

*Approved
SNA
24/2/26*

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT- FIFTH SESSION - 2026

**DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE, INTELLIGENCE AND FOREIGN
RELATIONS**

REPORT ON:

**APPROVAL HEARING OF CANON (DR.) IDA BETTY ODINGA, EGH FOR
APPOINTMENT AS PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF
KENYA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)**

**CLERK'S CHAMBERS
DIRECTORATE OF DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEES
PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS
NAIROBI**

FEBRUARY, 2026

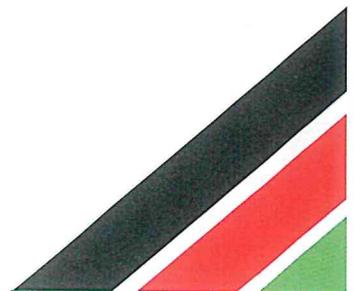


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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANC	Amani National Congress
BA	Bachelor of Arts
Cap.	Chapter (of the Laws of Kenya)
CBS	Chief of the Burning Spear
DCI	Directorate of Criminal Investigations
EACC	Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission
EGH	Elder of the Order of the Golden Heart
H.E.	His Excellency
HELB	Higher Education Loans Board
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IOT	Ida Odinga Trust
KRA	Kenya Revenue Authority
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MP	Member of Parliament
ODM	Orange Democratic Movement
ODPP	Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
ORPP	Office of the Registrar of Political Parties
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UDM	United Democratic Movement
UN	United Nations
UNEA	United Nations Environment Assembly
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNON	United Nations Office at Nairobi
WDM-K	Wiper Democratic Movement of Kenya

LIST OF ANNEXURES

- Annexure 1: Transmittal letter from H.E. the President regarding parliamentary approval of the nominee for appointment to the Foreign Service
- Annexure 2: Message from the Hon. Speaker of the National Assembly to the House regarding nomination of one (1) person for appointment as Ambassador/Permanent Representative
- Annexure 3: Advertisement notifying the public of the approval hearing and submission of memoranda
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- Annexure 7: Nominee's Clearance Certificates from EACC, KRA, DCI, ORPP, HELB and Credit Reference Bureau
- Annexure 8: Nominee's curriculum vitae
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CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD

This report details the proceedings of the Departmental Committee on Defence, Intelligence, and Foreign Relations during the approval hearings of Canon (Dr.) Ida Betty Odinga, EGH, nominated for appointment as Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The purpose of the approval hearing was to ascertain the suitability of the nominee to discharge the responsibilities of the office to which she had been nominated.

The Committee is established pursuant to Article 124(1) of the Constitution and the National Assembly Standing Order 216. The National Assembly Standing Order 216 spells out the mandate of Departmental Committees which includes to: *vet and report on all appointments where the Constitution or any law requires the National Assembly to approve, except those under Standing Order 204 (that are done by the Committee on Appointments)*. Further, the Second Schedule of the Standing Orders mandates the Committee, among others, to oversee *foreign relations, diplomatic and consular services, and international relations*.

The Office of Permanent Representative is an office under the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs. The duties of the office, pursuant to Section 21 of the Foreign Service Act Cap 185E, is to pursue the foreign policy objective of the Republic; act as the personal representative of the Head of State; act as an official representative of the Republic at official functions in the host country; be responsible for the management and administration of the Mission; and be accountable for any expenditure of the Mission.

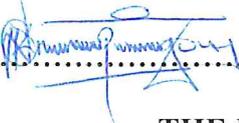
In accordance with Article 132(2)(e) of the Constitution, His Excellency the President nominated Canon (Dr.) Ida Betty Odinga, EGH, for appointment as Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to UNEP and forwarded the nomination to the National Assembly for approval. The nomination was subsequently referred to the Committee for consideration in line with the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap. 7F. The Committee conducted the approval hearing on Friday, 20th February 2026, during which it examined the nominee's academic background, professional experience, integrity, vision for the role, and overall suitability in accordance with the Constitution and relevant statutes.

Having conducted the approval hearings pursuant to Article 132(2)(e) of the Constitution; sections 3 and 8 of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap 7F; section 20 (2) of the Foreign Service Act, Cap 185E and Standing Order 216(5)(f) of the National Assembly, **the Committee recommends that the House APPROVES the appointment of Canon (Dr.) Ida Betty Odinga, EGH as the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).**

I take this opportunity to thank all the Members of the Committee for their input and valuable contributions during the approval hearings and preparation of this report. The Committee also appreciates the Offices of the Speaker and of the Clerk of the National Assembly for the technical support accorded to it during the exercise.

