Press Statement on the forceful mass eviction of the Nubian Community of Kibos, Kisumu County
8 February 2021

Amnesty International Kenya, Pamoja Trust, Grassroots Trust for Community Organization in Kenya and the Housing Coalition condemn the reckless and wanton destruction of homes, property and livelihoods of the Nubian Community in Kibos, Kisumu County. Local accounts estimated that approximately 3,000 people were violently evicted from their homes and at least one child has lost their life as their home collapsed upon them.

State agencies and not terrorists supervised and implemented this heinous act and destructed places of worship, shops, homes and private properties. The action betrays the 11 May 2020 Presidential promise to the nation by the Cabinet Secretary for Interior that no forced evictions would take place as the nation recovers from the Covid 19 pandemic. No eviction order produced, with the evictions carried out in the night. Unfortunately, this happened at a time when communities are trying to weather the storm of Covid 19. Hundreds of children had just returned to school with families struggling to put food on the table.

It is important to note that the Kibos Nubian Community has known Kibos as home for nearly 84 years. They have been part and parcel of the Kisumu urban fabric. The exploitation of their vulnerability by state agencies is therefore immoral and unconstitutional.

We therefore demand that:

1. The Ministry of Interior and Government Coordination Cabinet Secretary take full responsibility for the human settlement disaster witnessed in Kibos. He must now clarify whether the operation was sanctioned by his office or take disciplinary action against the County Commissioner and the Assistant County Commissioner who supervised this brutal operation against unarmed community.

2. The Interior Cabinet Secretary must issue a public statement asserting that there will be no further forced evictions nationally and that future processes will follow the guidelines in the International Convention on Economic and Social Cultural Rights, the Land Laws Amendment Act of 2016 and the recent Mitubell Welfare Society and the Kenya Airports Authority judgement

We further call on the;

3. Transport Cabinet Secretary James Macharia to take disciplinary action against the Kenya Railways Managing Director Philip Mainga. There must be no place in elected state for State Officers who deliberately and intentionally invade unarmed community at night and evict them.

Reparation and relocation is the only way forward to compensate the lives and livelihoods lost and property destroyed. Only this would restore the dignity of the marginalized community of Kibos. This process should be transparent and consultative and ensure that those with legitimate entitlements are awarded.

Only these actions will assure Kenyans that this operation was not sanctioned at the level of the National Cabinet of the Government of Kenya.

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