

## Statement on Presidential Debates

Monday October 12, 2015

In 2015, there have been a number of efforts and attempts by various media and civil society organisations to hold debates for candidates for the post of President of the United Republic of Tanzania. These attempts have made use of different strategies and approaches to respond to the strong desire among citizens for presidential debates.

The CEO Roundtable, Tanzania Media Foundation, Tanzania Women's Media Association and Twaweza have come together to continue this work and ensure that presidential debates are held this year.

The debate will provide a historic opportunity for citizens to ask questions directly to those who seek to represent and govern them. The debate also provides a platform for presidential candidates to lay out their agendas for the country in an interactive environment. We call on all citizens to submit questions on the issues that matter most to them and to assess which candidate can really represent them and address their concerns. We invite citizens to submit their questions to presidential candidates by Friday 16 October. Questions can be submitted by email, SMS, on social media or directly to the offices of any of the coalition partners.

We have invited those political parties that are fielding candidates for both the Zanzibar presidency and the Union presidency, as well as fielding candidates in at least 55 constituencies across Tanzania, to participate in the debate through their official presidential candidates.

The following parties have confirmed participation so far: Alliance for Democratic Change (ADC), Alliance for Change and Transparency – Wazalendo (ACT-Wazalendo) and Chama cha Ukombozi wa Umma (CHAUMMA).

We also call on all invited political parties to use this historic opportunity to show citizens that they are ready and willing to engage in a direct dialogue with the electorate and to demonstrate that their government will stand side by side with citizens.

The debate is scheduled for Sunday 18 October and preparations are ongoing. We are also continuing to reach out to the remaining parties to confirm their participation in this historic event. Thus far letters have been sent to all parties and attempts made to confirm their participation at the earliest opportunity.

We will meet party representatives on Thursday October 15 to agree the rules and regulations for the debate on Thursday 15 October. A press conference to announce these rules to citizens and observers will be held on Friday 16 October.

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### Notes to editors

1. To submit questions, citizens are invited to post use Twitter, Facebook or email to communicate directly with any of the members of the coalition, or to use the #Mkikimkiki on Twitter, or the Mkikimkiki2015 Facebook page, or to email [info@mkikimkiki.com](mailto:info@mkikimkiki.com).

2. This coalition has come together to harmonise and expand efforts to ensure that presidential debates are held in 2015. The coalition's members include:

- a. The CEO Roundtable is a forum through which industry leaders within the Tanzanian private sector can constructively engage with government, its development partners and other stakeholders with a view to creating a more conducive environment for business to prosper and for the country to develop.
- b. Tanzania Media Women's Association is a network of female media personnel which work on improving the lives of women and ensuring their participation in community and political leadership.
- c. Tanzania Media Foundation works to strengthen the media in Tanzania in order to increase accountability and improve governance, by enabling investigative and public interest journalism and facilitating critical reflection and learning.
- d. Twaweza works on enabling children to learn, citizens to exercise agency and governments to be more open and responsive in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda.