



*Approved
SNA
28/4/26*

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT- FIFTH SESSION - 2026

DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE, INTELLIGENCE AND FOREIGN RELATIONS

REPORT ON:

APPROVAL HEARING OF DR. JULIUS MURORI MBIJIWE, Ph.D., FOR APPOINTMENT AS AMBASSADOR TO VATICAN, THE HOLY SEE

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

APRIL, 2026





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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANC	Amani National Congress
Cap	Chapter (of the Laws of Kenya)
CBS	Chief of the Burning Spear
CRB	Credit Reference Bureau
CUE	Commission for University Education
DCI	Directorate of Criminal Investigations
EACC	Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission
H.E.	His Excellency
HELB	Higher Education Loans Board
KRA	Kenya Revenue Authority
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
M.P.	Member of Parliament
NIS	National Intelligence Service
ODM	Orange Democratic Movement
ODPP	Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
ORPP	Office of the Registrar of Political Parties
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TSC	Teachers Service Commission
UDA	United Democratic Alliance
UDM	United Democratic Movement
UN	United Nations
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
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CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD

This Report presents the proceedings and findings of the Departmental Committee on Defence, Intelligence and Foreign Relations on the approval hearing of Dr. Julius Murori Mbijiwe, Ph.D., who was nominated by His Excellency the President for appointment as Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya to Vatican, The Holy See. The purpose of the approval hearing was to ascertain the suitability of the nominee to discharge the responsibilities of the office to which he 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.

Pursuant to Article 132(2)(e) of the Constitution, the President nominated Dr. Julius Murori Mbijiwe, Ph.D., for appointment as Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya to Vatican, The Holy See, and transmitted the nomination to the National Assembly for approval in accordance with the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap. 7F. The Speaker of the National Assembly subsequently referred the nomination to the Departmental Committee on Defence, Intelligence and Foreign Relations for consideration and reporting to the House.

In undertaking this assignment, the Committee was guided by the Constitution, the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap. 7F, the Foreign Service Act, Cap. 185E, and the National Assembly Standing Orders. The Committee conducted the approval hearing on Monday, 27th April 2026, during which it examined the nominee's academic credentials, professional background, leadership experience, integrity, vision for advancing Kenya's diplomatic and economic interests, and overall suitability for appointment as Ambassador.

The Committee further facilitated public participation in accordance with Article 118 of the Constitution by inviting members of the public to submit memoranda on the nominee's suitability prior to the approval hearing. The Committee also sought and obtained clearance reports from relevant statutory bodies regarding the nominee's compliance with legal and integrity requirements.

Having considered the nominee's academic and professional qualifications, work experience, integrity records, and responses during the approval hearing, the Committee was satisfied that the nominee meets the constitutional and statutory requirements for appointment. Accordingly, and 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), **the Committee recommends that the House approves the appointment of Dr. Julius Murori Mbijiwe, Ph.D., as Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya to Vatican, The Holy See.**

The Committee wishes to express its appreciation to the Members of the Committee for their diligence and valuable contributions during the approval hearing and preparation of this Report. The Committee also acknowledges the Office of the Speaker and the Office of the Clerk of the National Assembly for the administrative and technical support extended to the Committee during the exercise.

On behalf of the Committee, and pursuant to Standing Order 199(6) of the National Assembly, it is my privilege and honour to present to the House this Report of the Departmental Committee on Defence, Intelligence and Foreign Relations on the approval hearing of Dr. Julius Murori Mbijiwe, Ph.D., as Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya to Vatican, The Holy See.

SIGNED:  DATE: 28/04/2026

 **THE HON. NELSON KOECH, CBS, MP**
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 Dr. Julius Murori Mbijiwe, Ph.D., as Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya to Vatican, The Holy See. The Speaker subsequently 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 members of the public to submit memoranda on the suitability of the nominee. By the set deadline for receipt of memoranda, the Committee had not received any submissions contesting the suitability of the nominee.

