

# Insight Bulletin

For People Who Want to Know

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## WILL AFRICAN COUNTRIES END CORRUPTION?



**L**egislators from different African countries have been asked to bring sanity in the management of public funds through vigilance in combating illicit financial flow in their respective countries.

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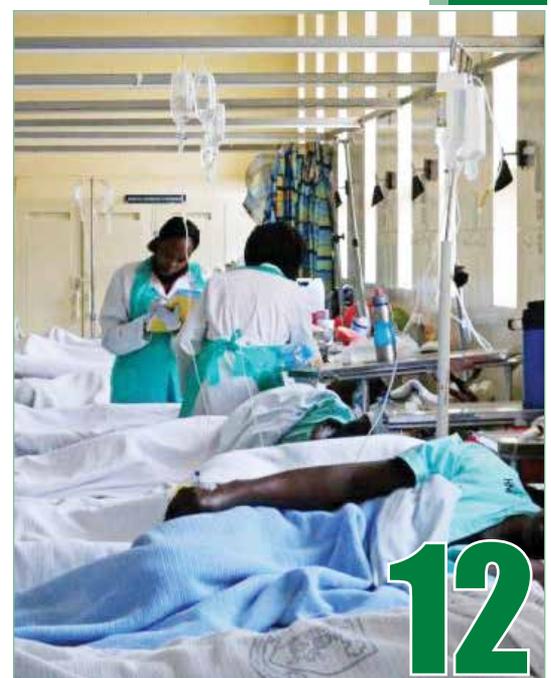
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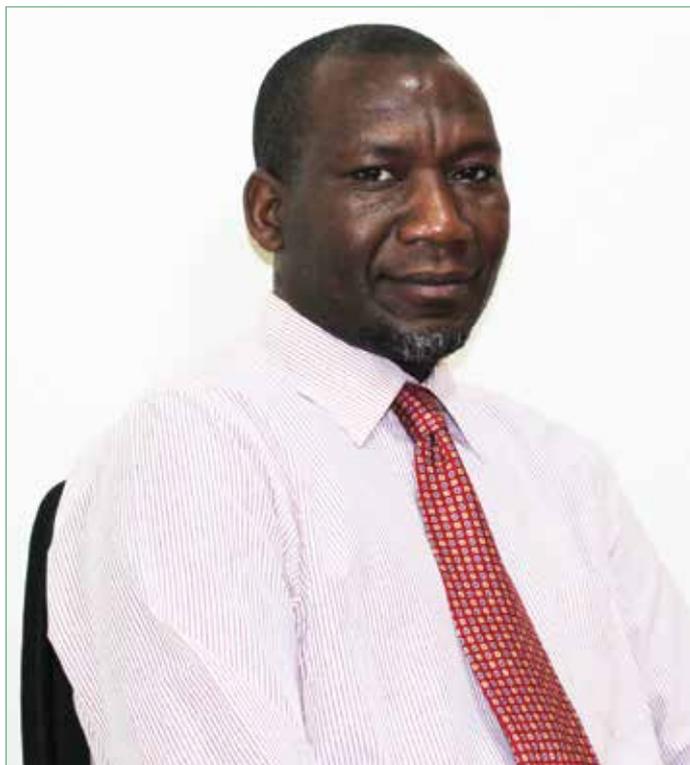
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# Leaders Lack Political Will to Combat Corruption



**N**ot only in Malawi where corruption is rampant, rather most African ruling parties and leaders lack the political will needed to genuinely tackle corruption. Legislative gaps in dealing with corruption are not strengthened. The enforcement of internal anti-corruption controls within states are not improving.

Sadly, scrutiny, enforcement and compliance in African public sectors have often been very low—creating opportunities for corruption.

The corruption-fighting capacity of existing institutions like the anti-corruption bureau must also be strengthened. Africans need independent anti-corruption structures, which should be led by agencies in the private sector or civil society unlike the status quo. Such agencies will ensure that corrupt officials are brought to book, as well as forcing police and public watchdogs to follow up on cases of corruption exposed in the media and by whistleblowers.

Nonetheless, these watchdogs must get the appropriate resources required to attract the best candidates and to remunerate them (and in some cases protect them)

appropriately. Furthermore, these institutions must be independent from the presidential office or the executive department, such as the police or justice ministry, and be accountable directly to parliament as the case now in Malawi and many other African countries.

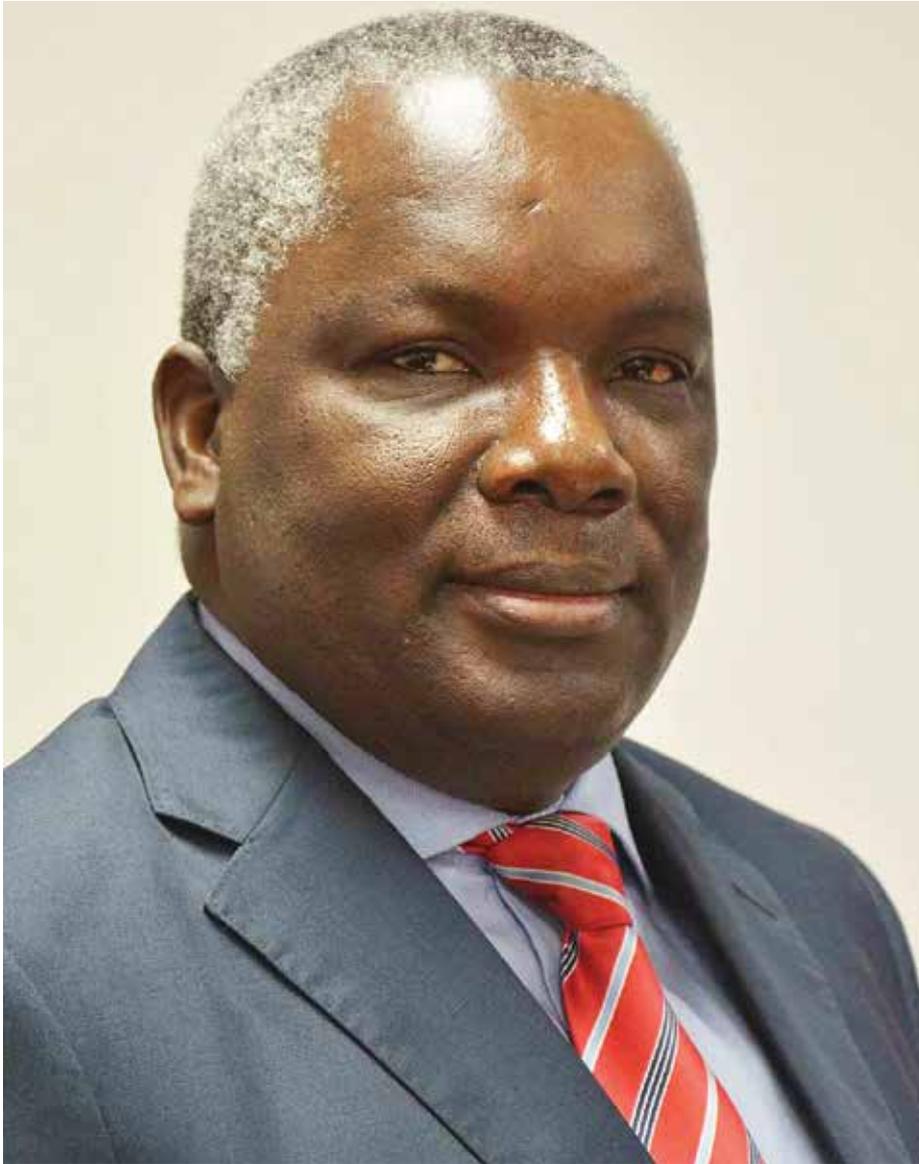
African ruling parties must punish the bad behaviour of their leaders and party members legally, socially and politically, as well as reward those with good behaviour. If this is highlighted and addressed publicly, governments can begin to restore the moral authority and credibility needed to deal with transgressions from ordinary citizens. Exemplary leaders will encourage ordinary citizens (themselves included) to uphold the rule of law. Civil society will have to play a role in 'naming and shaming' those leaders who espouse corrupt values while encouraging those who behave with integrity.

