THE LAW SOCIETY OF KENYA
THE CITATION OF THE FATHER JOHN ANTONY KAISER
HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD - 2016

The Honourable Chief Justice,
The President - elect of the LSK;
All the Council members – elect;
The Honourable Judges present;
Invited Guests;

My Dear Colleagues, Members of the Learned Profession of the Law;
Ladies and Gentlemen.
It gives me great pleasure this evening to be presenting to you this citation for this year - 2016 - **THE FATHER JOHN ANTONY KAISER HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD**, to honour a noble, distinguished and glamorous lady. A citizen who has been in the forefront of promoting human rights through sports and peace not only in Kenya, regionally but also internationally.

She is arguably in that generation that John F. Kennedy spoke about during his inauguration as the President of the United States of America in 1961. She is an astute leader, athlete, sportsperson, an Ambassador of peace and a diplomat of goodwill.

She is a - 5 feet tall and weighing 40kg, jovial and good hearted girl born in the year 1973 in a hilly region called Kapsaiti, Lelang division within Kapenguria sub-county, West Pokot county. This is within the pastoralists communities. It is an arid and hardship area vested with dry weather, poor geographical terrain and life camouflaged by poverty. Indeed, most Kenyan characterizes these parts of the country as the harsh arid and drought land and perennial ethnic hotbeds. She grew up from a very humble background of 24 siblings where she spent all her childhood working in the fields and tendering after her younger brothers and sisters.

As it is common knowledge, Pastoralists are predominantly dependent on livestock - cattle, goats, sheep and camels. Their fundamental rights include - nomadism for greener pasture, water and saltlick. This young girl was not an exception to this lifestyle.

Despite all odds, the lady endured the hardships, the sufferings and the trauma of life. She attended Kapsait Primary school. At the age of 7 years she started to run to school barefoot - a distance of 10 kilometres every morning. Her skills and aptitude in sports were now becoming graphically visible. Little did she know that in that high latitude and the daily racing practice to and from Primary School, this would become her career in future. Later on, she joined Nasokol Girls High School for her Ordinary level ("O" levels). In 1988, she won in the prestigious cross country race and was
nominated for the junior world championships. Upon completion of her secondary school she was awarded scholarship and enrolled at the famous "Rift Valley Institute of Technology", at Nakuru where she undertook studies in Accounts and Book Keeping. After completing her course, she was formally engaged on permanent basis by the then defunct "Kenya Postal & Telecommunication Corporation" (KPLC) (to later on become “Telkom (K) Limited”). In the course of her employment, she would be fully engaged in the Plethora of sports activities organized and planned by the employer. She would be competing with many other corporate bodies.

She was now determined to pursue a career as a runner, but unfortunately was not supported by anyone except her mother

Due to her excellence and prowess in athletics, she won several races and was awarded numerous medals and awards. This great performance by the formidable lady attracted the attention of many experts and interested groups abroad. From a remarkable humble background to an international sports icon, she singles out humility, patience, hard work, team spirit and mercies from the Almighty as the principles ingredients of such a success story. She is ever guided by the wise statement of the renowned sportsperson - Herschel Walker:-

"If you train hard, you will not only be hard, but you will be hard to beat"

She was once vividly regarded "...as the fastest woman in the world..."

Consequently, she got hooked up to a very celebrated international trainer called Vooker based in West Germany. While a resident athlete in Germany She embarked into serious international athletics. In the course of time she participated and won numerous races. These include but just to name a few of them:-

- Kenya National record holder at 3000metres, 5, 000metres and 10, 000 metres;
• *Won Bronze medal in the World half Marathon Championships in the year 1993;*
• *Won Bronze Medal in the World Championships 10, 000 metres in the years 1995 and 1999;*
• *New York City Marathon Champion in the years 1994 and 1995;*
• *Rotterdam marathon Champion in the years 1997, 1998 and 1999;*
• *London Marathon Champion in the year 2000.*
• *Rome Millenium Marathon Champion in the year 2000.*

Her performance abroad earned her fame all over the world and locally. The Government of Kenya recognised her efforts and granted her diplomatic status by issuing her with a diplomatic passport and other privileges. The words of a philosopher - Black Elk:- "*There can never be peace between nations until there is first known that true peace which is within the souls of men*” really inspired the lady.

