

# The ORANGE

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## NEWSLETTER OF THE ORANGE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT PARTY OF KENYA



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- Devolution in counties, municipalities and villages
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### Devolution in Cities, Municipalities and Villages

Since 2013 there have been, often vicious, fights on issues of devolution between county governments and the national government. The national government, and the deep state, is dominated by centrists who do not see why funds should be sent to counties to be eaten by undeserving simpletons. Funds must be collected from all counties and consumed by its owners in Nairobi. >> Pg2



### ODM NEWS

Minority Leader in the National Assembly Mr. Junet Mohammed has declared that the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) party will win the Ugunja parliamentary seat when the by-election is called. Speaking during the thanksgiving ceremony for the Energy Minister Mr. Opiyo Wandayi at Sidindi in Ugunja Constituency on Friday last week, Mr. Junet said the party was very strong and popular in the region and that it will not be easy for any political party to try and shake it when the by-election is called. . >> Pg 16



# Devolution in Cities, Municipalities and Villages



Since 2013 there have been, often vicious, fights on issues of devolution between county governments and the national government. The national government, and the deep state, is dominated by centrists who do not see why funds should be sent to counties to be eaten by undeserving simpletons. Funds must be collected from all counties and consumed by its owners in Nairobi.

Article 174 of the constitution outlines the objects of the devolution of government. Two important parts of this article are to: Give powers of self-governance to the people and enhance the participation of the people in the exercise of the powers of the state and in making decisions affecting them; and to recognise the right of communities to manage their own affairs and to further their development.

The constitution requires that there is devolution up to the village level in rural areas. In urban areas

the principle devolution units are cities, municipalities, townships and market centres. Urban areas are required to further devolve themselves into smaller units. The County Governments Act and the Urban Areas and Cities

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**Article 174 of the constitution outlines the objects of the devolution of government. Two important parts of this article are to: Give powers of self-governance to the people and enhance the participation of the people in the exercise of the powers of the state and in making decisions affecting them**

Act outline how devolution is to be achieved beyond the county headquarters. Devolution requires that representatives of the people at all levels should assume office after some electoral process.

County level centrists have been averse to further devolution in counties since 2013. Kakamega seems to be the only county to effect village councils as devolved units in rural areas in the first 5 years of devolution. No county effected devolution in urban areas in the first 5 years of elected county governments. After the 2017 general elections, governors have been setting up urban areas boards. The interest in setting up these boards has been sparked by the World Bank's Kenya Urban Support Programme, KUSP.

KUSP avails funds for development in Urban areas. The principle condition for accessing the funds is the existence of a governance board or committee for the urban area. The Urban Areas and Cities Act outlines the classification

of areas as cities or urban areas. The latter category consisting of municipalities, townships or market centres. The classification criteria include population, infrastructure, revenue generation and collection capacity, capacity for waste management, residents' participation framework and seat of county government.

The boards of a cities and urban areas are appointed for a term of five years through a competitive process by the county governor, with the approval of the county assembly. The members of the board represent various interests including professional associations, private sector, informal sector, neighbourhood associations, gender equity, representation of persons with disability, youth and marginalised groups.

The struggles for devolution space between the national and county governments has been mirrored at the county level between the county executives, led by governors, and boards of urban



areas. In the period 2013 to 2014, we witnessed bizarre struggles for office space between the county executives of Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu and the national executive.

In Nairobi, the Transitional Authority had earmarked the former prime minister's office as the office of the governor. The deputy president grabbed this office, forcing the governor to retreat to City Hall. In Mombasa, TA had identified the former provincial headquarters as the office of the governor. The county commissioner refused to allow the governor to occupy space in this building. In Kisumu, the governor occupied the former provincial headquarters and renamed it as "Prosperity House", the county commissioner issued orders for the governor to vacate the office on several occasions.

The above perverse office struggles are being repeated between county executives and boards of urban areas. These boards are in essence successors of the defunct local authorities including city and municipal councils. In as far as possible, infrastructure developed to support work of the local authorities should be used by the current boards. The county executive has made this very difficult.



The country was subjected to infantile anti-governor debates in parliament at the inception of devolution. Members of the national assembly and senate debated motions to denigrate governors by stopping them from: Using the title "Excellency"; fly flags on their vehicles; and having convoys. We now see some members of county executive try to denigrate board members by saying that the boards are "purely advisory" and executing projects in relevant areas without involvement or knowledge of boards.

The struggles for division of the national cake between national and devolved governments has been intense. The national government has tried to trash lawful procedures of division of national revenues and its appropriation by the national and county governments. This sad situation has been replicated at the county level between the county executives and boards.

With respect to budgeting for urban areas and cities, the annual estimates are to be prepared and submitted in line with the Urban Areas and Cities Act. In line with section 45(1) of the urban Areas and Cities Act, the steps are as follows: (1) Three months before the commencement of each financial year, a board or town

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***Accountability and financial autonomy is a key requirement of boards. A reading of Section 46 together with Section 51 of the Urban Areas and Cities Act indicates clearly that boards must maintain and operate their own bank accounts. Indeed, the auditor general audits boards as separate entities.***

committee shall cause to be prepared estimates of the revenue and expenditure of a board or town committee for that year; (2) The annual estimates shall make provision for all the estimated revenue and expenditure of the board for the financial year to which it relates; (3) The annual estimates shall be tabled before the board or town committee for adoption and approval; and (4) The annual estimates approved by the board or town committee under subsection (3) shall be submitted to the county

governor for submission to the county assembly for its approval.

Section 45(4) above is clear. It is expected that the budgeting process is to be participatory. This includes interactions with the governor and CEC. However, once the budget has been prepared by the board, then it is only the county assembly which can alter it. Some county executives have deliberately chosen to misinterpret the law and treat these devolved units as departments. They have then proceeded to unlawfully make budgets for the urban areas or cities.

