

The ORANGE

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NEWSLETTER OF THE ORANGE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT PARTY OF KENYA



TOP STORIES

1. **Devolved Free and Compulsory Basic Education in Kenya**
2. **Coalition and Broadbased Governments**
3. **ODM news**

Schoolchildren collaborating on homework after class.

We Are Ready for 2027 General Elections, ODM

ODM, led by Interim Party Leader Prof. Anyang' Nyong'o, has resolved to strengthen and prepare the party for the 2027 general elections, reaffirming its commitment to democracy, unity, and readiness for upcoming political battles.



ODM NEWS

ODM Party Leader Raila Odinga has called on President William Ruto to urgently address the surge in abductions and enforced disappearances that have plagued the country over the past eight months. Speaking at the burial of Kenya National Commission on Human Rights Chairperson Roseline Odede in Siaya County, Odinga condemned the abductions, warning that Kenya cannot be allowed to descend into a "gangster state." He emphasized that lawlessness has no place in the country and challenged the government to take full responsibility for the worsening security situation, urging swift action to restore public trust.

Devolved, Free and Compulsory Basic Education in Kenya



Education is facing another crisis yet again. It appears that the government is on a mission to do everything that could be done to sabotage the education of our children and destroy the future of the country.

The circular issued by the Controller of Budget (CoB) to the County Executive Committee Members of Finance on 15th January 2025 concerning county governments funding education raises serious questions not only about public finance management in the country but more importantly about the crisis-ridden education sector. These matters require urgent attention and discussion to find a fruitful way out of the crisis.

In purporting to clarify “Functions of County Government Towards Provision of Education Support” in effect the circular has prohibited county governments from initiating “any requisition for withdrawal of funds meant for performing functions categorised as National Government Function under Part 1 of the Fourth Schedule [...unless] accompanied by the requisite intergovernmental agreement as prescribed by law.” This means that henceforth all counties are prohibited from withdrawing from the County Bursary Funds any monies meant for awarding bursaries to students in secondary schools and universities as well as all other

institutions of higher education.

According to the CoB this is in accordance to the provisions of Article 187 of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 (CoK 2010). As well founded as this directive is it is going to precipitate a very serious crisis in schools and other institutions where present beneficiaries are learning.

The Constitution Should Cut Both ways

Even though the demand by the CoB for adherence to provisions of Schedule 4 is technically in order critics have argued that:

- 1) such concerns ought to have been raised and requirements enforced by the Office of the CoB (OCoB) at the onset of the practice more than ten years ago when counties, under pressure from the public, enacted County Bursary Fund legislations across the country.
- 2) Ever since such funds have been contained in annual County Appropriation Acts which are acceptable to the OCoB and are the basis of county requisitions.
- 3) Moreover others have also argued that the OCoB requirements ought to cut both ways so that the national government is also compelled to comply to the separation of functions in the

Fourth Schedule of the CoK 2010. They wonder why those provisions would apply only to County Governments and not also to the National Government.

4) Presently the national government is indiscriminately budgeting for and withdrawing and spending funds on numerous functions devolved under the Fourth Schedule, and are therefore meant to be performed by counties, with the approval of the CoB. Such functions include agriculture, health, housing, county roads and water amongst others.

5) The CoB is well aware of the stalled conversations on the unbundling of functions that would release devolved functions presently retained and unconstitutionally performed at the centre by the National Government. Reports from IGRTC, presented to the Senate on 23rd August 2023 show that National Government Ministries Departments and Agencies are still implementing County government functions amounting to about Kshs.272.2 billion. If such funds meant for devolved functions retained by the National Government were to follow the functions counties would get the badly needed boost for better delivery of services including the better funding of the devolved education functions. Evidence shows that many counties are presently struggling

to deliver quality Early Childhood-Development and Education (ECDE) services. This is due to largely inadequate financing that has occasioned shortage of teachers, inadequate play materials and inconsistent feeding programmes where these exist. Vocational Training Centres are also plagued by shortage of instructors and use of obsolete equipment to deliver the training and therefore not attractive and beneficial to the youth.

Majoring in Minors

However notwithstanding the importance of the concerns about who is encroaching on whose constitutional mandate this controversy may distract us from examining and resolving the roots of the present bursary crisis. We seem to have forgotten that when we promulgated the Constitution of Kenya in 2010 we promised at Article 43(1)(f) that “every person has the right to education” while article 53(1)(b) stipulates that “every child has the right to free and compulsory education”. Why therefore is payment of fees still necessary?

The controversy over whose responsibility it is, between the national government and counties, to grant bursary is a result of the failure by the state to fulfill the promised free and

compulsory basic education in the country.

Who is failing our children?

Article 39 of the Basic Education Act 2013 in elaborating on the implications of article 53(1) of the CoK 2010 clearly places this responsibility on the National Government and provides that: "It will be the duty of the Cabinet Secretary (responsible for basic education) to:-

- a)** provide free and compulsory basic education for every child;
- b)** ensure compulsory admission and attendance of children of children of compulsory school age at school or an institution offering basic education;
- c)** ensure that children belonging to the marginalised, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups are not discriminated against and prevented from pursuing and completing basic education;
- d)** provide human resource including teaching and non-teaching staff according to the prescribed staffing norms;
- e)** provide infrastructure including schools, learning and teaching equipment and appropriate financial resources;
- f)** ensure quality basic education conforming to the set standards;
- g)** provide special education and training facilities for talented and gifted pupils and pupils with disabilities;
- h)** ensure compulsory admission, attendance and completion of basic education by every pupil;
- i)** monitor functioning of schools;
- j)** advise the national government on financing of infrastructure development for basic education."

No Fees Charged

Furthermore Article 29(1) of the Basic Education Act 2013 emphasises that "No public school shall charge or cause any parent or guardian to pay tuition fees for or on behalf of any pupil in the school".

The only exceptions to this "no fees" rule is to be found in article 29(2) which states that:

- a)** tuition fees may be payable by persons who are not Kenyan citizens; and [that]
- b)** other charges may be imposed at a public school [only] with the approval of the Cabinet Secretary in consultation with the County Education Board provided that no child shall be refused to attend school because of failure to pay such charges.

From the foregoing it is clear that education in Kenya is not only a fundamental human right guaranteed in the CoK 2010 but also that the government is expressly committed to publicly financing education and that basic education is to be not only free but compulsory. Anyone derogating this right

commits an offence punishable under the law.

If the National Government fulfilled its obligations to provide free and compulsory quality basic education there would be no need for any one to pay school fees and therefore no need for bursary funds for basic education by counties or anybody else. Basic Education must be free in Kenya as provided for in the CoK 2010 and there is no need for any controversy over whose responsibility it is to offer bursaries.

Why Free Education?

It is commonly accepted that education is the engine of a nation's cultural, intellectual, social, political and economic, development. Education also remains one of the most critical assets for any country to promote equitable growth and development, poverty eradication and shared prosperity. This cannot happen without a solid foundation in basic and higher education especially university education. Education has therefore been deemed as a fundamental human right that is viewed as a powerful tool for developing the full potential of everyone and the productive capacity and economic productivity of a country. It also offers citizenship training enabling citizens to develop their capacity to engage in civic and political life to determine their fate and the fate of the country. Moreover education enhances equity and equality of individuals, communities and societies as well as ensuring human dignity and promoting and protecting individual and collective wellbeing.

There should therefore be no controversy on how accessing and enjoying this right should be funded, i.e. whether it should be privately or publicly funded.

The Constitutional Promise

Because we were aware that some social and political forces in and out of the country may sabotage the rights of all to access publicly funded quality education we deliberately inscribed the right in the CoK 2010 so that everyone, irrespective of their background, can access this right without let or hindrance and that it should be funded publicly by the state.

The Financing Crisis

Notwithstanding the foregoing in the CoK 2010 so that everyone, irrespective of their background, can access this right without let or hindrance and that it should be funded publicly by the state.

The Financing Crisis

Notwithstanding the foregoing assurances, guarantees, pledges and promises the education sector is currently suffering crises at all levels and in multiple dimensions such as a controversial, contested and disruptive Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) that continues to thoroughly diminish recent achievements in the country's education sector.

Public education is rife with inadequate and poor infrastructure and facilities, equipment and teaching and learning materials as well as insufficient and often poorly trained teachers, overcrowded classrooms and poor results. The teacher deficit stands at over 100,000.

Inadequate Infrastructure

The lack of infrastructure is a challenge which the government hasn't met over the years. Many learners especially in rural areas and in urban slums continue to attend lessons in dilapidated structures and even under trees. This situation has worsened following recent floods.

Excluding The Disadvantaged

Kenya also suffers huge regional inequalities in all education input indicators and outcomes, with much lower outcomes in rural areas and for lower-income populations, especially those in the slums. Nine in ten children from poor households fail to complete class eight. According to some estimates Nairobi, for example, has a population of 3 million, half of whom live in slum conditions. There are hardly any public schools in the slums. It is said that in Mathare Valley, for example, there are two public schools for 70,000 students.

Although primary education is meant to be free there are numerous barriers to entry and retention such as uniforms. In slum areas, class size is often 100 students, with five students frequently sharing a desk. The absence of free secondary schooling in slums means that many of the young people there are excluded from education after age 14. Children who are not engaged in school through the eighth grade are likely to be consumed by a culture of gangs, drugs and criminal activity for boys, and a world of rape, exploitation, and prostitution resulting in early, unwanted pregnancy for girls.

Many thousands of youngsters in Kenya from slum communities therefore grow up without hope – without the opportunities and skills that would enable them,

against the odds, to break the cycle of poverty.

From the foregoing it is obvious that fifteen years into the new constitution the fulfilment of Article 53 of the CoK 2010 remains elusive and unless extraordinary measures are taken it will remain an empty promise.

This controversy presents an opportunity to re-examine how to ensure the delivery of equitable and inclusive free and compulsory basic education to all.

