



**REMARKS BY THE IRCU COUNCIL OF PRESIDENTS DURING THE
LAUNCH OF THE INTER-RELIGIOUS FAMILY FESTIVAL**

DATE: 7TH MAY, 2024

VENUE: MEDIA CENTRE, KAMPALA

Fellow Ugandans;

Today, we are here to inform and invite you as we celebrate the vision of **One Family under God** and our African traditional family values. We are inspired by the vision that all people, regardless of our tribes, religion, and nationality, belong to the one human family, as endowed by the Creator God with freedom and fundamental rights.

To celebrate this vision, the Inter Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU) in partnership with Global Peace Foundation and the Government of the Republic of Uganda is organizing the first edition of the Interreligious Family Festival in Uganda on 29th June, 2024 at Kololo independence grounds. This inaugural Family Festival, will be organized under the theme: **“Celebrating Family, Faith, Freedom: One Family under God” for African Renaissance**”.

As you may be aware, we are all bound by our values, religious and cultural heritage which are important ingredients for the African renaissance. In post-colonial times the primacy of traditional African extended family values has evoked strong inter-religious and inter-cultural cooperation to uplift and protect the common legacy, meaning, purpose and future of the family institution. However, under the influence of globalization, the traditional African family system is increasingly getting challenged and weakened as new family patterns emerge and get diffused into the continent.

As Martin Luther King Jr said; *“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”* As your leaders, we believe that there is a lot at stake if we fail to stand up to protect and defend the family, freedom and our religious and cultural values. While we have continued to witness the true cost of our cultural and religious decline, we have a duty to defend all that we hold to be right and true. So fellow Ugandans and Africans, the best and right path for us all is to stand up and defend our values and traditions in accordance with our beliefs and our conscience so that our freedoms are not trampled under the weight of silence and/or ridicule.

Therefore, the Inter religious family festival 2024 will highlight the importance of family values and interfaith cooperation in advancing freedom and the vision of a twenty-first century African renaissance. It will also foster respect and appreciation for diversity, promote sustainable peace and development, and strengthen the family structure as a catalyst for African Renaissance.



Inter-Religious Council of Uganda
Religions for Peace



As a precursor to the festival, various activities and discussions will take place, including panel and roundtable discussions, youth and tourism colloquiums, community service for peace, exhibitions, the Uganda Martyr's trail and environmental conservation initiatives. The festival is expected to culminate in the establishment of a policy framework to support the implementation of the African Renaissance and the revitalization of inter-religious councils across the continent. It is hoped that through these efforts, the festival will contribute to the promotion of African values and the empowerment of communities to address the challenges facing the continent that include; poverty, governance challenges, unemployment and cultural violence.


As we converge to celebrate one family under God, let us be confident in the fact that no one can ever accuse us of being 'silent about the things that matter. Let us remember that what ties us all together is that invisible umbilical cord; the cord of love and sacrifice. It is the cord that should never be cut as it is the cord that binds us as one family under God, a prerequisite for Africa's renaissance.

Through this festival, let us all take inspiration and renew our commitment to stand together as one human family. Together, we can build and celebrate one family under God rich in diversity, equal in dignity and right to religious freedom and united in solidarity. This understanding is central to the traditional African extended family relationships and a foundation of African values which affirms that, "***I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am.***"

Therefore, we invite all families, men, women and young people, business community, development partners, education institutions, cultural and religious leaders from Africa as we celebrate faith, family and freedom as one unit for Africa's renaissance.

The festival will have songs, dance, food, entertainment, shopping, culture and diversity all enjoyed right in middle of our great metropolis. Therefore, please bring out those beautiful Indian saris, the stunning Mishananas, the coloured, striking wrappers of the Masai and other exciting traditional and religious attires from across Africa.

The Chief Guest will be the President of the Republic of Uganda and other former heads of states, President and Founder of Global Peace foundation, eminent Cultural and religious leaders of Uganda and the rest of Africa.


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His Eminence Metropolitan Jeronymos Muzeeyi
ARCHBISHOP OF THE UGANDA ORTHODOX CHURCH
CO-CHAIR IRCU COUNCIL OF PRESIDENTS
CO-CHAIR FESTIVAL NATIONAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

