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TOPIC:

**GOOD GOVERNANCE: The role of civil society in ensuring
free and fair elections.**

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INTRODUCTION

Elections remain central to broader strategies for promoting democracy. First, competitive elections can catalyze profound political change in a society. Elections in societies in transition or crisis can be seminal events that, if successful, not only confer legitimacy on governments but also can profoundly influence institutions, power arrangements, and citizens' expectations. Secondly, elections provide significant new opportunities for citizen involvement in public affairs. They are an opportunity to engage civic organizations and citizens in democratic politics through voter education, election monitoring, policy research and advocacy. They can provide an avenue for the participation of women, minorities, and disadvantaged groups, who traditionally have had less access to politics and governance. Finally, competitive election offer means of establishing accountability channeling political competition, and determining leadership succession'.¹

What is civil society?

¹ Article by Eric Bjornlund, Free And Fair Elections, Democracy International. pg 1

It has been submitted that ‘for a nation or government to organize free and fair elections, certain institutional mechanisms should be in place.’² One of such institutions is the civil society which is basically defined as follows.

*“Civil society is defined here as including community-based organizations, traditional leaders, implementing NGOs, unions, business associations, religious organizations, independent media student groups, cooperatives, and other associational groupings “.*³

It is submitted that in essence the term civil society, denotes an umbrella of non governmental institutions which have the common role of advocacy to the society, save in different platforms according to their themes. It has been reported that in South Africa there could be over 100,000 civil society organisations⁴, however, for purposes of this paper, I am going to refer to the Ugandan faith-based organisation and refer to their letter of the 11th June 2010, addressing General Elections in Uganda. The gist of the letter is guidance to conduct to different civil societies on their upcoming elections then.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN ENSURING FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS?

This paper deals with a subject which is of global significance. It encapsulates two major words which undoubtedly compliment each other –“free” and “fair”. While on the other hand, it is my perspective that free and fair elections are an illusion in the political arena. In order to articulate my task effectively, let me first examine the meaning of “free and fair” elections, secondly, establish the different criteria for determining the international or universal standards to be met by the stakeholders in an endeavor to comply with the “principle of free and fairness of elections. Thirdly, the role of civil society in the management of free and fair

² <http://www.pmbazuka.org/en/category/features/66126> at pg 10/8/2010

³ An Evaluation of Malian Society’s role in governance. Abdou Toqola, African Development Bank, and Dan Gerber, RTI International March 2007

⁴ <http://www.america.gov/st/democracy/hr-english/2010/January/20100126152113mlenu...10/8/2010>

elections. On this point, reference has been made from the Pastoral letter of the Catholic Bishops of Uganda on General Elections in Uganda. Finally, special reference will be drawn to Lesotho situation.

FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS

International law imposes certain obligations on states and electoral authorities regarding the conduct of election. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ICCPR, and other international instruments establish two essential conditions for democratic elections, (1) universal and equal suffrage, and (2) a secret ballot... International conventions banning discrimination based on race or gender further reinforce the right to participate in elections on the basis of “universal and equal suffrage”.⁵ However, the UDHR indicates that ,” the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government” as “expressed in periodic and genuine elections.”⁶

Bjoulund opines that ‘for the process of elections to be free, the following standards are mandatory

- Citizens must have a right and opportunity to choose;
- There must be freedom of assembly association, movement, and speech, for candidates, parties, voters, media, observers and others;
- Political environment should be free of intimidation.⁷

In noting the symbolic and inseparable relationship between democracy and “free and fair elections” Bjornlund envisage the following as the requirements for “fair elections”

- ❖ Honest balloting and counting administered without fraud or manipulation by impartial election authorities;

⁵Eric Bjournlund FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS: DEMOCRACY INTERNATIONAL @ page 1

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid @ page 3

- ❖ Political parties and individual must have reasonable opportunities to stand for elections;
- ❖ There must be prompt and just resolutions of election - related disputes and grievances, before and after Election day;
- ❖ **“Level playing field”**, specifically, there can be no misuse of public resources for campaigns;
- ❖ All parties and candidates must have adequate chance of communicating with the voters and winning their support including reasonably equitable access to media.’⁸

In addition, the 1990, Copenhagen document of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe sets forth standards for elections in the 55 member countries. Also, The Inter – Parliamentary Union adopted a Declaration on Criteria for Free and Fair Election, which spells out the broad range or rights of citizens, candidates, parties and state in attainment of free and fair elections.

