AKINYI ODONGO art centre

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FROM
Office of the President, Founder & Chairperson
Akinyi Odongo Art Centre (AOAC)
Nairobi, Kenya

DATE
6 October 2026

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ENCLOSURE
AOAC Policy Submission and Proposed Legislative Amendments on the Cotton Industry Development Bill, 2023

RE

AOAC Policy Submission and Request for Stakeholder Engagement on the Cotton Industry Development Bill, 2023 (Senate Bill No. 5 of 2023)

Strengthening Kenya's Cotton-to-Fashion Value Chain for Industrialisation, Creative Enterprise, Employment and Economic Empowerment

Dear Sir/Madam,

Akinyi Odongo Art Centre (AOAC) respectfully submits its policy recommendations on the Cotton Industry Development Bill, 2023, and requests an opportunity to make an oral presentation before the Senate Standing Committee on Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries.

AOAC is a Kenyan organisation working at the intersection of fashion, art, culture, agriculture, sustainability, innovation, enterprise development and economic empowerment. Our work seeks to strengthen the connection between communities that produce raw materials and the enterprises, industries and creative practitioners who transform those materials into commercially and culturally valuable products.

We recognise the importance of the Cotton Industry Development Bill and its objective of strengthening cotton production, value addition, processing, marketing, research and the economic position of cotton farmers and other industry participants.

However, AOAC respectfully submits that Kenya's cotton opportunity extends significantly beyond the agricultural production of cotton.

Cotton is not only a crop. It is the beginning of an industrial, creative and cultural value chain.

The economic journey of cotton can extend from:

Seed → Farmer → Cooperative → Collection → Ginning → Fibre → Spinning → Yarn → Weaving/Knitting → Textile → Design → Fashion → Garment Manufacturing → Retail → Export → Circular Economy

The legislation should therefore ensure that the full value chain is deliberately recognised and supported.

This is particularly important because Kenya continues to seek greater domestic manufacturing, employment creation, youth enterprise, women's economic empowerment, export growth and development of the creative economy.

AOAC's principal concern

AOAC believes that there remains an important policy gap between cotton production and the downstream creative

and manufacturing industries that create consumer demand and higher-value products from cotton.

Fashion designers, textile innovators, garment manufacturers, artisans, creative enterprises, training institutions and other downstream actors should not be treated simply as end users of cotton.

They are economic actors within the cotton value chain.

Design creates demand.
Fashion creates markets.
Manufacturing creates employment.
Branding and creativity create value.
Exports create foreign exchange.

Consequently, AOAC proposes that the Cotton Industry Development framework expressly incorporate the downstream textile, fashion, design, garment manufacturing and creative-enterprise ecosystem.

The Presidential reservations and institutional question

AOAC further notes the Presidential reservations concerning the establishment of an additional regulatory entity under the Bill.

AOAC does not approach this issue merely from the perspective of whether another institution should or should not be created.

Our recommendation is that the final institutional framework should prioritise:

- Coordination
- Efficiency
- Participation of counties
- Farmer representation
- Fashion and creative-industry representation
- Youth and women enterprise development
- Accountability
- Representation of the entire cotton value chain
- Private-sector participation
- Textile and manufacturing representation
- Research and innovation

We believe that the institutional structure should be designed around outcomes and value-chain coordination rather than institutional proliferation.

Request for engagement

In view of the continuing parliamentary consideration of the Bill and the importance of ensuring that the final legislative framework reflects the complete economic potential of cotton, AOAC respectfully requests:

01 That this submission be formally received and considered by the Committee;

02 That AOAC be granted an opportunity to make an oral presentation;

03 That AOAC's technical recommendations be considered in the Committee's deliberations on the Bill and the Presidential reservations;

04 That the Committee consider the establishment of a structured multi-sector stakeholder mechanism bringing together agriculture, textile manufacturing, fashion, creative industries, research, TVET, counties, farmers and private-sector actors.

AOAC is ready to contribute its technical experience, community-level knowledge and fashion and creative-industry expertise to this process.

We believe Kenya has the opportunity not merely to revive cotton production, but to build a competitive Kenyan cotton-to-fashion and cotton-to-manufacturing ecosystem capable of creating jobs, strengthening rural economies, empowering women and youth, supporting local manufacturing and positioning Kenyan products in regional and international markets.

We respectfully submit the accompanying policy memorandum for consideration.

Yours faithfully,



Akinyi Odongo, O.G.W.

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