

## The Hypocrisy of Religiosity in Tanzania

### News:

Tanzania: Widespread news outlets have unanimously reported the step taken by the ruling party CCM of condemning in the strongest terms the ignominious action that took place on Sunday 6/09/2015, when the republican union of Tanzania presidential aspirant, from the opposition camp under the coalition of UKAWA Edward Lowassa when he attended Sunday prayers then started to deliver political sermons in the Lutheran church (KKKT) in Tabora town, in western Tanzania. The aspirant has been quoted by various media outlets including social media, claiming that, since independence, there has never been a single president who was a Lutheran, therefore it is now their turn !

### Comment:

In this issue, the ruling party CCM has promptly condemned religiosity and sectarianism in the ongoing campaigns. The party went to the extent of claiming it is not ready to sit and watch the nation being torn apart because of religiosity, federalism, tribalism or any kind of discrimination meant for the purpose of political mileage. They have further insisted that the step taken by the UKAWA presidential aspirant is against elections rules and regulations and contradict ethics rules signed by all the parties. Above all, they claim it is against the custom and tradition of the Tanzanians in ensuring that the nation remains unitarily intact, peaceful and stable. It is quite astonishing how the notion of religiosity is being hypocritically used in this country under the capitalist ideology and its ruling system democracy, be it with the ruling party or opposition. Yet the memorandum of all secular political parties is based on secularism. Even the constitution claims the same.

The issue of religious discrimination in Tanzania is as clear as the sky; it does not need any evidence to prove it! Be it against certain Christian sects in small areas, though the real problem is against Muslims who sacrificed to fight for the independence against the German rule and later from British imperialism.

Let us remind ourselves of one tiny thing, that even Edward Lowassa, the presidential aspirant from the opposition in 1993 while a minister for state in the prime ministers office, in the same political party CCM signed a memorandum with the church on behalf of the secular government, known as the Memorandum of Understanding, approving education, public and health services to be run by a Christian institute known as the Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT) and Tanzania Episcopal Conference (TEC) in collaboration with the government. Yet there was no outcry of the issue of religiosity in Tanzania?

Those who claim to fight sectarianism and religiosity today, where were they when the minister for state, in the office of the Prime Minister William Lukuvi made his statement in 2004 in the Methodist Church in Dodoma then boldly proved it before the parliament, that the Zanzibaris have intended to declare Zanzibar an Islamic state? Is it not religiosity, who condemned it?

Or the kind of oppression, subjugation and oppression committed against the Muslims including Muslims scholars and teachers pinned with the allegations of terrorism, others proved before the law of courts the kind of inhuman, ignoble and horrible acts done to them

in jails? Are there any commissions which have been formed to investigate those allegations? The Minister for Internal Affairs Mathias Chikawe when asked about the allegations in the parliament, just uttered rude and obscene words that cannot be uttered by an ordinary man let alone a minister!!! As for his superior, the prime minister, he simply claimed he does not have that kind of information at all! Isn't this religiosity? In 2013 when the report of human rights violation in the Operation Tokomeza Ujangili wa wanyama was received, why did the government immediately form a special commission to investigate, eventually several ministers had to resign? <http://www.thecitizen.co.tz/News/4-sacked-over-Tokomeza-Ujangili/-/1840392/2120620/-/7q8ff1/-/index.html>

When the same oppression and violations are committed against the Muslims, then even the prime minister does not have any clue. What is this, if not religiosity?

Not to mention the ongoing unduly arrests of innocent Muslims. Some Muslims have been arrested. The proof of their arrest being beards and kanzus, as was recently reported by some media outlets. This kind of humiliating and oppression went unnoticed with no single politician rebuking it. This shows those who commit these atrocities enjoy full blessings from the rulers. Are these not acts of religiosity?

The comment of the Catholics referring the incumbent government as God's choice is still vivid in the minds of the citizens. What does it concern the church to endorse rulers in a secular state?

Finally, democracy along its political parties that have no regard to religion, except that they use it when beneficial to them.

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