It is also interesting to observe that, Eric Bjorn Lund indicates that ‘details of electoral system differ from one country to another and the following are the factors which affect the outcome of an election and subsequently the nature of a country’s government. Voter participation, minority party representation, the likelihood of coalition government, the number of women and ethnic minority office holders, the prospect for genuinely representative constituencies, and the range of participating and winning candidates and parties. However, and despite differences in implementation, practices in democratic countries share a commitment to core, universal principles⁹

In essence the term civil society “denotes an umbrella of non governmental institutions which have the common role of advocacy to the society, save in

⁸ Opicit at pg 3

⁹ Opicit at p2

different platforms according to their themes. It has been reported that in South Africa there could be over 100,000 civil society organisations¹⁰, however, for the purposes of this paper, I am going to refer to the Ugandan faith-based organisation, in a form of a letter of the 11th June 2010, of Catholic Bishops of Uganda on General Elections in Uganda. The letter in essence offers guidance to conduct to different civil societies on the upcoming elections then.

THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY

THE CHURCH

In the context of a civil society movement, the church plays “The church as the most representative of all civil organisations outside of the political parties is an illustration of the role that a civil society must embrace on matters of good governance and free and fair national elections. According to the Pastoral letter of the Catholic Bishops of Uganda on General Elections in Uganda, The Church represents the moral conscience of a nation and she is expected to spell out what is good or bad, right and wrong in the political life of given community.”¹¹

Free and Fair National Elections

The specific role of civil societies should be viewed, though not in isolation, at how they impact on the presence and functioning of the following:

Electoral Commission/Independent Electoral Commission

Of primary importance, ‘the electoral body should derive its powers and mandate from the Constitution’.¹²

It is important that the Electoral Commission wins the confidence of the people in that the elections will be free and fair;

¹⁰ <http://www.america.gov/st/democracy/hr-english/2010/January/20100126152113mlenu...10/8/2010>

¹¹ Pastoral Letter of the Catholic Bishops of Uganda on General Elections in Uganda, 11th June 2010, at pg 7

¹² <http://www.america.gov/st/democracy/hr-english/2010/January/20100126152113mlenu...10/8/2010>

- a) The Electoral Commission should demonstrate a clear road map for the holding of elections that will be devoid of violence and intimidation;
- b) The Electoral Commission has to ensure that an updated voters' register and/or roll is made available and voters are able to cross check their names in an effort to guarantee that they will participate in the forthcoming elections;
- c) The Electoral Commission must at all times review their past inefficiencies which should not be repeated in the following elections;
- d) The Electoral Commission has to ensure that electoral laws should be free from ambiguity;

The Free Press

The press has several roles in ensuring free and fair elections, such as:

The voters' education;

Dissemination of information relating to any electoral reforms that have taken place;

The "watch dog" of all the electoral arrangements and processes, and informing the relevant stakeholders about any suspicious activities and maneuvers of the electoral principles and systems;

Political Parties

When preparing for the free and fair elections the political parties must:

Form a common front in order to ably interpret the aspirations of the electorates and orient them towards the common good by offering them effective formulations of political choices;

Must put aside each political parties' interests "and work to put in place a more credible electoral framework that will work in the best interests of the country";

Security Agencies

It is the role of the civil society to advocate that:

The Army and the police should ensure restoration of peace and stability by ensuring protection and defence of peoples' lives and properties;

The acts of threats and intimidation to both voters and electoral officials are suppressed effectively;

Access to State Resources

In order for the elections to be seen as free and fair, the state must:

Refrain from misusing the state resources such as the state radio, television and vehicles during the campaigning;

Also refrain from misusing state vehicles for ferrying their supporters to polling stations on election days;

ON RELATIONSHIP WITH DEMOCRACY

While it must be accepted that civil societies are expected to play a critical role in an attempt to ensure elections are free and fair, Bruce Gilley stated that 'it has become widely understood that a healthy democracy requires more than elections. This is why most democracy promotion and assistance focuses instead on other activities such as supporting civil society to strengthening effective legislation processes.¹³

It must be accepted that the electoral and non-electoral aspects of democracy are mutually dependent on:

- The illusion of expecting to have one without the other (ie. free and fair elections without good governance), since they tend to evolve in tandem;
- Vibrant civil society supported by a free press and other independent organisations, do not only support electoral outcomes by ensuring fairness, legitimacy, and compliance, but
- It also supports post-electoral follow-through, in the form of government accountability, transparency and the rule of law. President Barack Obama.

