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The State of Political Parties in Tanzania

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Introduction

As this work was getting under way there was a wide spread feeling among the opposition parties that the ruling party was suppressing them, particularly in the run up to the elections in October, 2000. In an article in *Majira*, a popular national Daily, on November 23, 1999, it was reported that the ruling party, Chama cha Mapinduzi (popularity known by its acronym CCM) had established youth vigilante groups (UVCCM – Umoja wa Vijana CCM) in every region with the aim of preparing them to confront the youth of the opposition parties in the forthcoming elections. It was further reported that a training camp had been set up in Mbeya (in the south-west) to provide basic military and fitness training for the CCM youth to prepare them to restrain all those who might want to "... spoil the CCM's victory in the national elections." "If a CCM member is hit with one stone in the face you must retaliate with two stones. Do not follow what is written in the holy books that you should turn the left cheek when hit on the right cheek." The Deputy Secretary General of CCM was quoted as saying.

The newspaper report essentially summed up the pervasive feeling among members of opposition political parties that the ruling party is determined to hold onto power by ruthlessly suppressing the opposition and ensuring its victory in the elections by hooks or by crooks. To this end the opposition parties and leaders believe that CCM has devised mechanisms ranging from intimidation to outright rigging in order to ensure that the other parties do not record a significant vote in the forthcoming (2000) elections. CCM, according to the opposition, would like to revert to a de-facto single-party political system. At the time of writing this article at least four leaders of opposition parties had either been arrested, convicted, or were appearing in courts.

The government has denied any assault on the opposition. Addressing journalists on December 18th 1999, the Prime Minister stressed the point that when leaders of opposition have been arrested, it is because they have contravened the law. He insisted that CCM leaders committing similar

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offences would face the same treatment. The ruling party, on its part, denies any schemes and insists that it will indeed ensure that it wins the election but only by fair means. CCM contends that the opposition parties are their own worst enemies because they waste large amounts of energy in internal bickering and political intrigues and have failed to cooperate or to create a coalition, or coalitions, that can be mobilized to dislodge the ruling party and its incumbents in the elections. It is further argued by CCM that the opposition parties (most of which have only emerged in the last six years or so) are motivated by material gain rather than political principle or commitment. Many are referred to as *ruzuku* (subsidy) parties led by rent seeking political elites whose sole goal is to access for personal benefit the public funds intended to assist in election campaigns or promote institutional capacity within these parties. One influential daily sums up the contemporary picture thus:

“When multi-partyism was ushered in Tanzania in 1992, we hoped that it would be used as a vehicle not only for change but also for enhancement of the principles of democracy and good governance. But when political parties came into offing, most of them were founded as personal parties either for self-aggrandizement or for the money minded, a quick way of earning easy money..... Squabbles within the leadership have become almost the order of the day” (*The African*, December 21, 1999).

It is against this background that this study was undertaken with the following underlying concerns:

- That newly established political parties have largely remained weak;
- That the ruling party has become stronger, thus further weakening and marginalizing the new parties;
- That the political party, as the critical institution undergirding pluralist democracy, is under threat;
- That long-term sustainable democracy is impossible without vibrant political parties with competing policy alternatives.

Background

Tanganyika (now Tanzania mainland) was under British colonial rule until 1961 when it became independent under the Marlborough House constitution agreed between the outgoing colonial power and the incoming political elites. The nationalist struggle for independence featured trade unions and a range of political parties representing diverse interests. At the time of independence the dominant political party was the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), formed in 1954 through the

transformation of the Tanganyika African Association (TAA) under the leadership of Julius Nyerere. Never-the-less there were other political parties. Among these were the United Tanganyika Party (UTP), set up to defend settler colonial interests; the African National Congress (ANC) – a left-leaning splinter from TANU; and other parties based on regions and ethnic groups.

The Marlborough House Constitution was silent on the position and role of the opposition in general and political parties in particular. Thus, within one year of independence, the TANU government extinguished the political powers of traditional rulers and by 1965 it banned the other political parties and established a constitutional one-party state. To be sure, some of these parties had disintegrated from internal decay but the fact remains that the immediate post-colonial constitutional and political order was not conducive to competitive policies. Thus, TANU proceeded to impose its monopoly over political power but not without resistance arising from trade unions, co-operatives, and students throughout the period to the early 1990s when multi-partyism was re-instated.

