

THE 55TH INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

MESSAGE TO THE NATION BY THE COUNCIL OF PRESIDENTS OF THE INTER-RELIGIOUS COUNCIL OF UGANDA

Dear Fellow Citizens,

On behalf of the Council of Presidents of the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda, and on my own behalf, I wish to convey our heartfelt greetings to the people of Uganda, as we commemorate the 55th Independence Anniversary.

This great day is taking place at a time when the nation is on tension as people are still gripped with fear and anxiety over the recent regrettable events that happened around and inside the institution of Parliament. It need not be overstated that Parliament is an inviolable, autonomous pillar of democratic governance.

As we celebrate our 55th independence, it is incumbent on all of us to step aside and ponder the promises and commitments our leaders- past and present- have made since independence. Since the 50th independence anniversary, we, as religious leaders, have endeavoured to envision our contribution in the realm of nation-building. There are as many tangible achievements as missed opportunities

It is our considered view that at this material time we need to come and reason together as we celebrate our past achievements. At the same time, it is imperative that we collectively take stock of the current challenges that face us as a country. It

is through building synergies that we shall succeed in charting out a future that benefits us all and our posterity.

National Dialogue

It is in this context that the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda and the Elders Forum of Uganda, working closely with other like-minded organisations, have put in place an independent, non-partisan forum to foster peace, justice and stability through citizens' conversations (dialogue). There is a host of challenges that we have to overcome as a nation irrespective of our diversity.

These include moral decadence, identity crisis, political polarisation, chronic corruption, economic exclusion, unbalanced regional development, poor service delivery, burgeoning youth unemployment, among others. We need to build a new national consensus on a shared transformative agenda that consolidates peace, democracy and inclusive development to achieve equal opportunity for all.

On this note, we wish to call upon government and other key stakeholders to fast-track the national dialogue process. We appeal to the different stakeholders, in and outside government, to share our views and the proposed national dialogue framework.

We wish His Excellency President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, his family and all the people of Uganda a Happy Independence Day.

For God and My Country!



**His Eminence Sheikh Shaban Ramadhan Mubaje
GRAND MUFTI OF UGANDA
CHAIRMAN, COUNCIL OF PRESIDENTS
FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE INTER-RELIGIOUS COUNCIL OF UGANDA**

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