

KIBAKI'S MANIFESTO CANNOT BE TRUSTED

The PNU has come up with its long-awaited Manifesto. President Mwai Kibaki made numerous solemn promises of the kind that abound in this manifesto before his election in 2002. Virtually every one of them was broken - even though he knew that in the next election he would have to explain his failures.

He is now making even more ambitious promises and pledges. Will have very few reasons to try to fulfil these promises because he will not be running for office again in 2012. And because the just-formed PNU is likely to fade away from the political scene than the NRC coalition he headed but destroyed, no one will be accountable for all the failed policies and promises.

In any event, his manifesto completely contradicts the entire basis of the election campaign Kenyans have witnessed. President Kibaki has continually emphasized continuity, yet in his manifesto, he talks of all-compassing greater change. He should know that change and continuity are two different things. Has he now abandoned continuity upon which he has always pegged his re-election motto of *Kazi iendelee*?

The foregoing notwithstanding, we wish to question President Kibaki about the new commitments he is making to create "a prosperous, secure and equitable future for all Kenyans"!

The PNU Manifesto purports to build on PNUs "excellent record and firm foundation to create a prosperous, secure and equitable future for all Kenyans." But PNU as a party is hardly two months old. Which partners are being credited for this so called success. Is it Uhuru's Kenyatta's KANU, the largest party in the PNU coalition? Or is it Kamlesh Patti's Kenda.

On Prosperity

A prosperous nation is one in which all citizens are assured of access to basic needs like food, shelter, Health services and security. The majority of Kenyans cannot afford even one meal a day since under the Kibaki administration the cost of living has gone beyond the reach of ordinary men and women. Since the President killed the initiative for creating a National Health Insurance Scheme, which would have provided universal access to Healthcare, how sincere is his commitment to uplift the lives of struggling Kenyans. .

Similarly, Kenyans have not forgotten how Mr. Kibaki frustrated his ministers' efforts to provide affordable housing for Kenyans in pursuit of the pledge to build the 150,000 houses.

On Security

On this matter the facts speak for themselves. One only needs to look at what is happening in Mt. Elgon district, Kuresoi, or recall the Mungiki menace, frequent car jackings and bank robberies, and the recent killing of at least 500 Kenyan Youths whose bodies were recovered in Ngong Forest.

On Equity

Kenya is the third most inequitable nation in the world in terms of income and wealth distribution. Currently, 10% of the population control up to 70% of the country's wealth while close to 60% live in abject poverty. Rather than closing the gap, it has deepened during President Kibaki's five-year rule. Most Kenyans are asking who is benefiting from the much-heralded economic growth. It is clear that economic growth without equity does not translate into improved living standards for the majority

To continue living the above LIE, the PNU makes 10 pledges for Kenyans, which we are happy to expose as nothing but hot air.

Pledge number 1: Education

PNU pledges a free primary and secondary education yet we know that the minister for education, who is one of PNU's most senior stalwarts, has clearly told Kenyans that free secondary education is wishful thinking. Kenyans are asking, who is fooling who on this matter?

Pledge Number 2: Healthcare

PNU promises Kenyans to restructure the National Hospital Insurance Fund and transform it into a health insurance fund. Kenyans know that none other than President Kibaki himself is the one who recently vetoed the National Social Health Insurance Scheme proposal.

Pledge Number 3: Maternal Healthcare

PNU proposes free antenatal clinics, free and safe delivery and free postnatal clinics yet the health infrastructure to make this possible hardly exists. President Kibaki has continued to under fund the Health Ministry. Again, who is fooling who?

Pledge Number 4: Doubling the Size of the Economy

Of course this is desirable. But it can never be achieved unless we mobilize the energies and resources of ALL Kenyans, especially the poor who are in the majority. The record shows that the President's team will never engage all Kenyans on this issue, or on any other issue. Even if the economy grows, it will benefit most of our people, since corruption and centralisation of wealth have become the hallmarks of the Kibaki administration.

Pledge Number 5: Doubling our Investment in Infrastructure

Again this is desirable, however if experience of the last five years is anything to go by, this infrastructure will be concentrated in selected regions of the country to the exclusion of others. If we may ask, what happened to the 2002 pledge to make the Mombasa Malaba and Busia highways a dual carriageway?

Pledge Number 6: Promoting enterprise

PNU pledges to build a million stalls and sheds for juakali, and new business parks. We want to ask what he has done for these disadvantaged groups whom he promised the very same things five years ago. Who is fooling who?

Pledge Number 7: Equal Rights and Respect for Cultures

The PNU Manifesto pledges not to discriminate or harass people based on their ethnicity, religion, race, gender or social class. If there had been no illegal rendition of Kenyans, perhaps we would have been fooled to believe this. If there were no discrimination in issuance of identity cards and passports to Kenyans of Somali origin again, we would have given Kibaki the benefit of doubt. If Kenyan women married to non-Kenyans had enjoyed equal rights of conferring citizenship to their spouses as enjoyed by their male counterparts, we would have had reason to believe president Kibaki on this. As matters stand we can only view this as another pledge made with the sole purpose of attracting votes and then quickly dishonoured.

Pledge Number 8: More Representation for Women

On this we need not say much. Let Kenyans just a gender audit of Mr. Kibaki's appointments in the last five years. Kibaki has repeatedly told Kenyans to judge him by his past record.

Pledge Number 9: Security

On this matter the facts speak for themselves. One only needs to look at what is happening in Mt. Elgon district, Kuresoi, or recall the Mungiki menace, frequent car jackings and bank robberies. And then we have just learned that there are death squads operating in Kenya, which killed of at least 500 Kenyan Youths in cold blood and their bodies dumped in Ngong Forest and Kiserian.

Pledge Number 10: Devolution and Equity

We welcome the president's belated conversion to devolution. However we remind Kenyans that devolving money without giving people the authority to manage and control completely negates the purpose of devolution. The PNU approach had been tried before through the District Focus for Rural Development and failed; currently CDF is bogged down by the fact that the MP rather than the local community controls the fund. In any case, PNU's so-called devolution is governed by a mere act of parliament and not the constitution. The sustainability of this pledge is therefore not guaranteed. Our friends in PNU cannot have their cake and eat it.

Kibaki's Broken Promises

President Kibaki had five long years to deliver the urgent pledges that Kenyans anxiously waited to be honoured so they could meet the daily necessities of life. He betrayed all of us.

- Kibaki promised to deliver a new constitution within the first 100, but did not deliver.
- Kibaki pledged that corruption would cease to be a way of life, but today corruption thrives at the centre of his administration.
- Kibaki promised an end to roadside declarations, but today that has become his style.
- Kibaki promised to create 500,000 jobs annually. He never created the environment for this nor the actual jobs. If his claim that he has created 1.8 million jobs in five years, then this translates into 360,000 jobs per year, a far cry from the 500,000 jobs promised and even below 400,000 that KANU government was creating annually as at 2002.
- Kibaki pledged to serve only one five year term which ends on December 30th 2007, so why is he crisscrossing the country asking the people to re-elect him for another term.
- Kibaki pledged a lean government, but now he has the most bloated government this country has ever had.
- Kibaki pledged to kill tribalism yet his appointments have been so skewed in favour of a particular group at the exclusion of the rest of Kenya. No wonder they resist devolution.

The Verdict

President Kibaki has let Kenyans down during his last five years of rule. **PRESIDENT KIBAKI THEREFORE CANNOT BE TRUSTED. TO HONOUR ANY OF THE PLEDGES HE IS MAKING TO KENYANS AT A TIME WHEN HE IS DESPERATELY SEEKING THEIR VOTES**