Pressures for political change in Tanzania began to emerge in earnest in the late 1980s. These pressures evolved against a background of largely failed structural adjustment programs, which had been put in place in the early 1980s. These programs, which were supposedly intended to spearhead economic recovery, on the whole had quite the opposite effect - they intensified economic difficulties precipitating popular discontent. This discontent created a crisis of political legitimacy for the state, giving rise to demands which were ultimately translated into calls for a more open and competitive political system. The reformers' argument was, at least in part, that economic liberalization had to be accompanied by political liberalization in order to stimulate sustained economic recovery. This argument was mainly embraced by those who had lost out during structural adjustment.

It should be noted that the government and the ruling party (CCM) strongly resisted these demands and it was not until the late ex-president Nyerere intervened that the ruling party acceded to these demands, albeit hesitantly. It is in this context that a Presidential Commission was set up in 1990 with essentially one term of reference – “To enquire whether the majority of Tanzanians preferred the continuation of a single-party system or the establishment of a multiparty system.” The commission was chaired by Chief Justice Francis Nyalali and eventually became popularly known as the Nyalali Commission.

Although many in the opposition groups were skeptical about its composition, term(s) of reference, and its very political legitimacy, the commission approached its task with such seriousness and integrity that its report earned popular acceptance. This acceptance arose mainly from the depth of analysis, the scope of the issues covered, and the range of recommendations it made. The major recommendation made by the Nyalali Commission was that Tanzania should abandon the single-party system and adopt a multiparty system in spite of the fact that many of those who made verbal or written submissions (80%) preferred the continuation of a single-party system. Three arguments were made to support this apparently anti-majoritarian recommendation. One argument was that many of those who expressed a preference for a single party insisted on major reforms. The second argument was that the 20 per cent who preferred a multiparty system were a substantial minority whose discontent could negatively affect a democratic political system. The third argument was that given the grip of single party dominance, the 80 percent majority could partly be explained by Plato's allegory of the cave since all Tanzanians below the age of 40 had known no other political system. This was encapsulated in the popular contention that "if one CCM has brought us such misery, many CCMs will finish us off." CCM had become the very embodiment and expression of the idea of a political party leading to the popular perception that political parties should be viewed negatively or at least cynically.

The Nyalali Commission went further than just recommending the adoption of a multiparty system. It also prescribed the necessary conditions under which the system could be established and consolidated. Among these conditions were:

- Creation of a conducive environment for free participation in politics through the repeal of 40 pieces of repressive legislation;
- Establishment of a body to oversee the transition with a clear transition time-table;
- Appointment of a Constitutional Commission to draft a new constitution with considerably reduced presidential powers;
- To conduct a free and open public debate on a new constitution and eventually subject it to a popular referendum;
- To set up a major public education program on multi-partyism and democracy;
- De-linking CCM from public institutions such as the armed forces and the civil service.

It is important to note that there was no public or parliamentary discussion of the Nyalali report. Instead the CCM took it up at its February 1992 delegates' conference and approved the proposal for multipartyism without discussion. Even more important is the fact that the party

conference passed a resolution removing the single party clause in its own constitution giving way to the Political Parties Act, 1992, which was subsequently passed by parliament in July 1992. Among the many conditions recommended by the Nyalali Commission, only the removal of the party from public institutions was adopted. The rest were ignored and there was no attempt to explain why. Thus, right from the beginning, it would seem that the ruling party was less than fully committed to meaningful and fundamental change. The period since 1992 has been marked by:

- a) A CCM controlled transition, rather than a negotiated one which would have all parties participate in determining the path, pace, process and players in the transition;
- b) Extreme uncertainty with regard to the rules and procedures resulting in the entrapment of opposition parties;
- c) Lack of a clear and unwavering commitment to the promotion and institutionalization of multi-partyism as a desired political system;
- d) A consuming preoccupation with political stability and emphasis of law and order;
- e) Restrictive rules and regulations designed to control political parties rather than to nurture them;
- f) Systematic harassment of opposition parties and their leaders with the Preventative Detention Act (1962), in particular, hanging over their heads like the proverbial sword of Damocles.

