

## WHO WILL TALK FOR KENYANS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS?

Since the December 27th announcement of the disputed presidential elections, we have been held hostage in our own country. We all came out in large numbers to vote for a better and more prosperous Kenya for all. Sorry, for our kinsmen to the most. This was not to be and we are now at level zero and our votes no longer matter. The only thing that matters is which politician will get what, and how much he will get for his tribe and so forth.

The mediation talks gave us hope that a selfless resolution was forthcoming. However a stalemate hangs on the balance between the two camps (PNU & ODM). Our leaders have narrowed the agenda to “ *either we get it all, share it all or destroy it all*”. As they thump their chests on their stand, the rest of Kenyan are kept busy burying their dead, nursing their injured and providing for their displaced people. They are too busy to pay attention to what is going on in the so-called negotiation for *peace* and *justice*.

No wonder the only voice heard is that of foreigners whom leaders see as either spoilers or supporters to their *scramble for Kenya* depending on which camp one is in. In their cat and mouse game, our politicians have given the foreigners an opportunity to join in the *scramble for Kenya* to protect their interests.

We are asking ourselves where we come in the mediation talks as ordinary Kenyans. Do our leaders ever think about us? Is the crisis in Kenya about leadership powers that can be solved by only creating and sharing powerful positions? Is it about other tribes who pollute our environment by their sheer presence and that the only solution is evicting and killing them? Or is it about distribution of resources that can be solved by just auctioning the country and sharing the returns? Who of the scrambling groups have these answers for us? Foreigners or our own leaders?

Fellow Kenyans we must look deeper into the underlying causes of our sorry state. Like one united family, we must all be involved and be objective about issues. Politicians can only prescribe to us a political dose, lawyers a legal dose and business and religious communities their own dose. It is true that we need a combined force comprising all these groups in order to bring lasting healing to our Nation, discharging it from the ICU.

We need to master:

- How to quarrel without fighting
- How to fight without hurting
- How to hurt without killing
- How to resolve differences without hating
- How to work together kill our common enemies;  
poverty and its relatives

Do we really feel a sense of ownership of our beloved nation as citizens? Is it according to the type or size of property one owns? No, foreigners own more than most of us. What then is my share of Kenya? Is it a common heritage and history, or is it my right and privileges as a citizen? Hasn't it already been take from our own hands as we watch? What remains of us if our votes are invalidated by our own leaders and foreigners?

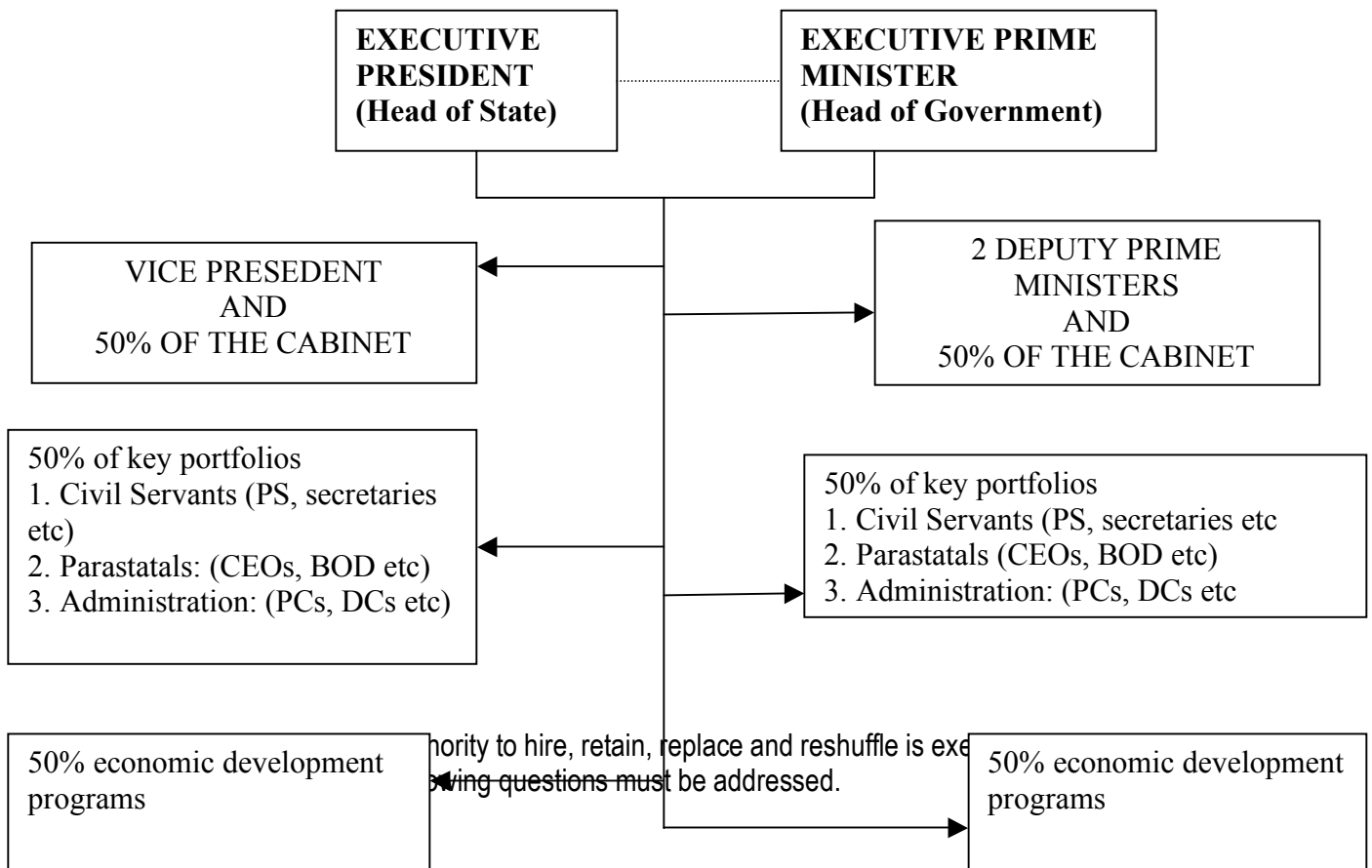
How many Kenyans can say “Kenya is my land, my country”? Some countries have policies that ensure locals have a major share of businesses and that they play a key role in the exploitation and ownership of their resources. Do the local people of Kisumu have any sense of ownership of some of the businesses there? Are the local people of Nyeri aware of the benefits that accrue to them from those from other tribes working there?

How come we seem to adore foreigners and therefore create incentives for them to invest while we destroy investments of our own people simply because they are not from our tribe?

Do we need policies that guide our relationships as a nation when we happen to be in areas perceived not to be our indigenous homes? Like leasing rather than buying land from locals, partnership in businesses etc. Will these bring about a sense of interdependent economic relationships?

We must critique each of the power sharing models presented to us from a national perspective and not simply embrace them because they come from our parties. Remember none of these parties is older than 5 years and I bet none will be there in 5 years time. **Kenya is not a party; it is a NATION!**

Below is the ODM power sharing model drawn from a report as presented on page 6 of the Daily Nation of Tuesday February 19, 2008: “ODM happy with talks progress”.



- Will there be 2 cabinet meetings shared by their respective executives?
- Who will carry out the duty of the opposition? Are we likely to have two opposing yet equal authorities by all measures?
- What will happen when the report of the review to the disputed presidential elections as agreed by the teams comes out? Will the losing side resign from office? What if it doesn't?
- Suppose there is a disagreement and a fall out, are we likely to geographically part ways as a nation on equal 50 50 proportions? Are we likely to have Kenya Original or New Kenya as it happens in parties?
- Since our constitution's fundamentals have no provision in the proposed model above and the minimum reforms cannot address this, how are we to going manage it? Are we likely to use the one delivered to as by German?
- How is this type of system going to impact on us as ordinary Kenyan citizens? Are we likely to have allegiance to both executives or at liberty to choose?
- Will it be win-win for PNU and ODM and win- win- lose for the 2 parties and the voters?
- Will the role of democracy where the majority has their way and the few are heard be violated? If so, what precedent will this set for our nation?
- How will this model promote our national unity? Are we likely to be two camps in one nation?

Please give solutions to Kenyan. What is PNU model? Is it part of the problem or solution?

In my view, the negotiators are right by agreeing there are problems that must be addressed by Kenyans and for Kenya. They have outlined restoration of peace and resettlement agendas for Kenyan as key. Thank you.

Remember only Kenyans can give lasting political solutions through the ballot and this right must be left intact. Disrespect or discard this right at your own peril! Short-term quick fixings will make things worse, aggravating the already bad situation. The easiest and sustainable way will be to set long-term all-inclusive constitutional agenda and consult the Kenyan citizens at the grassroots who have more confidence in civil society organizations than political parties when it comes to real issues that affect them.

ODM, not the government, can safeguard our hopes and aspirations as Kenyans by keeping the government on its toes from the opposition benches. With their majority numbers in the august house, they can deliver more for Kenya from opposition benches than being part of a monster of a nation with two HEADS. Remember decisions of yesterday made the Kenya we have today and the Kenya of tomorrow will be shaped by the decisions we make today!

Wario Chege