



Press Release – People’s Shujaaz Awards 2018 Edition Winners Unveiled

Nairobi, 11th December 2018 – We are proud to reveal the names of Members of Parliament who were voted by *Wanjiku* as People’s Shujaaz, 2018 edition. With a lot of bad news that hits us every day, it’s easy to get cynical and MPs become easy targets as the representatives of the people. In such an atmosphere, it is possible to fail to recognize hardworking MPs who are keen on issues affecting the least in the society. To that end, People Shujaaz Awards is aimed at helping shine a light on some of these Parliamentarians who champion public interest issues on the floor of the House. Unlike the previous Awards, this year’s People Shujaaz Awards, 2018 edition attracted only six categories. Kenyans therefore spent the last ten days voting for their favorite MPs in these categories as follows:

Category 1: *Wanjiku’s* Best Representative – Health – Hon. Rose Museo Mumo.

The Woman Representative for Makueni County moved a motion on *establishment of programmes and interventions to encourage uptake of counselling services*. Having expressed concern that the country’s mental health policy estimates show that about 25% and 40% of outpatients and inpatients suffer mental illness, respectively, she further went on to make a strong case for some of the reasons behind this spike in mental illness and made a plea for Parliament to urge the government to immediately establish programmes and interventions to encourage uptake of counselling services among individuals, families and communities to mitigate effects of mental disorders.

Category 2: *Wanjiku’s* Best Representative – People with Disabilities (PWDs) – Hon. George Khaniri

The Senator for Vihiga moved a motion to have the National Council for Persons with Disabilities in collaboration with Ministry of East African Community, Labor and Social Protection and county governments, carry out a nationwide registration of all persons living with disabilities in order to determine their accurate number. The Senator had observed that, of the nearly 4 million Kenyans living with disabilities in the country; only a small fraction was duly registered, thereby denying services due them over their lack of registration status. The Senator also recognizing that health was a devolved function hoped a nationwide registration would help both levels of government in planning for the PWDs.

Category 3: *Wanjiku’s* Best Representative – the Needy – Hon. Aaron Cheruiyot

The Kericho Senator made a plea for Parliament to consider, protect and take care of the older members of our society. While moving the Care and Protection of Older Members of Society Bill, 2018, he elaborated on why the country needs to ensure the elderly in the society are accorded respect and dignity they deserve in public and social places.

Category 4: *Wanjiku’s* Best Representative – Progressive Legislation – Hon. Petronila Were Lokorio

The nominated Senator moved the motion to establish offices of the Commission for Administrative Justice (CAJ) at the county level. She observed that while the CAJ had the headquarters in Nairobi with satellite offices in Mombasa, Kisumu, Isiolo and Uasin Gishu counties; residents of the remaining 42 counties were therefore unable to report allegations of maladministration, delay, administrative injustice, discourtesy, incompetence, misbehaviour, inefficiency or ineptitude within the public service.

Category 5: *Wanjiku's* Best Representative – Security & Disaster Management – Hon. Johnston Sakaja and Hon. Mutula Kilonzo Jnr.

The Nairobi and Makueni Senator co-sponsored the Disaster risk management Bill, 2018 that seeks to ensure co-ordination of disaster risk management issues at the national level as well as at the county level. The Bill further seeks to establish the County Disaster Risk Management Committees in each of the counties. The effort by the two Senators comes at a time when the country has faced a number of disasters including fire, floods, droughts among other forms of disaster that have greatly affected *Wanjiku*.

Category 6: *Wanjiku's* Best Representative – Environmental Conservation – Hon. William Chepkut

The MP for Ainabkoi moved a motion urging the government to introduce compulsory tree planting programmes in all learning institutions and individual households. In light of the bleak international conversations on climate change and the ongoing national conversation to protect the country's forest cover, Hon. Chepkut's motion was timely and a good intervention for *Wanjiku*.

People's Shujaaz Awards is an initiative to celebrate Parliamentarians that are championing *Wanjiku's* interest on the floor of the House, both at the National Assembly and the Senate. Though we are focusing on and awarding the winners only; one can still access the full list of all the finalists for the 2018 edition at <http://info.mzalendo.com/shujaaz/2018> and inform themselves further on the reasons for the nomination of each finalist.

The People's Shujaaz Awards complement the National Honours the Presidency bestows on Kenyans for exemplary service to the country every year. Mzalendo Trust will award each of the People's Shujaaz Awards winners a small plaque in the shape of a shield with the name of the category in which they won. This is to encourage those Members of Parliament who despite a general dislike for their ilk keep striving to ensure issues of great public interest are debated on the floor of Parliament. We believe that it is important to point out that, all is not lost as far as the Legislature is concerned. The awards will be distributed through personalized courtesy calls to the Parliamentarians in their offices.

Mzalendo is Kenya's premier Parliamentary monitoring organization. A non-partisan organisation that keeps an eye on Kenyan Parliament with a mission to facilitate public participation in parliamentary processes through information sharing, research and networking. Through the website www.mzalendo.com we have remained focused on encouraging citizen accountability.

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