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 Monday, 27th April 2026, guided by the Constitution, the Foreign Service Act, Cap. 185E, the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap. 7F, and the National Assembly Standing Orders. During the hearing, the Committee examined the nominee's academic qualifications, professional background, leadership experience, integrity, and vision for advancing Kenya's diplomatic, economic and bilateral relations with the Vatican.

Having considered the nominee's academic credentials, professional qualifications, integrity clearance reports, and performance during the approval hearing, the Committee observed that the nominee meets the constitutional and statutory requirements for appointment to State Office, including compliance with Chapter Six of the Constitution on Leadership and Integrity.

Consequently, and 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 Dr. Julius Murori Mbijiwe, Ph.D., as Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya to Vatican, The Holy See.**

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 **14th April, 2026**, transmitted to the Speaker of the National Assembly the name of one (1) person nominated for approval by the House for appointment as Ambassador.
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 Ambassador. The purpose of the approval hearing was to ascertain the suitability of the nominee to discharge the responsibilities of the office of the Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya to Vatican, The Holy See.

1.2 Establishment and Mandate of the Committee

4. 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

5. 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.*

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 subsequently reconstituted on 6th March 2025, and 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. Odhiambo Millie G. Akoth, CBS, M.P.

Suba North Constituency

ODM Party

Hon. Kwenya Thuku Zachary, M.P.

Kinangop Constituency

Jubilee Party

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

Kamukunji Constituency

Jubilee 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.

Central Imenti 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

Mr. Martin Sigei
Research Officer III

Mr. Edwin Machuki
Fiscal Analyst II

Mr. Salat Ali
Principal Serjeant-at-Arms II

Mr. Alex Amwata
Hansard Reporter II

Ms. Frida Ngari
Media Relations Officer III

Mr. Mark Mbuthia
Audio Recording Officer III

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 objectives 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 **14th April, 2026**, referenced **EOP/CAB.26/4A VOL.VIII/(8)** (*Annexure 1*), the name and curriculum vitae together with other testimonials of Dr. Julius Murori Mbijiwe, Ph.D., nominated for appointment as Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya to Vatican, The Holy See.

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 Thursday, 16th April 2026, informed Members of the President's Message (*Annexure 2*) on nomination of Dr. Julius Murori Mbijiwe, Ph.D., nominated for appointment as Ambassador Vatican, The Holy See.
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 National Assembly Standing Orders, the name and curriculum vitae and other testimonials of Dr. Julius Murori Mbijiwe, Ph.D., nominated for appointment as Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya to Vatican, The Holy See 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 **17th April 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 **24th April 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 **Monday 27th April 2026** at the **Bunge Tower, Room 18/19, 3rd Floor, Parliament Buildings at 10.00 am.**

2.5 Notification to the Nominee

19. The Clerk of the National Assembly invited the nominee through letter dated **17th April 2026** (*Annexure 4*) and through an advertisement in the print media on **17th April 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 **Friday, 17th April 2026**, the Clerk of the National Assembly wrote to the EACC, KRA, DCI, HELB, ORPP and ODPP 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. XXXVI (121)** dated **22nd April 2026**, confirmed that it had not undertaken any investigation nor has it recommended prosecution of the nominee.
22. The KRA, through a letter **Ref. No. KRA/5/1002/5(13895)**, dated **24th April 2026**, confirmed that the nominee was tax compliant.
23. The DCI, through a letter Ref. No. **DCI/CRO/SEC/6/7/2/A/VOL.XIX/100** dated **23rd April 2026**, provided forensic fingerprint analysis of the nominee had been conducted in the criminal database and found that he had no previous criminal record.
24. The HELB, through a letter **Ref. No. HELB/RR/112009/V/504** dated **22nd April 2026**, indicated that the nominee was compliant.
25. The ORPP, through a letter **Ref. No. ORPP/ORG/34/VOL. X (13)** dated **20th April 2026** confirmed that the nominee was not an official of any registered political party.
26. The ODPP, through a letter **Ref. No. ODPP/CONF/5/50A** dated **24th April 2026** 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 Dr. Julius Murori Mbijiwe, Ph.D., for appointment as Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya to Vatican, The Holy See.