On behalf of the Committee and pursuant to Standing Order 199(6) of the National Assembly, it is now my duty and privilege to present to the House, the Report of the Departmental Committee on Defence, Intelligence and Foreign Relations on the Approval Hearing of Canon (Dr.) Ida Betty

Odinga, EGH for Appointment as Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

SIGNED:  DATE: 24/02/26

**THE HON. NELSON KOECH, CBS, M.P.
CHAIRPERSON, DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE, INTELLIGENCE
AND FOREIGN RELATIONS**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Article 132(2)(e) of the Constitution mandates the President to nominate, and with the approval of the National Assembly appoint, ambassadors, high commissioners and diplomatic representatives. Article 124(4)(a) further requires that such appointments be considered by a Committee of the relevant House.

Pursuant to these provisions, and in accordance with sections 3 and 5 of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap. 7F, His Excellency the President transmitted to the Speaker of the National Assembly the nomination of Canon (Dr.) Ida Betty Odinga, EGH, for appointment as Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The Speaker conveyed the Message to the House and referred the nomination to the Departmental Committee on Defence, Intelligence and Foreign Relations for vetting and reporting within the statutory timelines.

In compliance with Article 118 of the Constitution and Section 6(4) of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, the Clerk of the National Assembly notified the public of the intended approval hearing and invited submission of memoranda on the suitability of the nominee. Two memoranda were received in the form of emails, however, they did not meet the threshold under section 6(9) of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, which requires that “Any person may prior to the approval hearing, and by written statement on oath, provide the Clerk with evidence contesting the suitability of a candidate. The Clerk also sought clearance from the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA), Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI), Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP), Higher Education Loans Board (HELB), and Office of the Registrar of Political Parties (ORPP), all of which confirmed the nominee’s compliance with statutory and integrity requirements.

The Committee conducted the approval hearing on Friday, 20th February 2026, guided by the Constitution, the Foreign Service Act, Cap. 185E, and the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap. 7F. During the hearing, the Committee assessed the nominee’s academic qualifications, professional background, leadership experience, integrity, and vision for advancing Kenya’s environmental diplomacy. The nominee emphasised the importance of multilateral collaboration, mobilisation of partnerships to address global environmental challenges, and strengthening UNEP’s role as a strategic institution headquartered in Nairobi. She also noted the link between environmental sustainability and socio-economic development, and the need for inclusive, values-driven leadership.

The Committee observed that the nominee satisfied the constitutional requirements for appointment, met the integrity threshold under Chapter Six of the Constitution, and demonstrated an understanding of the mandate and expectations of the Office of Permanent Representative to UNEP. Accordingly, and pursuant to Article 132(2)(e) of the Constitution, sections 3 and 8 of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap. 7F, and section 20(2) of the Foreign Service Act, Cap. 185E, the Committee recommends that **the House APPROVES the appointment of Canon (Dr.) Ida Betty Odinga, EGH, as Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).**

1.0 PREFACE

1.1 Introduction

1. Pursuant to Article 132(2)(e) of the Constitution as read with sections 20(2) and 22(2) (a) of the Foreign Service Act, Cap 185E, His Excellency the President, through the Head of the Public Service and via the transmittal letter dated **2nd February, 2026**, transmitted to the Speaker of the National Assembly the name of one (1) person nominated for approval by the House for appointment as Permanent Representative.
2. Article 124(4)(a) of the Constitution provides that when a House of Parliament considers any appointment for which its approval is required under the Constitution or an Act of Parliament, the appointment shall be considered by a Committee of the relevant House.
3. This report details the proceedings of the Committee during the approval hearing of the nominee for appointment as Permanent Representative. The purpose of the approval hearing was to ascertain the suitability of the nominee to discharge the responsibilities of the office of the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the UNEP.

1.2 Establishment and Mandate of the Committee

3. The Departmental Committee on Defence Intelligence and Foreign Relations is one of the Departmental Committees of the National Assembly established under Standing Order 216 whose mandates, pursuant to the Standing Order 216 (5) includes, among others, *to vet and report on all appointments where the Constitution or any other law requires the National Assembly to approve, except those under Standing Order 204 (Committee on Appointments).*

1.3 Committee Subjects

4. The subject matter of the Committee is stated in the Second Schedule of the National Assembly Standing Orders and includes, among others, *foreign relations, diplomatic and consular services, and international relations.*
5. In executing its mandate, the Committee oversees the following government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs):
 - (a) The Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs;
 - (b) The Ministry of Defence;
 - (c) The State Department for East African Community Affairs (EAC); and
 - (d) The National Intelligence Service (NIS).

