



Press Release – Mzalendo Launches the People’s Shujaaz Awards

Nairobi, 28th November 2014 – Mzalendo Trust has today launched **the People’s Shujaaz Awards** - an initiative to celebrate Parliamentarians that have excelled in championing issues of great public interest in Parliament - the National Assembly and Senate. The Parliamentarians were selected based on bills moved, contributions to bills, motions raised and statements issued from March 2013 to date.

“At the centre of these Awards are the bread and butter issues that drive Kenyan election campaigns and politics like food, health, water, education, security as well as core mandates of Parliament like devolution and budgetary oversight. The issues and list of nominees were arrived at through collaborative efforts between Mzalendo and other civil societies working on governance issues,” said Mzalendo’s Executive Director, Jessica Musila.

The inaugural People’s Shujaaz Awards has 10 categories with 3 nominees each. Mzalendo’s review of Parliamentary records revealed discussions on education, water, health and budgetary oversight dominated debate. Kenyans have an opportunity to select their best choice in each category through online voting on info.mzalendo.com/shujaaz. Voting closes on 7th December 2014, 11.59pm and finalists will be announced and awarded gifts on 11th December 2014.

Kenyans spend a lot of time bashing politicians and there is a risk that we may dismiss or fail to encourage those who are actually representing their interests. People’s Shujaaz Awards is an attempt to fix that - we believe that it is important to point out that it is not all doom and gloom when it comes to Parliamentarians. **The People’s Shujaaz Awards** complement the National Honours the Presidency bestows on Kenyans who have given exemplary service to the country every year.

Through this initiative, Mzalendo seeks to gently nudge Parliamentarians to champion public interest, raise public awareness on the roles of MPs and Senators plus sensitize them on the need to hold their leaders to account. Mzalendo is a non-partisan Parliamentary Monitoring initiative which keeps an eye on Parliament and makes information on Parliamentarians and their activities easily accessible to the public.

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