Most recently a committee "To coordinate views on the Constitution" was appointed by the president under Appeals Court judge, R H Kisanga. Consistent with the piece-meal approach to constitution making, this committee was to sound out public views on 19 issues including: the structure of the Union; powers of the executive; absolute majority (of cast vote) requirement for winning presidential elections; challenging presidential election results; independent candidacy; proportional representation; presidential nomination of members of parliament; separation of powers; the 40 laws condemned by the Nyalali Commission; human rights and the entrenchment of socialism and self-reliance as national ideologies.

In the 'white paper' the government had already taken a position on each of the issues. For example, on the Union the government favoured the present system of two governments; on the powers of the president the government did not see any need to curtail them, etc. The Kisanga Report differed with the views of the government on such issues as the Union; an independent electoral commission; independent candidates; executive powers; repressive laws; and challenges of presidential results. The report is the subject of political controversy in the country. It is interesting to note the following, however:

- That the terms of reference and issues addressed by the Committee were highly selective and determined solely by the incumbent government and party;
- There was no attempt to link the Kisanga Committee with the Nyalali Commission, even where the former could have complemented the latter on such questions as the Union;
- No issues were raised concerning the building of an environment conducive to the promotion of multi-party democracy, such as revisiting the Political Parties Act;
- Initial reactions by the president to the committee's recommendations opposed to the government position were hostile;
- Only a further selected number of issues have been tabled as amendments in parliament. They tellingly include empowering the president to nominate ten members of parliament; dropping the absolute majority requirement for the winning presidential candidate; and forbidding the challenging of presidential election results.

The State and the Strength of Parliamentary Opposition

Since the passage of the Political Parties Act in 1992, Tanzania has seen the emergence of thirteen fully registered parties along with two others which have obtained preliminary registration. The registered parties along with their parliamentary seats obtained in the 1995 elections are as follows:

Table 1 Popular Votes and Parliamentary Seats by Parties, 1995 General Election.

PART	POPULAR VOTE (Total Cast Votes - 6,440,913) SEATS IN	%	PARLIAM ENT (Total Seats - 232)	%
Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM)	3,814,206	59.2	168	80.2
Civic United Front (CUF)	323,432	5.0	24	10.3
Chama cha Demokrasia (CHADEMA)	396,825	6.2	3	1.3
Union for Multiparty Democracy (UMD)	41,256	0.64		
National Convention for Construction Reform (NCCR - Mageuzi)	1,402,343	21.81	16	6.9
National League for Democracy (NLD)	26,666	0.4		

Tanzania People's Party (TPP)	15,335	0.2		
United People's Democratic Party (UPDP)	19,841	0.3		
National Reconstruction Alliance (NRA)	60,707	0.9		
Popular National Party (PONA)	18,155	0.3		
Tanzania Democratic Alliance (TADEA)	76,636	1.2		
Tanzania Labour Party (TLP)	27,963	0.4		
United Democratic Party (UDP)	213,547	3.3	3	1.3

Source: National Electoral Commission

Table 2 Presidential Popular Votes (Total Cast Vote 6,512,745), 1995 Presidential Election

PARTY	CANDIDATE	TOTAL VOTE	PERCENTAGE
CCM	Mkapa, B W	4,026,422	61.8
CUF	Lipumba, I H	418,973	6.4
NCCR-Mageuzi	Mrema, A L	1,808,616	27.8
UDP	Cheyo, J M	258,734	4.0

Source: National Electoral Commission

Table 3 Special Seats for Women by Parties

PARTY	NUMBER
CCM	28
CUF	4
NCCR-Mageuzi	3
CHADEMA	1
UDP	1

Source: National Electoral Commission

On the whole the 1995 Parliamentary elections were considered free and fair by internal and external monitors. However, they were challenged in court by the opposition parties on the basis of electoral fraud on the part of the electoral commission. The petition was quashed by the High Court. The Presidential vote results, once announced by the Electoral Commission, can not be questioned in any court of law under the present constitution. Some petitions against individual results in the parliamentary elections

resulted in by-elections, most of which have gone against the opposition parties.