¹³ Bruce Gilley, Civil Society, Democracy, and Elections ,28th January 2010, 2 pg 1

in speeches in both Moscow and Accra is reported to have referred to the role of civil society as democratic change from the “bottom up”; as he said, This (good governance and free and fair elections) is about more than just holding elections. It’s also about what happens between elections”.

- Civil society engages in a daily struggle to head off repressive laws, expose corruption, and ensure that the fair representation of all groups, interests, and ideas;
- Strives to compel government accountability, and to assure that officeholders continue to play by the rules of the game. As President Obama put it in Cairo in 2009: “You must maintain your power through consent, not coercion, you must respect the rights of minorities, and participate with a spirit of tolerance and compromise, you must place the interest of your people and the legitimate workings of the political process above our party. Without these ingredients, elections alone do not make true democracy.”¹⁴

THE NATURE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN LESOTHO . WHAT ARE THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS

Although this question might seem irrelevant for the purpose of this paper, some people might feel that it is necessary for the purpose of refocusing or redefining their scope in the coming elections in 2012.

A document produced by a marriage of Care Lesotho, Action Aid International and Catholic Commission for Peace and Justice in 2006, also describes a Civil Society as:

“The range of institutions and organisations that connect people to government and the private sector. This includes faith-based, community-based and non-government organisations”.

¹⁴ Ibid at pg 1. <http://www.america.gov/st/democracyhr-english.2010/January/20100126152113mlenu10/08/2010>

The same document goes further to assert that:

“Civil Society when strong, autonomous of but engage with government, and truly representative of the people, has the potential to play an instrumental role in improving governance”.¹⁵

True to some extent, the above assertion may be, I beg to differ in that my description would include the private sector formations such as: The Chamber and Employers’ Association. Again, and in the same breadth, I would also include political opposition parties. Correctly, therefore, my inclusive description of a civil society would be, ‘any formal or informal private formation that is not part of a government’.

Historically, Lesotho has not had an experience of private formal formations of any importance. The only formal private formations of note that surfaced were faith-based and in the form of different churches denominations, followed after a while by political parties which came into existence in the pre-independence era.

Faith-Based Civil Societies

It was in 1833 when the Parish Evangelical Missionary Society (PEMS) first arrived and started operations in Lesotho which later came to be known as the Lesotho Evangelical Church (LEC). These were followed by the Roman Catholic Church around 1865; then the Anglican Church of Lesotho. It was not surprising, therefore, that the first political parties to emerge in Lesotho aligned themselves with the other already existing formal private formations.

Politics-Based Civil Societies

a) Basotholand African Congress/ Basotholand Congress Party

¹⁵ Document - Strengthening Civil Society in Lesotho, Monday 24 July 2010 pg 7

It was the Ntate Lefela led Basotholand African Congress (BAC) which was formed around 1952, and which later evolved to Basotholand Congress Party (BCP), the party led by Ntate Ntsu Mokhehle. History tells us that Ntate Ntsu Mokhehle was born in and thus belonged to Anglican Church denomination but somehow the political party that he led became more entrenched in the Lesotho Evangelical Church. It is no coincidence, therefore, that the entire structure of BCP (and later of all other Congress parties) was and continues to be the same of that of LEC.

Basotholand National Party/ Basotho National Party

Basotho National Party (BNP) which was led by Morena Leabua Jonathan was formed in 1959 and became aligned to the Roman Catholic Church (RCC). Once again, history tells us that Morena Leabua Jonathan was born into a Lesotho Evangelical Church and was thus a Protestant himself but subsequently became converted to a Roman Catholic. Whether his conversion was occasioned by his status at the time he served as an adviser to the Regent Paramount Chief Mantsebo Seeiso Bereng and had to stay at Matsieng and discovered that the Regent Paramount Chief and the entire paramouncy family belonged to the Roman Catholic Church, is not clear. Morena Leabua Jonathan is also alleged to have been a member of BAC/BCP, initially. His membership of the Roman Catholic Church was later to come in very handy when he formed his political party, as the majority of his support came from the RCC members.

Community-Based Civil Societies

It was around early 1960's; with the BCP influence that community-based civil societies such as, Theko-Mmoho, a business cooperative and a labour trade union were formed. It was at about this same time that a predecessor of the now Lesotho Chamber Of Commerce and Industry was formed; followed much later by credit unions movements that were established under the influence of the Roman Catholic Church, to the present proliferation of thematic civil societies and other foreign churches' and/or donor-based ones.

It is a fact that we now talk of the presence of a myriad of civil society organisations purporting to represent specific constituencies such as the following, as an illustration:

- ❖ Lesotho Council of Non-Government Organisations;
- ❖ Transformation Resource Centre;
- ❖ Lesotho Chamber of Commerce and Industry;
- ❖ Christian Council of Lesotho;
- ❖ Lesotho Trade Unions;
- ❖ Lesotho Teachers' Associations/Unions;
- ❖ Lesotho Transport, Bus and Taxi Associations;
- ❖ Law Society of Lesotho;
- ❖ Association of Lesotho Employers;
- ❖ Public Servants Association;
- ❖ Khathang Tema Baitsukuli;
- ❖ Opposition political parties.

What is uniquely interesting about all these civil societies is that, despite their having specific mandates for their specific constituencies, none of them can boldly boast of having attained their objectives nor answered their members' aspirations.

Lesotho Council of Non-Government Organisations (LCN)

Since establishment, and if my memory serve me well, there are about only two (2) notable achievements that LCN can boast of:

- i) Together with the Transformation Resource Centre, they played a pivotal role in assisting and ensuring that communities which were affected by the construction of the Katse dam got their dislodgement compensations from Lesotho Highlands Water Authority (LHDA). Whether those compensations were adequate, is something else;
- ii) Together with the Lesotho Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Lesotho Transport Associations and Labour Unions, they succeeded in

their role of ensuring the re-instatement of the BCP led Government after it was toppled in 1994;

- iii) Any other achievement in other themes or activities that is not public knowledge, can rightly not be considered notable for a mother body organisation and a federation of many other civil societies.

Transformation Resource Centre (TRC)

Since its establishment 1980's the Transformation Resource Centre has stood its ground as a human rights defender kind of organisation.

- i) One very notable achievement by Transformation Resource Centre was in relation to resources spent on training Basotho mineworkers who were working in the South African Mines. Together with National University of Lesotho- Department of Labour Studies they dedicated themselves with equipping those Migrant workers in labour movement issues and trade union politics. It is the Basotho or Lesotho trained and developed mineworkers who became the kin pin during the formation of National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) in South Africa which became the backbone and muscle of Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). History bears witness to the roles stalwarts like James Motlatsi and Cyril Ramaphosa played in shaping the current South African political landscape;
- ii) In Lesotho, at one stage or another, we have had horrendous abuses of human rights, but up to now it has not been clear to me what specific role Transformation Resource Centre, played. I request to be pardoned, should there be something notable that they performed and/or achieved.

Lesotho Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI)

The Lesotho Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) has also not done itself a favour when one comes to think of the national importance of its

mandate. They may have succeeded in:

- i) Acquiring a security company, Security Lesotho at the time it was being liquidated by the holding company Lesotho National Development Corporation. In that process alone 600 jobs were saved;
- ii) Together with LCN, Labour Unions and Transport Associations, they also played an important role in the re-instatement of the BCP led Government;

But very unfortunately, the Chamber as we know it today is still burdened with an albatross of:

- iii) Absence of development and empowerment of Basotho indigenous entrepreneurs;
- iv) Rampant illegal transfers of 'small enterprises' licenses to foreign people/enterprises of Chinese origin. A point in mind is that according to the 'Trading Enterprises Regulations 1999', Regulation 14. (n) General Cafes, General Dealers, and Mini Supermarkets are reserved and shall not be issued or transferred to foreign enterprises;
- v) At the time Lesotho decided to privatize most of its parastatals, the Government undertook to plough back the proceeds of such sales into a pool which would be utilised to finance the Lesotho Private Sector. The proceeds of such sales were, however, diverted to financing the unplanned and thus unbudgeted for but very important free primary education. Up to now the Lesotho Government has not been taken to task and pressurized to honour that commitment of creating a fund for the indigenous private sector.

Christian Council of Lesotho (CCL)

There was a time when the Christian Council of Lesotho could be relied

on to stand its ground and express its displeasure when some human rights violations were being perpetrated by the previous regime of Dr Leabua Jonathan, after the 1970 foiled elections. To some extent, the pattern was maintained even during the military rule of 1986 to 1993, dubious and unconvincing though it was, at times.

To the observant, the chameleons like behaviour of the joint churches through the CCL, was never a surprise but expected for the following reasons:

- i) As mentioned earlier on, political parties at very initial stages of formation sought to turn churches as their stronghold membership base, and succeeded to a very large extent;
- ii) The Catholic church which was deemed to have played a very critical role in BNP victory of 1965 elections, has always sympathised with BNP led Government;
- iii) Later when the military took over the Government, still the RCC sympathised with the Government for the reason that though the military had de facto toppled the preferred Government of Dr Leabua Jonathan, the head of the Lesotho Military Junta, Major General Metsing Lekhanya was also a staunch member of RCC, hence the church sympathy;
- iv) In 1993 when the democratic BCP led Government got into power, the then Prime Minister, Dr Ntsu Mokhehle, a member of a protestant denomination, it became an opportunity for the LEC which is the second biggest church in Lesotho, to sympathise with the Government;
- v) It is no wonder, therefore, that since independence the CCL has immersed in politics of its own kind, up to this day. Though it has to be noted that what might have also contributed to stifling autonomy of CCL depended highly on who and from which church the Chairman came since its chairmanship rotates between and among its member churches;

- vi) With the membership of each church denomination as a base this is one civil society formation that is imbued with the best opportunity for being of significance, were it for its deep rooted Ecclesiastical internal politics.

Lesotho Trade Unions/Associations

Since their inception, It seems as nothing notable could be attributed to Trade Unions' success. What could be notable, and of late is the route that one of the factory workers' Trade Union, FAWU has taken, is the parallel formation of a political party, Lesotho Workers Party which contests national elections for parliamentary seats. In order to improve its chance of success in national elections, Lesotho Workers' formed an unholy alliance with another newly formed opposition party, All Basotho Convention (ABC)

The Lesotho Labour Movement faces problems of massive proportion in that:

- i) Basotho have allowed themselves to be polarized by political parties, to a point where most workers would rather devote/spare their allegiance to a political party instead of a trade union in his/her industry/sector;
- ii) Workers' allegiance preference has had the effect of compromising the trade unions independence which end up aligning themselves with political parties;
- iii) Very few of the trade unions command the necessary fifty (50%) per cent plus, membership needed for a trade union to be recognized by employers;
- iv) The conclusive situation as obtaining in the work places/industries/sectors and nationally:
 - Is that of trade unions which have no mandatory recognition in most if not all industries, thus end up not being effective and unable to attract more members;

- Most trade unions seem to desire to bed the Government as some members, particularly in the leadership refrain from any decisions that may appear not to be going to go down well with the Government, in preference to decisions that would rather being against the aspirations and desires of the trade unions themselves;

Opposition Political Parties

By definition it is acceptable to consider opposition parties that should as part of the civil society with the mandate (I assume) of interlinking their supporters with a Government of the day. Opposition political parties are expected, by their very nature:

- To perform the advocacy function of everybody who considered not to support the government policies;
- To perform the functions of a government in waiting so as to give a nation an option of another government should the ruling party falter in its governance;
- To perform the function of serving the interests and the aspirations of a wider society, beyond those of their members;
- Are not expected to be seen to be very eager in supporting whatever the government proposes as long as they directly benefit financially;
- To advocate for the policies that will indicate to the electorates that they will do things differently from the way they are being done by the government of the day;
- To be seen to be able to upkeep democratic governance of their own parties instead of practicing the very autocratic and oppressive tendencies that they are blaming the government of;

ASSESSING THE ROLE OF (LESOTHO'S) CIVIL SOCIETY IN ENSURING FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS:

Circumstances Surrounding Civil Society in Lesotho

Lesotho is currently governed by a party that has an ingrained characteristic of shunning and disdaining consultation on national issues unless such consultations will rubber stamp the thinking of the ruling elite. The current government is renowned and married to the culture of no negotiation unless 'you will agree and succumb to my stand point'.

