



**ISS-AMANI Forum-Hanns Seidel Stiftung
Workshop on Capacity building for Members of Parliament in Kenya**

3-4 October 2008, Whitesands Hotel, Mombasa

Seminar Report

The opening remarks were made by Dr. Wolf Krug: Hanns Seidel Foundation who emphasised the role Parliament has the role to play in enhancing human security- legislation that is essential for strengthening democracy in Kenya, dealing with the regional challenges in the Horn of Africa [e.g. Ethiopia- ethnic tensions, defacto civil war in Somalia, Sudan post CPA implementation and possibility of cessation]; and managing conflict over natural resources and cattle rustling in the region.

The keynote speech was made by Hon. Joseph Nkaissery, the Assistant Minister for Defence and Security who pointed out the need for such a workshop in the aftermath of the violent post election scenario. He pointed out the need to pay full attention to the understanding of human security by transcending the definition of the UNDP. He urged for the identification of human security threats in order to devise avenues for mitigating such threats by MPs in areas of their representations. This implied planning and exploring options (Policy and programmes) to mitigate human security threats such as - cattle rustling, banditry, climate change, terrorism, crime, as well as poverty and high food and commodity prices. The key issue was that addressing these challenges requires both national and local approaches from all stakeholders- government, the international community, civil society etc. Hon Nkaissery requested organisers and AMANI Forum to run similar workshops for other Members of Parliament who, owing to other commitments were not able to participate in this workshop.

In his presentation on Parliamentary capacity building in Kenya, Dr. Fred Matiangi of the State University of New York Parliamentary project indicated that his organisation would be focusing on the Security Sector in the country, especially reform of the judiciary. He thus urged for collaborative efforts by those working with Parliament in order to avoid disjointed interventions. Parliament will always be the most focal player in governance reform in the country as indicated by various polls conducted recently.

Parliamentary capacity building efforts in Kenya: Hon Ekwe Ethuro Acknowledged that parliament is improving with support from different organisations, but a lot still has to be done. His recommendations for capacity building were to targeted capacity building and get champions on specific issue who can undertake public awareness on human security threats and to ensure

that there is coordination of capacity building activities especially since institutional memory is a problem in Parliament where turnover is 70%.

The main recommendations emphasized the need to focus on the following:

- identify human security threats in order to address avenues for mitigating human security threats by MPs in areas of their representations.
- to broaden the workshop capacity building horizons beyond those who were representing to other members. Emphasised the need to identify members of Parliament who are “champions” on specific human security issues and engaging them
- ISS and Safer world should organise a capacity building seminar for security committees
- organise resource centre and documentation centre for MPs to access information on human security threats
- encourage the role of the Media in covering the work and contribution of MPs outside the House
- encourage MPs to pursue the enactment of crucial Legislation on Human Security and governance, and improve their access to information on security matters.
- encourage Parliament to engage with Civil society organisations on issues of Human security in order to minimise the scepticism that exists between the two institutions.