(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 office of Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya to Vatican, The Holy See was assessed through a scrutiny of his academic credentials, professional training and experience, personal integrity, background, as well as his performance during the approval hearings conducted on **Monday, 27th April 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 **17th April 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 **24th April 2026 at 5.00 pm**, the Committee had not received any submissions either by written statement on oath (affidavit) or via email from members of the public regarding the nomination of Dr. Julius Murori Mbijiwe, Ph.D., for appointment as Ambassador to Vatican, The Holy See.

3.0 APPROVAL HEARING OF DR. JULIUS MURORI MBIJIWE, Ph.D., AS AMBASSADOR TO VATICAN, THE HOLY SEE.

41. Dr. Julius Murori Mbiyiwe, Ph.D., appeared before the Committee on Monday, 27th April 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

42. The nominee is a Kenyan citizen born on 28th January 1973 in Meru County, within the Republic of Kenya. He confirmed that he is a citizen by birth and does not hold dual citizenship.

Academic and Professional Qualifications

43. The nominee holds a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Project Planning and Management, as well as a Master of Arts in Project Planning and Management from, the University of Nairobi. He also holds a Bachelor's degree in Education (Science) from Kenyatta University.

Employment Record and Work Experience

44. The nominee has served as Chief of Staff for Meru County since 2025 to date. Prior to this, he served as a Member of the County Assembly in Meru County from 2013 to 2022, during which he held key leadership roles, including Chairperson of the Budget Committee and the Public Accounts and Investments Committee.

Honours and awards

45. The nominee has received several recognitions, including being awarded as the best MCA in Meru County in 2022.

Professional Association and Memberships

46. The nominee is a member of Kenya Red Cross Society.

Published Writings

47. The nominee did not indicate any published writings.

Public Office, Political Activities and Affiliations

48. The nominee has served as the Executive Secretary of the Kenya Union of Post Primary Education Teachers (KUPPET) and as a Member of the County Assembly, Meru County from 2013 to 2022.

Income and Net Worth

49. The nominee declared an estimated net worth of approximately KES 80 million.

Potential Conflict of Interest

50. The nominee declared that he does not have any persons, litigation, financial arrangement, matter or issue that would present a potential conflict of interest should he assume the position of Ambassador. The nominee stated that, should a conflict of interest arise during the

discharge of his duties, he would declare the interest in writing to the appointing authority in accordance with the law.

Pro-Bono, Charity Work or Donation to Charity

51. The nominee has participated in fundraisers towards building churches and done donations for poor and vulnerable families.

Integrity

52. The nominee stated that he 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

53. To assess the nominee's overall suitability for the position, the Committee posed questions to the nominee on his suitability for appointment as the Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya to Vatican, The Holy See. The nominee responded as follows:

On the significance of Vatican Mission and the cost-benefit of the embassy

54. The nominee acknowledged the strategic importance of establishing a standalone Kenyan embassy at the Vatican. He emphasized the Vatican's extensive involvement in Kenya through its wide network of educational and health institutions and its active role in peacebuilding initiatives, which necessitate close diplomatic engagement. The nominee further stated that having a dedicated embassy would allow for more focused and timely diplomatic activities, which are currently managed from the Kenyan embassy in France. Despite acknowledging the increased financial costs, he suggested that the long-term benefits and improved efficiency justify the investment.

On the linguistic requirements of the Vatican

55. Dr. Julius stated that, in recognition of the linguistic requirements of the Vatican, where Italian and Latin are the principal languages of communication, he would enroll in Italian language instruction and, in the interim, utilize interpretation services to ensure the effective discharge of his duties. He further stated that English is widely spoken within diplomatic circles at the Vatican and affirmed his proficiency in the language.