Accountability and financial autonomy is a key requirement of boards. A reading of Section 46 together with Section 51 of the Urban Areas and Cities Act indicates clearly that boards must maintain and operate their own bank accounts. Indeed, the auditor general audits boards as separate entities.

The major purpose of devolution is self governance. That is to allow the people, generally through, their representatives to participate in making decisions on development issues and governance. Implicit in this principle is the right of the people to decide on who represents them in organs of governance.

Generally, these representatives assume office after some electoral process.

Before 2013, the President would appoint all provincial and district commissioners. These commissioners would then govern their designated areas with delegated authority from the president. After 2013, we have been electing governors and members of county assemblies to govern county on our behalf. This way we are exercising our right to self determination in counties. Citizens in urban areas and cities must also get the right to determine who represents them in boards. Allowing the governor to nominate and appoint representatives in boards is not in line with the spirit of devolution.

Board members appointed by governors, like PCs and DCs before, are appointed to principally serve the interests of the governors. They are likely to be well selected pliant governor's poodles.

The Urban Areas and Cities Act must be amended to allow for election of board members by citizens. The elections can either be direct first the post in demarcated electoral areas or through proportional representation in party lists.

# Magufuli in Perspective



The Late John Magufuli

President John Magufuli of Tanzania was buried at his Chato home in March 2021 after an emotionally charged week in his country. He was mourned by millions of Tanzanians as a true national hero.

The people were fixated from their offices to pubs to beauty salons to corner shops, on the steady stream of images on their television sets showing eulogies and dirges as the coffin of the late leader was carried from the commercial hub of Dar-es-Salaam, through the capital Dodoma, to his final place of rest, his hometown.

Large crowds of mourners thronged the streets and stadiums to bid their last goodbyes to a president who spent much of his tenure roaming the country to meet his constituents.

Often, Magufuli would use these tours to address people's needs, relying on his power to demand solutions on-the-spot for the citizens' various complaints. But in other cases, during visits to opposition strongholds, he was known to castigate voters for not

backing his ruling CCM party, and was even on record saying he would not resolve residents' problems.

Magufuli was loved by the working class and peasants. He was loathed by the opposition, sections of the middle class and the international fraternity of western nations and their multilateral financial institutions.

A former teacher and industrial chemist, Magufuli was known as "the bulldozer" for his no-nonsense approach to building roads during his stints as minister of works (2000-05 and 2010-15).

In 2015, he became an unexpected presidential candidate for the CCM, the party that along with its predecessor had uninterruptedly been in power since independence but was rocked at the time by internal divisions and corruption scandals.

Faced with the prospect of defeat, the CCM turned to Magufuli whose hard-nosed reputation was seen as an antidote to the ignominy which plagued the party's upper ranks.

Having leap-frogged the political heavyweights, Magufuli went on to win the 2015 election – but the happenstance of his "accidental" presidency did nothing to dampen his vision. Magufuli was impatient to see results, and his zeal to fight

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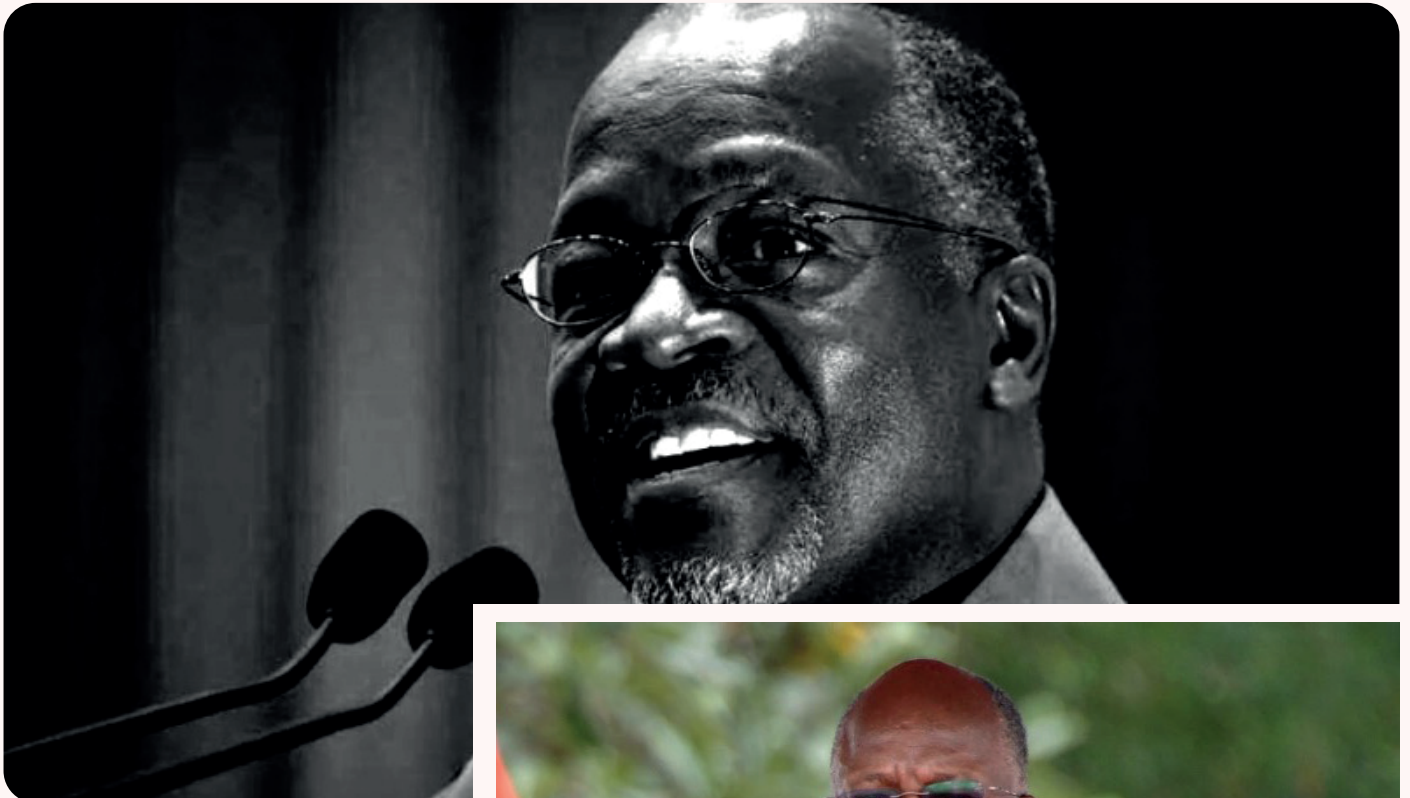
corruption and develop Tanzania's infrastructure is what many will remember him for.

Since the 1960s, there had been talks of constructing a mega-dam over the Rufiji River, but time and again the project stalled. Within two years of becoming president, Magufuli had signed off on the blueprints and construction began in 2019, financed not by donors, but by the government.

There is other evidence of the bricks-and-mortars of Magufuli's time in office, too. Supporters point to the construction of numerous highways and improvements to thousands of feeder-road areas. They also call attention to the country's first electric railway that is currently being built and credit him with the revival of the national carrier, Air Tanzania.

Consistently, Magufuli made progress which will continue to affect the lives of millions of Tanzanians for years to come. Yet consistently, he was willing to deploy his constitutional power to curtail civil and political freedoms and bend the law to do his bidding.





During the same period that saw the undertaking of the massive infrastructure projects, Magufuli banned teen mothers from classrooms; outlawed opposition rallies and broadcasting of parliament sessions; and introduced legislation which rolled back civil rights. He had the annoying habit of berating public officers in public.

The 2015 Statistics Act criminalised publishing statistics and independent research without government approval. Amendments to the Electronic and Postal Communications Act restricted freedom of speech online, while the 2016 Media Services Act handed sweeping powers to the government to fine or shut down media houses with little oversight.

At the election in October 2020, independent observers were effectively locked out, but one observer, Tanzania Election Watch, retrospectively confirmed at least 18 arrests of opposition party officials, as well as "arbitrary arrests, unlawful detention, sexual violence and violence against women".

The vote, which Magufuli won with 84 percent, was fiercely contested by opposition figures, who claimed the results were not credible. Members of the western community, including the United Nations, the United States and the European Union, condemned intimidation and harassment of opposition figures and their supporters, alongside a nationwide internet shutdown.

The Many of Magufuli's multibillion-dollar infrastructure projects were marred by allegations that public procurement procedures were routinely bypassed in the race to complete the projects.

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***The projects Maghufuli delivered were of the highest international standards. From air ports to bus terminuses to universities to roads***

Would Maghufuli have delivered these projects otherwise? Would the bureaucracy which was used to corrupt tardy “international standards” have delivered projects at the right cost and time without being bulldozed?

The projects Maghufuli delivered were of the highest international standards. From air ports to bus terminuses to universities to roads to SGR railways to office blocks, world class projects were delivered fantastically.

A sleepy town like Chato, with a population of less than 28,000, was transformed by the erection of a regional hospital, an airport and industrial

facilities in record time. He reduced taxes and increased tax revenues.

Maghufuli delivered finances to universities including to students effectively and efficiently. The depressing perennial African refrain of “no money” was totally absent from Maghufuli.

Magufuli made it his mission to purge the civil service of corruption. He was frugal in his ways. He eschewed foreign travel and any form of ostentation. He abhorred the politics of lies and communications tomfoolery. Maghufuli said what he meant and meant what he said.

# The Legacy of John Pombe Magufuli: A Mirror with Raila Odinga

In 2015, when John Pombe Magufuli was elected as the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, Tanzanians quickly dubbed him the “Raila of Tanzania.” This nickname wasn’t merely a reflection of his political dynamism but also a recognition of the shared traits and ideologies between Magufuli and Raila Amolo Odinga, Kenya’s veteran statesman and former Prime Minister. The comparison between these two leaders is not coincidental but rooted in their shared Pan-Africanist credentials, staunch anti-corruption stance, and relentless pursuit of infrastructural development. As both leaders have shaped the political landscapes of their respective countries, their legacies are closely intertwined with the broader aspirations and struggles of the African people.

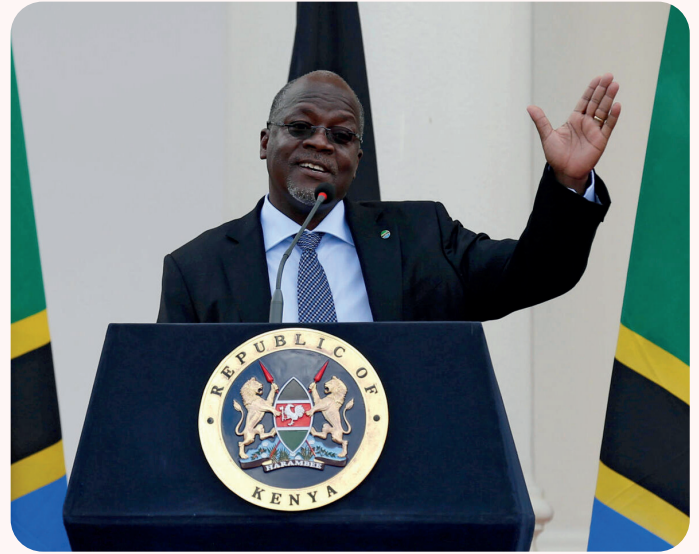
## Pan-Africanism and Nationalism: The Shared Vision

Pan-Africanism, as an ideology, seeks to unite African countries in the pursuit of economic, political, and social liberation from neo-colonialism and external influence. Both Magufuli and Raila Odinga have been ardent proponents of this ideology. Magufuli’s presidency was marked by a fierce commitment to Tanzanian nationalism and economic self-reliance. His policies were rooted

in the belief that Tanzania could only prosper if it reduced its dependence on foreign aid and investment, which he often viewed as a tool of Western imperialism.