1.4 Committee Membership

6. The Committee was constituted by the House on **27th October 2022** and reconstituted on **6th March 2025** comprises the following Members:

Chairperson

Hon. Nelson Koech, CBS, M.P.

Belgut Constituency

UDA Party

Vice-Chairperson

Hon. Maj. (Rtd.) Sheikh Abdullahi Bashir, CBS, M.P.

Mandera North Constituency

UDM Party

Members

Hon. Wanjira Martha Wangari, CBS, M.P.

Gilgil Constituency

UDA Party

Hon. Joshua Kandie, M.P.

Baringo Central Constituency

UDA Party

Hon. Hassan Abdi Yusuf, CBS, M.P.

Kamkunji Constituency

Jubilee Party

Hon. Kwenya Thuku Zachary, M.P.

Kinangop Constituency

Jubilee Party

Hon. Odhiambo Millie G. Akoth, CBS, M.P.

Suba North Constituency

ODM Party

Hon. Logova Sloya Clement, M.P.

Sabatia Constituency

UDA Party

Hon. Kanchory Elijah Memusi, M.P.

Kajiado Central Constituency

ODM Party

Hon. Ikana Fredrick Lusuli, M.P.

Shinyalu Constituency

ANC Party

Hon. (Dr.) Kasalu Irene Muthoni, MP

Kitui County

WDM-K

Hon. Mohamed A. Hussein, M.P.

Lagdera Constituency

ODM Party

Hon. Kirima Moses Nguchine, M.P.

Imenti Central Constituency

UDA Party

Hon. Anne Muratha, M.P.

Kiambu County

UDA Party

Hon. Luyai Caleb Amisi, M.P.

Saboti Constituency

ODM Party

1.5 Committee Secretariat

7. The Committee Secretariat comprises the following technical staff:

Mr. Muyodi Emmanuel
Clerk Assistant I/Head of Secretariat

Mr. Bernard Njeru
Clerk Assistant III

Mr. Lenny Muchangi
Legal Counsel II

Ms. Noelle Chelagat
Media Relations Officer I

Mr. Edwin Machuki
Fiscal Analyst II

Mr. Salat Ali
Principal Serjeant-at-Arms II

Mr. John Ng'ang'a
Audio Recording Officer

Mr. Daniel Ominde
Research Officer III

Mr. Alex Namwada
Hansard Officer II

Ms. Maryan Gabow
Public Communications Officer III

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Office of the Ambassador/Permanent Representative

8. The Office of the Ambassador/Permanent Representative is an office under the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, according to Executive Order No. 2 of 2025.
9. The duties of the office (Head of a Mission), pursuant to Section 21 of the Foreign Service Act Cap 185E, are to:
 - (a) actively pursue the foreign policy objective of the Republic in the host country;
 - (b) act as the personal representative of the Head of State in the host country;
 - (c) act as an official representative of the Republic at official functions in the host country;
 - (d) be responsible for the management and administration of the Mission and all members of the Foreign Service located at the Mission, including the locally engaged staff of the Mission; and
 - (e) be accountable for any expenditure of the Mission and ensure that the budget of the Mission is administered in accordance with the Public Finance Management Act, Cap 412A and all other applicable laws and regulations.
10. On appointment, Article 132(2)(e) of the Constitution provides that *the President shall nominate and, with the approval of the National Assembly, appoint and may dismiss high commissioners, ambassadors and diplomatic and consular representatives*. Section 20 of the Foreign Service Act, Cap 185E, reaffirms these constitutional provisions, designating the Office of a high commissioner, ambassador, diplomatic, or consular representative as a State office as per Article 260 of the Constitution.
11. Additionally, Section 20(2) of the Act provides that in accordance with Article 132(2)(e) of the Constitution, the President shall nominate and, subject to approval by the National Assembly, appoint high commissioners, ambassadors, and diplomatic or consular representatives. Furthermore, Section 20(3) of the Act mandates that a nomination under subsection (2) should ensure a fair balance between career diplomats and other appointees, as well as represent the gender, regional, and other diversities of the Kenyan populace. Any individual nominated for appointment under subsection (2) must be a Kenyan citizen and possess reputable character and standing.

2.2 Notification of the Nomination

12. Pursuant to Article 132(2)(e) of the Constitution as read with Sections 20(2) and 22(2)(e) of the Foreign Service Act Cap 185E, and Sections 3 and 5 of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap 7F, His Excellency the President, through the Head of the Public Service, transmitted to the Speaker of the National Assembly vide the transmittal letter dated **2nd February, 2026**, referenced **EOP/CAB.26/4A VOL.VII/(144)** (*Annexure 1*), the name and curriculum vitae together with other testimonials of Canon (Dr.) Ida Betty Odinga, EGH nominated for appointment Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

2.3 Notification to the House and Referral to the Committee

13. Pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 42(2) of the National Assembly, the Speaker, through a Communication dated Tuesday, 10th February 2026, informed Members of the President's Message (*Annexure 2*) on nomination of Canon (Dr.) Ida Betty Odinga, EGH

nominated for appointment Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

14. Pursuant to Section 8(1) of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap 7F and Standing Order 216(5)(f) as read with the Second Schedule of the Standing Orders of the National Assembly, the name and curriculum vitae and other testimonials of Canon (Dr.) Ida Betty Odinga, EGH nominated for appointment Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) were referred to the Departmental Committee on Defence, Intelligence and Foreign Relations for approval hearing, as required under Article 124(4)(a) of the Constitution, and reporting to the House within twenty-eight (28) days.

2.4 Notification to the Public

15. Article 118 of the Constitution provides that Parliament shall facilitate public participation and involvement in the legislative business and other business of Parliament and its Committees. Further, Section 6(4) of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap 7F provides that the Clerk shall notify the public of the time and place for holding approval hearings at least seven days prior to the hearings.
16. Further, Section 6(9) of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap 7F provides that *any person may, prior to the approval hearings and by written statement on oath, provide the Clerk with evidence contesting the suitability of a candidate to hold the office to which the candidate has been nominated.*
17. Pursuant to Article 118 of the Constitution as read with Section 6(9) of Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap 7F, the Clerk of the National Assembly placed an advertisement in the print media on **12th February 2026** (*Annexure 3*) inviting the public to submit memoranda by way of written statement on oath (affidavit) on the suitability or otherwise of the nominees on or before **19th February 2026** at 5.00 pm.
18. Further, through the same advertisement and pursuant to Article 118 of the Constitution, Section 6(4) of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap 7F and Standing Order 45(3) of the National Assembly, the Clerk of the National Assembly notified the general public that the approval hearing of the nominee would be conducted on **Friday, 20th February 2026** in the **Mini Chamber, County Hall, 1st Floor, Parliament Buildings at 10.00 am.**

2.5 Notification to the Nominee

19. On **11th February 2026**, the Clerk of the National Assembly invited the nominee through letter dated **11th February 2026** (*Annexure 4*) and through an advertisement in the print media on **12th February 2026** (*Annexure 3*), for the approval hearing in accordance with Section 6(3) of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap 7F.

2.6 Clearance and Compliance Requirements

20. On **Wednesday, 11th February 2026**, the Clerk of the National Assembly wrote to the EACC, KRA, DCI, HELB, ORPP and ODPP (*Annexure 5*) requesting for reports with respect to the nominee on ethics and integrity, tax compliance, criminal records, higher education loans repayments and political party affiliations.

21. The EACC, through a letter **Ref. No. EACC.7/10/5 VOL. XXXV (82)** dated **18th February 2026**, (*Annexure 6*) stated that it had not undertaken any investigations pursuant to its mandate nor recommended the prosecution against Canon (Dr.) Ida Betty Odinga, EGH.
22. The KRA, through a letter **Ref. No. KRA/5/1002/5(13600)**, dated **17th February 2026**, (*Annexure 6*), confirmed that the nominee was tax compliant.
23. The DCI, through a letter **Ref. No. DCI/CRO/SEC/6/7/2/A/VOL.XVIII/161** dated **16th February 2026** (*Annexure 6*), provided forensic fingerprint analysis of the nominee had been conducted in the criminal database and found that she had no previous criminal record.
24. The HELB, through a letter **Ref. No. HELB/RR/112009/V/478** dated **12th February 2026** (*Annexure 6*), indicated that the nominee was compliant.
25. The ORPP, through a letter **Ref. No. ORPP/ORG/34/1 VOL. II (44)** dated **16th February 2026** (*Annexure 6*) confirmed that the nominee was neither an official nor a member of any registered political party.
26. The ODPP, through a letter **Ref. No. ODPP/SPP/GEN** dated **13th February 2026** (*Annexure 6*) confirmed that there were no active criminal proceedings or previous charges recorded against the nominee.