In the year 2003, the lady who hailed from a war stricken area where the people which include the Pokot, Turkana, Serbei and Samburu relish in cattle rustling and hence cause for alot of warring by the warriors using sophisticated firearm including the notorious AK 47, decided enough was enough but to plough back what she had materially earned abroad. She came back home from Europe.

She came up with a noble idea of incorporating an organization under the Trustee Perpetual Succession Act, Cap 164 of the Laws of Kenya. This was the birth of the now highly publicized *"Tegla Loroupe Peace Foundation".*

The mission statement for the foundation states *"Attaining a peaceful, prosperous and just world in which Sports is a unifying Factor"*. The Foundation aims at promoting peace building, improving of the livelihood and resilience of the vulnerable pastoralists communities affected by and vulnerable to conflicts and civil strife found in Northern Kenya, Southern Sudan, Northern
Eastern Uganda, Ethiopia and other volatile areas in the region in peace building through conflict resolution programs, gender empowerment, girl child education sponsorships, environment conservation, HIV/AIDS awareness programme and promotion of education and sports. These communities are the Pokot, Turkana, Serbei, Karamoja, Iljemps, Masai and Samburu by engaging them in sports and other enterprise activities.

The Foundation has established a complex educational centre for peace at a place called Siyioi in West Pokot where she donated her own 23 acres of land for that purpose. It comprises of a Vocational facility for the training of the reformed warriors, an Early Childhood Development place, a boarding primary school facility for talented and needy children from war stricken areas. Indeed, in 2015, it saw the first 18 KCPE students all enrolling to different secondary schools. There are future plans to establish a secondary and university wing at the centre.

Additionally, the efforts by the Foundation led by the Lady are bearing fruits. Recently there was established a Tegla Loroupe Peace Foundation (TLPF) in Uganda Reportedly, it has successfully managed to organize 12 peace building races annually that involve the participation and unites all the warriors from all the war stricken regions at Kapenguria from, 6 peace races at Moroto in Uganda and two (2) at Tana River delta where she caused ceasefire during the 2014 ethnic clashes there, while there she rescued Twenty (20) young girls who are now undergoing formal education at the centre. She has managed to have 45 firearms including the notorious A47 guns voluntarily surrendered by the reformed warriors directly and preferable to the Foundation and to the government of Kenya in a well-organized disarmament project.

As a result of her efforts, the perennial ethnic clashes and cattle rustling are on significant decline according to the National Cohesion and Integration Commission and the Government of Kenya. The reformed warriors join a camp where they are taught alternative enterprise and livelihood vocational programmes such as farming, tailoring, modern husbandry and other livestock keeping.
Unfortunately, on 13th March, 2016 as fate would have it the Foundation lost a very famous and a leader of reformed warrior by the name Robert Matanda together with his beloved wife through a tragic road accident along the infamous black spot - Salgaa. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

It is now evident that she has spent her entire life committed to helping broker peace, alleviating poverty and reconciliation through peace building activities and sports.

Subsequently, arising from her fervent contribution in sports diplomacy and peace she has been appointed as an Ambassador of Peace in many fora. These include:-

- Silver Star by former President Moi, 2002;
- The Oxfam Great Britain Ambassador of peace - Dafur, year 2007;
- Milele Lifetime Achievement Award by the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, year 2007;
- A Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations Children's Education Fund;
- IAAF Ambassador in the year 2006;
- Honorary Doctorate of Science on Peace and Conflict Studies (Honoria Causa) - Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, year 2009;
- UN Athlete for Peace Ambassador;
- Kenya Wildlife Services - Race with Rhino Ambassador, year 2012;
- The Presidential - Moran of the Burning Spear by former President Mwai Kibaki, year 2012;
- United Nations Development Programme Eminent Person, year 2013;
Ladies and Gentlemen, the recipient of the year 2016 **FATHER JOHN ANTONY KAISER HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD** is

**AMBASSADOR DR. TEGLA CHEPKITE LOROUPE**

THANK YOU.