On the significance of Vatican-Kenya relations

56. The nominee underscored the Holy See's extensive contribution to Kenya through its wide network of educational and health institutions, noting their role in supporting peacebuilding efforts that complement Kenya's national priorities. He emphasized the need for consistent, day-to-day diplomatic engagement within Vatican City to enhance coordination and effective management of these partnerships.

On the Nominee's view regarding the proposed Foreign Service (Amendment) Bill, 2025

57. He stated that he was aware of the proposal to ensure that in nominations for positions such as high commissioners, ambassadors, and other diplomatic or consular representatives, career diplomats constitute the majority at a ratio of 70:30 compared to non-career appointees. However, he supported a broader pool of candidates that includes politicians and other professionals, arguing that political and leadership experience equips individuals with valuable negotiation and governance skills that can enrich and strengthen the diplomatic service.

On the Nominee's understanding of the Vatican's Unique Diplomatic Status

58. Dr. Julius Mujiwe's response indicated a surfacing understanding of the Vatican's unique diplomatic status. While his remarks remained general, touching on "oversight" and consultation in conflict situations, and he acknowledged some lack of clarity, he nonetheless conveyed an openness to further learning and engagement on the issue.

On the Nominee's assessment of the effectiveness of devolution

59. Dr. Julius stated that devolution is functional but requires further strengthening to fully realize its intended objectives. He observed that, notwithstanding existing challenges, the system has made notable progress in decentralizing governance, bringing services closer to the people, and enhancing public participation in decision-making processes.
60. He further stated that devolution has contributed to more equitable distribution of resources across regions and has empowered county governments to address local priorities more effectively. However, he noted that issues such as capacity constraints at the county level, delays in the disbursement of funds, and instances of intergovernmental conflict continue to impede optimal performance.
61. Dr. Julius emphasized the need for sustained institutional support, improved accountability mechanisms, and enhanced coordination between the national and county governments to strengthen the effectiveness of devolution. He underscored that addressing these challenges would consolidate the gains made and ensure that devolution delivers more efficiently and responsively to the citizens.

On the proposed strategy for rationalizing wage bill management in the Counties

62. The nominee suggested rationalizing county workforces and encouraging multitasking to reduce wage bill pressures. He linked this approach to meeting the Public Financial Management Act's mandate that counties allocate not less than 30% of their budgets to development, a target many counties struggle to achieve.

On the Nominee's negotiation experience and its relevance to diplomacy

63. The nominee stated that his leadership in budget negotiations between Meru County Assembly and Executive Arm of Government demonstrated practical experience directly transferable to diplomatic engagements. Additionally, his participation in teachers' union negotiations during the 2012 strike further strengthened his skills in conflict resolution, mediation, and consensus-building.

On the Nominee's understanding of religious and cultural dimensions of the Vatican

64. The nominee stated that his Catholic background, including his leadership roles within his parish and active association with religious congregations, constitutes a significant cultural asset in the context of his prospective assignment. He noted that this experience has afforded him a deep appreciation of the traditions, values, and hierarchical structures that underpin the Vatican's religious and institutional framework, as well as familiarity with Catholic doctrine.
65. He added that this foundation would enable him to engage effectively and respectfully with officials of the Holy See and is expected to facilitate relationship building, foster mutual understanding, and strengthen engagement within both the religious and diplomatic spheres of the Vatican.

On Kenya's Foreign Service Pillars

66. Dr. Julius acknowledged a limited understanding of the full scope of Kenya's foreign service pillars, citing security and economic interests while omitting key areas such as climate change, diaspora affairs, and environmental diplomacy. He, however, expressed a clear willingness to undertake further capacity building and advisory support to address these gaps.

3.3 Committee's Observations on the Suitability of the Nominee

67. The Committee, having reviewed the nominee's completed questionnaire, curriculum vitae and oral submission, made the following observations regarding his suitability for appointment as Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya to Vatican, The Holy See:
- (1) **THAT**, in accordance with Article 78(1) and (2) of the Constitution, the nominee is eligible for appointment to State Office since he is a Kenyan citizen and does not hold dual citizenship.
 - (2) **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, HELB and CUE.
 - (3) **THAT**, the nominee has not been charged in a court of law.
 - (4) **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.
 - (5) **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.

