

KENYA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS



KENYA CATHOLIC SECRETARIAT

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Our Ref:

Your Ref:

Let us Restore Hope.

“May the God of hope fill you with joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 15:13)

Dear fellow Kenyans and all people of goodwill,

We, the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops (KCCB), thank God for the gift of every Kenyan and all people who live and work in Kenya. We do not take for granted God's loving care for this country and its people. In addition, we thank God for the gift of our beautiful country, Kenya. We are grateful to all Kenyans who remain peaceful and active in useful economic engagement and in deepening our democracy even in very challenging situations.

Peace in our Country

We thank the government for its efforts to ensure peace is maintained. This is one major aspiration of all Kenyans. In a world marked with deadly political conflicts as we witness in the Middle East, and internal strife in several African countries, we do not take for granted the general environment of relative peace we enjoy. We know we are still far from achieving full order in our affairs, but, nevertheless, appreciate where we are. We continue to pray for peace and stability within our borders and for our brothers and sisters living in unstable environments in many parts of the world.

Issues of Concern

We, the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops, feel compelled to voice our grave concerns regarding the troubling political climate that has gripped our country. We have made clear statements many times in the recent past, with very little response from the Government. Despite the calmness we are experiencing, there is a lot of anxiety, and most people are losing trust in the Government.

Consequently, we raise these important observations and concerns that should be addressed:

1. Political Wrangles

The political wrangles in the Government, have generated unwarranted tensions and deepened divisions among our people. Further, it has created an environment of mistrust among the citizens and within the Government itself.

2. Corruption and Politics of Self-Interest

The elected leaders have been mandated to fulfil roles conferred to them by the Constitution. They are among the highest-paid legislators in the world. We are troubled by their heightened insensitivity and irresponsibility in carrying out their tasks, allowing themselves to be captured and compromised in corrupt deals. Corruption may not always involve financial benefits, but the unjust use of position and authority, or abuse of office. The massive greed we are witnessing is shocking and heartbreaking.

3. Violation Human rights and Freedom of Speech

We are appalled by the blatant recurring incidents of reported abductions, disappearances, torture and killings of Kenyans. We also decry the increasing murder of women. This has caused great consternation, anger and disgust. Many families are still grappling with the loss of their children who were brutally killed, injured, or went missing following what is referred to as "GenZ demonstrations" in June 2024. Many of these victims had raised concerns about the rampant corruption within and outside the Government. Who is abducting these people, and is the Government unable to stop these abductions and killings?

The Government must protect the life of every human person in Kenya. (Cf. Constitution of the Republic of Kenya, Article 26). It must take the lead in following the law, which the leadership took an oath to uphold and defend at all times.

4. Culture of Lies, NHIF, Unkept Promises and Misplaced Priorities

The culture of lies is swiftly replacing the integrity and respect that Kenyans deserve. Basically, it seems that truth does not exist, and if it does, it is only what the Government says. Unfortunately, it seems that the Kenyans have helplessly tolerated the lies told to them constantly by the politicians. Kenyans must learn not to applaud

or validate the lies that the politicians tell them, but rather must resolve to seek and be led by the truth.

When the Government fails to fulfil its promises, particularly concerning payments to essential service providers, it harms vulnerable communities. This is the case with NHIF. The neglect of Faith-Based Organizations (FBO) hospitals, now owed billions in dues, is an issue we have addressed constantly even with the President.

We recall other pertinent unresolved issues we have raised recently with the Government: over-taxation of Kenyans, the hiking of the Missionary work permits, Youth unemployment, regulations of the Education system especially the CBC and University loan scheme, the failure to constitute the IEBC etc.

We believe that genuine consultation of all concerned stakeholders in all these matters, is necessary, beyond the casual public participation. This culture of lies, unkept promises and misplaced priorities is unacceptable and needs to be dealt with.

