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MISSION STATEMENT

The Africa Faith and Justice Network, inspired by the Gospel and informed by Catholic Social Teaching, seeks to educate and advocate for just relations with Africa and to work in partnership with African peoples as they engage in the struggle for justice, peace, and the integrity of creation.

A BRIEF HISTORY

Moved to action by their personal experiences in Africa, three Catholic missionary congregations namely the Missionaries of Africa, the Congregation of the Holy Spirit (Spiritains), and the Society of African Missions, founded the Africa Faith and Justice Network (AFJN) in 1983 to transform United States policy towards Africa and her people. Since that time, membership has grown and remains committed in faith to advocate in Washington, DC for U.S. relations with Africa that foster justice and peace, and to educate the public across the United States on the truth about Africa.

President Magufuli: A Good Example of Leadership and Good Governance in Africa

*Nampenda Rais wangu,
Rais anaipenda Nchi
yangu.*



Wewe Je?



Photo Credit: John Shabani. Source: <https://johnshabani.blogspot.com>

The Republic of Tanzania held presidential elections in October 2015. Dr. John Pombe Magufuli carried 58% of the votes and thus was sworn in as president on November 5th 2015. President John Pombe Joseph Magufuli has since been declared the best President in the World by the United Nations Economic & Social Council during their annual review which was published on August 12, 2016.

He previously held the post of Minister of Works where he earned the nickname “bulldozer” for steering the program to build good roads. He was known to be a no-nonsense, results-driven politician and displayed great integrity by not giving in to multiple opportunities to make riches while he held this position.

Dr. Magufuli’s election has turned Tanzania into a rising star in Africa with a very healthy growth rate. Born in extreme poverty, he promised that as presi-

dent, he would focus on fighting poverty, corruption and wasteful spending, which are problems that continue to plague many African nations. His policies also aim to enable regional trade, capitalize on the nation's natural resources and facilitate increased industrialization.

From the first day in office, he has been keeping his campaign promises. For Tanzania's Independence Day in 2015, he cancelled all celebrations and all the extravagant expenses government traditionally splurged out. Instead of spending money on celebrations that would promptly have been forgotten the next day, he ordered a rare clean-up exercise in a bid to tackle the cholera outbreak that had spread in some parts of the country killing more than 200 people. And he didn't just order it; he enthusiastically joined in by cleaning up the surroundings of the state house. This caused thousands of Tanzanians to come out and join in on the clean-up as well.

More importantly, he took drastic measures to boost government coffers, which pleased the masses but upset the establishment. He slashed the budget for the usually opulent opening of parliament by almost 90% and demanded that the money saved be spent on purchasing hospital beds and on roadwork. He didn't attend the ceremony by plane as it was customarily done by his predecessors, he drove all the way (a little less than eight hours drive from Dar es Salaam to Dodoma). He reduced the size of the presidential convoy, as well as the size of the presidential delegation that travels with him.

A month after taking office, he finally announced his cabinet made up of 19 ministries. It had 11 fewer ministries than the previous government; some were merged to save money. He publicly warned those selected as ministers and other government officials that he would not tolerate corruption, laziness or excessive bureaucracy. He told them they should expect nothing more than to work tirelessly to serve the people of the country alongside him. A government post no longer means a life of ease, privilege and the opportunity to make money. It means hard work, motivated by nothing more than a fierce desire to serve the public which is what politicians routinely promised but do not deliver on.

He put a stop to the public procurement of goods and services at inflated costs. He declared that anyone found procuring public goods or services on inflated prices will be fired. He ordered an immediate ban on foreign travels by public servants on his third day in office and put a stop to the purchase of first-class tickets. He stated that all tasks that necessitated government officials to travel abroad will now be done by the country's high commissioners and ambassadors abroad. As an example, he once trimmed down a delegation of 50 set to tour Commonwealth countries to just four. And The ban on foreign travel helped the government save at least \$429.5 million between November 2015 and November 2016.