African ruling parties must train up and bring in a new calibre of leadership at all levels. As well as being competent and honest, these candidates must operate with integrity. Malawi as it enters into party conventions period very soon, a system of merit must be brought into the internal party elections. Candidates must be judged on the basis of competence, moral character and genuine commitment to public service. Merit-based appointments to jobs in the public service, and in politics, will significantly contribute to reducing the patronage system of jobs for friends and relatives, which only works to foster an environment of corruption.

Sometimes, excessive administrative red tape for the most basic public services, such as getting a business license, encourages corruption. African governments should do more to make administrative processes simpler and more transparent, which will reduce the opportunities for corruption. It is important for African countries to professionalise their public services. Merit-based appointments to jobs in public services, regulators and enforcement agencies will go a long way towards reducing the patronage system of 'jobs for pals', which fosters the environment for corruption. More transparent methods of appointment should be introduced, including making outcomes of decisions publicly available.

FROM PAGE 1&lt;&lt;

# WILL AFRICAN COUNTRIES END CORRUPTION?



*Fraud and plundering of public funds are the battles that have to be won by all African countries, Hon. Richard Msowoya.*

The call was made by the Speaker of the Malawi National Assembly during the opening of the week long fifth executive committee of the African Organisations for Public Accounts Committee (AFROPAC) at Parliament Building in Lilongwe.

The meeting drew participants from ten African countries and was being held alongside the African Voice for Strategic planning workshop.

In an interview with Insight, the Speaker said that Africa has a very long way to go in order to win the

battle against fraud and abuse of public resources hence the need for PAC to play oversight roles that will yield positive results.

The speaker further said that fraud and plundering of public funds are the battles that have to be won by all African countries, we must move from mere checking of what has been misappropriated in the approved budgets to seriously scrutinising the huge sums of money that African countries are losing through illicit financial flows.

The United Nation economic commission for Africa says that every year, Africa loses between \$30 Billion and \$60 Billion due to illicit financial flows and these are factors that negatively affect the economic growth on the continent.

In his remarks, Afropac Chairperson Edward Dangoseh said the meeting has helped African countries in finding solutions to end corruption, fraud and any other related issues and enhance public finance management.

Malawi's Public Accounts Committee Chairperson Alekeni Menyani agreed with the speaker saying that public finance management is a very serious challenge which parliamentarians ought to do more than just oversight.

The ten countries Malawi hosted are Kenya, Liberia, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, Swaziland, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo and Uganda.

**...we must move from mere checking of what has been misappropriated in the approved budgets to seriously scrutinising the huge sums of money that African countries are losing through illicit financial flows.**