Thus, since the 1995 elections the parliamentary picture has changed somewhat. In a series of by-elections arising from election petitions or otherwise vacant seats the ruling party has made substantive gains at the expense of the opposition parties. Racked by internal bickering since the last elections, the NCCR – Mageuzi, which had gained one more seat, has now lost a total of four seats. CHADEMA has lost one seat. CUF has held its position. It is only UDP which has gained one seat since the main elections. CHADEMA, CUF and UDP were engaged in discussions intended to strengthen the opposition against CCM in the run up to the October 2000 elections. The overall picture that emerges from the parliamentary and presidential elections has the following main features:

1. The distribution of presidential and parliamentary votes across parties is fairly consistent with the CCM capturing 60% to 40% for the opposition parties.
2. Out of a total of 13 registered parties only five are represented in parliament, 4.3% of the popular vote is thus lost;
3. There is a major discrepancy between the popular votes obtained by the political parties and the seats in parliament. The opposition parties as a group, for example, obtained 40.8 per cent of the popular vote but they only got 19.8 percent of the seats in parliament;
4. The ruling party holds a disproportionately high share of seats and is thus in a position to pass any legislation with little obstruction from the opposition. CCM continues to dominate the legislature;
5. To make up for this distortion the Speaker of the House has sought to enhance the position of the opposition parties through the appointment of their members to positions on the various parliamentary committees. An office of the leader of the opposition has been established in Dodoma and Dar es Salaam and the leader of one of the opposition parties is Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee.

The discrepancy between the popular vote and representation in parliament is a result of the electoral system in Tanzania which is mainly a constituency based first-past-the-post or winner-takes-all system. Additionally, there are two special categories of members as per Art. 66 (1) of the constitution:

- a) Women members being not less than fifteen percent of the constituency members. These are appointed by political parties on the basis of proportional representation in relation to the constituency seats won in parliament;

- b) Five members elected by the Zanzibar House of Representatives.

From the data above it will be clear that the wide discrepancy between the popular vote and parliamentary representation is a result of the electoral system. Apart from distortion of representation this has other negative consequences:

- a) Some parties may not be represented at all although they might have won a substantial amount of popular votes;
- b) The policy on party funding is based on the proportion of seats in parliament rather than the popular vote;
- c) Special women's seats are also based on the share of seats held rather than the popular votes obtained thus deepening the distortion.

The opposition parties are all agreed about the need for a system of proportional representation to enhance fairness and reflect popularity but the ruling party is opposed to it. The grounds advanced by the ruling party are that the proportional representation (party list) system would create a gap between the representatives and their constituencies. It would seem, however, that the ruling party obtains unfair advantage from the present system. The Speaker of the House, however, argued that Tanzania would best benefit from a mixed system (which already operates with the 15 percent special seats for women). There should be constituency seats to enhance direct accountability of representatives to voters. At the same time, however, proportional representation should be instituted in order to reflect the popular will, cater for small and disadvantaged groups and to enhance the authority of political parties.

Political Party Funding

The funding of political parties is an area of considerable controversy with different practices between countries. Ordinarily there are basically four types of party funding support. These are:

- Election expenses for candidates;
- Election expenses for parties;
- Party operating expenses;
- Indirect.

Tanzania does not, as yet, have a stable system of political party funding. At the moment funds are provided for party operating expenses but during the 1995 elections funds were granted for party and candidate election expenses. Although such funds were directed to candidates, they were paid through their respective political parties and invariably all parties retained some of money to meet party election and institutional expenses. The funds are administered by the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties. Candidate election expenses have since been withdrawn partly because

the subsidies provided an incentive to purely rent-seeking candidates. The following tables reveal the amounts paid out to political parties during 1996/97-1998/99.

