PRESS RELEASE:
World Future Council supports right of peaceful protest in Kenya

27 June 2024: The World Future Council today expressed shock and concern at the escalating violence against the citizen protests in Nairobi including harassment and injury of numerous protestors and the tragic deaths of more than 20 people in Nairobi, and numerous others in Githurai and other parts of the country.
The protests were organized by Kenyan citizens, many of them youth, in response to a government finance bill that would increase taxes on many lower and middle income Kenyans.

Despite assurances by the Government that the right to assembly would be protected and facilitated, human rights observers and medical officers have reported numerous incidents of human rights violations by police and military forces including excessive and unwarranted use of force. These violations against civilians were concluded with the Kenyan President
Ruto calling protestors criminals and their protests as treasonous in his address to the Nation on Tuesday.

“I am *so angry at what is happening in my country Kenya,”* says Dr Auma Obama, Councillor of the World Future Council, who was teargassed by Kenyan police while giving an interview in Nairobi to CNN, as she marched with the demonstrator.
“Our leaders are giving orders to kill our young people. Their only crime being to PEACEFULLY exercise their constitutional right to protest! I was witness to this. In the capital Nairobi, in Githurai, and in other parts of the country, killings of innocent young people by the police and the army were witnessed.

Why?! These are our children. They are our future! Our leaders need not to gun them down, not teargas them, but to listen to them. Because violence is never an option!
Know that it does not make you weak if you listen to young people. It actually makes you stronger. Because it shows you have humility. And there is greatness in humility."

Credits: Festo Lang

The World Future Council is also concerned at reports of forced disappearances and extra-judicial killings of citizens opposed to government policies. World Future Council affirms the right of freedom of expression and peaceful protest anywhere and everywhere in the world, including in Kenya.
Citizens exercising their right to peaceful protest need to be protected from unwarranted and illegal harassment, detention and violence.
It is especially disconcerting that such violations of civil rights are taking place in Nairobi just one month after Kenya hosted the 2024 UN Civil Society Conference in Nairobi.

“Kenya, as a member of the United Nations and a party to the key international human rights treaties, is obliged to protect the human right to freedom of expression, peaceful protest and due process,” said Alyn Ware, WFC Spokesperson on Peace and Disarmament who participated in the Nairobi conference. *“We call on the Kenyan government to live up to these obligations.”*

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