

DIALOGUE REFERENCE GROUP

SECURING ELECTIONS 2022

GET READY FOR THE 2022 ELECTIONS:

COMMUNIQUE OF THE THIRD RELIGIOUS LEADERS' CONVOCATION

PREAMBLE

We religious leaders from around the country have gathered here at *Ufungamano House* on 19th and 20th January 2022 to assess Kenya's readiness for the August 9, 2022 General Elections and make recommendations on existing gaps. The delegates in the 3rd National Religious Leaders Convocation were inspired by scripture recorded in Nehemiah 2: 5

If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my fathers are buried so that I can rebuild it.

And also from Sura Al Asr (103)

Should recommend to one another to the truth and patience

The Convocation recognized that the moral and social structures of the nation are threatened, and require rebuilding to Secure Elections 2022.

1. READINESS FOR THE ELECTIONS 2022

This Convocation is deeply concerned that the nation is apparently not ready for the Elections 2022. Corruption, impunity, lawlessness, insults and incitement to violence are happening with abandon, and Kenyans are sinking deeper into despair and depression. It is a great pain for Kenyans that political leaders have deliberately neglected to address the issues of electoral justice, which exposes the nation to a repeat of the pre and post election violence and crisis witnessed in the past.

It is in this context that this 3rd National Religious Leaders Convocation has considered the different aspects of readiness for elections, and now shares the following message and action points.

2. NATIONAL PRAYER AND FASTING

This Convocation recognizes that the nation is in a very precarious situation, with a real danger of sinking into violence before, during and after the 2022 General Elections. We call all Kenyans to commit to prayer and fasting for the nation so that God intervenes and safeguards the lives and wellbeing of all. In this regard, we ask each individual to select one day each week when they will fast and dedicate time to pray for the nation. On our part, we will organize prayer sessions where we will welcome the elections related institutions. We will be sharing the schedules in due course.

3. ELECTORAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This Convocation has noted that there is work pending in Parliament to fine tune the electoral legislative framework. Of note is the need for completion of the Campaign Financing (Amendment) Bill 2020; Framework for Realization of the 2/3 Gender Rule; Political Party Primaries Bill; and others. Towards this, we have committed to engage parliamentarians at the local level to mobilize them to prioritize the elections related laws. This will be in addition to reaching all concerned institutions to ensure that the laws are implemented and adhered to.

4. ELECTORAL INSTITUTIONS

This Convocation recognizes that the elections management institutions in Kenya are heavily impeded from executing their mandates. We have committed to support the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) to deliver the quality of elections envisaged in Article 81 of the Constitution of Kenya 2010. Towards this, we will:

- (a) Pray with and offer spiritual and pastoral support to the staff of the IEBC and other electoral institutions at national, county and sub county levels.
- (b) Advocate for the IEBC to enforce the electoral code of conduct firmly
- (c) We will seek an appointment with the Inspector General to emphasize the absolute need for assurance of protection of elections officials and immediate arrest and prosecution of perpetrators. The physical assault of elections officials in Dagoreti North, Vihiga, Mandera, Kisumu and Matungu must never be repeated.

5. SECURITY INSTITUTIONS AND STRUCTURES

This Convocation is deeply concerned that the security institutions in the country are clearly and progressively losing control of the situation in the country. The violence in Lamu, Laikipia, Kerio Valley, Marsabit, Samburu, Isiolo and the dozens of bodies retrieved from Yala River and other places are a pointer to this. The National Police Service has been accused of favoritism, disregard for rule of law, and gross human rights abuses. We have committed to engage the Inspector General, as well as security agencies at national, county and sub county levels to advocate for equal application of the law.

We will seek to meet the Cabinet Secretary for Interior to discuss the security arrangements before, during and after the General Elections.

6. CITIZEN READINESS AND CAPACITY

This Convocation recognizes that the weak link in the democratization of the country is the lack of civic and voter education of the people. This is driving the prevailing voter apathy that results in Kenyans either absconding the elections or voting for the richest candidates rather than the best qualified. To remedy this, we have committed to:

- (a) Mobilize Kenyans, especially the youth, to register as voters
- (b) Deliver civic and voter education to empower the people to recognize their position as holders of Kenya's sovereignty
- (c) Deliver messages of peace and national cohesion through our pulpits all other public forums we have access to

7. POLITICAL ACTORS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

This Convocation has followed the widespread impunity manifested by political actors as they engage in early campaigns. Cases of hate speech and incitement to violence are increasing. If this trend is not stopped forthwith, the political actors will foment violence before, during and after the 2022 Elections. We have therefore committed to:

- (a) Reach out to His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta and appeal to him to disengage from the succession politics. The President is the symbol of national unity as provided for

Article 131 of the Constitution of Kenya 2010, and so he should remain above partisan politics, recognizing that he is the President of all Kenyans.

- (b) Reach out to the Deputy President, HE Dr William Ruto, as well as other state officers, to point out the widespread perception that they are using public resources and institutions to undertake partisan and early campaigns, which goes against the values espoused in Article 10 of the Constitution.
- (c) Reach out to political parties to inspire them to hold free, fair and credible primaries, and to especially provide for women and youth to hold leadership in the parties and vie in areas where the parties are strong
- (d) We will designate specific religious leaders to reach out to and accompany political actors to provide pastoral support, and also to motivate them to be controlled in their sentiments
- (e) We will publicise and urge Kenyans to vote against any political actor who incites violence or engages in hate speech

Further to these, we will engage all political actors, especially the Presidential candidates, to accept results or address any disputes through the courts of law.

CONCLUSION

We conclude by calling upon all Kenyans to treasure and join in praying in the words of our National Anthem:

O God of all creation, bless this our land and nation, justice be our shield and defender

May God bless Kenya now and always.

Signed on this 20th day of January 2022 at Ufungamano House, Nairobi.

Institution	Name	Signature
Hindu Council of Kenya	Sulathakota Raju	K. Sulathakota
Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops	MOST. REV. MARTIN KIVUVA NUSONDE	Martin Kivuva
National Council of Churches of Kenya	REV CANON CHRIS KINYANJU	Chris Kinyanjui
National Muslim Leaders Forum	Imam Salim M. Charo	Salim M. Charo
Organisation of African Instituted Churches	Rev. Fr. JOSEPH MUTIE NGUMBI	Joseph Mutie Ngumbi
Seventh Day Adventist Church	Dr. Samuel Kericho	Dr. Samuel Kericho
Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims	SHEIKH YUSUF N. ABUHAMZA RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS	Yusuf N. Abuhamza
Evangelical Alliance of Kenya	BISHOP JOHN WARARI WAKABU	John Warari