5. Selfish Agenda to Extend the Term of Elected Leaders

It is baffling that a bill proposing an extension of the five-year term to seven years is being considered, and apparently there are plans to rush it through the legislative system. A two-term limit of ten years, as given by the current Constitution, is ample time for any visionary political leader to leave a strong legacy if they perform. We need to critically scrutinize this political move. We question the motivations behind this agenda and the long-term interests it serves. We strongly condemn this retrogressive and manipulative thinking. Let us not create problems where there are none. We have matters of National concern such as the crumbling CBC education system, health care services, reconstitution of the IEBC, a huge block of educated but unemployed youth and fighting the monster of corruption among others, that are surely top priorities.

6. Overtaxing Kenyans

We all know that the Government raises its revenue primarily through taxes. Our problem is that Kenyans are being unreasonably overtaxed. We are vehemently concerned by the continued myriad of new tax regimes that are constantly emerging from day to day. It seems to be a hidden way of reintroducing the rejected Finance Bill 2024. We must listen keenly to the cry of the Kenyan people. The current tax regime is already prohibitive and burdensome. As Catholic Bishops, we have many times reminded the Government of the need to put to good use all the collected revenue and live within its means.

Conclusion:

We thank God for holding our country together despite the political and social upheavals. We pray that our leaders, guided by the values of justice, mercy, humility selflessness, and honesty, provide good leadership and governance for our Nation, in accordance with God's will. What does the Lord God require of us and our leadership? As the prophet Micah says: "You have been told O mortal, what is good, and what the Lord requires of you: Only to do justice and to love goodness, and to walk humbly with your God. (*Micah 6:8*).

We invite all Kenyans and all people of faith to prayer, especially when we see that the tentacles of evil seem to be seizing our Nation. We also invite our fellow Catholics, as we prepare for the **Jubilee Year 2025**, to pray for our country as "Pilgrims of Hope". We are all called to walk together always keeping our gaze at the Risen Christ with Hope.

Signed by:



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Most Rev. Maurice Muhatia Makumba
CHAIRMAN
KENYA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS/
ARCHBISHOP OF KISUMU

Thursday, 14th November 2024

Present

NAME

DIOCESE

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|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Most Rev. Anthony Muheria | - Vice -Chairman of KCCB/ Nyeri |
| 2. Most Rev. Martin Kivuva Musonde | - Apostolic Administrator of Embu |
| 3. Most Rev. Philip Anyolo | - Mombasa |
| 4. Rt. Rev. Joseph Mairura Okemwa | - Nairobi |
| 5. Rt. Rev. Alfred Rotich | - Kisii |
| 6. Rt. Rev. Norman King'oo Wambua | - Kericho |
| 7. Rt. Rev. Peter Kihara | - Machakos |
| 8. Rt. Rev. David Kamau Ng'ang'a | - Marsabit |
| | - Aux Nairobi |

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| 9. Rt. Rev. Salesius Mugambi | - Meru |
| 10. Rt. Rev. James Maria Wainaina | - Murang'a |
| 11. Rt. Rev. Paul Kariuki Njiru | - Wote |
| 12. Rt. Rev. Dominic Kimengich | - Eldoret |
| 13. Rt. Rev. John Oballa Owaa | - Ngong |
| 14. Rt. Rev. Joseph Mbatia | - Nyahururu |
| 15. Rt. Rev. Joseph Obanyi Sagwe | - Kakamega |
| 16. Rt. Rev. Joseph Mwangela | - Kitui |
| 17. Rt. Rev. Michael Odiwa | - Homa Bay |
| 18. Rt. Rev. Willybard Lagho | - Malindi |
| 19. Rt. Rev. Mark Kadima | - Bungoma |
| 20. Rt. Rev. George Muthaka | - Garissa |
| 21. Rt. Rev. John Mbinda | - Lodwar |
| 22. Rt. Rev. Hieronymus Emusugut Joya | - Malarala |
| 23. Rt. Rev. Henry Juma Odonya | - Kitale |
| 24. Rt. Rev. Cleophas Oseso | - Nakuru |
| 25. Rt. Rev. Simon Peter Kamomoe | - Aux. Nairobi |
| 26. Rt. Rev. Wallace Ng'ang'a | - Military Ordinariate |
| 27. Rt. Rev. Peter Makau Munguti | - Isiolo |
| 28. Rt. Rev. John Kiplimo Lelei | - Aux. Eldoret |