



Presbyterian Church of East Africa

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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PRESS STATEMENT

We, the members of the Business Committee of the 24th General Assembly that met on this 27th day of November 2024 have raised a concern in regard to the current issues affecting the nation of Kenya. In the olden times, God raised prophets to deliver God's message to the people including kings and all. Therefore the Church has divine mandate to represent the masses and to be the prophetic voice from God in the present dispensation. It is for this reason that we wish to prophetically highlight the following issues affecting the Kenyan society:

1. UNIVERSITY FUNDING

This Church acknowledges and appreciates the efforts by the government to complete the Collective Bargaining Agreement by the University lecturers that necessitated their return to work. However, it is our considered opinion that that matter took too long to settle and this affected the smooth running of our institutions of higher learning. Further, the Church remains concerned about the change in the university funding model that is negatively affecting the learning environment. There have been cases where undeserving children have been funded at the expense of the needy. This Church urges the government to critically look into the issue to ensure that no deserving child is discriminated in the government support whether in public or private institutions of higher learning. It is also regrettably noted that the Government has not been able to clear the fees for the government sponsored students in private universities. We call upon the Government to clear the same. Finally, the Government to ensure there is adequate quality assurance in our universities to avoid cases of dubious degrees and certificates being offered as we heard recently. We call upon politicians to stop meddling with the Universities Boards and Managements as they are the main cause of the chaos and confusion witnessed in some our Universities.

2. CBC – (COMPENTENCY BASED CURRICULUM)

We appreciate the efforts done by the Government towards the CBC. In particular the Church notes that the Government has continued to employ grade nine teachers and infrastructural development in terms of classes. However, we call upon the Government to make it more affordable and ensure that all areas within Kenya get enough teachers and enough classes.

3. SHA/SHIF

Universal health care for all is a very noble idea. However, the change from NHIF to SHA/SHIF seems to have been done hurriedly without proper planning, feasibility study, and public participation. This has negatively affected the citizens it intended to help, causing even some related deaths. This Church asks the government to re-evaluate its position on the matter, and avoid hurriedly implementing programs that have far-reaching and sometimes fatal consequences on the citizenry. The Church is concerned about the heavy debts left to our hospitals by the defunct NHIF and threatens hospitals to closure. We are asking the Government to ensure that these debts are all paid up.

4. ADANI PROJECTS

Whilst we acknowledge that there are various infrastructural issues that needs to be addressed in this nation, the government needs to do due diligence before subjecting Kenyans to theatrics and money wasting contracts that have far-reaching economic consequences. Although genuine questions had been raised severally pertaining to these contracts, the government resorted to either arrogance, silence or dictatorial tendencies in terms of her defense of the projects. It took the embarrassing move of the international prosecution to cancel the contracts that had been locally questioned. This disdain of Kenyans and push to implement certain projects at whatever cost and in total disregard of what people feel is unacceptable. We urge the government to adopt a listening attitude and prioritize the concerns of its citizens who should be the primary beneficiaries of any government initiative.

5. CORRUPTION

Corruption remains the greatest threat to economic and societal development in this country. For a long time, this country has been suffering from the effects of corruption in all facets of the society. Unfortunately this vice seems to have been entrenched and normalized now more than ever before in all sectors in both County and National governments. Issues of projects that were launched and funded yet non-existent have increased daily. This Church calls upon the government to seriously address and end this culture of corruption and impunity without further delay. Those with suspected corruption cases should be suspended and barred from holding offices if convicted.

6. ABDUCTIONS

In the wake of the recent protests led by the Youth of this country (Gen-Z protests), a lot of young people were and continue to be abducted. Some of our fellow citizens still cannot tell the whereabouts of their loved ones. It is the responsibility of the government to ensure the security and wellbeing of her citizenry. The intelligence organs in Kenya are well equipped and trained to unravel such matters. This Church demands the cessation of these abductions, the release of these missing persons and/or information pertaining to their whereabouts. Rights and freedoms entrenched in our Constitution must be respected and upheld at all times by all, including security agents. Further, the Church calls upon the Government to stop intimidating the Church in order to silence them. We are concerned by the way Church leaders are intimidated by security agents and we cases where strange people are seen during Sunday services. This should stop going forth. Another concern is the issue foreign visitors abductions which are happening and they have tainted the image of our country internationally. We call upon the Government to ensure that this stops.

7. BRETTON WOODS INSTITUTIONS

We note with appreciation the support that has been for a long time accorded to this country by the IMF and World Bank especially on matters of development and financial support. However, the over reliance on these Breton Woods institutions and excessive borrowing end up denying the country her independence and threatens the future of our children. This Church calls upon the government to be prudent in her engagement

with these institutions. The Government must stop allowing these institutions from taking over sovereignty at all cost.

8. FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Of late there have been increased incidences of the arrest and threats to persons who engage in whistle blowing. The truth of the matter is that there are a lot of things that are going wrong and need to be brought into the limelight. Freedom of speech is enshrined in the Constitution and should be upheld at whatever cost. This Church calls upon the government to ensure the safety and security of the press people and other whistleblowers.