Table IV Monthly and Total Subsidies in Tshs, 1996/97-1998/99

	Party	Monthly Subsidy	Total Subsidies 1996/97-1998/99
(i)	CCM	150,400,000/-	5,263,200,000/-
(ii)	CHADEMA	8,300,000/-	290,500,000/-
(iii)	CUF	16,400,000/-	574,000,000/-
(iv)	NCCR-MAGEUZI	31,800,000/-	1,181,343,270/-
(v)	UDP	1,300,000/-	45,500,000/-
	TOTAL	208,200,000/-	7,254,543,270/-

Source: Registrar of Political Parties, April, 2000

Party subsidies have been a source of tension and major rifts particularly in the ranks of the new political parties. Some political parties such as NCCR – Mageuzi, which put up a commendable performance during the 1995 general election have since crumbled under the weight of 'ruzuku' (subsidy). While some of the smaller parties have all but vanished from lack of financial support, other relatively larger parties which qualify for support have suffered from internal squabbles over resources.

There are at least two basic theories which have emerged to explain this regressive phenomenon. One theory is that the CCM government, in its willful strategy to destroy the opposition parties, being well aware of the impecuniousness and/or greed of the leadership, invented the idea of 'ruzuku' to sow seeds of dissention and confusion within the parties. The other theory is that the political party leaders lack fundamentally in commitment to any political ideals and are essentially driven by personal greed. Both schools of thought tend to look at ruzuku as a curse – negative for long-term party growth and consolidation. Yet, left without public funds, all the political parties (including the ruling party) would probably crumble. Herein lies the ultimate dilemma – to provide funds and take the risk of internal 'ruzuku wars' or to deny the parties public funds and run the risk of the collapse of political parties. At the time of writing this paper at least one party had suspended its financial officer and instituted a committee to investigate financial impropriety in the party.

Currently party funding by the state is limited to contributing towards operational costs. This too is confined to the political parties that obtained at least one seat in the 1995 parliamentary elections. This means that only

five parties receive financial support according to their number of seats. The other eight registered parties do not receive any support. As a result they cannot even afford to set up, let alone run, party offices. These smaller parties benefited from party and candidate election subsidies in the 1995 elections and to a large extent this enhanced their presence, participation and visibility. Since that time, however, they have continued to exist either only in name or in the person of the leader. Given the current trend whereby CCM has won most of the by-elections, it is quite likely that the performance of the opposition in the 2000 elections could be reduced to the point of all the parties failing to return members in the next parliament. If that were to happen, all the opposition parties would lose their public financial support, CCM would take 100 percent of the party funds and the country would revert a de-facto one-party system.

In some other political systems, such as that of Germany, funds are granted to political parties on the basis of popular votes obtained in national, state, and local elections as well as stipulated matching funds for moneys raised through membership fees, grants, and bequests. In those situations such alternative funding may contribute a substantial part of the budget. In Tanzania, however, membership fees are a very small proportion of party budgets and are usually retained by the branch to meet local costs. Individual contributions may be made to support election candidates but are unlikely to yield substantial amounts to the institutional funds. It will thus be necessary to continue to provide public funds to political parties as long as:

- a) They are encouraged to seek alternative funding and particularly support from members. In this case it will be necessary to ensure that upper limits as well as disclosure rules are in place to minimise corruption – political and economic;
- b) The funds are strictly controlled and accounts are regularly inspected and audited annually;
- c) Funds should be disbursed on the basis of
 - i) Performance in popular vote rather than seats won
 - ii) Some form of matching public funds should be dispersed according to formulas designed to encourage self-reliance;
- d) Party support funds should be made available at national, regional and district levels to strengthen parties at the grassroots.

Trends in Political Party Development

Some people in Tanzania have argued that political parties may not be a necessary, let alone a defining, feature of democracy. Such observers have tended to link multi-partyism specifically with the democratization process in the Western countries and to contend that democracy and its institutional forms has to be defined within certain cultural settings and historical

experiences. In defining democracy these arguments normally stress participation and inclusiveness rather than competition and contestation. These arguments go further to suggest that political parties in Africa do not function as well as political parties in the West because they do not possess the conventional features associated with political parties. These are:

- a) A strong and politically competent civil society;
- b) A national identity cutting across ethnic groups and religions;
- c) A committed and voluntary membership;
- d) A set of clear and shared values, norms, and ideologies;
- e) Strict intra-party discipline or well-established mechanisms of managing factionalism.

It is further argued that some of the mushrooming of political parties that followed in the wake of the 1992 Act was pure faddism with political parties seen as fashionable. Let us review the state of political parties in Tanzania against this background.

