

KENYA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS



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Your Ref:

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A CALL TO PRAYER FOR THE KENYA WE DESIRE

"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land." (2 Chronicles 7:14)

Greetings in the Name of Our Lord & Embracing the Season of Lent as a Season of Grace

Fellow Kenyans and all people of goodwill, we, the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops, extend our warm and heartfelt greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. As we gather at Mama Ngina Waterfront in Mombasa for the national launch of the 2025 Lenten Campaign, we are united by our shared commitment to rebuild our nation on the foundations of faith, justice, and compassion. In embracing the season of Lent, we renew our resolve to address our people's pressing issues and work collectively toward the Kenya we desire - a Nation marked by unity, justice, and enduring hope.

Blessings and Hope

In this Jubilee Year of Hope, it is fitting that we celebrate God's abundant blessings upon our Nation. We rejoice in the achievements of the many Kenyans who bring honour to Kenya on the international stage, the unwavering dedication of professionals and workers who drive our national progress, and the vibrant energy of our youth whose dreams illuminate the path to a brighter future. We also recognize efforts from Government for stabilizing our Kenyan currency. These blessings, indeed many, are but a few of the countless gifts we must acknowledge and continue to count every day. They remind us that even amid our challenges, God's grace endures, and our nation possesses the strength and resilience needed to build the future we envision.

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INCORPORATING: THE GENERAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE

1. Commission for Doctrine, 2. Commission for Liturgy, 3. Commission for Missions, 4. Commission for Pastoral and Lay Apostolate (Family Life National Office, National Youth Office), 5. Commission for Inter-Religious Dialogue and Ecumenism (CIRDE), 6. Seminary Episcopal Commission, 7. Commission for Clergy and Religious (Liaison Committee), 8. Commission for Education and Religious Education (CERE), 9. Commission for Promotion of Integral Human Development-CPIHD (Catholic Justice and Peace Department, Catholic Health Department of Kenya, Caritas Department of Kenya, Refugees Migrants and Seafarers Department), 10. Commission for Social Communications, 11. Council for Economy (Secretariat for Economy), 12. Ad Hoc Commission for AIDS Relief (KARP), 13. Canon Law National Office

"You shall be my Witnesses", (Acts 1:8) for the Sanctification and Salvation of all People.

While we celebrate the relative peace in Kenya, we deplore the continuous attacks and mass killing of children, women, prisoners of war and violence against targeted communities in DRC and South Sudan. The International community must act urgently to end the bloodshed.

While we express our gratitude and thank God for the many good things happening in our country, in the true spirit of the season of Lent, we want to retreat and look at some of the pressing issues we face as a country.

1. Upholding the Sanctity of Life amidst Abductions and Extra-Judicial Killings

We come out once again to express our profound dismay over the incidents of abductions and extra-judicial killings that threaten the sanctity of life in our nation. Life is a divine gift from God. It is our sacred duty to protect every individual ensuring that no one is subjected to violence or denied their inherent dignity. It is the duty of all relevant authorities to take decisive, transparent action to end these inhumane practices, affirming that every human life is inviolable and worthy of protection.

2. Divisive Politics and Premature Election Campaigns

Political realignments have emerged well before the 2027 general elections, raising significant concerns on two fronts. First, this early onset of political campaigns diverts critical attention from national development, shifting focus to the spectacle of election campaigns. The fervour generated by political rallies creates an artificial euphoria that obscures substantive policy debates, elevating political temperatures. Second, this premature election fervour undermines the very spirit of the democratic process, as a government is expected to concentrate on governance and implementation until the officially designated campaigning period is announced.

3. Ethnic Mobilization and Lessons from the Past

Ethnic mobilization has long been employed as a tool of division and manipulation. Over the decades, the exploitation of ethnic identities for political gain has led to violence and deep societal fractures. Today, we stand resolute in our commitment to learn from these painful lessons. We affirm that every Kenyan, regardless of ethnicity or political affiliation, deserves to be treated with the utmost dignity and respect. In building *The Kenya We Desire*, it is imperative that we embrace a future where all

citizens are united in mutual recognition and respect, transcending the divisive tactics of the past.