# NIRMA SOAP

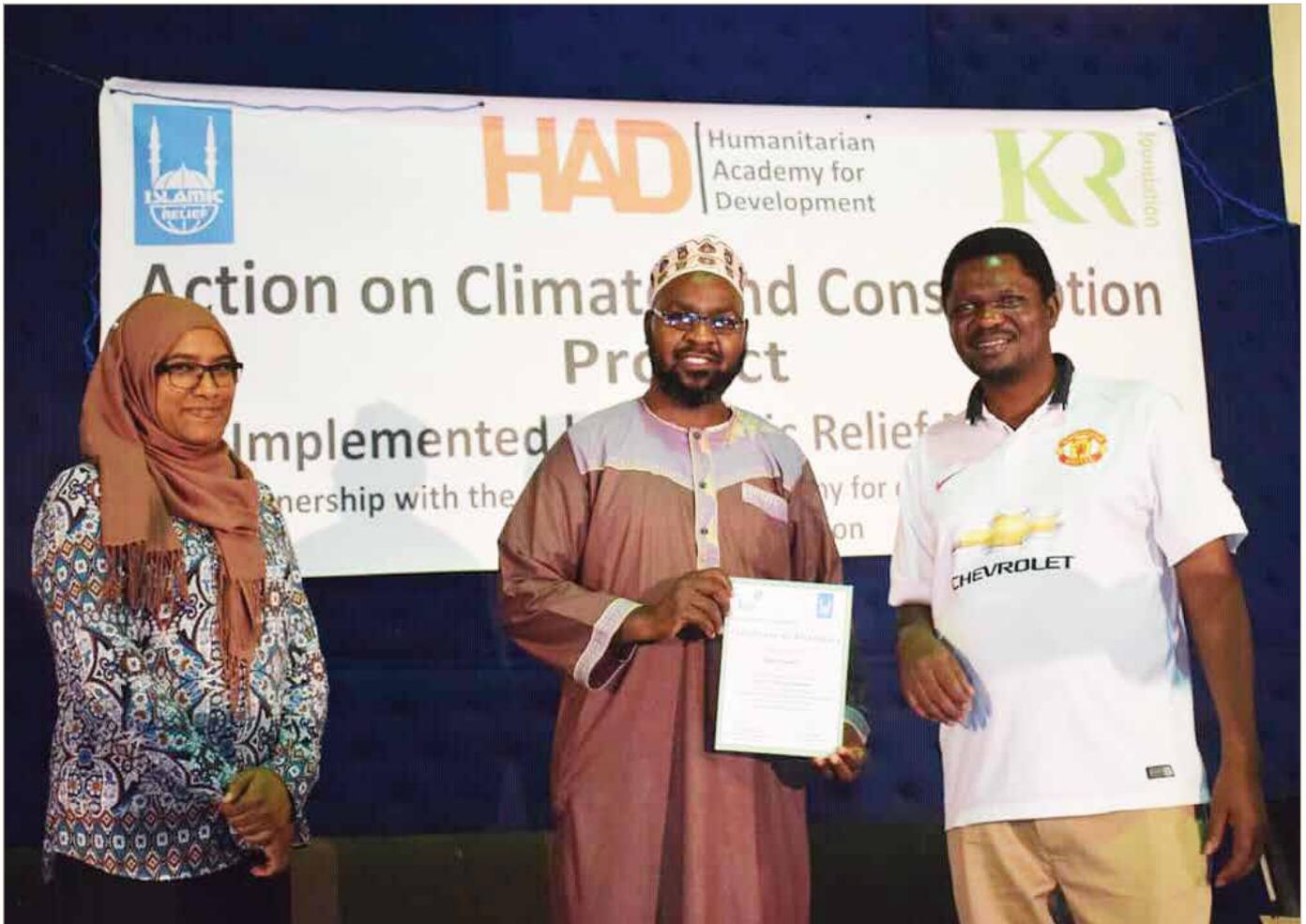
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# ISLAMIC RELIEF MALAWI

## Conducts Workshop on Climate Change

By Salimu Martin

**M**alawi is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change and this has affected agricultural production which is the backbone of the country's economy.

Climate change in the country has exacerbated by high population growth, rapid deforestation, and widespread soil erosion resulting in changing rainfall patterns, floods, droughts and prolonged dry spells.

Islamic Relief Malawi has so far engaged religious leaders and other people to civic educate them on how they can mitigate the climate change in the country and the world at large

Speaking in Blantyre during a two day workshop, Country Representative for Islamic Relief Malawi Sherifa Mia said the workshop will help people in the country to identify other alternatives in fighting against climate change

"Despite the fact that Malawi's greenhouse gas emissions are minuscule, climate change is hitting poor countries first as a result

people are suffering, especially women, children and the elderly. Climate change is exacerbating the inequalities that already exist for women in Malawi," Mia said.

According to Mia civic education plays an essential role in increasing adaptation and mitigation capacities of communities, and empower women and men to adopt sustainable lifestyles.

Mia further said that Climate change education is part of Islamic relief education for sustainable development program. It also makes

recommendations for Malawian government and society to encourage them to take action to adapt to the messages of climate change and make sure that women’s participation must be central to any of these efforts,” she added.

Speaking to Insight Magazine one of the participants Sheikh Jafali Kawinga said that the workshop is beneficial as it will help people in the country to find ways of mitigating the climate change.