He decreed that henceforth, government meetings would be held in state buildings rather than in expensive hotels. He called on all public institutions to significantly cut expenditure on refreshments during meetings. Dr. Magufuli decried "unnecessary heavy refreshments" being offered at meetings and directed that lunch be served only "in very rare and exceptional circumstances" where a meeting that starts in the morning is expected to continue into the evening. He also issued a directive for unnecessary physical meetings to be stopped and for public servants to conduct conference calls instead. This is to cut unnecessary costs that the government incurred from meetings and conferences.

Dr. Magufuli has focused on revenue collection which has helped the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) go from raising 900 billion Shillings monthly to more than 1.8 trillion Shillings. Recently, the Tanzanian government has asked Acacia Mining, a subsidiary of the world's largest gold mining company Barrick Gold, to pay approximately \$190 billion in revised taxes, interest and fines. This latest development is a game changer in a dispute that pits mining companies against presi-

dent John Magufuli's government which introduced a new mining legislation fairer to Tanzanians. He made education free for children whose parents couldn't afford it. A promise he made during his election campaign. He also directed relevant authorities to sort and resolve the problems stopping the release of education loans.

In the spirit of fighting incompetence, laziness and corruption, he had warned everybody to take notice of what he had said in terms of delivery, efficiency and honesty. No more warnings were issued. On Law Day (February 4, 2016), President Magufuli called upon the Chief Justice to quickly embark on the establishment of a Special High Court to swiftly deal with cases of corruption.

Over his first three months in office, he fired more than 150 senior civil servants among which were top officials of the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) and Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA), the director of the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB), the Commissioner General of the Immigration Services Department, the Managing Director of Reli Assets Holding (RAHCO), and the Director General of Tanzania Civil Aviation Authority. Most civil servants were fired in a dramatic fashion without mentioning their wrongdoing, and some of them decided to sue the government in court.

Over 10,000 ghost workers were also rooted from various government departments. A nationwide fraud audit had discovered that \$2million a month was going to pay the non-existent workers. Moreover, an investigation into the use of forged certificates among government employees led to the firing of more than 10,000 civil servants. Over 400,000 academic certificates were verified. The public servants found to have fake certificates were ordered to resign voluntarily or else they would face prosecution for the crime, which is punishable for up to seven years in jail. President Magufuli made surprise raids at government offices to see for himself who was at their desks, who was absent and who had used the well-worn trick of leaving their jackets on the chairs to indicate they had just stepped out for a moment when in fact they were gone weeks.

He went to the federal hospital, the Muhimbili National Hospital (MNH), unannounced and made sure to visit all the wards, including those kept from high profile visitors like himself. He discovered the hospital in a deplorable state, with key diagnostic equipment such as the CT-Scan and MRI not working. Patients who needed to undergo testing had to pay exorbitant fees for the services at private hospitals. He fired the director and the hospital board and ordered that the equipment that was working be repaired or replaced within two weeks, otherwise the newly appointed director will also be fired. New CT-Scan and MRI machines were installed in three days!

In his first 100 days in office President Magufuli also become an internet sensation. The hashtag #WhatWouldMagufuliDo became a Twitter obsession not only among social media users in Africa, but also globally. It was about people using the hashtag to post funny creative pictures that were inspired by the President's war on waste and inefficiency. People used it to post pictures applying Magufuli's values to their daily lives by saving money in ridiculous ways. For instance, there were photos of a bride and bridegroom cutting a loaf of bread instead of a cake with words that read like "I wanted to buy a wedding cake but thought #WhatWouldMagufuliDo?" or another one eating plain rice with a picture of a chicken leg arguing, "I wanted to buy myself chicken to go with this rice for lunch, but I asked myself #WhatWouldMagufuliDo?"

The example that Magufuli has set is what Africa needs now. Additionally, Tanzania has been an example in terms of democracy on the African continent, specifically with presidential term limits.

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