



End of 16 Days of Activisms Event/End of Year Event

10th Dec 2019

Board Chairs' Speech

My thanks to Executive Director, Ishmael Bahati for the wonderful speech, and of course to PEMA Team—thank you all very much for this event in respect to the 16 Days of activism against Sexual and Gender-Based violence's against our young women and girls. I also want to thank the eminent presenters, panelists, guests, partners and friends and all those from other parts of our country who have come here today to help enlighten us and help us recharge.

Sexual and gender-based violence is the most extreme form of the global and systemic inequality experienced by women and girls.

It knows no geographic – or socio-economic – or cultural boundaries.

Worldwide, one in three women will suffer physical or sexual violence at some point in her life. This extends from rape and domestic violence to harassment at work. Women and girls experience violence in all countries and in all neighborhoods. Like all other countries in the world, gender-based violence also happens here, in Kenya, specifically in Mombasa.

But these crimes often remain unreported and hidden – sometimes because women survivors choose to remain silent. **Why?** Because they fear stigmatization and shame within their homes and communities. Their claims are often dismissed. They feel they have no-one to turn to who will respect their dignity.

WE MUST END THIS SILENCE!

Everyone has a responsibility to prevent and to end violence against women and girls. This has to start by our challenging the pervasive culture of discrimination against women and girls – in every place we come from and will go – that allows violence to continue.

We must shatter negative gender stereotypes and attitudes. We must introduce and implement laws to prevent discrimination and end exploitation.

We as individuals, must do more.

We must all – especially men – stand up against abusive behavior whenever we see it.

We must say:

“I do not agree with this. I will not support such action. It is wrong.”

We must risk criticism for standing out from the crowd.

We must condemn all acts of violence.

We must establish equality with women in our work lives. And our home lives.

We must change the everyday experiences of women and girls.

Women's rights were once thought of as women's business only. But, more and more, men and boys are becoming true partners – true allies – in the battle for women's empowerment. This must continue. And it must expand.

P.O Box 41562-80100 G.P.O. Mombasa, Office cell: +254 713 681 341,

Advancing social inclusion and human rights



Before closing, I would like to take a moment to thank All our partners. All the stakeholders. All the organizations and members who have been represented today in this important event. You are indeed “supporters of justice”.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I end by saying that we all have a role to play in ending violence against women. And I urge everyone in this hall – as well as those beyond this congregation who hear our words today – to play your part in protecting women and girls from discrimination and violence.

If we stand together in our homes – in our communities – our countries and across the world – we can challenge discrimination.

We can end impunity, that is still far too prevalent in our country and globe at large.

We can put a stop to the mindset and the customs that encourage – or ignore – or tolerate the global disgrace which is called “violence against women and girls”.

Thank you.