He further asked fellow participants to spread the message obtained from the workshop to those who did not attend.

“Let me commend Islamic Relief Malawi for coming up with this initiative. This is a very important event to everyone as climate change has affected us and what I can ask my fellow participant is to implement lessons and skills we have acquired from this training. My appeal to Islamic relief is to organize more training workshops about climate change,” Kawinga said.

The workshop was held in partnership with Leadership for Environment and Development (LEAD)

Over 180 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa alone could die as a result of climate change by the end of the century. Unpredictable rainfall patterns, lower crop yields, soaring of food prices and dwindling natural resources are already causing increased human migration, tension and conflict.

**Despite the fact that Malawi’s greenhouse gas emissions are minuscule, climate change is hitting poor countries first as a result people are suffering, especially women, children and the elderly**



*Climate change workshop in progress.*



*A group photo of the participants “Ready to restore the environment.”*



The 'Sumud Freedom Camp' was erected last Friday by a coalition of Palestinian, Israeli, Jewish and other activists [Courtesy of Operation Dove/Elia]

# Israeli forces raided Sarura protest camp in Hebron Hills

Activists say one local man was wounded when soldiers entered the 'We are Sumud' camp and attempted to remove tents.

Israeli forces raided a protest camp in a village in the South Hebron Hills of the occupied West Bank, wounding at least one local resident, detaining one person, and attempting to destroy remaining tents erected by activists, organisers said.

The raid took place on Thursday morning in the village of Sarura, where activists and local landowners set up a protest camp last week to demand that families

who were evicted in the 1990s be allowed to return.

Without providing orders or documentation for why they were there, soldiers confiscated equipment used by activists and attempted to remove two shade structures, Issa Amro, the director of the Hebron-based Youth Against Settlements told Al Jazeera by phone.

"This morning soldiers arrived to confiscate tents and tools," Amro

said.

"[Soldiers] tried to destroy the last tent in the camp, but kids and activists were able to stop them."

Ashley Bohrer, an American-Jewish activist of the Center for Jewish Nonviolence, told Al Jazeera that soldiers used a "disproportionate amount of force against activists, kicking and shoving us to take the shade structure".

Video from Thursday's incident

show Israeli soldiers shoving local families and activists as they attempted to remove the remaining tent.

Activists are heard yelling, "there are children on this tent" as soldiers started to remove stakes that were supporting the shade structure.

Bohrer added that a 55-year-old Palestinian man, who owned a cave in the village, he was injured by Israeli forces and had to be treated by paramedics.

A Canadian-born man with the Center for Jewish Nonviolence was also detained, Amro said. The activist was later released.

**'We are Sumud'**

The protest camp was erected by a coalition of Palestinian, Israeli, Jewish and other organisations under the banner "We are Sumud" to call for "an end to the systematic displacement of Palestinians". Sumud means "steadfastness" in Arabic.

"The main goal is to bring the Palestinian families back so they could return to their homes," Amro said, emphasising the coalition's commitment to non-violent resistance.

At least 10 families from Sarura, who mostly lived in caves, were forcibly evicted in 1998 due to settler violence and a military firing zone set up by Israel, according to Amro and a statement by organisers of the demonstration.

The village is located in what the Oslo Accords designated as Area C, which makes up the 60 percent of the occupied West Bank that is under full Israeli control.

Israeli forces had previously raided the camp on Saturday, confiscating

tents, generators and tools used by the activists and local families, Amro said.

Sulaiman al-Khatib of Combatants for Peace was also present during Saturday's raid and told Al Jazeera that soldiers were "aggressive and did not show any papers".

The department of Israel's defence ministry in charge of the occupied territories, said in an email statement to Al Jazeera that the tent structures "were illegally built and therefore were caught [on Saturday] morning for a second time this week".

The statement added that "the land in question is a military firing zone, where entry is forbidden".

COGAT also said "protesters tried to create physical tension with forces... and forces acted in accordance to protocol".

Amro said after speaking to families from Sarura, they have decided to continue the protest and rebuild tents and restore caves.

