



THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF KENYA (ACK)

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PRESS STATEMENT

“ONE CHURCH, ONE PEOPLE, ONE NATION”

1. INTRODUCTION

The Bishops, Provincial Synod Officials, Regional Christian Community Services Directors and Departmental Heads of the Anglican Church of Kenya met at the All Saints' Cathedral Multi-Purpose Hall on 8th July 2010 to pray, reflect and deliberate on the state of the Nation. As a follow-up to the meeting held on 29th April, the Archbishop convened the consultative meeting for the ACK to obtain a common ground on a shared desire and commitment to peace and harmony, and be prepared to influence the nation in this direction through a sustained captivating message of peace, love and unity. In our time together, we meditated on Mark 9:14-29. In the account, a young man had been tormented by an unclean, paralysing spirit since his childhood and his father had brought him to Jesus' disciples for healing. This challenge proved too great for the disciples and the case was referred to Jesus who drove out the unclean spirit. He went on to declare, *“... This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting”* (verse 29). We reaffirm our statement made on the 29th of April 2010 on the Proposed Constitution, that we say NO to the Proposed Constitution as it is.

2. STATE OF THE NATION

Our nation is at a crossroads brought about by the sharp differences of opinion on the Proposed Constitution and the upcoming national referendum. The mood of the nation

is characterised by fear, anxiety, confusion, lack of political direction, apathy and suspicion. We continue to discern spiritual to guide our politics

As a result, the stakes are raised and the nation is at risk of falling apart if things are allowed to continue in the same manner. All this threatens to tear the social fabric of our society.

We all witnessed the unfortunate events that followed the General Elections of 2007 and declared as a nation that we would never allow ourselves to get to that point again. We acknowledged that the seeds of violence and division had been planted just before and during the National Referendum on the Constitution in 2005. We prayed and fasted as we cried out to God to save our country from civil strife. We do not want to risk a repeat of these events.

If the proposed constitution is approved, those who vote "NO" will be aggrieved. Similarly, if it is rejected, those who vote "YES" will be aggrieved. Such a scenario will not augur well for the future of the nation. There should be no victor or vanquished in a constitution making process. Whichever way you vote, the fact that you have taken part in the process should be honoured.

3. MESSAGE TO KENYANS

The Church as Conscience of the society has a biblical mandate to proclaim and sustain justice, peace and harmony.

Kenya is at a turning point that will have a critical and lasting impact on this generation and those to come. Now more than ever, Kenyans must rise up and go against the tendency to resort to comfort zones due to differences in opinion. This is **NOT** the time to assert stands and opinions on the proposed constitution if that will only serve to create divisions along ethnic, regional or religious lines.

Kenya is greater than any one of us. We need to focus beyond the referendum and on the life of Kenya as a nation thus the need to promote peace, harmony and unity.

4. OUR HOPE

Matthew 5:9 blessed are the Peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God.

5. OUR APPEAL

We urge the Government to step in and narrow the gap between the State and Religion by creating forums for dialogue and consensus building both before and after the referendum. Let us draw from our African traditions where people made every effort to agree on issues. This went a long way in diffusing tensions and removing the sense of negative competition which is especially necessary for a national instrument like the proposed constitution. We need to steer away from adversarial politics.

As we prepare for the referendum, let us prove to ourselves and the generations to come that we are capable of exercising our democratic right peacefully.

Let every avenue be sought to ensure Kenyans clearly understand the importance of a new constitution. It is not just a document but a covenant among the people of Kenya. All covenants are characterised by trust, commitment, responsibility, others' interest, unity and grace. We shall have lost out on the reason for a new constitution if the people adopt it without taking it to heart.

Let us be driven by the vision of a united people, a people who are very aware of their shared humanity and the beauty of diversity – the gift of God.

Let every Kenyan be driven by the vision of a united nation, a nation where people are free to have differences of opinion without the fear of being intimidated or shunned.

In conclusion, we state that:

- i) We stand by our resolution made on the 29th of April 2010
- ii) That nobody should be intimidated or condemned for their position and view on the Proposed Constitution.
- iii) As ACK we rededicate ourselves to the work of reconciliation, healing and integration.

iv) Given the mood of the nation, we still believe that postponement of the referendum **with a view to building consensus is in the long term interest of the nation**

Signed this 8th Day of July 2010

The Most Rev. Dr. Eliud Wabukala
ARCHBISHOP OF KENYA &
BISHOP OF ALL SAINTS' CATHEDRAL DIOCESE