



Press Release
29 September 2016

Almost all citizens (95%) think they should be free to criticize the government And 7 out of 10 (69%) prefer democracy as the best form of government

29 September 2016, Dar es Salaam: Citizens' support for democracy and free expression is strong. Almost all citizens (95%) think that they should be free to criticize the government when they believe it has done something wrong. Seven out of ten citizens (69%) agree that democracy is their preferred form of government, although opposition supporters are a little more likely than ruling party supporters to say that undemocratic government can sometimes be preferable (18% compared to 15% of ruling party supporters). Nonetheless a large majority of citizens (86%) believe that Tanzania needs many political parties to offer citizens real choices in who governs them.

These findings were released by Twaweza in a research brief titled *Democracy, dictatorship and demonstrations: What do citizens really think?* The brief is based on data from *Sauti za Wananchi*, Africa's first nationally representative high-frequency mobile phone survey. The findings are based on data collected from 1,602 respondents across Mainland Tanzania (Zanzibar is not covered in these results) between 23 and 29 August 2016.

Despite these strong preferences for democratic governance, citizens have mixed views on the role of the opposition. Eight out of ten (80%) think that, after elections, the opposition should accept defeat and help the government to develop the country, and 20% think that they should monitor and hold the government accountable. Similarly, 49% think that rallies outside campaign periods are a distraction for the government and the public, and inhibit development. Fewer than half (47%) think that opposition parties should be able to hold rallies whenever they want. Again this is split by party affiliation: 71% of those who feel close to opposition parties support having rallies compared to 37% of ruling party supporters.

Furthermore, 6 out of 10 Tanzanians (60%) support the ban on political rallies including 70% of ruling party supporters and 33% of opposition supporters. Half of citizens (50%) are in large part unwilling to join demonstrations in principle, while 3 out of 10 (29%) are willing to do so. Citizens who are closer to opposition parties are much more willing to demonstrate (43% compared to 27% of ruling party supporters). Young people are also more likely to say they are willing to join demonstrations (35% of 18-29 year olds are willing to compared to 15% of over 50s).

One out of six citizens (16%) citizens is aware of UKUTA, a few months after its formation. Among them, almost half (48%) describe it as a union to fight dictatorship and one out of five (22%) say they support UKUTA. Just over half (55%) of those who feel closer opposition parties support the movement while 44% of them do not. And a significant minority of 6% of ruling party supporters also do. One out of ten citizens who was aware of UKUTA also said that they planned to participate in the demonstrations including 3% of ruling party supporters and one out of four opposition supporters (24%).

Most citizens have some idea what a dictator is, 3 out of 10 citizens (34%) don't know and a similar number describe it as the use of excessive force (32%).

Overall, 11% of citizens think that Tanzania is currently being led by a dictator while 58% do not. This varies between different groups, with the following percentages reporting that they do think there is a dictatorship in the country:

- Men: 13%, women: 8%
- Aged 18 to 29: 13%, Over 50: 4%
- Richest: 16%, poorest: 8%
- Higher education: 26%, no education: 4%
- Opposition party supporters: 29%, ruling party supporters: 5%

"This survey throws up fascinating findings on Tanzanians' political views," said Aidan Eyakuze, Executive Director of Twaweza, "For the government, the strong support shown here for multiparty democracy and freedom of speech is noteworthy. While the majority of Tanzanians do not currently agree that President Magufuli is a dictator, this survey shows that further moves to restrict democratic space and undermine the freedom to speak and to meet will be unpopular. Citizens seem to be saying that some limitations on human rights might be a price worth paying for maintaining peace and fast-tracking development. But if anti-democratic moves go too far, their willingness to accept them may well disappear."

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Notes to Editors

- This brief and the data contained can be accessed at www.twaweza.org, or www.twaweza.org/sauti
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