supreme Court of Kenya **Hon. Justice Martha K. Koome, EGH** for organizing the just concluded Symposium and exhibition.

I also wish to thank all delegates, panellists and discussants for their active participation and engagement in the three-day event ending today. This event has brought us all under one roof as actors in labour sectors to discuss the pertinent issues affecting workplaces in our nation, that is Violence and Harassment including Gender Based Violence.

The theme of the event being **“The Role of the Employment and Labour Relations Court in Fostering the Right to a World of Work free from Violence and Harassment including Gender Based Violence and Harassment”** is quite appealing, relevant and resonate well with the aspiration of the Government of Kenya particularly on the journey towards ratification of ILO Convention No.190 on Violence and

Harassment and its accompanying recommendation No, 206 which started in June, 2024. The Ministry of Labour and Social protection through a consultative engagement with stakeholders developed an ambitious time bound action plan to guide on this Ratification process.

In June 2024, the Ministry of Labour and Social protection convened a historical meeting bringing together all relevant Government Departments, Civil society, social partners and development partners who successfully developed a gap and cost benefit analysis.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am aware that during the symposium, several critical issues concerning labour rights, Safety and Health of workers, gender-based

violence (GBV), and the well-being of workers in Kenya emerged. The key of these issues includes labour laws reforms to incorporate the contents of Convention No. 190 in readiness for ratification, strengthen the responsibilities of parties in Section 6 of Employment Act 2007.

Distinguished discussants and participants have identified milestones and challenges and also underscored urgent need for comprehensive measures to address these challenges effectively. The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection has in the recent past focused on addressing the vulnerability of ALL workers including migrant workers, particularly women, who are prone to exploitation, abuse, and discrimination, both domestically and internationally.

Ratification of the **ILO Conventions 190** and accompanying **recommendation No. 206** is indeed timely and of which will guarantee the rights and protections of workers comprehensively and combat Gender based violence in the workplaces.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

During the webinar which was curtain raiser for this auspicious event and during the last three days, it has come out clearly that there is still prevalence of violence and harassment in workplaces across the Country, particularly gender-based violence. This then present us with an urgent need to enhance:

- a) Advocacy, awareness and sensitization for ratification of ILO Convention C190 and recommendation 206

- b) implementation of GBV-related policies in the work places.
- c) Offer support for women's economic empowerment, and corporate social responsibility.
- d) Capacity building of labour inspectorate (OSHA and Labour), trade unions and all Law enforcement officers in this space.

As one way of creation of awareness and sensitization of the public on Convention No. 190, the Ministry has kickstarted public participation in the eight (8) mapped regions: -Coast, Nairobi, Rift Valley, Nyanza, Western, North Eastern, Eastern and Central.

Ladies and gentlemen

As you may be aware, ratifications come with a reporting obligation as provided for in the ILO Constitution. All Stakeholders' with the responsibility in the workplace must therefore play their roles diligently by eradicating all forms of violence and harassment in their spaces.

Ladies and gentlemen

The outcome and recommendations of the just ended symposium will assist my Ministry and even Kenya at large in making significant steps towards creating a more equitable, inclusive, and prosperous society for all its citizens. These recommendations will assist businesses and policy makers to contribute to creating safer and more inclusive workplaces:

- a) fostering sustainable economic development.
- b) prioritizing labour rights, gender equality, and workplace safety in Kenya.
- c) Enhancing collaborating with stakeholders,
- d) implementing robust policies, and conducting thorough analyses,

Ladies and gentlemen

In conclusion, I wish to thank all the Universities who participated in this symposium led by the University of Nairobi for their support through knowledge sharing and provision of the venue, I also wish to thank the Honourable Speakers of both Senate and National Assembly for their personal presence and participation.

Allow me also to thank our social partners and the International Labour Organization for their contribution in this event and continued support in labour sector as we uphold the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

Finally, in a special way, let me once again thank the Honourable Chief Justice, and the President of the Supreme Court, the Principal Judge and all Honourable Judges for always acknowledging the role of the Ministry of Labour in participation in Employment and Labour Relations Court activities.

Let us ALL join hands and support one another in this noble course of ensuring that our Country is free from Violence and Harassment including Gender Based Violence through putting in place the requisite legal framework and systems.

Thank you all.