Raila Odinga, on the other hand, has long been a champion of African unity and self-determination. His political career, spanning several decades, has been characterized by a commitment to the principles of social justice, equity, and the empowerment of marginalized communities. Raila’s Pan-Africanism is not just ideological but also practical, as evidenced by his efforts to forge stronger ties with other African nations during his tenure as Prime Minister, as the African Union’s High Representative for Infrastructure Development, and through his diplomatic engagements.

The Pan-Africanist credentials of both leaders have often put them at odds with Western powers. Magufuli’s nationalistic approach to governance, which prioritised Tanzanian interests over foreign ones, earned him the ire of Western governments and multinational corporations. He was often portrayed in Western media as a dictator and an anti-business leader, a narrative that overlooked his genuine efforts to uplift his country’s economy through self-reliance. Similarly, Raila Odinga’s unwavering stance



against external interference in Kenya’s internal affairs has made him a target of Western propaganda, particularly during the 2022 Kenyan elections. It is said that powerful Western countries intervened to prevent Raila from ascending to the presidency, fearing the rise of another leader like Magufuli in East Africa.

## Fighting Corruption: A Common Crusade

One of the most striking similarities between Magufuli and Raila Odinga is their uncompromising stance on corruption. Corruption has been a pervasive issue in many African countries, often hindering development and perpetuating poverty. Both leaders recognized that the fight against corruption was not just a moral imperative but also a necessary condition for national development.

Magufuli, upon assuming office, wasted no time in implementing measures to curb government spending and eliminate corruption. His administration was characterized by a relentless crackdown on corrupt officials and the implementation of austerity measures that shocked many within Tanzania’s political elite. Magufuli’s anti-corruption drive included barring unnecessary foreign travel by government officials, reducing his own salary from US\$15,000 to US\$4,000 per month, and banning officials from flying first and business class. These measures were unprecedented in



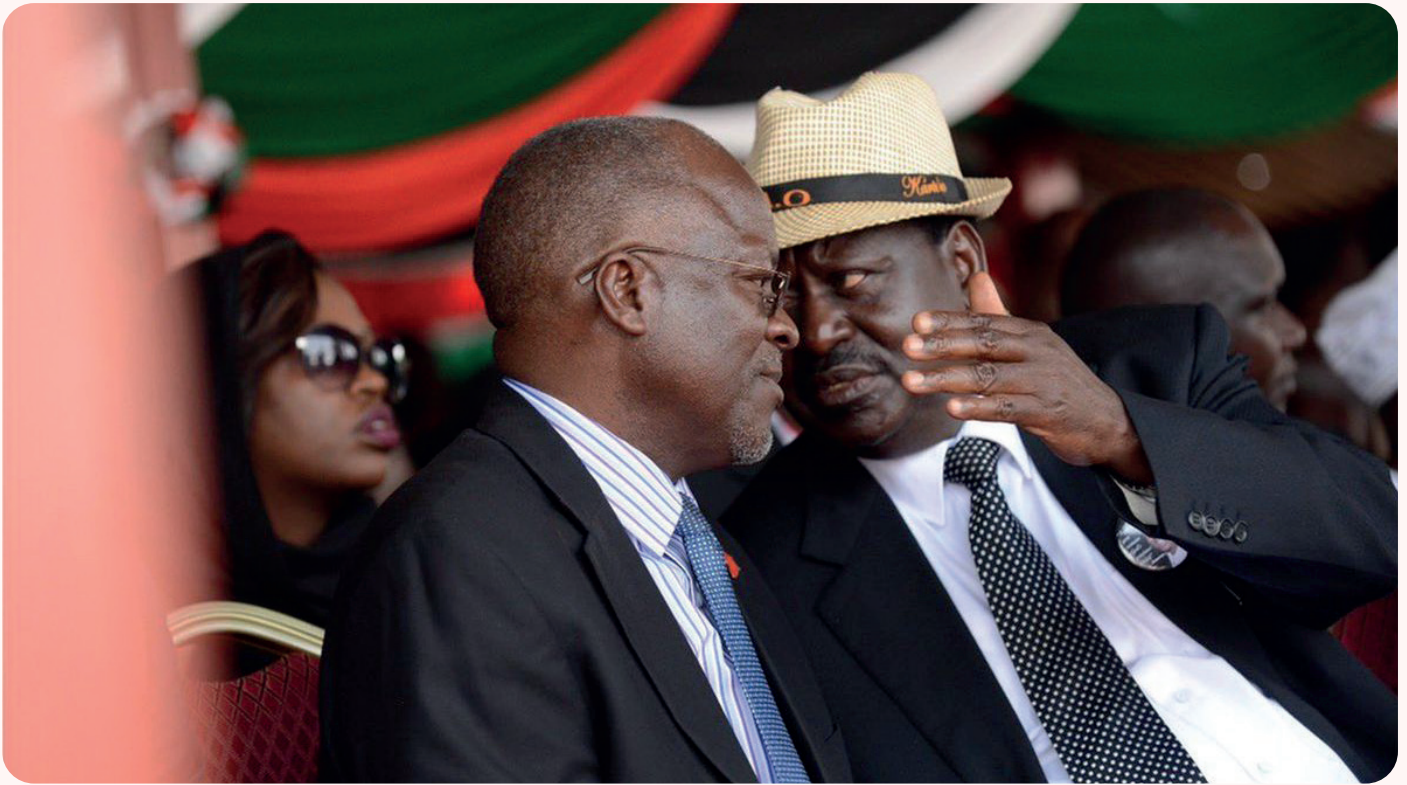
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Tanzania’s history and set a new standard for public service in the country.

