



INSTITUTION OF SURVEYORS OF KENYA

FOR IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE

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ISK STATEMENT ON THE PARLIAMENTARY VETTING OF NOMINEES TO THE NATIONAL LAND COMMISSION

The Institution of Surveyors of Kenya (ISK) has closely followed the proceedings of the National Assembly Departmental Committee on Lands during the vetting of nominees to the National Land Commission. The hearings were conducted pursuant to the oversight mandate of the National Assembly under the Constitution of Kenya to determine the suitability of nominees proposed for appointment as Chairperson and Members of the Commission.

Throughout the vetting process, Members of Parliament raised critical questions concerning the nominees' understanding of the constitutional mandate of the Commission, their preparedness to address complex land governance challenges, and their capacity to lead one of the most sensitive constitutional bodies in Kenya's governance framework. The questions ranged from the management of public land, the protection of public assets from illegal allocation, the resolution of historical land injustices, and the broader institutional independence and technical capacity of the Commission.

Questions Raised by the Committee and Responses by Nominees

During the vetting proceedings, members of the Committee extensively interrogated nominees on their understanding of the role and functions of the National Land Commission under the Constitution. Nominees were asked to explain how they would manage public land on behalf of national and county governments, address historical land injustices, strengthen transparency in land administration, and protect public land from encroachment and irregular allocation.

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Several committee members also raised questions on the technical aspects of land governance, including land administration systems, the role of cadastral records in land management, dispute resolution mechanisms relating to land ownership, and the practical processes involved in safeguarding public land. These questions sought to establish whether the nominees possessed the technical appreciation required to guide policy and decision-making within the Commission.

While the nominees generally acknowledged the importance of the Commission's mandate and expressed commitment to serving the public interest, the responses revealed varying levels of depth in understanding of land governance. In several instances, some nominees were unable to directly and comprehensively respond to the issues raised by committee members. Instead, a number of nominees emphasized that they would rely on the expertise of the Commission's secretariat to support their work.

For ISK, these exchanges were particularly significant, as they highlighted the importance of ensuring that those appointed to the Commission possess a strong appreciation of the complex issues that define land governance in Kenya. It is important to point out that the Commissioners at NLC are required to oversight land governance strategy and policy throughout the country as per Article 67 of the Constitution - which they cannot without knowledge of the land governance challenges and deep grounding in land administration strategies and policies.

Technical Capacity and the Role of Commissioners

The Institution of Surveyors of Kenya notes with concern that the vetting process appears to have confirmed fears that had earlier been expressed within the land sector regarding the level of technical capacity required to effectively guide the National Land Commission.

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During the hearings, several nominees pointed to the existence of a technical secretariat within the Commission and indicated that they would rely on the secretariat's expertise in carrying out the Commission's work. While ISK fully recognizes and appreciates the critical role played by the Commission's secretariat, comprising professionals such as surveyors, valuers, planners, land administrators, and legal experts, the Institution emphasizes that the constitutional responsibilities of the Commission ultimately rest with the commissioners themselves.

The work of the Commission is not intended to be a process in which commissioners merely endorse or rubber stamp the technical outputs of the secretariat. Rather, the Constitution envisages commissioners who possess the ability to critically interrogate technical reports, guide institutional policy, exercise independent judgment, and make informed decisions on complex land matters.

The effectiveness and credibility of the Commission therefore depend on commissioners who can meaningfully engage with the technical dimensions of land administration. While the secretariat provides essential professional support, the ultimate duty to interpret the law, weigh competing interests, safeguard public land, and resolve complex land governance issues rests squarely with the commissioners.

ISK's Position

ISK notes that the questions raised during the hearings reflect a clear appreciation of the importance of professionalism, competence, and independence in the leadership of the National Land Commission. Land governance remains one of the most complex and sensitive areas of public administration in Kenya. Decisions made by the National Land Commission have far-reaching implications for property rights, public infrastructure development, investor confidence, protection of public land, and the resolution of historical land injustices.

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It is therefore essential that the individuals entrusted with leadership of the Commission possess not only integrity and leadership experience but also the capacity to critically and substantively engage with the technical issues that underpin land administration.

The Institution of Surveyors of Kenya remains committed to supporting strong, transparent, and technically sound land governance in Kenya and will continue to engage constructively with Parliament and other stakeholders to promote professionalism and accountability within the land sector.

**Eric Nyadimo, MISK, LS(K)
PRESIDENT**

About ISK

The Institution of Surveyors of Kenya (ISK) is the professional body that brings together professionals who provide services in the Land built sector. The professionals fall within eight major disciplines of the surveying profession namely Land Surveying, Valuation, Building Surveying, Land Administration Management, Engineering Surveying, Geospatial Information Management, Estate Agents and Property Management. Our membership of over 7,200 is widely spread across the Country.

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