4.0 COMMITTEE'S GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

68. The Committee, having considered the nominee's academic credentials and professional qualifications, work and professional experience, personal integrity, as well as his 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. He indicated the nonexistence of a 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 did not receive any submissions either by written statement on oath (affidavit) or via email from members of the public regarding the nomination of Dr. Julius Murori Mbijiwe, Ph.D., for appointment as Ambassador to Vatican, The Holy See.
 - 6) The nominee presented his academic and professional credentials, made oral submissions during the approval hearing, demonstrating his suitability for appointment in accordance with the provisions of Section 6(7) of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) Act, Cap 7F.
 - 7) Dr. Julius Murori Mbijiwe, Ph.D., possesses a robust academic foundation, having advanced from secondary education to a doctoral degree in Project Planning and Management. He is further distinguished by extensive experience in leadership and governance.
 - 8) His decade-long service in the Meru County Assembly, involvement in union leadership, and current role as Chief of Staff in Meru County demonstrated solid negotiation and stakeholder management skills.
 - 9) In addition, his deep Catholic faith and active participation in church activities were seen as relevant attributes for engagement with the Vatican, and he showed awareness of the Catholic Church's substantial institutional footprint in Kenya, particularly in education and healthcare.
 - 10) He also expressed willingness to learn and improve his understanding of diplomacy, which the Committee viewed as a positive trait.
 - 11) The Committee noted the nominee's acknowledgement of the strategic importance of establishing a standalone Kenyan Mission to the Holy See. The nominee highlighted the Holy See's extensive involvement in Kenya through its wide network of educational and

health institutions, as well as its active role in peacebuilding initiatives, which necessitate close and sustained diplomatic engagement. He further observed that a dedicated Mission in Vatican City would enable more focused, timely, and effective diplomatic operations compared to the current arrangement under the Kenyan Embassy in France. While acknowledging the additional financial implications, the nominee expressed the view that the long-term benefits and improved efficiency would justify the investment.

- 12) The Committee further notes that its Report on the Supplementary Budget Estimates No. 1 for the Financial Year ending 30th June 2026 had recommended that the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs submit a detailed cost-benefit analysis and justification for the establishment of a new Mission at the Vatican, particularly in light of Kenya's existing non-resident accreditation through France under the Holy See's diplomatic framework.
- 13) In this regard, the Committee expresses concern that, despite the stated strategic and diplomatic value including enhanced bilateral engagement, improved access to the Holy See's extensive global diplomatic network, strengthened collaboration in peacebuilding and humanitarian efforts, and increased soft-power influence through faith-based partnerships the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs has not yet provided a comprehensive and evidence-based justification demonstrating that these benefits sufficiently outweigh the associated establishment and operational costs.
- 14) The Committee therefore reiterates its recommendation that the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs submit a detailed cost-benefit analysis and clear strategic justification for the proposed Mission to the Holy See, outlining measurable diplomatic, developmental, and foreign policy gains, as well as a sustainable framework to ensure value for money.
- 15) Dr. Julius demonstrated strong leadership credentials and academic achievement. However, he would require substantial preparation to effectively represent Kenya's interests at the Holy See, an institution whose diplomatic practice is shaped less by conventional statecraft than by religious doctrine and canonical governance.

5.0 COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

69. 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 Dr. Julius Murori Mbiijiwe, Ph.D., as the Ambassador to Vatican, The Holy See.**

SIGNED: [Signature] DATE: 28/04/2026

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

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
PAPERS LAID

DATE: **28 APR 2026** DAY: **TUESDAY**

TABLED BY: **21** *Report of the Departmental Committee on Defence, Intelligence and Foreign Relations on the Approval hearing of Dr. Julius Murori Mbiijiwe, Ph.D., for appointment as Ambassador to Vatican, The Holy See*
VICE CHAIRPERSON

CLERK AT THE TABLE: **WZOPU WAKALE**