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KENYA WOMEN PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION STATEMENT ON THE EJECTION OF KWALE COUNTY WOMAN MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT – HON. ZULEIKHA HASSAN FROM THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS FOR ATTENDING PROCEEDINGS WITH HER BABY

NAIROBI, 9th August, 2019

During the morning session on Wednesday 7th August, 2019, Hon. Zuleikha Hassan - Kwale County Woman Member of Parliament was ejected from the National Assembly Chambers for taking her 5-month old infant to the Chamber, terming the baby as a “stranger” as provided for in the standing orders.

KEWOPA recognizes that as the country strives towards achieving universal health coverage, maternal and child health should be at the top of the list. KEWOPA are supporters of women’s rights including children and therefore, advocates for these rights to be honored.

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends 6 months exclusive breastfeeding for infants and thereafter diet supplemented breastfeeding for up to 2 years. It is unfortunate that this incident is happening during the breastfeeding week which speaks a lot of the support towards maternal and child health. Further, Kenya is a signatory to treaties that provide for the right of an infant to exclusive breastfeeding for six months.

The Health Act, 2017 section 71, requires all employers to provide lactation centres at the work places for nursing mothers. Parliament as an employer, should adhere to this requirement and be the role model in protecting the rights of nursing mothers and their infants.

Having been instrumental in passing this law and also advocating for the Breastfeeding Bill, KEWOPA calls upon all employers in Kenya to provide a safe working environment that supports breastfeeding mothers. Further, KEWOPA asks the Government to provide clear guidelines for Government agencies and to all employers to ensure compliance with the law.

HON. PURITY NGIRICI, MP

CHAIRPERSON – KENYA WOMEN PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION