



*In Search of Better Health*

# KENYA MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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PRESS STATEMENT

11 January 2023

### RE: RESPONSE TO A MALICIOUS AND UNSUBSTANTIATED ARTICLE ON KEMRI BY NTV

The Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) has taken note of the article which ran on NTV on Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> January 2023, titled 'KEMRI on the spot over possible embezzlement of KES. 2.2Billion in irregular Hiring. The article was based on an Open Letter to the Deputy President H.E Rigathi Gachagua dated 29<sup>th</sup> November 2022 to the effect that KEMRI was involved in irregular hiring, financial irregularities, and abuse of Office which they received from a Senior Management Member of KEMRI. KEMRI wishes to respond as follows: -

1. We take great exception to this article which is malicious, inaccurate and completely one-sided. It is unfortunate that this report was aired without KEMRI being given the Right of Reply and an opportunity to clarify facts or defend itself as is professionally required.
2. On staff allowances, Kshs 473M was released by Treasury after a court case and it was paid to staff who were entitled to be paid as per the Judgement of the court. A total of 473 million was released from National Treasury of 4<sup>th</sup> July 2019 and the same was disbursed as extraneous, risk, emergency call allowances to the eligible staff. These payments were audited by KENAO and the report is attached. This was a one-off payment, subsequently we have been receiving funds to pay these allowances Currently we are paying the Doctors , Dentists , nurses , clinical officer and Laboratory technologists as supported by the current payroll.
3. There is a pending court case by the Union against KEMRI, Ministry of Health, National Treasury & Salary Remuneration Commission (SRC) on staff allowances. The Union should await the conclusion of that case.
4. On acting DG/CEO & other positions in science and admin. These vacancies were caused by natural attrition as is normal in any public or private organization. Vacancies will only be filled as per the HR Instruments which are currently under review.
5. On Kes. 1.2 Billion Donor funding relates to one of our partners and the money was wired directly to the KEMRI-Wellcome Trust Programme. However, in capturing proceeds from donor funding this amount was captured in the books of KEMRI Welcome Trust not in the KEMRI main books of accounts. All donor funding is audited by international audit firms appointed by the funding organization, in addition to KENAO audit, in this particular case, audit was done by KPMG. The Board of management has arranged to Meet Welcome trust and Oxford university to review the MOU and funding arrangements.
6. On Ag. DD-HR.Ms. Beatrice Adieri is on secondment from the Public Service Commission in line with the Public Service Commission Act 2017 & PSC Regulations 2020 with approval from the Board and MoH. KEMRI also seconds officers to support other State Agencies in line with the law and Government practice. There is nothing illegal against her secondment. Ms. Adieri is a Director of Human Resource Management at PSC with over 27 years'

- experience and is highly qualified, a full member with IHRM certification. Her IHRM Membership No. 03888.
7. On appointment of external law firms, we have a list of pre-qualified law firms appointed competitively in line with the Public Procurement & Disposal Act 2015. Law firms are given work competitively and with approval of the AG.
  8. On Kshs. 12M of travel allowance not accounted for, this is a historical matter. It arose in 2015 due to an Internal Audit process. The matter has henceforth been addressed and concluded. An internal audit report is available to confirm this.
  9. The KEMRI does not have a recognition agreement with the said Union of Kenya Civil Servants since they don't have a required threshold of 50 + 1 of unionisable membership in KEMRI as required by the labour laws and therefore the Union cannot purport to represent the staff.
  10. That on allowances of staff issue, a meeting was called by the management and members given a brief on the said risk allowances to their satisfaction. It is important to state that while the management was trying to engage the relevant government authorities with an intention to secure these allowances, the Union of Kenya Civil Servants took the matter to court. Unfortunately, the matter is still in court pending determination.



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