4. A Call for Accountability amidst the Scourge of Corruption

Corruption remains one of the most insidious challenges undermining our national progress and eroding public trust in our institutions. Despite promises of reform, corruption continues to infiltrate national and county levels, diverting vital resources from those who need them most. As the Church, we categorically condemn all forms of corruption that rob our people of their God-given rights and obstruct the path to a just society. We ask the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) and other relevant bodies to enforce anti-corruption measures rigorously and impartially. We truly desire a Kenya where corruption has no place, and where services are offered without any bribe.

5. Advocating for Electoral Reforms

In our relentless pursuit of a transparent and credible electoral process, we commend recent initiatives such as establishing an IEBC selection panel. These steps certainly assist in restoring faith in our democratic institutions. But more is needed. We call for the immediate updating of the voter register, the prompt conduct of by-elections for vacant seats, and continuous efforts to register new voters, especially among our dynamic youth—to ensure that every eligible citizen has a voice. Moreover, we urge the government to provide sufficient resources and autonomy to constitutional bodies such as the IEBC and the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR). These reforms are essential for nurturing a democracy that is participatory, just, and truly reflective of the people's will.

6. Economic Policies: Housing Levy and Taxation

Economic justice is a cornerstone of our vision for a fairer and more prosperous Kenya. We call for a comprehensive reform of our economic policies to ensure that every Kenyan benefits from National progress. We also call for complete transparency in the allocation and utilization of tax revenues, insisting that these funds be exclusively dedicated for providing essential services that uplift the common good. Robust anti-corruption measures must be enforced to safeguard public resources, ensuring that every available shilling is invested for the sustainable developments of our nation. We desire a Kenya where all public processes are fully transparent.

7. The Crisis in the Health Sector

The crisis in the health sector is undermining the dignity of the sick and those hospitalised. Families are going through painful experiences unable to pay using the SHA scheme. What was the hurry to transition without good interphase?

As Catholic Bishops, we are still very unhappy that our hospitals, which serve mainly the underprivileged, are grounding because the government is not keeping its promises to remit funds owed to them. We could have served more patients had we received the dues since 2020. In spite of the promises made in November 2024 after our previous statement, the only payments that came through cover part of the claims in this period only. Our faith-based Hospitals are still owed not less than 2.5Billion shillings. We need commitment from Government on when this amount will be paid and not mere promises.

Moreover, the reorganization of the Levels of Hospitals will not favour their operations. We think this system will only weaken our hospitals more by reducing the patient numbers while not offering a better health care to our people. We therefore request for a review of the Health Act. The haphazardly coordinated Health sector is too dangerous, and a threat to a healthy Kenyan population.

8. Empowering Our Youth for a Brighter Future

The Youth of Kenya are not only the leaders of tomorrow they are the visionaries of today. Brimming with creativity, innovation, and an unwavering commitment to progress, our young people are poised to transform our society. All leaders should prioritize policies and initiatives that empower our youth through quality education, vocational training, and entrepreneurial opportunities. We ought to create an environment where fresh ideas and innovative solutions flourish by valuing and providing our young people with the tools they need to succeed.

9. Lower the Cost of Living for All Kenyans

While there have been isolated improvements in the pricing of certain commodities, the overall burden of the rising cost of living continues to affect the everyday lives of millions of Kenyans. Essential services such as

electricity, transportation, and healthcare are becoming increasingly unaffordable, placing an undue strain on family budgets and diminishing quality of life. Moreover, the current opaque tax regime complicates efforts to determine how public funds are allocated and whether they effectively alleviate the financial burdens on citizens. The government authorities and private sector stakeholders have to engage in comprehensive, transparent dialogue and implement sustainable strategies to bring down the cost of living to manageable levels. We have to do everything within our means to ensure that every Kenyan enjoys a dignified life with access to the essential services and economic stability necessary for a thriving society. A bit of political goodwill could take us forward. We have much hope this can be achieved.