Raila Odinga’s fight against corruption has been a central theme throughout his political career. As Minister of Roads in Kenya, Raila was known for his no-nonsense approach to dealing with corrupt contractors and government officials. He introduced stringent measures to ensure transparency and accountability in the awarding of road construction contracts, which earned him both admiration and enmity within the government. He, during his term as the Minister for Roads, coined and popularised the term “Cowboy Contractors” to mean those who inflated their bills or were paid for works not done. Raila’s anti-corruption crusade has continued in his role as a statesman and opposition leader, where he has consistently







called out corrupt practices in government and advocated for reforms to strengthen Kenya's anti-corruption institutions.

The fight against corruption has not been without its challenges for both leaders. Magufuli's tough stance on corruption often led to accusations of authoritarianism, as he took drastic measures to root out graft within the government. In Kenya, Raila's efforts to combat corruption have often been met with resistance from powerful vested interests, leading to political confrontations and, at times, personal attacks on his character. Despite these challenges, both Magufuli and Raila remained steadfast in their commitment to eradicating corruption, viewing it as essential to the realization of their broader vision for their countries till Magufuli died under unclear circumstances in March 2021.

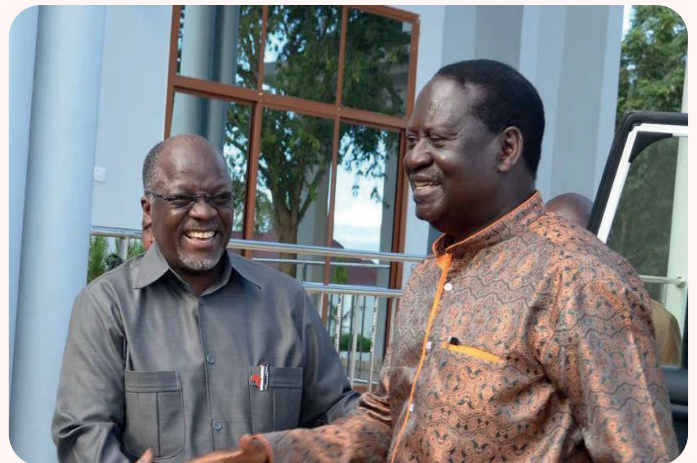
**Infrastructure Development: Laying the Foundations for Progress**

Infrastructure development has been a cornerstone of the political agendas of both Magufuli and Raila Odinga. They recognized that the construction of roads, railways, and other critical infrastructure was key to unlocking their countries' economic potential and improving the lives of their citizens.



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Magufuli earned the moniker "The Bulldozer" due to his focus on infrastructure projects during his time as Minister of Works, Transport, and Communications, and later as President. His administration embarked on an ambitious infrastructure development program that saw the construction of roads, bridges, and railways across Tanzania. Magufuli's infrastructure drive was not just about building physical structures but also about creating jobs and stimulating economic growth in rural areas. His policies were geared towards ensuring that all Tanzanians, regardless of their location, had access to basic infrastructure services, which in turn would spur economic development.



During his tenure as Minister of Roads in Kenya, Raila Odinga also prioritised infrastructure development. He oversaw the expansion and modernisation of Kenya's road network, which had a transformative impact on the country's economy. Raila's infrastructure initiatives were driven by the belief that a well-developed transport network was crucial for regional integration and trade, both within Kenya and with neighbouring countries. His efforts in this area earned him a reputation as a leader committed to his country's long-term development.

The infrastructural focus of both leaders highlights their shared belief in the importance of laying the foundations for sustainable development. They understood that without adequate infrastructure, their countries would struggle to attract investment, create jobs, and improve the living standards of their citizens. Moreover, their emphasis on infrastructure also reflects their Pan-Africanist vision, as they sought to create a more connected and integrated East Africa that could compete on the global stage.





### The Comradely Bond: A Shared History

The bond between Magufuli and Raila Odinga was forged long before either of them ascended to the highest offices in their respective countries. The two leaders first met when they were both serving as ministers of roads in Tanzania and Kenya, respectively. This period marked the beginning of a comradely relationship that would endure throughout their political careers.

Their shared experiences as ministers of roads provided them with a unique perspective on the challenges of governance and development in East Africa. They understood the importance of infrastructure in driving economic growth and were committed to addressing the infrastructural deficits in their countries. This shared commitment to infrastructure development became a defining feature of their political agendas and cemented their bond as leaders with a common vision for East Africa.

Magufuli and Raila's relationship was not just professional but also personal. They respected each other's leadership styles and recognized the value of

collaboration in achieving their goals. This camaraderie was evident in their interactions on the international stage, where they often supported each other's initiatives and advocated for closer ties between Tanzania and Kenya. Their bond was a testament to the potential for cooperation and unity among African leaders, especially those who share a commitment to Pan-Africanism and national development.

### Challenges and Criticisms: A Tale of Two Leaders

While Magufuli and Raila Odinga are celebrated for their achievements, their respective leaderships have not been without controversy. Magufuli's presidency was marked by a series of actions that drew criticism both domestically and internationally. His perceived authoritarian style of governance, characterised by a crackdown on the imperialist-sponsored opposition, the media, and civil society, led to accusations of human rights violations. The West, in particular, was quick to label Magufuli as a dictator, a narrative that was amplified by his resistance to foreign interference in Tanzania's affairs. Raila Odinga, too, has faced his

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share of challenges. His long political career has been marked by several electoral disputes, most notably in 2007 and 2017, where he alleged his victory was stolen through rigged elections. These disputes have led to political instability in Kenya, with Raila often cast as a polarising figure. Despite these challenges, Raila has played a central role in Kenyan politics, advocating for democratic reforms and national unity.

The criticisms against both leaders reflect the broader tensions between their nationalistic and Pan-Africanist visions and the interests of powerful external actors. Magufuli's resistance to Western influence in Tanzania's affairs was often met with hostility from foreign governments and international organisations, who viewed his policies as threatening their interests in the region. Similarly, Raila Odinga's Pan-Africanist stance and his calls for greater African unity have often been met with scepticism by Western powers, who prefer leaders who are more aligned with their geopolitical objectives.

### The Magufuli Effect: A Cautionary Tale for East Africa

The legacy of John Pombe Magufuli will be debated for years to come. His sudden death in 2021 left a void in Tanzanian politics and raised questions about the country's future direction. Magufuli's tenure was marked by significant achievements in economic growth, infrastructure development, and anti-corruption efforts, but it was also marred by controversies and criticisms related to his governance style.



# Unveiling of Candidate



**SPEECH BY RT. HON. RAILA ODINGA AT THE OFFICIAL UNVEILING OF KENYA'S CANDIDATE FOR THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON, 27TH AUGUST 2024.**

**Your Excellency, the President of the Republic of Kenya, Dr. William Ruto, Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government, Cabinet Secretaries, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, A very good morning to everyone.**

1. I am greatly honoured and want to thank all of you for the solidarity with Kenya as demonstrated by your presence.
2. Today, as a candidate for the AUC chairperson, I am personally encouraged and humbled by the collective support from my country and the Eastern Africa region. The official unveiling of my candidacy as Kenya's nominee for the Chairmanship of the African Union Commission (AUC) is a major impetus and milestone in my bid.
3. The history of Africa is replete with low and high moments. Africa is widely considered the birthplace of mankind whose political organization was reflected in great Kingdoms across the continent.
4. However, the continent has suffered slavery, colonialism, humiliation, repeated aggression, and internal violent conflicts.
5. However, Excellencies, like the legendary phoenix, Africa has risen from the ashes of these historical atrocities to make a

6. full-blown arrival on the global stage. Consequently, we have heard slogans such as 'African Renaissance' and 'Africa Rising'.
6. Nonetheless, I envisage an Africa where our visionary sloganeering will translate into strategic action for the transformation of our continent.
7. Unfortunately, even as we rise, our continent still grapples with emerging challenges and vulnerabilities including identity conflicts and wars, hunger, poverty, violent extremism, adverse climate change, acute unemployment among our youths, transboundary pandemics and infectious diseases such as Mpox, and other threats to human security and dignity.
8. My plan is to work with you, Excellencies, and make the AU more people-centered and serve the interests of the vast voiceless majority of Africans. The African people should feel the AU in their lives.
9. Excellencies, if elected chairman, I propose to utilize the transition period to critically analyze the existing proposals for reforms and building capacity of the AU Commission. The ultimate aim is to follow up on the implementation of the reports so far formulated.
10. Certainly, the story of Africa is not all gloom and doom. Thanks to the work your Excellencies

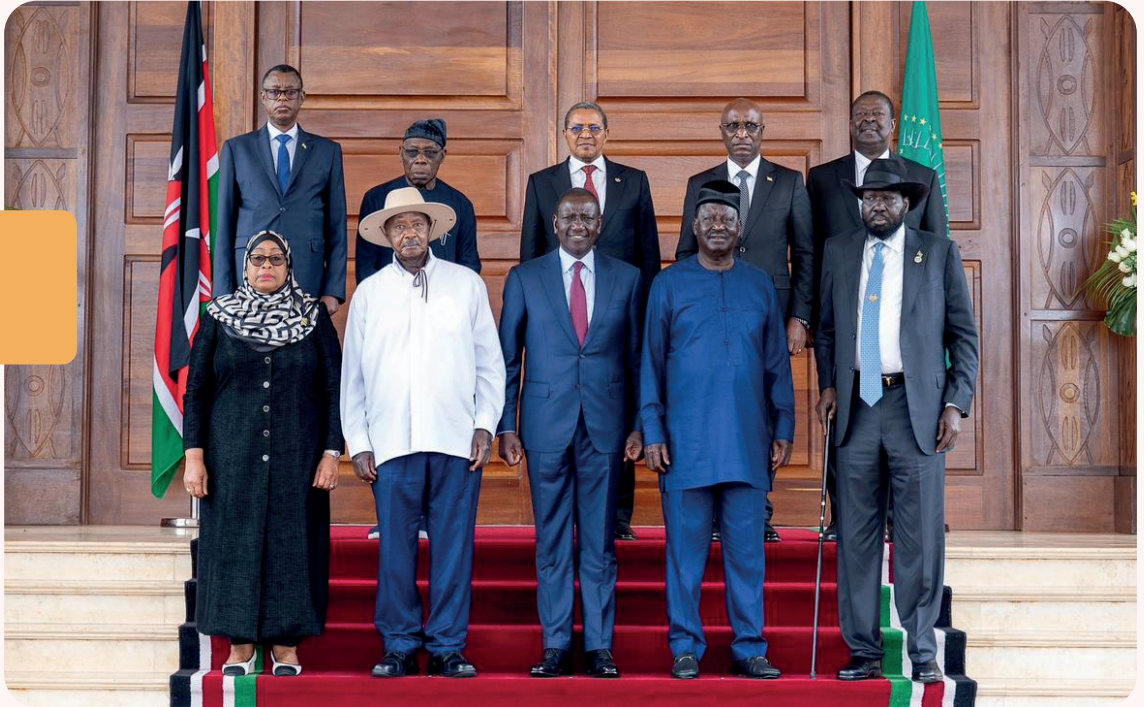
- are doing, Africa has been on an upward and positive trajectory in recent years.
11. In February, the African Development Bank reported that Africa will account for eleven of the world's 20 fastest-growing economies this year.
12. The continent is set to remain the second-fastest-growing region after Asia.
13. I deeply appreciate your efforts in restoring hope on the Continent, and it is my wish to have a chance to complement your efforts as AUC chairperson.
14. Excellencies, throughout my leadership and service to the public, I have noted the significance of defining strategic goals and appreciating the influence of political dynamics on the outcomes of these goals. So, decision-making must be backed by a balance between policy and geopolitics.
15. I plan to work with you, Excellencies to integrate this continent. We are one people who, unfortunately, are trying too hard to separate from each other.
16. I have travelled the length and breadth of this beautiful continent, and I have seen the faces of Africa's future. They are the faces of our children, full of hope and energy, and unbound by the borders of

