



**REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN REV. DR. SAMUEL KOBIA,
CBS DURING RELIGIOUS LEADERS' SYMPOSIUM AT THE
KENYA INSTITUTE OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT.**

Date: 27TH October 2021

It is my great honor to host you all for the inaugural symposium on peace. As religious leaders we not only honor but we highly value your tireless labour in shepherding this nation and ensuring the values we all hold dear are taught and lived out. Your reach and scope is clear: Kenya has 85.5% Christians, 11 percent Muslims and 2% Hindu and other faiths. That makes us a 98.5% religious country. Which simply means that seated before me is the parliament with the biggest mandate of 98.5% of the people.

Your mandate is vast, you are there at birth, coming of age, marriage and even death. Your input into the lives of our people is undeniable and its consequence far reaching. We recognize also that you see and interact with your members every week. Which makes you the most in-touch leaders of any in our nation.

Having said that, it is important that we recognize that all faiths embrace and teach the tenets of peace and cohesion as a core teaching. In fact there is no other basis for peace than our creator being referred to as love itself. In Christianity Jesus is referred to

as the Prince of Peace. The Prophet Mohammed, peace be upon him, advocated for peace and cohesive living as did Buddha and many teachings as contained in the Ramayana and the Gita.

This is clear evidence that we agree on a common course as the religious leaders and the NCIC: the course to see our fellow citizens living in peaceful and cohesive societies which will propel us further into a prosperous society. It is in recognition of this that we invited you here to share thoughts and ideas on how to make our nation much better.

It is true that the nation has benefited greatly from years of religious leaders promoting peace, cohesion and unity. We know that religious leaders were involved in the struggle to bring in the Second Liberation and we are aware that the religious leaders were heavily involved in bringing peace in 2007. In fact, in every election cycle religious leaders play a central role in pacifying the nation after divisive elections which our politicians often plunge us into. This rich history of mid-wife to peace and peace building is another facet that we must work on even more as we head into 2022 aware that it is only ten months to the Election.

As the NCIC we do not just want to host you here but instead we want to partner with you on our campaign dubbed “**Elections bila Noma**” where we envision an election free of violence and hate speech. I must say that this is a good start to a beautiful future.

Ladies and gentlemen let me speak a little bit about the role of religious leaders in strengthening one of the pillars of our Elections bila Noma campaign - The social consequence of hate speech. A few months ago, we had the privilege of launching the walls of fame and shame. Interestingly we have seen a sharp decline in hate

speech coming from our political leaders. At least not when addressing political meetings from the open platforms, But hate mongers have gone online and we are following them there.

Why do I share this? Because if you too began to name and shame those who speak and propagate hate, if you joined us and called out leaders who habitually teach hate then we would create a society where hate speech is not tolerated. We as the NCIC do it by dint of the constitution of men, but you can do so by the power bestowed upon you by the Creator himself. We must call out vice where it shows its head because in the case of peace building a stitch in time always saves nine and prevention is better, easier and cheaper than cure. As peace builders we have a clear mandate to ensure Kenya remains a peaceful cohesive nation. To do so we must unburden our people and must remind them that there is hope beyond an election. We must remind them that there is no leader above the constitution. It is these reminders that will keep our people from being too invested in their candidate and instead focus on the institutions that ensure Kenya remains steady no matter the leader in office. With those many remarks I would like to thank you from the bottom of our hearts as the NCIC for attending our inaugural peace symposium and may God bless you and may God bless Kenya.

REV. DR. SAMUEL KOBIAH, CBS

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN