

## **President Kenyatta signs nine Bills into law**

By James Mwambai

NAIROBI, 31st August 2016, **(PSCU)**—President Uhuru Kenyatta today at State House, Nairobi, signed into law nine Bills, six of which meet constitutional deadline.

The Bills signed into law include; The Controller of Budget Bill, The Miscellaneous Fees and Levies Bill, Access to Information Bill, The Kenya National Examination Council Amendment Bill, The Community Land Bill, The Protection Traditional Knowledge and Cultural Expressions Bill.

Other Bills which the President signed are The Forest Conservation and Management Bill, The Lands Laws Bill and the Seeds and Plant Varieties (Amendment) Act.

The Controller of Budget Bill is an Act of Parliament to give effect to the provisions of Articles 225, 228 and 252 of the Constitution regarding the functions of the Office of the Controller of Budget and for connected purposes.

The Miscellaneous Fees and Levies Bill is an Act of Parliament to provide for the imposition of duties, fees and levies on imported or exported goods and for connected purposes.

Access to Information Bill gives effect to Article 35 of the Constitution; to confer on the Commission on Administrative Justice the

oversight and enforcement functions and powers and connected purposes.

The law allows the public to seek for any information from government, and obligates public servants to make sure they provide that information, or risk hefty fines or jail terms.

The principal object of the Kenya National Examination Council (Amendment) Bill is to anchor the existence and practice of structured ranking of schools and candidates in statute law.

The new law seeks to address the challenges facing ranking of schools and candidates like the current abolishment of the ranking system in national examinations without proper consultations.

The law therefore, empowers the Kenya National Examination Council to rank schools and candidates based on the national examinations conducted and administered by the Council.

The Community Land Act, 2016 is an Act of Parliament to give effect to Article 63 (5) of the Constitution; to provide for the recognition, protection and registration of community land rights; management and administration of community land; to provide for the role of county governments in relation to unregistered community land and for connected purposes.

The Community Land Bill which is now a law will ensure that all community land currently held in trust by county governments will be registered.

The Protection Of Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Cultural Expressions Bill, 2015 provides for the protection and promotion of traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions; to give effect to Articles 11, 40 and 69 (1), (c) of the Constitution; and for connected purposes.

The legal framework aims to protect holders of Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Cultural Expressions against misappropriation, misuse and unlawful exploitation by third parties for use in pharmaceutical products, therapy, arts and craft, music, design and even works of architecture.

The Forest Conservation and Management Bill, which is now a law is to provide for the establishment, development and sustainable management, including conservation and rational utilisation of all forest resources for the socio-economic development of the country.

The law which is an Act of Parliament shall apply to all forests on public, community and private lands. The implementation of this Act shall be guided by the following principles of good governance and access to public information, and a participatory approach to forest conservation and management shall be enshrined to ensure

the effective involvement of stakeholders in forest conservation and management.

The law also requires that forest resources management and conservation shall be devolved wherever possible and appropriate to those owners and managers of forest resources.

The Land Laws Bill is an Act of Parliament to amend the laws relating to land to, align them with the Constitution, to give effect to Articles 68(c),(i) and 67 (2)(e) of the Constitution, to provide for procedures on evictions from land, and for connected purposes.

The Bills were presented to the President for his signature by Solicitor General Njee Muturi

**Ends...**