2.7 Issues for Consideration during the Approval Hearings

27. In conducting the approval hearings, the Committee was guided by Section 6(7) and (8) of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap 7F which provides that:
 - (7) *An approval hearing shall focus on a candidate's academic credentials, professional training and experience, personal integrity and background.*
 - (8) *The criteria specified in the Schedule shall be used by a Committee during an approval hearing for the purposes of vetting a candidate.*
28. Additionally, Section 7 of the Act provides that the issues for consideration by the relevant House of Parliament in relation to any nomination shall be:
 - (a) *the procedure used to arrive at the nominee;*
 - (b) *any constitutional or statutory requirements relating to the office in question; and*

the suitability of the nominee for the appointment proposed having regard to whether the nominee's abilities, experience and qualities meet the needs of the body to which nomination is being made.

(a) Procedure for Nomination

29. Article 132 (2)(e) of the Constitution confers upon the President the power to nominate and, with the approval of the National Assembly, appoint high commissioners, ambassadors and diplomatic and consular representatives.
30. Section 5(1) of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap 7F, further requires the appointing authority, upon nominating a person for appointment, to notify the relevant House of Parliament.
31. In this regard, pursuant to Article 132(2)(e) of the Constitution and Section 5(1) of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap 7F, the President notified the National Assembly of the nomination of Canon (Dr.) Ida Betty Odinga, EGH for appointment to the

offices of Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

(b) Constitutional and Statutory Requirements

32. In addition, the Constitution and various statutes guide the appointment of persons to public office. In determining the suitability of the nominees, the Committee was guided by the provisions on leadership and integrity as outlined in Chapter Six of the Constitution. Article 73(2) of the Constitution provides that the guiding principles of leadership and integrity include:

- (a) selection on the basis of personal integrity, competence and suitability, or election in free and fair elections;
- (b) objectivity and impartiality in decision making, and in ensuring that decisions are not influenced by nepotism, favouritism, other improper motives or corrupt practices;
- (c) selfless service based solely on the public interest, demonstrated by —
 - (i) honesty in the execution of public duties; and
 - (ii) the declaration of any personal interest that may conflict with public duties;
- (d) accountability to the public for decisions and actions; and
- (e) discipline and commitment in service to the people.

33. Furthermore, Article 75 of the Constitution requires a State Officer, whether in public or private life to behave in a manner that avoids conflict between personal interest and public official duties. It further prohibits a State Officer who has been dismissed or otherwise removed from office from holding any other State Office.

34. Regarding the activities of State Officers, Article 77 of the Constitution prohibits a full-time State Officer from participating in any other gainful employment, or holding office in a political party.

35. Further, Article 78 of the Constitution disqualifies persons who are not Kenyan citizens from appointment as State Officers. Equally, a State Officer is barred from holding dual citizenship.

36. In addition, the Committee considered Section 10 of the Leadership and Integrity Act, Cap 185C which provides that:

A State officer shall, to the best of their ability—

- (a) carry out the duties of the office efficiently and honestly;*
- (b) carry out the duties in a transparent and accountable manner;*
- (c) keep accurate records and documents relating to the functions of the office; and*
- (d) report truthfully on all matters of the organization which they represent.*

37. Further, Section 20 of the Foreign Service Act, Cap 185E provides that:

- (1) The Office of a high commissioner, ambassador, diplomatic or consular representative shall be a State office for purposes of Article 260 of the Constitution.*
- (2) Pursuant to Article 132 (2) (e) of the Constitution, the President shall nominate and, subject to the approval of the National Assembly, appoint high commissioners, ambassadors and diplomatic or consular representatives.*
- (3) A nomination under sub section (2) shall reflect—*
 - (a) a fair balance between career diplomats and other appointees; and*
 - (b) the gender, regional and other diversities of the people of Kenya.*
- (4) A person nominated for appointment under subsection (2) shall be—*

- (a) a citizen of Kenya; and
- (b) of a reputable character and standing.

(c) Suitability of the nominees for the proposed appointments having regard to whether the nominees' abilities, experience and qualities meet the needs of the body to which the nomination is being made.