Envisioning *The Kenya We Desire*

Lastly, you may ask, what is the Kenya We Desire? The *Kenya We Desire* is a Nation that is led by honest, selfless leadership who upholds the sanctity of life and the dignity of every human being, ensuring that every citizen—especially the poor—lives freely and securely. In this vision, our justice system is efficient, fair, and devoid of discrimination, fostering an environment where respect and constructive dialogue replaces unethical attacks. Furthermore, sound economic policies nurture an enabling environment for business and industry, a robust health system caring for the vulnerable, and an accessible education system securing a promising future for our children, while environmental stewardship and sustainable agriculture protect our natural resources for generations to come.

Despite our challenges, there remains an enduring hope for our Nation. The resilience and determination of our people, coupled with the call on ethical leadership and steadfast faith, assure us that all is not lost. We are witnessing a growing collective awareness and a renewed commitment to justice, unity, and the common good. This transformative spirit, promises a future where our Nation could rise above its current trials.

In conclusion

We join hands with all Christian Churches and all the Faith Groups who are committed to defending the dignity of the human person and the rights of citizens. We all - Christians and Muslims, indigenous religions, Hindus,

Sikhs, Buddhists and other religions, must join hands to build the "Kenya We Desire" and protect the dignity and rights of each Kenyan.

For all Catholics this year is a Jubilee Year, 2025 years since the birth of our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ. Because of our faith in Jesus, we live in this world as "Pilgrims of Hope". In this Jubilee Year, we are reminded that our life is a pilgrimage—a journey through this world marked by hope and courage trusting that each step we take is guided by God's assistance and a steadfast commitment to justice, compassion, and love. Let us all strive together to build a more inclusive, hopeful, and prosperous Nation for all. We urge you to dedicate all lenten Fridays to prayer and fasting in order to invoke God's Mercy for our country and peace in the world especially in DRC, South Sudan, Ukraine and Gaza and other regions.

We finally call upon all Catholics faithful and all people of good will to continue praying for His Holiness Pope Francis whose health still remains in critical condition that the healing power of the Lord may be upon him.

May God bless us all and grant us the strength to walk in His ways. May this Lent season bring us closer to God and to The Kenya We Desire.

May God bless you all, May God bless Kenya.

Signed by:



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



28th February 2025

PRESENT

NAME

1. Most Rev. Anthony Muheria
2. Most Rev. Martin Kivuva Musonde
3. Most Rev. Philip Anyolo
4. Rt. Rev. Joseph Mairura Okemwa
5. Rt. Rev. Alfred Rotich
6. Rt. Rev. Norman King'oo Wambua
7. Rt. Rev. Peter Kihara
8. Rt. Rev. David Kamau Ng'ang'a
9. Rt. Rev. Salesius Mugambi
10. Rt. Rev. James Maria Wainaina
11. Rt. Rev. Paul Kariuki Njiru
12. Rt. Rev. Dominic Kimengich
13. Rt. Rev. John Oballa Owaa
14. Rt. Rev. Joseph Mbatia
15. Rt. Rev. Joseph Obanyi Sagwe
16. Rt. Rev. Joseph Mwongela
17. Rt. Rev. Michael Odiwa
18. Rt. Rev. Willybard Lagho
19. Rt. Rev. Mark Kadima
20. Rt. Rev. George Muthaka
21. Rt. Rev. John Mbinda
22. Rt. Rev. Hieronymus Emusugut Joya
23. Rt. Rev. Henry Juma Odonya
24. Rt. Rev. Cleophas Oseso
25. Rt. Rev. Simon Peter Kamomoe
26. Rt. Rev. Wallace Ng'ang'a
27. Rt. Rev. Peter Makau Munguti
28. Rt. Rev. John Lelei
29. Rt. Rev. Peter Kimani

DIOCESE

- Vice - Chairman of KCCB/Nyeri
- Mombasa
- Nairobi
- Kisii
- Kericho
- Machakos
- Marsabit
- Aux Nairobi
- Meru
- Murang'a
- Wote
- Eldoret
- Ngong
- Nyahururu
- Kakamega
- Kitui
- Homa Bay
- Malindi
- Bungoma
- Garissa
- Lodwar
- Maralal
- Kitale
- Nakuru
- Aux. Nairobi
- Military Ordinariate
- Isiolo
- Aux. Eldoret
- Embu