"Nothing will stop us...We will not give up, we will keep fighting and resisting the occupation," Amro said.

"We will build Sarura again."

Al-Khatib agreed, saying that activists and local families know "this is a long, long journey, but we won't stop our Sumud".

This is happening when Israel wants a united Jerusalem as its eternal capital, and has been forcibly displacing Palestinians to take over the holy city entirely.



Sarura is located in 'Area C', under full Israeli control [Courtesy of Elie Avidor/Combatants for Peace]



**Activists are heard yelling, "there are children on this tent" as soldiers started to remove stakes that were supporting the shade structure.**



## Hunger Looms as Pests Threaten Staple Crops in Malawi

**A** dry spell and worsening pest infestation are threatening Malawi's staple maize crop. In addition to the pests, prospects for good rains have not been so certain in the year 2017/2018 growing season resulting into hunger looming across the country.

Malawi has periodically been hit by flooding which has affected people's lives including livestock as country relies heavily on rain-fed agriculture and most of its maize is grown on small plots by subsistence farmers in their respective home areas.

The current dry spell has been exacerbated by an outbreak of crop-munching fall armyworms, a pest from Latin America that first threatened African crops late in 2016 and has repeated in this year 2018. The armyworms have caused a

national disaster in December after it was discovered that they had spread to 20 of Malawi's 28 districts.

According to Albert Changaya, a senior official in the department of agriculture says that the armyworm



*Nearly 2 million people are at risk of food shortages because of the effects of armyworms and drought in Malawi, Hon Joseph Mwanamvekha.*

infestation had spread from an initial 35,000 hectares to 206,000 hectares of maize.

Malawi's maize production in the 2016/17 farming season rose a third to 3.2 million tonnes. The surplus harvest led to maize prices falling and contributed to lower inflation as food accounts for 50.1 percent of Malawi's CPI (consumer price inflation) basket.

The drought also brings the second consecutive harvest failure which has yet to recover from last year's severe flooding. In most local markets maize prices have gone high due to the drought.

Agriculture Minister Joseph Mwanamvekha said earlier this month that nearly 2 million people are at risk of food shortages because of the effects of armyworms and drought in Malawi.



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# MALAWI CHOLERA CLAIMS MORE LIVES

By Salimu Martin

**M**alawi is still battling with a cholera attack that began when rainy season started in November this year. So far the disease has killed 25 people, and more than 693 others have been hospitalised across the country's hospitals.

Cholera is an acute diarrhoea infection which is caused by consuming contaminated food and water. In Malawi most of the people that are affected are children and adults, and if the disease is left untreated it can kill within hours. The number has risen so fast since first week of February when it was 420 from all the affected districts of Karonga, Nkhata-Bay, Salima, Dedza, Lilongwe, Blantyre, Dowa and Likoma.

Confirming the death toll, Ministry of Health spokesperson Joshua Malango said that so far my Ministry has registered the loss of 17 lives from all the districts. Malango however advised people to rush with their patients to hospital rather than wasting their time with witchcrafts suspicions.

Malango further said that "our health workers have been advised to give priority to Cholera cases as we also advise Malawians to take caution on the occurrence which is believed to have been triggered by poor hygiene among residents especially those who leave in rural areas."

The most areas hit by the disease are those along the lakeshore because they use water directly from the lake, while others who are close to the rivers, they use water from the rivers and some are even using wells that

are not covered.

Cholera Expert from Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital in Blantyre said that "We are putting measures to ensure the outbreak does not spread as you are aware that government has embarked on a nationwide campaign to remind people to wash their hands with soap, especially after using the toilet and before eating any food and to boil their drinking water. Apart from such campaigns, Government is also encouraging people to go for vaccines treatment while at the same time it is distributing chlorine and other chemicals to treat drinking water.

Previously Malawi had suffered its worst cholera outbreak in 2009, when 82 people died and more than 3,000 people were infected across the country.