38. The nominee's suitability to hold the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was assessed through a scrutiny of her academic credentials, professional training and experience, personal integrity, background, as well as her performance during the approval hearings conducted on **Friday, 20th February 2026**.

2.8 Memoranda from Members of the Public in respect of the Nominee

39. The Clerk of the National Assembly placed an advertisement in the print media on **12th February 2026** (*Annexure 3*) inviting the public to submit memoranda by way of written statements on oath (affidavit) on the suitability or otherwise of the nominee in conformity with Section 6(9) of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap 7F.
40. In this regard, by **19th February 2026 at 5.00 pm** the Committee had received two submissions via email from members of the public regarding the nomination of Canon (Dr.) Ida Betty Odinga, EGH for appointment to the offices of Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). However, they did not meet the threshold under section 6(9) of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, which requires that "Any person may prior to the approval hearing, and by written statement on oath, provide the Clerk with evidence contesting the suitability of a candidate.

3.0 APPROVAL HEARING OF CANON (DR.) IDA BETTY ODINGA, EGH FOR APPOINTMENT AS PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)

41. On Thursday, 19th February 2026, the Committee held a sitting to deliberate on the approval hearings and noted that:
- (i) The Committee would proceed with the approval hearing as scheduled on 20th February 2026, from 10.00 am; and
 - (ii) The Committee would examine the nominee against the criteria set out in Section 7 of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap 7F – academic qualifications; employment record; professional affiliations; potential conflict of interest; knowledge of the relevant subject; overall suitability for the position; integrity; vision and leadership; and expectations and key priorities.
42. Canon (Dr.) Ida Betty Odinga, EGH, appeared before the Committee on Friday, 20th February 2026, at 10.00 am and was vetted under oath pursuant to Article 132(2)(e) of the Constitution, the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap 7F, the Foreign Service Act, Cap 185E and the National Assembly Standing Orders. The Committee noted as follows:

3.1 Questions from the General Questionnaire

Citizenship, Date and Place of Birth

43. The nominee is a Kenyan citizen born on 24th August 1950 in Baringo District, within the Republic of Kenya. She confirmed that she is a citizen by birth and does not hold dual citizenship.

Academic and Professional Qualifications

44. The nominee holds a Bachelor of Arts (BA) Degree with Education option, specialising in Geography, from the University of Nairobi.

Employment Record and Work Experience

45. The nominee previously served as a teacher at Highway Secondary School and Kenya High School, and later as an Education Officer. She is currently the Managing Director of East Africa Spectre Limited and the Proprietor of Opoda Farm.

Honours and awards

46. The nominee has received several recognitions, including Elder of the Order of the Golden Heart (EGH); Honorary Doctor of Philosophy (Humanities), Great Lakes University of Kisumu; Honorary Doctor of Philosophy (Humanities), Igbinedion University; Kenya's Most Powerful Women Award (The Standard); Trailblazer Award and Lifetime Achievement Award (Human Achievers Foundation); and Distinguished African Amazon Award (Centre for Economic and Leadership Development).

Professional Association and Memberships

47. The nominee is the patron of the Women Governors Caucus (G7), Advisory Council; has served as the Global Peace Ambassador, UN; has served as the patron of Kenya Medical Women's Association, and Kenya Breast Health Organisation; has served as the Champion of Integrated Care pack Program; is the founder and patron of the Kenya League of Women;

has served as the Council Member, Maseno University; and the Chairperson, Paraplegic Association of Kenya Advisory Board.

Published Writings

48. The nominee submitted various speeches and extracts reflecting her advocacy work and public engagements.

Public Office, Political Activities and Affiliations

49. The nominee served as the First Lady to the Prime Minister between 2008 and 2012; a member of the Election Board NARC; Lead Women League Campaign; and Azimio Women League Campaign.

Income and Net Worth

50. The nominee declared an estimated net worth of approximately KES 500 million comprising immovable property, motor vehicles and shareholding investments. Her sources of income include salary and returns from investments.

Potential Conflict of Interest

51. The nominee declared that she does not have any persons, litigation, financial arrangement, matter or issue that would present a potential conflict of interest should she assume the position of Permanent Representative. The nominee stated that, should a conflict of interest arise during the discharge of her duties, she would declare the interest in writing to the appointing authority in accordance with the law. The nominee participated in White Ribbon Alliance, to enhance awareness, prevention of fistula, and eradication of chigoe flea infestations in underserved communities.