- yesterday. I dream of an Africa where those borders and colonial languages no longer divide us.
17. From the hills of Kenya to the deserts of the Sahara and Kalahari, from the lakes of the Great Rift to the rainforests of Central Africa, Africans have to be one, its resilience, and hope for a bright future transmitted to our young people.
18. Excellencies, my selection to be Kenya's candidate is not about one man's ambition, but an African's journey to serve the motherland. Indeed, I plan to constitute my "Cabinet of the Chairperson" with a continental outlook.
19. I am grateful that friends and eminent persons across Africa have volunteered to engage in my campaigns, from West, North, South, Central, and of course Eastern Africa.
20. Excellencies, I am ready to serve, my heart is ready, my hands are steady and with your support, I shall get the opportunity to be of service to Africa, the cradle of mankind. I am made in Eastern Africa for Africa.
21. Kindly buy my vision, the charge is 34 plus votes in the first round. I particularly appeal to fellow East Africans, that we walk this journey together and go to Addis as a team in February 2025.

**I thank you and God bless Kenya, God bless Eastern Africa and God bless Africa.**

# Regional Leaders Endorse Raila for AUC Post

Regional Leaders



Heads of State from East African Region Tuesday 27th August endorsed ODM Leader Mr. Raila Odinga for the chairmanship of the African Union Commission (AUC). The leaders who converged in Nairobi on invitation of their host President William Ruto pledged to mobilize support for Mr. Odinga's bid ahead of the election to held in February 2025.

During the event at State House Nairobi, the government of Kenya asserted its influence by rallying the support of the East African Community States as it officially unveiled Mr. Odinga for the candidacy of the AUC Chairperson.

Pres. Ruto described Mr. Odinga as an African Statesman who was capable to transforming Africa to greater heights of development and self-dependency. "Raila is capable and up to the task", he said.

EAC Chairman Pres. Salva Kiir of South Sudan rallied the region behind Mr. Odinga's bid saying he was the right candidate for the position.

Leaders present were Pres. Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, Pres. Samia Suluhu Hassan of Tanzania, the Prime Minister of

Burundi Mr. Gervais Ndirakobuca and the Foreign Affairs Minister of Rwanda Mr. James Kabarebe, who represented President Paul Kagame.

Also in attendance were former President of Tanzania Mr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete and Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo, a former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Tanzanian President Samia Suluhu lauded Odinga for his significant contributions to establishing the African Union and the progress achieved since, including the Agenda 2063 and the African Continental Free Trade Area.

President Suluhu reiterated Tanzania's full support for Odinga's bid, stressing the need to complete institutional reforms to enhance accountability and maintain unity within the AU. President Salva Kiir of South Sudan commended Odinga for his unwavering commitment to African prosperity, describing him as a steadfast Pan-Africanist. President Kiir reaffirmed Sudan's support for Odinga's bid and urged the region to rally behind Odinga as their candidate.

Former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, speaking at

the unveiling, reflected on his longstanding friendship with Odinga and expressed confidence in his leadership abilities. Obasanjo emphasized the critical juncture Africa faces, where unity and shared responsibility are essential to overcoming challenges such as poverty, insecurity, and instability amid global conflicts. In his speech President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni reflected on his long-term involvement in African struggles, emphasizing the

importance of accurate diagnosis in political management. He also emphasized the importance of patriotism and Pan-Africanism for the prosperity of Africa, using historical examples of African victories against external forces and the subsequent downfall due to internal strife. Mr. Odinga thanked the regional leaders for their support and promised to ensure the continent's interests are taken care of if elected Chairman of the AUC.





**LAUNCH OF KENYA'S AUC CHAIRMANSHIP BID. PRIORITIES**

**Financial Independence**

- I will advocate for the reform of the global financial architecture to ensure Africa's equitable participation in global economic decisions.
- I will rally Member States and engage the private sector to finance AU priorities, ensuring sustainable development and delivery on continental goals.

RT. Hon. Raia Amolo Odinga, EGH

**LAUNCH OF KENYA'S AUC CHAIRMANSHIP BID. PRIORITIES**

**Enhancing Intra-African Trade**

I will advocate for open skies, visa policy harmonization, and infrastructure development to facilitate seamless connectivity and movement of goods and peoples across Africa. Overcoming these barriers will spur economic growth and position Africa as a global economic player and leader.

RT. Hon. Raia Amolo Odinga, EGH

**LAUNCH OF KENYA'S AUC CHAIRMANSHIP BID. PRIORITIES**

**Gender Equality and Equity**

Throughout my life, I have been an indefatigable champion of the rights of women and girls. As Chairperson of AUC, I will prioritise opportunity, dignity, and security for women and girls across the continent.

RT. Hon. Raia Amolo Odinga, EGH

**LAUNCH OF KENYA'S AUC CHAIRMANSHIP BID. PRIORITIES**

**Agricultural Transformation**

- I will endeavour to promote market access within the continent and value addition in our agricultural and aquaculture sectors.
- I will promote sustainable food production, agribusiness and the modernisation of agriculture to reinforce food security, to foster job creation and enhance rural livelihoods.

RT. Hon. Raia Amolo Odinga, EGH

**LAUNCH OF KENYA'S AUC CHAIRMANSHIP BID. PRIORITIES**

**Climate Action**

I will promote climate positive investments and financing, leverage renewable energy resources, and integrate climate-smart strategies into our economic plans to secure a sustainable future for Africa. Importantly, I will raise Africa's voice at International Fora on climate change, climate action, and climate justice.

RT. Hon. Raia Amolo Odinga, EGH

# “I am Ready for Africa”, Declares Raia

Former Kenyan Prime Minister and opposition leader Raia Odinga on Tuesday announced his candidacy for the African Union (AU) chairmanship, promising to steer the organization towards being more people-centered.

During the official launch of his campaign at a state ceremony in Nairobi attended by regional leaders from across Africa, Odinga articulated a vision focused on making the AU's benefits tangible to the people of Africa.

The election for chairman and seven other positions will take place during the African Union Summit in February 2025. The chairperson of the AU Commission serves a four-year term that can be renewed once.

“My selection to be Kenya's candidate is not a one man's ambition but an African's journey to serve the motherland, I plan to constitute my cabinet of chairpersons with a continental outlook,” Odinga pledged.

He added, “I dream of an Africa in which borders and colonial languages no longer separate us. Africans must be united, with resilience and hope for a bright future transmitted to our youth.” Odinga emphasized his commitment to collaborating with heads of state from across the continent to ensure that the bloc's actions and policies have a direct impact on the lives of its citizens.



**Political analysts view Odinga's bid as a potential catalyst for change within the AU, given his long-standing advocacy for democratic governance and social equity.**

He said the AU must transform from a high-level bureaucratic body to one whose impacts can be felt at the grassroots level. He also highlighted the necessity for the bloc to adopt a more inclusive approach that prioritizes the needs and aspirations of the Africans.

Political analysts view Odinga's bid as a potential catalyst for change within the AU, given his long-standing advocacy for democratic governance and social equity.

“Raia Odinga's approach could be a significant shift in how the African Union connects with its citizens,” Simon Mukhwana, a Nairobi-based political analyst, told Anadolu.

“His promise to make the AU more people-centered is ambitious, and it has the potential to significantly boost the organization's legitimacy and relevance. The challenge will be to translate these high-level commitments into concrete actions that positively impact Africans' daily lives,” he said. He added that Odinga's leadership style, which emphasizes

dialogue and consensus-building, has the potential to redefine the AU's engagement with the people it represents. Odinga is among the candidates in the race, as are Mahamoud Ali Yousouf of Djibouti, Anil Gayan of Mauritius, and Richard Randriamandrato of Madagascar.

Kenya has received significant support for Odinga's candidacy through President William Ruto's diplomatic efforts. Kenya currently has endorsements from 19 African countries.

The region's heads of state converged in Nairobi to show their support for one of their own. Presidents Yoweri Museveni (Uganda), Samia Suluhu (Tanzania) and Salva Kiir (South Sudan) who is also the Chairman of the EAC block, Burundi Prime Minister Gervais Ndirakobuca and Rwanda's Foreign Affairs Minister Mr. James Kabarebe who represented President Paul Kagame all pledged their support for Mr. Odinga's bid.

# ODM Will Retain Ugunja Seat, Says Junet



Minority Leader in the National Assembly Mr. Junet Mohammed has declared that the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) party will win the Ugunja parliamentary seat when the by-election is called.

Speaking during the thanksgiving ceremony for the Energy Minister Mr. Opiyo Wandayi at Sidindi in Ugunja Constituency on Friday last week, Mr. Junet said the party was very strong and popular in the region and that it will not be easy for any political party to try and shake it when the by-election is called.

The ceremony was graced by President William Ruto who is also the party leader of the United Democratic Alliance (UDA). "Mr. President, let me tell you early in advance that ODM will retain this seat. This is our seat. We appeal to your party not to even think of fielding a candidate when the by-election is announced", he said to a rapturous applause from the crowd.

Mr. Wandayi who was the area Member of Parliament relinquished the seat when he was appointed by the President to serve in the government. He had been elected three times to serve as a Member of Parliament. He was the first person to be elected to represent the constituency in parliament since its creation in 2012.

Mr. Junet said the party will mobilize all her troops to ensure the ODM candidate clinches the seat. Currently, there are no Commissioners in the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) and once reconstituted, the Commission will be able to set the date for the by-election alongside those of Banissa Constituency whose

MP Mr. Kulow Maalim Hassan died in a road accident in Nairobi in April 2023 and Magarini Constituency whose MP Harrison Kombe's election was nullified alongside several other Wards that are vacant.

## LAUNCH OF KENYA'S AUC CHAIRMANSHIP BID

**PRIORITIES**

**Peace And Security**

I will prioritize conflict prevention and resolution and work with African leaders across the continent to address the root causes of instability, and promote functional institutions to create a conducive environment for Africa's development and prosperity.

**RT. Hon. Raila Amolo Odinga, EGH**

## LAUNCH OF KENYA'S AUC CHAIRMANSHIP BID

**PRIORITIES**

**Continental Integration**

I will support Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and drive implementation of initiatives to enhance continental unity and prosperity.

**RT. Hon. Raila Amolo Odinga, EGH**

## LAUNCH OF KENYA'S AUC CHAIRMANSHIP BID

**PRIORITIES**

**Economic Transformation**

I commit to promoting industrialisation, supporting manufacturing, and enhancing innovation through investments in education, technology, healthcare, affordable energy, and skills development.

**RT. Hon. Raila Amolo Odinga, EGH**