Transfer Basic Education to Counties for Equity and Effectiveness

Clearly centralising resources for developing infrastructure in the countryside in Nairobi unnecessary, inefficient and ineffective and can only spawn centralised corruption. To ensure equity the function and resources meant for the provision of physical infrastructure in basic education as provided for in Article 39(e) of the Basic Education Act 2013 should be transferred to the counties and be sent directly to schools to be administered by local communities and Boards of Management. Article 39(e) states that the CS for Education shall:

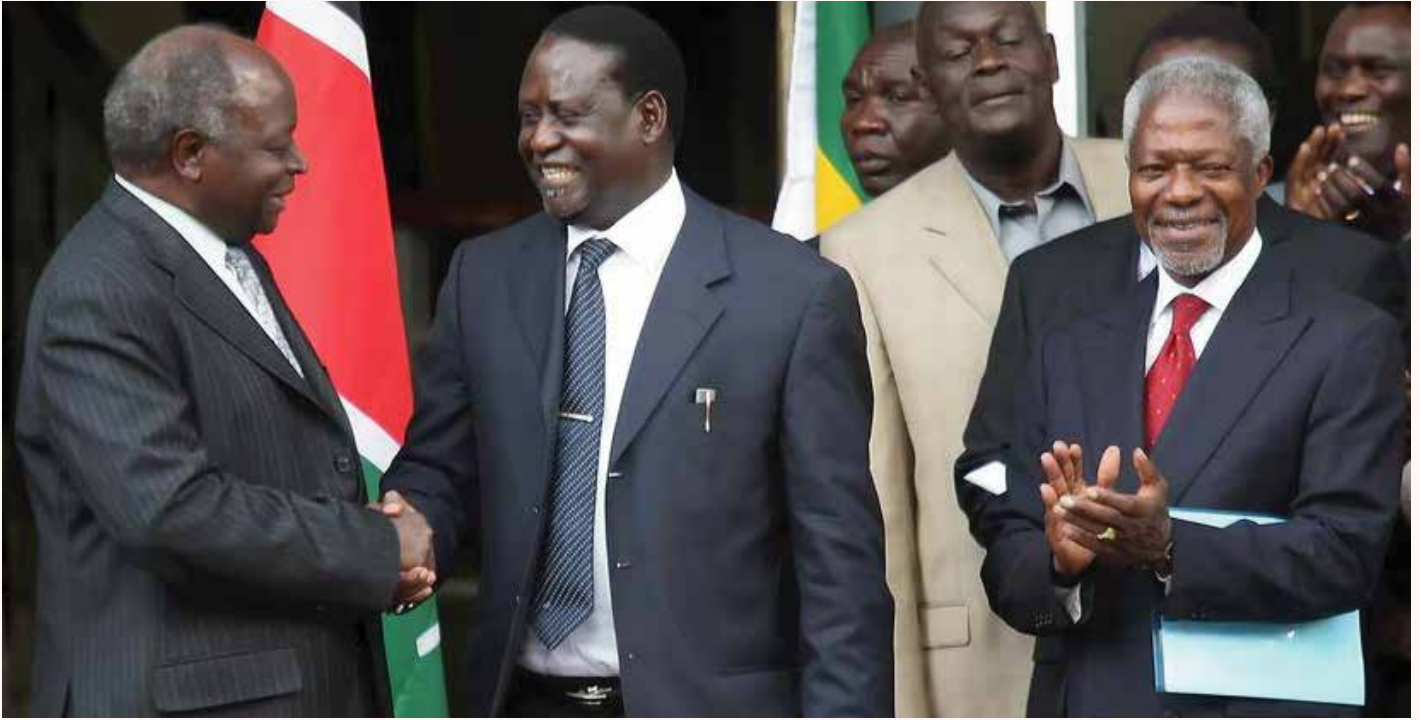
- e) provide infrastructure including schools, learning and teaching equipment and appropriate financial resources.

Why and How To Transfer the Function

The reasons for and manner of transferring the function is clearly set out in article 187 of the CoK 2010 as follows:

- (1) A function or power of government at one level may be transferred to a government at the other level by agreement between the governments if--
 - (a) the function or power would be more effectively performed or exercised by the receiving government; and
 - (b) the transfer of the function or power is not prohibited by the legislation under which it is to be performed or exercised.
- (2) If a function or power is transferred from a government at one level to a government at the other level--
 - (a) arrangements shall be put in place to ensure that the resources necessary for the performance of the function or exercise of the power are transferred; and
 - (b) constitutional responsibility for the performance of the function or exercise of the power shall remain with the government to which it is assigned by the Fourth Schedule.

The present crisis presents a golden opportunity for reviewing how to go about implementing the commitments of Article 53 of the 2010 and promises of the Basic Education Act 2013.



What are Coalitions and Broadbased Governments?

The appointment of ODM and Jubilee Party members to the William Ruto KK cabinet has renewed discussions on just what are coalitions and broadbased governments? ODM detractors claim that ODM is now part of the government. ODM replies that some of its members have joined cabinet. However ODM says that it has no formal agreement with KK therefore ODM is still part of the minority party in both houses of parliament. In common parlance ODM is still in the 'opposition'.

So what is a coalition? What is a broadbased government?

A coalition is usually a temporary union between two or more groups, especially political parties, for the purpose of gaining more influence or power than the individual groups or parties can hope to achieve on their own. By focusing on their common objectives and goals, all of the member groups can build their strength and get an advantage on issues of common interest. With a particular objective in mind—winning an election, passing a particular piece of legislation, or forming a government. Coalitions have a limited life span until the objectives are achieved. All of the coalition partners are in it to get something something. In other words it is a win- win situation.

The primary reason for forming, joining or building a coalition is to gain more influence and power than the individual organization has on its own. This can be done by combining votes in an elected body or by combining resources during a political or civic campaign. Working together, the groups or parties are able to accomplish more together than they would on their own.

Parties and organizations need to have a clear objective for forming a coalition. A coalition that comes together during a campaign to win an election has a different objective than a coalition that comes together after an election to form a government. In some cases the coalition is the same but the objectives are different.

There are many issues that should be thought about when considering forming or joining a coalition. These may include better research, sharing information, mobilizing supporters, informing the public, advocate on an issue, raise money, organize against a stronger force, and gain power. Not every coalition will do every one of these things but they should at least consider them and decide what makes sense for them.

In politics there are three resources at your disposal— time, money and people. It is essential to determine how much of each of the resources each of the coalition members can provide

and then budget them in the most overall effective way to benefit everyone in the coalition.

It is also important to develop methods to determine whether or not the coalition partners are living up to their commitment of resources.

There are different types of coalitions that can play a role in politics:

- **Coalitions between two or more political parties**— political parties may agree to work together in order to maximize their gains in upcoming elections or strengthen themselves in the legislative area.
- **Coalitions between elected officials**— elected officials may agree to work together or at the least not oppose one another for mutual benefit. These coalitions may be blocs of political parties in a legislative body or they may be politicians from a particular region that agree to work together toward a certain goal.
- **Coalitions between a political party and civic organizations** — civic organizations may form coalitions with political parties in order to assist the political party and advance their particular agenda.
- **Coalitions between civic organizations**— civic organizations may agree to combine forces in the political arena in order to

affect the outcome of an election or vote on a particular piece of legislation.

Political parties and civic groups must determine how much cooperation they will agree to in forming a coalition. The following areas move from the easiest to accomplish to the more difficult:

- **Agree not to compete**— the political parties and candidates may decide that they will just not compete for the same seats or in the same areas. They may also decide that they will not vote against each other's legislation. This type of cooperation may be public and known to everyone or quiet and kept out of the public's view.
- **Join forces in name**— political parties and organizations may declare publicly that they support each other's agenda. This may not require that they work together or share resources beyond the visible show of support.
- **Work together as candidates**— candidates share information and efforts in support of each other.
- **Share resources**— candidates or political parties combine their resources to defeat another candidate, party or coalition. There are various potential advantages for political parties and organizations in joining coalitions.
- By combining forces coalitions allow organizations or parties to gain something that they could not gain on their own.



- By gaining influence or power, coalitions provide groups or parties with tangible results that they could not accomplish on their own
- Coalitions can provide the member groups or parties with ways to build their organizations and broaden their base of support.
- Member organizations of a coalition can focus on their strengths while relying on the strengths of coalition partners in other areas and still share in the accomplishments with the other members.
- Partners in a coalition are able to learn from other organizations and acquire new skills. By combining efforts and sharing experiences members of the coalition can broaden their knowledge and abilities.
- Shared resources often mean that the coalition can overcome deficiencies. The sum is often greater than the parts.
- Increased numbers – more people – can overcome deficits in time and money. More people may mean that it will take less time to accomplish an objective and could cost less with more volunteer effort.
- Different parties or partners can provide diversity to the organization. Parties of largely one ethnic background may broaden their appeal by including other parties or organizations from other ethnic groups or a party may strengthen its position by working

with an organization associated with a particular issue or cause.

There are potential disadvantages to joining a coalition that should be considered:

- In order to find common ground with other members of a coalition, the group or party may have to compromise on priorities or principle. The benefits of compromise must outweigh the losses.
- By joining a coalition, the group or party loses some control over the message and tactical decisions. They may also lose their individual identities or names in the election period. This can lead to disagreements or squabbling between the coalition members and within the member organization.
- By associating with other members of the coalition, the group or party may also be associated with the negative aspects of those other members.

In joining or forming a coalition, there are a number of challenges that must be considered and overcome. These may include some of the following:

- **Focus, objectives and limits** – coalition partners often fail to agree on the common objectives, either through omission – they just never discuss the objectives – or through poor communication – one member has one idea and another member has a different idea. Failure to develop a clear focus and

set realistic objectives on what the coalition will deal with can cause the disagreements and splits in the coalition.

- **Motivation** – coalition partners with different reasons for belonging to a coalition or different levels of motivation can cause discontent between partners. They may be working toward different goals or some partners may coast while more motivated partners do most of the hard work.
- **Decision making authority** – there needs to be a clear understanding of how decisions in the coalition will be made and which partners will control which resources.



Coalitions are temporary unions of political parties or groups aimed at achieving shared objectives, while broad-based governments involve collaboration across diverse entities to maximize influence, resources, and representation.

- **Decision making authority** – there needs to be a clear understanding of how decisions in the coalition will be made and which partners will control which resources.

· **Dispute resolution mechanisms** – partners need to have a clear and accepted method of resolving conflicts within the coalition set up in advance of any potential problems.

· **Maintaining trust** – coalition partners need to believe that all members of the coalition are being open and forthright in their agreements and dealings within the coalition. Suspicion that one or more of the partners is not living up to their commitments, even if unfounded, can wreck a coalition. To avoid this sort of suspicion creeping into the workings of the coalition it is important to develop open and transparent procedures.

· **Shared workload** – coalition partners need to have a sense that all the members are doing their fair share of the work and contributing what is expected of them to achieve the coalition's goal.

· **Weak links** – As with any organization, there are going to be weaknesses within the coalition. Because coalitions are combined efforts, these weaknesses may come primarily from one partner. It is important that these weaknesses be made clear at the beginning so that ways to overcome them or work around them can be found.

· **Communication** – coalition partners need to develop clear and workable lines of communication between partners and with the public.

· **Credit and visibility** – coalition partners need to feel that they are receiving the credit and the visibility they deserve. In some cases, partners may want to remain anonymous or behind the scenes but in most cases partners will want to be acknowledged for the contribution they have made.

· **Avoid conflicting priorities** – different coalition partners may have different priorities within the coalition. Sometimes these priorities may be inconsistent or even opposed to each other. It is important that all partners share the priorities of the coalition as a whole and agree to work toward the shared goal.

· **Hidden agendas** – coalition partners need to be clear about what they hope to get out of the coalition and not have priorities that are unknown to the other partners.

There are a number of points to consider that make it more likely that the coalition will stick together and accomplish the objectives.

· Determine a clear objective for the coalition and what the common ground will be. It is important to focus on the points where the members of the coalition can agree and avoid points where disagreement will waste time. It is not important that the members agree on every issue but that they find at least one or two issues that are important enough for them to focus their energies.

· Make sure that all the members of the coalition receive some equitable benefit from the coalition. It is important that all members feel that they are gaining in power or influence from the coalition. If a member organization feels that it is not receiving its fair share of the benefits from the

coalition, it will see its interests are better served by dropping out of the coalition.

· Agree to disagree. Members of the coalition will not agree on all issues (if they did, they should become a single party or group). There may be topics which are off limits to discussion in order to avoid conflict or issues where the coalition partners decide that they will not agree on but the disagreement will not impede on the common objectives.

· Be willing to compromise. In order to find common ground with coalition partners, member groups will have to be flexible and may have to give in on certain issues to reach a consensus.

· Be able to negotiate or give and take to receive what the party or organization wants in exchange for a lesser priority.

· Decision makers for each group must negotiate. Representatives of the organizations must be in a position to make decisions for their group and implement the agreements.

· There must be trust and cooperation between the partners. Member organizations have to believe that others in the coalition are honest and working fairly with the partners.

· Respect the interests of the partners. Respect positions, difficulties, strengths and weaknesses of member organizations. Each organization contributes a unique experience, structure, program, values and leadership qualities to the coalition. It is important to secure mutual understanding between the members of the coalition to reach the common advantage. Determine a clear understanding of the role, as well as the

responsibilities, each member of the coalition will have within the coalition. Once the common ground has been agreed upon, it is important that all the members understand what is expected of them as members of the coalition. This may require clear planning with members dividing the various tasks and concentrating their resources.

· Achieve tangible results. Coalitions must achieve results that are clear to the member organizations and the public. They must not only achieve these goals but they must be able to clearly demonstrate their achievements. In some cases winning on an issue may be a success and in other cases blocking someone else from winning may be a success.

It is important that:

· **Formal Documentation** – will the coalition become a legal, independent body that requires legal documents? Do the partners want to draw up some sort of formal agreement or letter of understanding that outlines the limits and objectives of the coalition?

· **Written values, priorities and principles** – “sign on” – will there be a document drawn up that outlines the values, priorities and principles of the coalition, something that the partners will agree to or “sign on” to join the coalition?

· **Publicity** – will the coalition seek publicity and how do the partners want the coalition presented to a wider audience? Is there a media plan and who will be responsible for implementing it?

· **Staff** – will the coalition require permanent staff and organizational structure.

Once the partners have agreed to form a coalition and come to an agreement about all the various aspects of the coalition, the hard part is maintaining the coalition and making it work so that it achieves its goals and is a win/win for everyone involved.

· **Maintain Trust** – Keep the philosophy of the organization but be sensitive to others in the coalition to build and maintain the trust between organizations. Organizations may need to develop confidence building measures or at the very least ways to check on partner confidence to make sure that once the original euphoria is past the partners continue to see the benefits and continue to work together.

· **Decision Maker Meetings** – Decision makers within the group will need to have agreed upon meetings to maintain communication and resolve any differences that may arise.

· **Internal Communication** – Partners will need to maintain communication between partners and within parties.

· **External Communication** – Partners will need to maintain agreed upon procedures for dealing with the public and the press.

Broadbased is defined as involving participation or support of a broad spectrum of parties or people. Is the current broadbased government in Kenya a formal coalition government? Not yet, until it is formalized through execution of relevant agreements and the depositing of the same with the Registrar of Political Parties as required by the Political Parties Act.

Raila: Stop Abduction Madness



Kenyan plain-clothed police officers push a man into a car during a protest in Nairobi, 16 July 2024. © Ed Ram/AP

ODM Party Leader Raila Odinga has, for the third time in as many weeks, called on President William Ruto to put an end to the wave of abductions that has rocked the country over the last eight months. Speaking at the burial of Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) Chairperson Roseline Odede in Uyoma, Siaya County, Odinga condemned the abductions, warning that Kenya cannot be turned into a gangster state. "We have no room for lawlessness in Kenya," Odinga declared, urging the government to take responsibility for the security crisis.

He lauded the late Odede for her unwavering commitment to justice, saying she never shied away from speaking truth to power until her last breath.

The AU Commission chair hopeful challenged the government to come clean on the growing cases of abductions, enforced disappearances, and extra-judicial killings. He noted that these acts are being executed in broad daylight by individuals equipped with handcuffs.

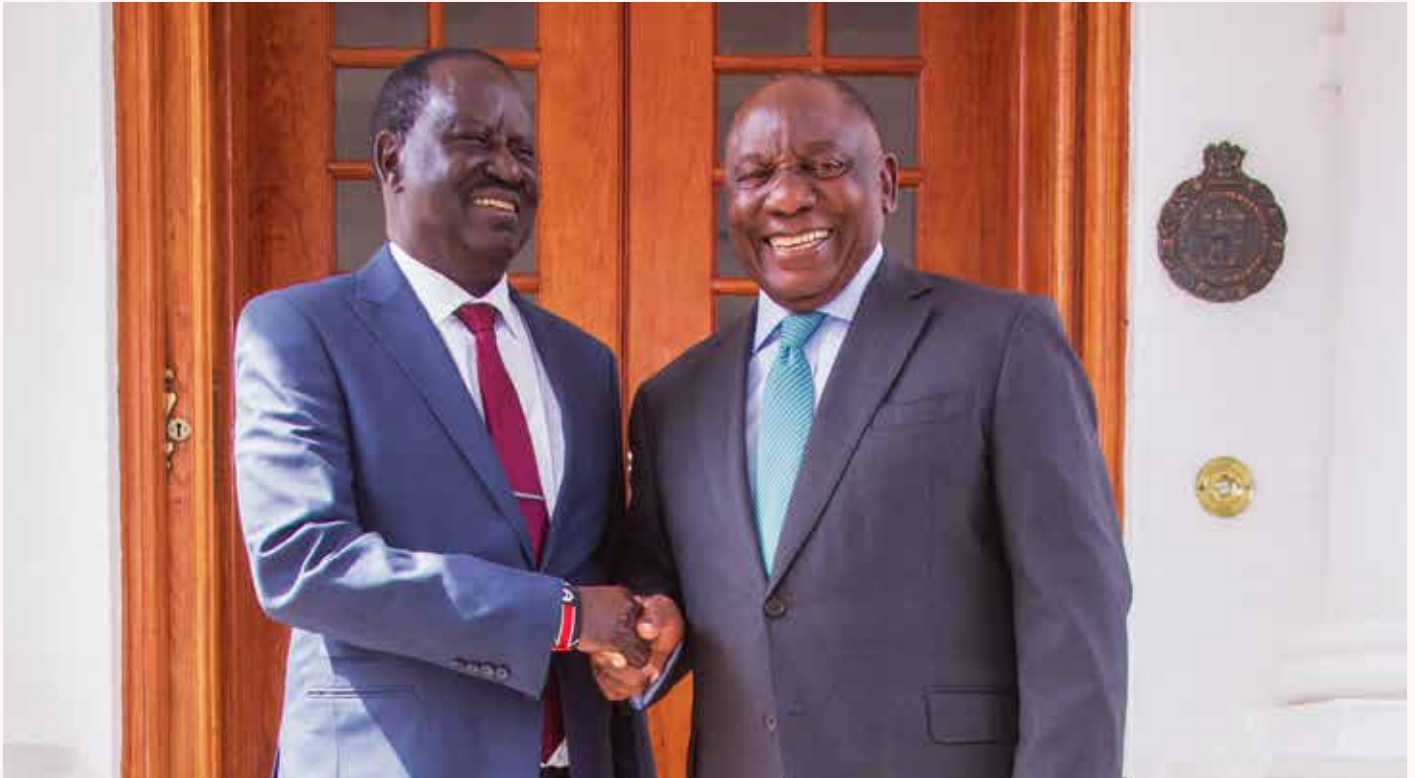
"There is no shop for handcuffs in Kenya. Handcuffs are in possession of security personnel only. So nobody should lie to us that it is civilians perpetrating these atrocious acts," Odinga stated.

Drawing parallels to the repressive Moi era, the ODM leader recalled how victims were arrested, blindfolded, and taken to Nyayo House torture chambers by the dreaded Special Branch officers. However, he pointed out that even during those dark days, security agents identified themselves.

Odinga's remarks come amid growing public outcry over the mysterious abductions, with the Ruto administration repeatedly denying involvement. This is despite recent revelations by Public Service Cabinet Secretary Justin Muturi that his own abducted son was released after President Ruto personally intervened by calling the head of the National Intelligence Service (NIS).

With pressure mounting on the government to act, Odinga's latest call underscores the deepening fears over human rights and security in Kenya.

Raila Visits SADC States to Campaign for his AUC Bid



Candidate for AUC Chairmanship Raila Odinga with President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa in Pretoria on Thursday last week.

In about a month, African leaders will converge in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for the Leader's Summit which will culminate in the election of the new Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC).

The continent's heads are scheduled to vote for the African Union Commission (AUC) chairperson between February 12 and 16 when they meet for the 38th Ordinary Session of the AU's Assembly and 46th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council.

ODM Leader and Former Prime Minister Raila Odinga is in the race to replace the outgoing chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat and is hoping his Pan-Africanist message will find favour among AU member states.

In recent weeks, he has been very busy, championing his bid across the continent. Last week, the former premier went on a whirlwind tour of Southern Africa where he met heads of state and top government officials to pitch for his bid.

In Mozambique, he met the newly-elected President Daniel Francisco Chapo.

"Thank you Mr. President for the opportunity to share with you my vision for Africa and my quest to be the AUC Chairperson. Obrigado!" Raila posted on his social media handles.

Mozambique was the latest stop as he campaigned in the Southern African

Development Committee (SADC) bloc, a body that boasts 16 member states. A day earlier, he met South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa in Pretoria and Lesotho's Prime Minister Sam Matekane in Maseru to champion for his bid.

"We have discussed my vision for the continent, and I got an opportunity to outline my plan for the African Union Commission (AUC) anchored on 10 priority areas," the former prime minister posted after meeting Ramaphosa.

In his SADC tour, Raila has also met Presidents Duma Boko of Botswana, Nangolo Mbumba of Namibia and Emerson Mnangagwa of Zimbabwe.

"Outreach to every corner of the continent continues. Thank you brave Namibia," Foreign Affairs Cabinet Secretary Korir Sing'oei posted about Raila's whistle-stop tour of the south.

Mr. Odinga began the year by meeting Mauritius Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam, days after meeting heads of West African nations.

His campaign team is confident that Raila, facing competition from Djibouti's Foreign Affairs Minister Mahamoud Youssouf and former Madagascar Foreign Minister Richard James Randriamandrato, will bag the AUC seat.

Lawyer Makau Mutua, a member of Raila's AUC campaign secretariat has often described the former premier's engagements with the African heads as "fruitful".



Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga at State House Maputo where he was hosted for talks by President Danie Chapo on his AUC bid.



We Are Ready for 2027 General Elections, ODM

The Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) party says it will continue to actively play its role as a minority party even as some of its members serve in the national government as cabinet secretaries.

The party's Central Management Committee (CMC) meeting held last week resolved to have the party strengthened and rejuvenated in readiness for the 2027 general election.

The meeting which was chaired by the Interim Party Leader Prof. Anyang' Nyong'o was attended by Deputy Party Leaders Mr. Godfrey Osotsi (Senator of Vihiga) and Mr. Abdulswamad Sherrif Nassir (the Governor of Mombasa), National Chairperson Ms. Gladys Wanga (Homabay), Secretary General Mr. Edwin Sifuna, National Treasurer Mr. Timothy Bosire, Minority Leader in the National Assembly Mr. Junet Mohammed, Secretary for Political Affairs Ms. Roza Buyu, Youth Leader Mr. John Ketora among others.

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ODM, has resolved to strengthen and prepare the party for the 2027 general elections, reaffirming its commitment to democracy, unity, and readiness for upcoming political battles.

“After the meeting, Prof. Nyong'o said the party will be strengthened and prepare it for the 2027 general election. “After chairing the meeting of the Central Management Committee, I want to assure our members and the public that ODM will continue to be a force for good in the year ahead. We stand firm as the foremost defender of democracy, championing freedom, full participation,

transparency, good governance, justice, fairness and equity” posted Prof. Nyong'o on his X handle.

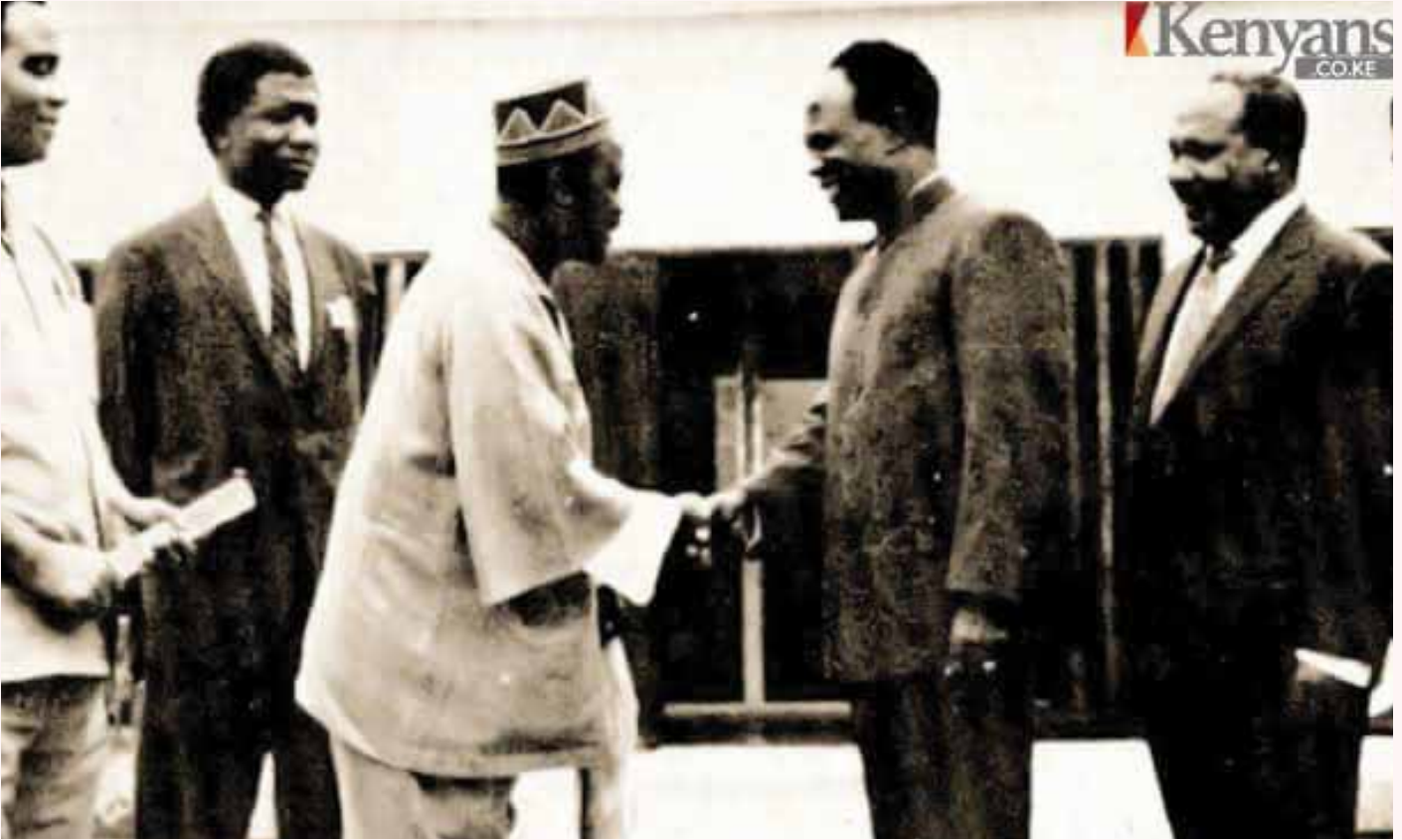
He went ahead to say that, “we urge our members to remember that ODM is a distinct political force, committed to winning power through democratic means. In this pursuit, let us be mindful of our words and actions and avoid supporting our competitors in ways that may undermine the party's unity and goals”.

In the statement read by Secretary General Mr. Sifuna, the party outlined its plans and vision in the new year and promised to ensure the party remains solid and strong. “We must continue to strengthen ourselves in readiness for the battles ahead. Following the largely successful grassroots elections in November last year at the polling units in all the 47 counties, the party received 41 appeals”, he said.

“The cases have been reviewed for merit with most of them being found to be frivolous. A total of six appeals were found to be supported by evidence and will be proceeding to hearing before the party's Appeals Committee”, added Sen. Sifuna.

He announced that the Central Committee had seconded DPL Mr. Abdulswamad Sherrif Nassir, Secretary for Political Affairs Ms. Roza Buyu, and Organizing Secretary Mr. Abdisalan Ahmed to the Appeals Committee for purposes of the six appeals.

“Upon conclusion of this process, the National Elections Coordinating Committee (NECC) shall be announcing dates for elections at the Ward, Branch, and county levels”, said Mr. Sifuna.



Two great Panafricanists - Jaramogi Oginga Odinga and Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah greet each other.

Jaramogi Reigned But Never Ruled

Today, January 20, marks 31 years since Kenya lost one of its greatest sons—Jaramogi Oginga Odinga. A teacher, a freedom fighter, and a statesman, Jaramogi dedicated his life to the struggle for justice, democracy, and the liberation of his people. His passing on this day in 1994 was a profound loss, not just to his family and comrades, but to a nation that he fought so hard to free and transform. It is a date of personal significance to me as well, as he departed 18 years to the day after my own father.

Jaramogi was a man of unmatched selflessness. At the dawn of independence, when colonial rule was crumbling and Kenya stood on the cusp of a new era, he was offered the presidency. He declined, insisting that the leader of the struggle, Jomo Kenyatta, be released from prison and allowed to assume the mantle of leadership. In doing so, he demonstrated that his vision for Kenya was not about personal ambition and aggrandizement but about principle and justice.

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Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, a freedom fighter and statesman, dedicated his life to justice and democracy, leaving an enduring legacy as Kenya's greatest leader who never ruled.

As Kenya's first Vice President, Jaramogi sought to steer the country toward genuine freedom and social justice. But when the nation began to take a wrong turn—betraying the ideals of the struggle and entrenching an oppressive, reactionary system—he did what few in power would dare to do: he took a walk.

Resigning from government, he formed the Kenya People's Union (KPU) to fight for the soul of the young republic. For this, he was rewarded with persecution—his party was banned, and he was detained without trial. Yet, Jaramogi remained undeterred.

Even in his later years, when many would have chosen the comfort of retirement, Jaramogi was at the forefront of the struggle for Kenya's Second Liberation. He championed multiparty democracy, refusing to relent even in the face of state brutality and repression. The return of pluralism in 1991 was, in many ways, a culmination of his lifelong fight for an open, just, and democratic society.

Jaramogi Oginga Odinga was, without a doubt, the best president Kenya never had. His reign, though unofficial, lives on in the hearts of those who continue to fight for the ideals he so fervently believed in—justice,

equity, and democracy. Though he never ruled, his influence shaped Kenya in ways that no office could have conferred.

As we mark this solemn anniversary, let us recommit to the struggle for a Kenya that Jaramogi envisioned—a Kenya where leadership is not about power but about service, where democracy is not a privilege but a right, and where justice is not selective but universal.

Jaramogi lived for Kenya. He suffered for Kenya. He reigned in the hearts of Kenyans. And even in death, his legacy endures.

Long Live, Jaramogi.