Pro-Bono, Charity Work or Donation to Charity

52. The nominee has participated in civil society initiatives, including breast cancer awareness, eradication of jiggers, educational scholarships and women's empowerment programmes. She is the founder of the Ida Odinga Trust (IOT), a non-partisan organisation advancing education, maternal health and nutrition.

Integrity

53. The nominee stated that she has neither been charged in a court of law nor adversely mentioned in any investigatory report of Parliament or any Commission of Inquiry in the last three years. The nominee has never been dismissed or otherwise removed from office for contravention of the provisions of Article 75 of the Constitution.

3.2 General and Mission-Specific Questions to the Nominee

54. To assess the nominee's overall suitability for the position, the Committee posed questions to the nominee on her suitability for appointment as the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The nominee responded as follows:

On Inspiring Young Girls

55. The nominee encouraged young girls to remain confident in their values and identity and to pursue education diligently, underscoring education as a key pillar for personal growth and development. The nominee further emphasised the importance of upholding integrity,

faithfulness, and hard work, remaining prayerful, and respecting guidance from mentors. Additionally, the nominee indicated that she has consistently championed gender-responsive policies and related advocacy initiatives.

On Advancing Kenya's Climate Diplomacy

56. The nominee submitted that Kenya and Africa are emerging as global leaders in climate action through frameworks such as the *National Climate Change Action Plan (2023–2027)*. She committed to strengthening partnerships to ensure climate initiatives deliver socio-economic benefits to vulnerable populations. She cited Kenya's leadership at the *United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7)* and proposed multi-stakeholder working groups to support the implementation of environmental resolutions.

On Translating Advocacy Experience into Diplomacy

57. The nominee submitted that her experience in advocacy, coalition-building and public engagement provides a strong foundation for multilateral diplomacy. She stated that she founded the *League of Kenya Women Voters*, which has participated in the Commission on the Status of Women since the 1995 Beijing Conference.
58. She stated that such engagements require consensus-building, negotiation and engagement across governments, civil society and development actors. She stated that she considers such skills to be directly transferable to the diplomatic engagements at UNEP.

On Addressing Resource Constraints within the UN System and Supporting UNEP

59. The nominee acknowledged concerns regarding the resource constraints currently facing the United Nations system, particularly in climate change financing and programme support. She noted the significance of UNEP as the only United Nations headquarters located in the Global South and domiciled in Nairobi, Kenya.
60. The nominee submitted that she would adopt a collaborative approach and work with teams comprising individuals with diverse skills and expertise. She committed to engage stakeholders to address the challenges and contribute to mobilising solutions to support UNEP's mandate.

On Integrating Environmental Sustainability with Social and Development Priorities

61. The nominee submitted that environmental sustainability is closely linked to health, nutrition, education and livelihoods. While drawing inferences from her work through the *Ida Odinga Trust (IOT)* and nutrition initiatives across Africa, the nominee noted that environmental degradation and socio-economic vulnerability are interconnected.
62. She also mentioned her collaboration with Prof. Wangari Maathai in environmental advocacy, and her role in promoting cleaner household energy solutions at the East Africa Spectre Limited. She submitted that she will adopt an approach that aligns environmental diplomacy with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Kenya's development priorities.

On Addressing the Technical Nature of UNEP's Work and Safeguarding Kenya's Credibility

63. The nominee acknowledged the importance of addressing environmental challenges through collaborative approaches. She submitted that her academic background in geography

introduced her to environmental issues early in her career, and that her subsequent engagement in environmental advocacy, policy forums and clean energy initiatives provided practical exposure to sustainability matters. She stated that her leadership approach would involve convening expertise, partnerships and ensuring that global environmental discussions produce practical outcomes.

On the Nominee's Motivation and Readiness to Serve

64. The nominee stated that her acceptance of the nomination is grounded in a lifelong commitment to public service and leadership. She described the appointment as a continuation of a journey shaped by service in education, civil society and national advocacy, rather than a departure into a new field. She stated that her upbringing instilled values of integrity, accountability, hard work and fairness, which have guided her professional and personal life.
65. She submitted that balancing career, family responsibilities and public engagement has prepared her to undertake demanding responsibilities. She stated that service to the nation is a patriotic duty and affirmed her readiness to answer that call.

