

Closing remarks to the Peoples Progressive Party Delegates Conference. At Kiwatule, Kampala.

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The Interim Chairperson

The Interim Executive Committee

Distinguished Delegates.

Thank you for the honor of inviting me, although am not a member of your party. It is healthy for different political parties and groups to invite each other to their conferences and cultivate friendly atmosphere, build common minimum rules, behavior and above all have agreed upon certain critical national issues or needs which all parties should honor and respect. For example, in the area of conduct, things like respect for each other, and shunning of use of derogatory language, respect for institutions and rule of law.

One of our Nation's perennial problem, has been lack of respect for each other, intolerance, selective respect for the rule of law and institutions. We have since colonial times cultivated a culture of behaving as if we are the first people to walk the planet as if nothing was happening before us. That is why we talk of having INTRODUCED multi parties in Uganda, and therefore we need to tread carefully as we nurture it. But is it true to say that, multi parties are being introduced in this country? There were multi parties just before and after independence like: We had DP, UPC, KY etc. The other parties were neglected, suffocated and later banned until Amin disbanded UPC itself. There were multi parties during the 1980 elections and after.

The question is what happened to the parties and multipartism? What do we do to avoid similar re-occurrences? I have said else where that we should study our history carefully and that history never repeats itself. The problems are, putting in place people who don't believe in multi parties being in charge of nurturing the same. Secondly, the perennial misconception that the problems and future of the country and people can best be served on the shoulders of one person. Thirdly, having little and at times, no respect for our institutions, laws, and cultural values. Fourthly, having parties that have no internal Democracy, no free flow of ideas and the same party being in charge of promoting what it does not practice.

Monopoly of anything, intellectual thinking; politically, economically even the monopoly of religious beliefs, can lead to corruption of morals, culture, values,

erosion of sense of shame and slowly but surely result into intellectual and economic dependence, degeneration, decay and destruction.

The fifth problem and a consequence of the above is that leaders begin to lose the critical sense of shame and act recklessly, defiantly with contempt and impunity.

Some people are wondering at the rate at which Political parties are being formed. That, why not form one major party in opposition? That is the ideal. In the mean time, it is better to belong to a small but serious focused and organized group than to belong to none. Through such serious organizations however small, we learn that smallness is no virtue or strength, and out of sheer necessity and a shared goal and program, you coalesce and eventually form bigger purposeful organizations and pull together in a well agreed upon, purposeful direction. This process isolates those artificially created and sponsored. If purposeful parties don't pull together, the population after studying them, will choose for us at the polls. That is what you find out at every election where there are numerous people or parties. Usually two or three parties or candidates emerge as serious contenders. This was the case in 1962, 1980, 1996, 2001 and 2006. The constitution has helped as far as the Presidential elections are concerned. In that the winner must obtain more than 50%. If no clear winner, only the top two sort it out. I wish we had done the same for parliamentary and district chairpersons.

I have a few recommendations to you distinguished delegates of this relatively new party.

First, you must strive from start to build the practice and culture of internal free debate of ideas and internal democracy. If you are not tolerant and democratic while not in power, it will be too late to make any attempt to do so, while in power. Worse still, when things go wrong in a ruling party it affects everybody those within and outside the party.

Second, although there are many parties, we should cooperate and share views so that we come closer as we move along. Democratic practices and culture, tolerance, development and wealth creation, are through hard work and coordination, rather than through donations, handouts, favours and slogans. Third, parties are not enemies and are not at war with each other. Even people at real war, behind scenes, talk about how to achieve peace through other means other than war. Because as people fight real wars, they discover that war is extremely costly and destructive, although those up the ladder usually take longer to notice and accept it. Fourth, parties should set up various groups of interested and expert people to study and formulate various alternative routes and policies to pull our country out of abject poverty. Fifth, you must avoid the perennial syndrome of parties and nations putting all their hopes, burdens and

solutions on the shoulders of one person, thus creating a spurious impression or belief that only one person can.

Those who will do anything to remain in power and those who pretend to support them, whatever sweet things they say, are not for altruistic reasons. It is greed for power, resources and wealth. While each nation has resources for the citizens needs, when well managed, no nation has enough resources for our greed.

Distinguished delegates I recommend that we:-

1. We should promote the practice and culture of internal debate and how to handle different ideas in our organizations. How to respect but not necessarily accept every idea put forward by others.
2. Develop and re-enforce a culture of respecting and strengthening institutions and laws.
3. We must as a nation irrespective of our political and religious inclinations, come together to promote and advance education, skills development and strengthen values that respect and reward hard work. It is valuing the culture of disciplined skilled hard work, savings and investments at small, medium and large scale that will turn our great potential resources into actual wealth. We should know and appreciate that the greatest wealth and asset of any nation, is its people. An enlightened, skilled, respected and valued human being. We must respect and value every human being, starting with our own, rather than putting high premiums on foreigners only. We must all of us fight the practice of impunity, open theft baptized corruption, and the misuse of our young men to beat humiliate and main fellow citizens. In the process we are dehumanizing these young men too. Can any of the leaders training and deploying these young men, ever send their own sons to proudly join these squads? Can these leaders ever receive their sons in the evening reporting that they are tired after many hours of chasing and beating up the perceived enemies of development projects? Why don't we wish, other people's sons, what we wish our own?

Let me advise our colleagues, who are looking the other side, while these humiliating activities go on, and those who take pride in such activities, that one day they will, harvest in plenty their fair share of Kiboko, harassment and humiliation. It is a question of time. Eventually we get a share of what we saw.

4. Let us fight the culture of creating imaginary enemies to justify our relevance in the continued struggle to stay in power. Today the problem is multipartists tomorrow it is a section of MP's then Donors, and when we have embraced multipartism the enemy is the opposition and on and on. As a nation, we are not short of real enemies and these enemies are not armed, and some are in our very own hearts and conscience.

For example there were those who shouted that CHOGM, was to bring Uganda on world map and there were people at home and abroad who were tarnishing Uganda's image and trying hard to sabotage the arrival of the Queen. So we needed money, lots of it to brand Uganda and tidy up Kampala and beyond, buy things in a hurry, for CHOGM was crucial.

True it was important but we had four years to prepare. For sure, some made good deals out of these exaggerations, hurrying to find things and suspension of laid out procedures, and in the process defeated the "enemies" of CHOGM.

Distinguished delegates, you have started a new party. You will make new friends, but most of you are not joining politics for the first time. You have been in other parties before. Let us avoid the practices of behaving as if this is the first good party. Let us remember what happened to those before. Let us learn to know what happened to those before. Lets us respect, tolerate and learn from each other. And above all, let us build respect and strengthen our institutions, and let the will of all people prevail at each and every election. Let us not turn parties into our bibanjas, business and life or death situations as we advance the frontiers of democracy.

Thank you for inviting me and giving me the opportunity to share some ideas with you. It is nice to see you here. Some of you are old friends, some will be future friends. It is not good to think that because you have made new friends you abandon those you meet as a student, in associations, struggles, religious organizations etc. Everything has its place. Some of us have beaten our fingers before, so lets us be careful not to repeat past mistakes and without shame blame history.

Thank you.