



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR
ON WOMEN RIGHTS

**STATEMENT BY CHIEF GUEST HON. HARRIETTE CHIGGAI DURING THE
CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE 5TH WOMEN IN HUMAN RIGHTS
CONVENTION ON 28TH MARCH 2024 IN MOMBASA**

Vice-Chairperson, IHRM Council

Council Members present,

IHRM Executive Director, CHRP Quresha Abdullahi

Distinguished Participants,

Good afternoon

Don't fear failing. Fail many times and always pick up yourself
embrace your pain and get out of it

1. The story of women in HR is a beautiful one. Why do I say this?
Because women are naturally empathetic, have compassion, kindness, patience and are natural nurturers. This makes them natural mentors and guides in families, organizations and the society at large.
2. The **5th** Women in HR Convention is a milestone gathering. It embodies the essence of empowerment, resilience, and equity for women leaders. The fact that we're here for the fifth time is a testament to the growing momentum behind women's leadership in HR.

3. As the **President's Advisor on Women Rights**, I am deeply committed to advancing the cause of women's empowerment and leadership in all sectors and HR is not an exception, that is why I am here not in my personal capacity but to represent the highest office in the country .
4. The convention's theme, "**Empowering Women Leaders through Purpose, Resilience, and Equity**," resonates profoundly with me. Throughout my career, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative power of purpose-driven leadership. When women leaders connect their work to a larger cause, their passion and dedication is truly inspiring. A strong sense of purpose fuels creativity, fosters innovation, and allows women leaders to navigate challenges with a clear vision.
5. I believe that in the past three days, you have **gained valuable insights** that will not only shape the HR industry but you have also **identified the gaps** that hinder women from moving up the ladder. Let me also add that **wahenga** meant to say '**panapo wanawake hapaharibiki neno**'. Why do I say so? Well, because I know you have come up with solutions that need to be implemented courtesy of this convention. Where women meet and commune together there has to be a purpose, vision, problem solving, nurturing and where there is a problem a solution must be found.
6. In my office we say that the world was changed by women who were willing to be difficult. Simply put, you are not comfortable with the status quo and therefore you are doing something about it. So I urge the women in this room to be 'difficult' then we will begin to experience real change.

7. You have the power to create inclusive workplaces where diversity is celebrated, and every voice is heard. I should therefore be seeing Creches; mental well being;; strong maternity policies; clear sexual harassment policies where there is a female HR in an organisation. By championing the rights and professional development of your female colleagues, you are paving the way and supporting the government to achieve the goal of a more equitable and just society.
8. Of course, creating truly inclusive workplaces isn't always easy. Unconscious bias, lack of access to mentorship, and even inflexible work cultures can all pose significant challenges. However, this convention has most likely equipped you with the tools and strategies to overcome these obstacles. I am also here as your champion in government to support you where you need me to.
9. I want to believe you have explored critical topics, honed your skills, and developed strategies to cultivate purpose, strengthen your resilience, and champion equity in your workplaces. Let's recommit ourselves to these crucial principles. Whether it's implementing unconscious bias training programs, advocating for flexible work arrangements, or mentoring a rising star, let's leverage the transformative power of HR to create lasting change. Let's be the change makers that this country needs.
10. You have the power to build truly inclusive workplaces where every individual, regardless of gender, feels valued, empowered, and has the opportunity to thrive. Remember, you are the architects of a more equitable future specifically in the workplaces.

11. As we gather here today, we are guided by a powerful vision: a Kenya where women are not just economically empowered, but thriving. Both the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) and Vision 2030 prioritize women empowerment initiatives. BETA recognizes that empowering women is a strategic pathway to unlocking Kenya's full economic potential.
12. By prioritizing women's access to education, skills training, financial services, and entrepreneurial support, BETA aims to dismantle systemic barriers and create an enabling environment for women to thrive. I want to urge the HR professionals in this room to work alongside us to dismantle the systemic barriers in boardrooms. Together let's chart a course towards a more equitable, inclusive, and prosperous Kenya, where women are empowered as drivers of socio-economic transformation.
13. In the pursuit of our shared goal of empowering women leaders, we must embrace continuous learning and harness the transformative potential of technology in the digital era. One of the barriers that make women not climb the ladder professionally is their families which shouldn't be so.
14. By leveraging A.I. technologies for instance, we can create new pathways for women to access education, employment, and a myriad of opportunities that enable them to compete with their male counterparts while still taking care of their families.
15. Imagine online learning platforms that cater to women in remote locations, or AI-powered mentorship programmes that connect aspiring women leaders with experienced professionals across the globe. Technology can be a powerful tool for breaking down barriers and leveling the playing field.

16. This is precisely why events like this one are so important. Here, we can explore innovative solutions, share best practices, and bridge the digital gap.
17. I salute the dedication and passion of women leaders in HR and beyond. These women continue to drive positive change in their organizations and communities.
18. **Let us keep moving forward, inspiring and empowering each other to build a more equitable and inclusive world for all. Together, we are unstoppable.**
19. I challenge us to seize this moment to reaffirm our commitment to empowering women leaders through purpose, resilience, and equity. **A woman's job is never done until it is done.** Let us therefore work together, to build a world where every woman has the opportunity to fulfill her potential and contribute meaningfully to society.
20. What are we as HR professionals doing to align with the government agenda and taking that knowledge back to our rural homes to sensitize the community with the sole purpose of poverty alleviation.
21. Let's make workplaces make sense for women to thrive. Let's make it safe for women and girls to climb the ladder by nubbing sexual harassment at its roots. With our collective efforts and determination, I am confident that we can create a more inclusive and safe work space for all
22. **In conclusion,** I urge each one of us to recognize the immense power and influence you hold as women in HR. You are

not merely professionals in your field; you are agents of change, catalysts for progress, and champions of equality. When faced with a challenge, adopt my motto : ***the question isn't who is going to let me; it's who is going to stop me. (that's what I define as being difficult , don't see obstacles, see results and actualise)***.

23. The time for change is now, and it starts with each one of us. we must show up and in style. Thank you for your dedication, your leadership, and your unwavering commitment to making a difference. Together, we can achieve greatness for this country.

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