Having said that, let it be considered that this culture could have developed as a result of continuous disputes with the opposition parties, and with no side prepared to compromise.

Very few, if any, of the civil societies have any notable influence and/or impact in the specific constituencies/sectors/industries within which they are operating.

Because Lesotho has become an endemically impoverished country with its survival based and grounded on donor funding and food aid, it becomes the desire of most civil societies to have a slice of donor funds approved in order to finance their activities and also to participate in the food aid distribution.

With specific regard to faith-based and/or their affiliates, the churches have but lost the powers, controls and influence that they once had over their members and as such they are no longer regarded to have any political vibrancy and direction.

Opposition political parties especially those whose leaders and/or also members in parliament seem to be there mostly, to line their leaders' or representatives' pockets;

The current government is unwilling to engage the civil society on any important issue of national importance with preparedness to share views in any meaningful, holistic attitude or manner; they instead form or establish their own sinister organisations that they allege to engage.

To the government, any consideration or opinion that is worthy of acceptance is that of its leadership or support base and very unfortunately this stance has been implanted by its founders, most of whom are now either dead, or warning the opposition ranks, and crying foul;

There has never been sufficient national nor international pressure on the Lesotho Governments, past and present to alter their stand when dealing with civil society, especially the community-based ones that would have a stake and interest in the day to day politics and governance issues of the country.

The donor- or international organisations-based societies, are for one reason or another very content with their being approved to carry out, mostly their Aid related functions with no intention or plan to be involved in critical policy issues that would catapult Lesotho development and bring about the sufferings and impoverishment of Basotho people to an end. The International community seems to have gladly embraced the conditions perpetrated by both HIV/Aids scourge and starvation and make big industry out of them through their philanthropy activities.

CONCLUSION

Without the government accepting voluntarily or as a result of excessive local and international pressure which will match their stubbornness and inalcitrance, is exerted on the Lesotho Government, Lesotho will hardly ever see a day when civil society can ever play meaningful role in both the politics and governance matters of Lesotho;

Until and unless the big brother, SADC deals and intervenes in internal national disputes of member countries with good intentions of protecting the true democratic dispensation rather than take sides with current heads of governments, governments will continue to ignore genuine complaints of member states citizens as long they have their clutches on the military;

Until and unless civil society distances themselves from the suspect and influence of the ruling party sympathy, people will always opt to place their hopes and trust in political parties, fragile though they may also equally seem;

Until and unless the civil society movement in the SADC region, in particular, forms one strong common front when they are confronted by their governments, civil society in other SADC member countries except the Republic of South Africa, will continue to suffer in ignominy and clouded:

- ✚ With the kind of 'democracy' that has been imposed, accepted and supported in the Kingdom of Swaziland with total disregard of the rights of Swazi people;
- ✚ Also like the Zimbabwean situation where 'President' Mugabe was defeated day-light in the presidential elections by MDC coalition, has remained the de facto president of that member state;

All these malpractices are being perpetrated in total disregard by the SADC leadership;

Until and unless the human rights advocacy reaches the hearing ears of the armed forces in the SADC region leading to an awareness that their main functions are the protection of the constitutions and not governments, the military will continue to be misused for oppressive and suppressive tactics of governments;

Until and unless the Christian faith based civil society become reformed and reminded of their responsibility of being their brother's keeper, they will continue to bed the governments of their respective countries to the disfranchisement of their countries and members of their congregations;

Until and unless the multinational organisations such as International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) as an example, stop from fraternizing governments at the expense of the citizenry, governments will continue to exploit their countries for the benefit of propping up 'Aid(s)' as economic development is never priority;

Until and unless governments and multinational organisations stop paying leap service to anti-laundering and deal with rulers who are behind syndicates in siphoning their governments and countries of funds that ought to be used for the national benefit, heads of governments will continue to govern their countries by hook or by crook for fear of repercussions of losing the control of state machinery.

In order to command respect and have sufficient influence in national politics, the civil societies (as described in this paper) must:

- be strong - many of them are not strong;
- be autonomous but engaged – many of them are engaged but not autonomous;
- be truly representative of the people – many of them are not representative, and as result it is a herculean task for them to have the potential to play an instrumental role in ensuring free and fair elections.

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