The Ruling Party (Chama Cha Mapinduzi [CCM])

CCM was established in 1977 as the successor party to TANU and the Afro-Shirazi Party, which were the sole parties in Tanganyika and Zanzibar, respectively, since 1964. CCM continued on as the sole legally recognized constitutional political party until 1992 when the Political Parties Act was passed. CCM yielded, very reluctantly, to the new system and, as we noted before, has continued to exploit incumbent advantage at the expense of the new competing political parties. In its present state CCM has the following features:

- a) It presides over a weak and perhaps affective but largely politically incompetent (some would say depoliticized) civil society;
- b) It is highly authoritarian in so far as it does not seek to persuade but to impose its will upon its own members and all other parties. It is more a state party than a political party;
- c) It is a ruling machine designed to maintain a grip on political power rather than an engine for socio-economic development;
- d) It has no ideological vision having abandoned Ujamaa (socialism and self-reliance) for market liberalism but rhetorically clinging to the former;
- e) It is cynical and politically minimalist in the sense that it seeks to hold onto political power by any means necessary under the pretext of maintaining law and order;
- f) It is a state-party essentially intolerant of dissent and unable to accommodate, let alone absorb, views from outside itself.

Opposition Parties

On the whole the opposition parties are in a state of disarray. With the exception of two parties (UDP and CUF) the others have lost seats in the

by-elections that have been held. The opposition parties on the whole have been plagued by the following problems:

- a) Internal squabbles revolving essentially around personal ambitions and money;
- b) Leaders are not natural politicians and therefore tend to concentrate energy on office and status rather than popular mobilization;
- c) The parties are modeled on CCM including their constitutions and therefore tend to be more authoritarian and less consultative;
- d) Personalities rather than principles, policies or ideology have tended to dominate;
- e) The parliamentary parties have failed to present clear and articulate policy alternatives to guide their strategies and tactics in parliament;
- f) Weak links between the parliamentarian and the party as a whole. The party merely provides the ticket to parliament but has no clear influence over the representative;
- g) All political parties are not clear if their MPs are partisans, trustees, politicos, delegates or all of those.

Although almost all the opposition parties have tended to exhibit similar pathologies to varying degrees, there remain some significant differences between them. In general, one can say that at least two parties were on the upward trend while the other two were either stable or declining. The CUF and UDP were on the rise while the CHADEMA and NCCR-M were on the decline. We present brief profiles below:

CUF

This party is regaining strength after the Commonwealth brokered an agreement settling differences between CUF and CCM over the 1995 presidential elections in Zanzibar. It is certainly the best-organized and strongest opposition party. It has thus turned its attention to mobilizing and organizing on the mainland, making significant gains in the recent local elections particularly in the coastal areas. Unfortunately, CUF is encumbered by the perception that it is a religious (Moslem) and Zanzibar party. Eighteen high level CUF leaders are currently undergoing a treason trial in Zanzibar and the CCM (Zanzibar) government is seeking to amend the Zanzibar Constitution to enable the incumbent president to contest for another five year term. This is causing major strains within CCM, the Union and the country as a whole.

UDP

At the time of the research, UDP had just organized a largely successful national conference involving 1200 delegates from the whole country and held elections of the national leadership, although the party chairman's election is said to have been undemocratic. The high profile of the party

chairman as chairman of the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee, shadow Minister of Finance and deputy leader of the opposition have enhanced the party's image. On the whole, being in parliament has helped the party to grow in stature and confidence.

CHADEMA

The party has suffered from factionalism for quite some time. This is partly because it was perceived to be a (middle) class and an ethnic (Chagga) party from the beginning. It has lost one of its four seats in parliament and the former MP who is also Secretary General of the party is currently in custody accused of endangering public order during the by-election in which he was ousted by CCM. The party believes that it is targeted for destruction by CCM and hence the constant harassment of its leaders right across the country.