3.3 Committee's Observations on the Suitability of the Nominee

66. The Committee, having reviewed the nominee's completed questionnaire, curriculum vitae and oral submission, made the following observations regarding her suitability for appointment as Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP):
 - (1) **THAT**, in accordance with Article 78(1) and (2) of the Constitution, the nominee is eligible for appointment to State Office since she is a Kenyan citizen and does not hold dual citizenship.
 - (2) **THAT**, the nominee possesses extensive skills in environmental matters and has engaged in environmental advocacy, policy forums, and clean-energy initiatives, demonstrating practical exposure to sustainability issues aligned with UNEP's mandate.
 - (3) **THAT**, the nominee has extensive professional and leadership experience in education, civil society engagement, and private enterprise, which she submitted has equipped her with skills in consensus-building, stakeholder engagement and public leadership necessary for multilateral diplomacy.
 - (4) **THAT**, the nominee demonstrated appreciation of the linkage between environmental sustainability and socio-economic development, particularly in the areas of health, nutrition, education and livelihoods, and expressed her intention to advance integrated approaches consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals and Kenya's development priorities.
 - (5) **THAT**, the nominee acknowledged the resource constraints facing the United Nations system, particularly in climate change programmes, and underscored the strategic importance of UNEP as the only United Nations headquarters located in the Global South and domiciled in Nairobi. She indicated that she would adopt a collaborative approach by convening multidisciplinary expertise and partnerships to mobilise solutions and strengthen UNEP's capacity.
 - (6) **THAT**, the nominee expressed her commitment to advancing Kenya's climate diplomacy, including supporting the implementation of resolutions adopted at the United Nations

Environment Assembly and strengthening partnerships to ensure that climate initiatives translate into tangible benefits for vulnerable populations.

- (7) **THAT**, the nominee meets the requirements of Chapter Six (6) of the Constitution on leadership and integrity having obtained clearances from EACC, KRA, DCI, ODPP, ORPP and HELB.
- (8) **THAT**, the nominee has neither been charged in a court of law nor adversely mentioned in any investigatory report of Parliament or any Commission of inquiry in the last three years.
- (9) **THAT**, the nominee does not hold office in any political party, a requirement under Article 77(2) of the Constitution and the Schedule of the Public Appointment (Parliamentary Approval) Cap 7F.
- (10) **THAT**, the nominee has never been dismissed from office under Article 75 of the Constitution for contravention of the provisions of Articles 75(1), Article 76, Article 77 and Article 78(2) of the Constitution.
- (11) **THAT**, overall, the nominee demonstrated understanding of the policy, diplomatic and collaborative dimensions of the role and expressed readiness to work with technical experts, Government institutions and international partners to advance Kenya's environmental interests at UNEP.

4.0 COMMITTEE'S GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

67. The Committee, having considered the nominee's academic credentials and professional qualifications, work and professional experience, personal integrity, as well as her performance during the approval hearing, made the following general observations:

- 1) The nominee is a Kenyan citizen and does not hold dual citizenship in conformity with Article 78 of the Constitution.
- 2) The nominee committed not to participate in any other gainful employment while serving as a State Officer as required by Article 77(1) of the Constitution.
- 3) In accordance with Article 77(2) of the Constitution and the Schedule of the Public Appointment (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap 7F, the nominee does not hold office in any political party.
- 4) The nominee indicated compliance with Articles 75 and 76 of the Constitution on the conduct and financial probity of State Officers. She indicated the nonexistence of potential conflict of interest and committed to declare any should it arise.
- 5) By the set deadline of receipt of memoranda from members of the public, the Committee had received two submissions via email to the approval of the nominee for appointment as Ambassador/Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). However, they did not meet the threshold under section 6(9) of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, which requires that "Any person may prior to the approval hearing, and by written statement on oath, provide the Clerk with evidence contesting the suitability of a candidate.
- 6) The nominee presented her academic and professional credentials, made oral submissions during the approval hearing, demonstrating her suitability for appointment in accordance with the provisions of Section 6(7) of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap 7F.

5.0 COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

68. Having conducted the approval hearing pursuant to Article 132(2)(e) of the Constitution; Sections 3 and 8 of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap 7F; Section 20 (2) of the Foreign Service Act, Cap 185E and Standing Order 216(5)(f) of the National Assembly, the Committee recommends that the House APPROVES the appointment of Canon (Dr.) Ida Betty Odinga, EGH as the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

SIGNED:  DATE: 24/02/26

THE HON. NELSON KOECH, CBS, M.P.
CHAIRPERSON, DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE, INTELLIGENCE AND FOREIGN RELATIONS