9. IEBC

For quite some time, this country has been operating without a fully functional IEBC. The failure to appoint qualified persons to man this very important body of elections has hindered some actions to be undertaken and put the country in a very precarious position; one that cannot be able to handle certain eventualities. For instance, some by-elections have not been held as a result of this. This Church calls upon this government to without any further delay, fill the offices that are vacant at the IEBC and ensure that the institution is fully functional. As a Church we call this precarious situation "a politically designed crisis for self-preservation". We call upon the leadership of the country to put the country's interest ahead of the self-interests.

10. TAXATION

We acknowledge that no country can operate without collecting taxes. However, the trend that we are witnessing borders on unreasonable taxation in certain cases. The business environment has become toxic forcing many small businesses to close down. Employees are suffering from a lot of deductions on their pay slips. The cost of living has become so high and Kenyans are suffering in the hands of a runaway economy. This Church calls upon the government to stop excessive taxations and acts that hamper the welfare of the lower cadre of society. Increase in taxation needs to be considerate and gradual. We call upon the Government not to bring the rejected Finance Bill 2023 through a back door.

11. HAITI MISSION

Recently the government deployed members of our police force on a peace-keeping mission to Haiti. Reports indicate that the UN is not adequately financing this initiative. The government is forced to pay from her coffers with the hope that the same will be refunded. Western nations with the capability to finance and sponsor such a peace-keeping mission have given it a wide berth. The government with an economy that is suffering is forced to step in and cover up for this mess and void. It is the considered opinion of this Church that the mission was not well thought out and the initiative was ill-advised. We therefore call upon the immediate withdraw of our police force from this mission.

12. VACCINATIONS

Kenyans are quite skeptical about various animal and human vaccinations that have been going on. There have been so many conspiracy theories going on and the government has not come out clearly about these initiatives. Adequate education and confidence building needs be undertaken prior to these being introduced. A good initiative is likely to fail where people have apprehensions. Very close interactions with suspicious international financiers and who seem to enjoy immunity and/or unlimited access and control with government leaders have not gone down well with the people. The government should put into place mechanisms to address these fears, avail clear information, and address all these. The Church therefore calls upon the government to act with speed and alleviate these fears.

13. INSECURITY

Recently, incidents have been circulating of some people vowing to push certain communities from their County. This kind of incitement is not only dangerous but retrogressive. It is against the Constitution of Kenya Article 40(1) which says one can own land and live anywhere in Kenya. It is therefore wrong for the government to seemingly look sideways when such sentiments are in the public domain. This Church calls upon the government to act with speed to end this trend and to deal with all issues that interfere with peaceful co-existence of Kenyans and freedom of movement and settlement.

14. TITLE DEEDS

There are several cases that have been highlighted by the press through *expose* pertaining to persons with genuine land titles being displaced by others holding titles to the same properties. This may also be related to overt corruption and brokerage that exists in the Land offices. This Church calls upon the government to speedily address the problems in the department of Lands and settlement. The issue of existing duplicate title deeds must be addressed sooner than later.

15. FARMERS' BILL

Some actions by the government today seemingly are out to punish those that sacrifice a lot and are engaged in creation of wealth. Why would the government start taxing and levying small scale farming? Small scale farmers are the apt representation of what 'hustling' is all about. It is therefore immoral for the government to punish the very same people that it initially portended to support through introduction of punitive levies. This Church asks the government to immediately withdraw the proposed Agriculture and Livestock bills currently in Parliament.

16. TERM LIMITS

This Church notes with a lot of concern the proposed extension of term limits for certain office holders. The drafters of the 2010 Constitution were wise enough and must have had very good reasons to limit the political terms to five years. Anything beyond that would be detrimental to the gains already acquired in the country. It would be unfortunate for us to interfere with this system. This Church asks the concerned to cease introducing changes that have far reaching consequences to constitutionalism in Kenya. The proposal must therefore be withdrawn with immediate effect. Any discussions of the same is a betrayal to the Kenya Citizens. As PCEA, we call upon our leaders to respect the constitution and avoid any mutilation of the same for some personal gain.

17. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

This Church is concerned with the increasing gender-based violence and femicide. The government needs to take immediate action to address this issue by building capacity of the youth and bringing to book all perpetrators of these heinous crimes to ensure the safety of everyone regardless their gender.

18. ROAD CARNAGE

It is sad to note road carnage has tremendously increased. We call upon the Government to ensure that all road regulations are adhered to, road signage to be put in place and the marking of the roads to be clear and visible. We also call upon the road users both motorists and pedestrians to use the roads well. The Michuki Rules which included speed governors and seat belts to be reinforced.

19. POLITICAL SITUATION

The Church calls upon our political leaders to lower the political tempers in the country for and the political re-alignments as the same are only bringing divisions and hampering development agenda. It is too early for our leaders to take us into campaign moods when they have not delivered what they promised Kenyans.

20. FOREIGN JOBS

The Government efforts to export labour to other countries is seemingly a good move due to the high levels of unemployment in our country. However, this has caused more frustrations to the young people and should also be clear what exactly they are going there to do so that we do not subject our young people to modern slavery. We should create a better environment for them to do businesses and employment opportunities.

Rt. Rev. Thegu Mutahi
MODERATOR – 24TH GENERAL

Rev. Dr. Robert Waihenya
SECRETARY GENERAL

27th November, 2024