NCCR-Mageuzi

As we pointed out earlier, NCCR-Mageuzi has probably suffered the most precipitous decline. From the position of being the strongest (mainland) opposition party in the 1995 elections, it is now probably in fourth place having lost a total of four parliamentary seats through by-elections since the general election. The party has also been plagued by power struggles for leadership, leading to the resignation of its populist chairman Augustine Mrema, who joined the Tanzania Labour Party (TLP). It is still smarting from the effects of the three to four years of internal struggles. A considerable number of supporters (not necessarily members) have left the party to join the TLP - following their leader Mrema.

Non-Parliamentary Parties

While the parliamentary opposition parties are in a state of disarray, the non-parliamentary parties are gradually sinking into oblivion as indicated by the following features:

- a) Their institutional forms are rudimentary and sometimes non-existent. Thus, most of them do not have a physical official address beyond the home of the leader;
- b) About six of the eight non-parliamentary parties have never held national conferences to elect their leaders leaving leadership positions vacant and/or promoting the notion that they 'belong' to certain people mainly as income generating projects earning the nickname NGI (Non-Governmental Individuals);
- c) The leader of one of the better known parties (UMD) recently rejoined the CCM;
- d) Attempts at forming alliances, let alone uniting, have consistently failed, mainly because the parties are perceived to belong to individuals making personality clashes not uncommon;

- e) A lack of seriousness in defining the goals and objectives of the political parties, particularly in regard to stating what sets them apart from other parties.

The Role of the Media

Since the early 1990s when pressures for political change were mounting, a vibrant press began to emerge. Up to the mid-1990s Tanzania essentially had one English language government owned daily (The Daily News) and a Kiswahili Party owned daily (Uhuru). Both had their Sunday editions. The 1990s however witnessed an exponential growth in the number of newspapers. As of 2000 there were over fourteen newspapers published in Dar es Salaam alone. Most of them are dailies but a good number are weeklies. Apart from newspapers, Tanzania has experienced growth in radio and television broadcasting. Almost all this growth has arisen from private sector initiatives serving interests ranging from policies, to religion and to entertainment.

One thing is consistent between all the new media: they all support opposition politics and are always frustrated when political parties do not seem to work well or at all. For this reason a number of newspapers, in particular, have been closed, suspended or otherwise restricted because they are collectively known as the voice of the opposition. No opposition party has a newspaper of its own although the ruling party continues to publish its Swahili Daily (Uhuru) and its Sunday edition (Mzalendo).

Other Trends

As pointed out earlier, state-civil society relations are rather tense as is indicated by the following trends:

- a) The government's consistent failure to articulate a clear national vision for the future. The Ujamaa vision has not found a successor. It rhetorically persists in the national constitution;
- b) Civil society remains very weak particularly with the collapse of cooperatives, trade unions and the weakness of political parties;
- c) A gradual drift towards authoritarianism with the government confining itself to law and order rather than social welfare functions;
- d) Growing intolerance of dissent. It cannot be accidental that in the last few months leaders of Chadema TPP, NCCR-M, and TLP have been arrested and variously detained;
- e) Increasing political volatility in the wake of the death of Nyerere and therefore, his disappearance from the political scene removes a stabilizing element within the CCM and the country as a whole. CCM is progressively becoming paranoid;
- f) The international community, which formally promoted multi-partyism, seems to be experiencing some democracy fatigue and is now more 'realist' and in favour of peace and stability.

What is to be Done?

"The source of future conflicts in this country is not religion or ethnicity but democracy." (Opposition MP)

Those were the words of one of my interviewees. The single most important problem in Tanzania today is the lack of a clear and demonstrated commitment to democratization. The building of democracy after years of authoritarian rule is not simply a matter of passing an act of parliament. It involves more work if democracy is to be nurtured and ultimately consolidated. The following needs to be done in Tanzania:

- a) The Nyalali recommendations, which were ignored opportunistically by the CCM government, need to be revisited;
- b) The Political Parties Act needs to be re-examined so that it is oriented towards the promotion rather than the restriction of political parties;
- c) The electoral system has to be overhauled to embrace elements of both proportional and constituency based representation;
- d) Political party funding should be based on clear and stable principles including the proportionality of popular votes rather than seats held in parliament;
- e) The system of local government should be re-examined with a view of creating a federal government with their provincial governments and assemblies in order to bring politics closer to the people. This could be the ultimate solution of the Union problem.

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