***...our health workers have been advised to give priority to Cholera cases as we also advise Malawians to take caution on the occurrence which is believed to have been triggered by poor hygiene among residents***

# UNITY KEY TO DEVELOPMENT

## Saudi Arabian Muslim Scholar Advises Sheikhs in Malawi

By Maulana Lehman

**A** visiting Saudi Arabia Muslim scholar Dr Muhammad Mukhtar has advised sheikhs in the country to maintain peace and unity currently prevailing in the country among Muslims and plan meaningful programmes and strategies to quicken the pace of development in their traditional areas.

Dr Mukhtar said it is the responsibility of the citizens to develop Islam so that it can catch up with other communities that were fast developing in reference to the teaching of Qur'an 3:103 "And hold fast all together to the rope of Allah and never be divided."

Throughout his presentation the renowned sheikh focused much on unity and love among Muslim scholars in the country as key to development.

All historical experiences and authentic sources of Islam urge Muslims to establish unity, develop close ties and improve cooperation amongst Muslim themselves

The cooperation that the Muslims will undertake in economic and political areas is the most significant foundation which will save them from the crises that they are experiencing.

For that reason, all Muslim individuals, communities, associations or nations,

should make unity their goal, and they should reject everything which might harm this unity.

It is known that while two strong men are wrestling each other, one small child could beat both of them. If two mountains were in balance in two sides of a scale, a little pebble could disrupt the balance and push one up and the other down.

Dr Mukhtar who was accompanied by a South African Dr Ismail Bilal who also focused much on how Malawians can borrow a leaf from South Africa which has successfully managed to establish a special committee that is looking after sheikhs who are said to be getting low salaries, this will help in ensuring that Malawi is not losing its

learned sheikhs who always leave the country for greener pastures.

According to Dr Bilal his organisation has a list of 70,000 members who are directly benefiting through their initiative which among other things is paying an extra money to sheikhs working in the rural areas apart from the salaries they receive from their respective employers.

The one day event was organized by a Forum for Muslim Graduates from Islamic Universities across the country under the theme Fiqh-ul E'atilah at Iqra Propagation Centre in Blantyre.



*"Sheikhs do not earn enough, therefore there is a need to subsidise their salaries," Dr Ismail Bilal*

**All historical experiences and authentic sources of Islam urge Muslims to establish unity, develop close ties and improve cooperation amongst Muslim themselves**

# Malawi Worsens on Corruption Index



**C**orruption poses a serious challenge in the development of every country so as Malawi. High level political corruption impedes service delivery, patronage and nepotism that exacerbate inequality and poverty in society.

Corruption is seen to be particularly severe in the police, registry and permit services, customs, and the judiciary. There are also reports of widespread corruption and extortion by public offices.

The 2017 Corruption Perception Index (CPI) by Transparency International shows that the country has gone down two places from 120 in 2016 to 122 in 2017.

Announcing the CPI in Lilongwe Integrity Platform (IP) a local organization which is affiliated to Transparency International expressed concern over the Malawi's stagnation in corruption.

Experts have currently commented on the development saying this will threaten foreign and local investors.

University of Malawi's Chancellor College-based economist Ben Kalua said Malawi is on the verge of losing potential investors if it does not step up its efforts in fighting against corruption.

Corruption in public offices has also been proved through the recent incident as the chief secretary to the government Lloyd Muhara who revealed that most computers that the government ministries, departments and other agencies receive through donation usually go missing.

Muhara said this in Lilongwe after receiving 10 laptops and 10 computers from the Egyptian Agency of Partnerships and Development.

"I am aware that over the years government ministries, departments and agencies have been receiving computer equipments through donations as part of project activities

and through local procurement," said Muhara.

It is now four years since Malawi was rocked by its biggest government corruption scandal in history. The systematic looting of public coffers by civil servants, private contractors and politicians saw them steal 31 Million USD from government coffers.

It is estimated that about 35% of government funds have been stolen over the past decade. The University of Malawi's political analyst Blessings Chinsinga recently pointed out that:

*... efforts to root out corruption do not stick because the existing institutional milieu makes it almost impossible to introduce changes that can effectively stamp out corruption.*

Corruption has cost Malawi in recent years with the massive plunder of public resources (Cash-gate) exposed in 2013 leading donors to pull out direct budgetary aid to government.

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