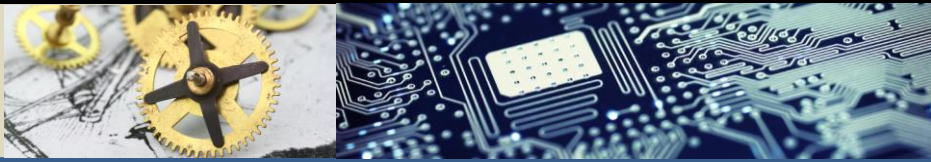


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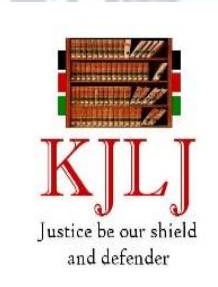
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Politics in nations all over involve confrontation; which is normal and okay within one's constitutional right to hold an opinion. This right however, has been misused. Political life especially in Kenya has been, and continues to be a notorious playhouse of the insensitive and the insincere group and one which is characterized by criminally induced actions. Accepting and respecting basic rights and civil liberties of people or groups whose outlooks differ from one's own is not typical in the political setting.

In the light of the recent incident in Kibera, Have politics in Kenya come to such a low that to hit the government, people must be incited to destroy their own? Why do we let ourselves accede to wishes of politicians who offer measly sums in the name of handouts? When are we going to break free from the leash around our necks and being let out like vicious dogs to attack people who are doing nothing but to help us?

Commonalities have time and again been used to propagate vendetta missions which see them loose the most, while their masters revel in their castles and luxurious vacations abroad. My heart breaks for those patients who looked forward to having clinics near their homes, those who were delighted to finally walk freely at night.

Let us develop our minds, and look beyond variations in political views; to handle conflicting issues in a pragmatic way. At the end of the day, the poor are the only ones who feel the blunt and pain of each blow in any political upsurge.

It was not long ago that the country was on fire with unthinkable loss of property and lives, yet we keep making the same mistakes. Talk of cutting off your nose to spite someone else's face! Will Kenyans ever learn?

Regards,

Stacy Jayo

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EU: ENAR CALLS ON EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT TO ADDRESS ANTI-SEMITISM AND ISLAM PHOBIA IN EUROPE



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European Network Against Racism (ENAR) Chair Sarah Isal made the following statement at a hearing organized by the European Parliament's Civil Liberties Committee on Anti-Semitism, Islam phobia and Hate Speech. The hearing took place at the European Parliament on 29th June.

Anti-Semitism is deeply rooted in Europe, as its resurgence after the Holocaust proved. It is with great concern that we have seen a general increase over the last years. The Community Security Trust (CST) in the UK reported an increase of 60% of violence committed against Jews in the EU between 2008 and 2014. According to the FRA survey, Jews in Europe are increasingly afraid of being verbally harassed (46%) or physically attacked (33%). In Belgium, the equality body reports that complaints received for anti-Semitic incidents have increased from 83 in 2013 to 130 in 2014 (+56%).

In France, a 2013 report from the French National Human Rights Institution reveals that anti-Semitism is not always understood properly, is often seen either as a phenomenon of the past or as isolated acts from either violent extremists or neo-Nazi groups, but is rarely seen as a structural phenomenon.

The extent of anti-Semitism in Hungary came to the forefront when, in November 2012 a Jobbik MP called in the Hungarian Parliament for a list of Jewish civil servants, after which there was no immediate outcry from other government officials. Similarly in Greece, extremely anti-Semitic rhetoric and literature have been associated with elected members of the Golden Dawn party. Understanding the complexity in which anti-Semitism manifests itself is key in combatting it. For instance, Hungary and Greece feature high levels of indigenous anti-Semitism and neo-Nazi activity, but lower levels of physical violence compared to countries such as France and Belgium in which anti-Semitism is much less socially acceptable, but violence is more common.

Bullying and prejudice at school are frequent for Jewish children. In Hungary, there are increasing reports of parents moving their child to Jewish schools following incidents in mainstream education. Jewish children also experience discrimination or segregation in education.

There has also been a worrying increase of Islam phobic incidents over the last years.

In France, the number of attacks against Muslims was multiplied by 6 following the Paris attacks compared to the same period in 2014, according to the Collective against Islam phobia in France (CCIF). In Sweden, attacks on mosques have increased. In Italy, official Islam phobic reactions including those by the Veneto educational authorities are frequent.

Muslim women are particularly targeted by violence. Because public debates focus on Muslim women and the wearing of the headscarf, veiled women are reduced to their religious signs in the view of many and are thus becoming privileged targets of Islam phobia.

ENAR shadow reports and FRA reports also highlighted that the heightened security context since the events of 11 September 2001 has contributed to experiences of direct and indirect discrimination by ethnic and religious minorities in Europe. In particular Muslim communities, and those perceived as belonging to Muslim communities, have been amongst the most vulnerable, at times victims of backlash from wider society after terrorist attacks and then victims of policy responses to these attacks.

Muslim people tend to experience the most severe labour market discrimination, as evidenced ENAR Shadow Reports. Muslims, and in particular Muslim women, also face discrimination due to restrictions to the right of wearing religious symbols in national laws and practices, for example in France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Spain.

Anti-Semitism and Islam phobia are the products of different histories and ideologies; and they cover diverse realities and types of manifestations which are specific to each.

However, anti-Semitism and Islam phobia are both specific forms of discrimination and racism in which attitudes; behavior, institutional patterns and policies reject, exclude, vilify, or deny equal treatment to people, based on their real or perceived Jewish or Muslim background. They have the same concrete implications on the physical, psychological or financial situation of individuals.

Despite the EU and national equality legislations, the specific direct and structural discrimination faced by Jews and Muslims imply that existing legal instruments and policy measures are not enough to ensure equality of outcome.

The response to anti-Semitism and Muslim hatred should therefore deal with these common and separate factors. ENAR calls the LIBE committee to include in its resolution (or resolutions) on anti-Semitism and Islam phobia that the European Commission should ask Member States to adopt specific national strategies with concrete policy goals, on the model of the National Roma Integration Strategies, to address anti-Semitism on the one hand, and Islam phobia on the other.

Policy goals should be specific to each national context and address each fields of life, in particular employment and education.

History has shown time again that there is a connection between hate speech and hate crime. Hate speech, creates a climate in which perpetrators of racist violence feel that the society condone their behavior so it is imperative that hate speech should be addressed. In some cases, and in the respect of international human rights law, they should even result in criminal proceedings.

We also hope that racist, anti-Semitic and Islam phobic violence feature in the European commission bilateral talks with member States on the enforcement of the EU's Framework Decision on combating racism and xenophobia.

There are many more issues that should be addressed, and we hope there will be in the context of the panel discussions. In particular in terms of larger context, we should keep in mind that to prevent discrimination and violence, more long-term social investment in education, housing, employment and health policies , as well as in intercultural dialogue and social cohesion programs, are crucial to stop the massive disenfranchisement of sizeable parts of the population, which nurtures violent extremism.

It is important to tackle these forms of racism and hatred - as well as anti-Gypsyism and Afro phobia - jointly, so as to show all forms of racism and hatred are of concern to all, and are equally important to address. Now is time for cooperation and alliance building to keep in mind the greater cause, beyond attempts from some to pit communities against one another. In the context of the creation of a new group in this house which gathers those who would like to promote racist, xenophobic, Islam phobic or anti-Semitic ideas, policies and practices, this is a matter of urgency.

View all "Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief" newsletters:

<http://hrwf.eu/newsletters/intolerance-and-discrimination-based-on-religion-or-belief/>

POLITICALLY CORRECT: AN OPEN LETTER TO MR. PRESIDENT

NELSON OTIENO OKEYO

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‘It is good but not prudent to undergo a drastic digital metamorphosis at this embryonic stage of achieving our millennium development goal, which is the Vision 2030.’

So far so good, But look, I have a flash back to the campaign period. Apart from the fact that it was an expensive one involving competitive use of jets, it was also full of several promises that critical minds may be interested in evaluating in terms of their achievement. My evaluation today is not inclined based on my political thoughts and opinions which are strong and reasonable anyway. A 24 hour economy was one of the leading promises. Many did not understand it but a few intellectuals did, the bright ones knew its possibility was near to impossibility. When looking at the recent notices barring the PSV Vehicles from travelling at night, one is left to conclude that this was just a mere slice hope and the governing coalition did not intend to implement it, leave alone meaning what they promised. How can a 24 hour economy run with the transport industry inactive for a half of the imaginative 24 hours? The Laptop project, a rather emotive one though not like the LAPPSET and Standard Gauge Railway project. Most of us will be irrational here, but look; I have said a countless times that no African country can survive economically for long without the support from the West, the East remaining constant. Call it my theory I will not mind. It is good but not prudent to undergo a drastic digital metamorphosis at this embryonic stage of achieving our millennium development goal that is the Vision 2030. What Kenya need as long as the education is concerned is a proper curriculum that will make good boys out of men and solve the problem of unemployment in Kenya. That is when the laptop project can be effective to broaden the workforce in an already established job market. A logical evaluation has it all, when a student misbehaves in school, the teacher asks him if that is what they are taught at home and the same applies when a student misbehaves at home where parents ironically asks whether that is what they are taught at school. In the end we bring up students very excellent in passing exams but not valuable in our society. Mr. President, you have failed me in this, but there is still some time, work on modalities to improve the curriculum and let the laptop project smoothly come later. Again, Constitutional implementation is famous ringtone from CIC corner of the capital city. It is a sent message that has not been delivered to the Mr. President, No, the presidency to be precise because the president and the advisors are jointly to blame. This is perhaps the greatest undoing for the Jubilee government since the constitution is the bedrock upon which the success of this dear country pegs. The rising cases of disregard to court decisions, which are also among the sources of law, the controversial appointment of political rejects and fellow kinsmen to several key portfolios in the country is just is just an example of the fragrance

in the breach of the rule of law and to a greater extent the inconsistency with the jubilee manifesto of digital control of issues on the matter of National Cohesion. Kudos Mr. President. But it seems some English words are losing their meaning in Kenya, perhaps because Kenya is no longer dating the West. In my opinion, the word national cohesion does not mean the union between the two tribes that form the ruling coalition by pretending to be healing the unhealed wounds of the 2007 post-election violence. But it is bringing together of all the tribes and creating an inhabitable atmosphere of nationhood, something that am ashamed to say has not been achieved, despite desperate attempts being put in place. Furthermore, it's not all about healing the 2007 wounds. Remember the Wagalla massacre and what has to be done after the Westgate attack. May be the advisors misled you to concentrate on healing the 2007 wounds because of the ICC issue at hand. They forgot to remind you Mr. President that you made a solemn assurance less than a year ago that this was a personal matter and therefore it should not be allowed in any manner whatsoever to influence the policy decisions that affect every Kenyan.



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