

ZANZIBAR GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY: A PANACEA TO POLITICAL OR ECONOMIC STABILITY?

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ABSTRACT

Zanzibar celebrated its five years anniversary of the Zanzibar Government of National Unity (ZGNU) in the year 2015. The decline of ZGNU in 2016 remains to be confusing and a door wide open for critical legal analysis, which this study is not in a position to discuss due to limited space for publication. This study with other things tries to examine and discuss how far the ZGNU has successfully maintained strong political stability and provides credible prospects to sustainable economic development in Zanzibar. This study is based on an analysis of the Zanzibar Laws, journal articles, textbooks, newspapers and Bank of Tanzania's (BoT) financial annual reports. The study finds that though there are a number of short falls arising from the formation of the ZGNU, it remains to be of an admirable benefit, by bringing about a strong political stability with a good sustainable economic development.

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INTRODUCTION

A Government of National Unity (GNU) denotes the concept of two or more political foes coming to a consensus to bury the hatchet and work together in a new coalition formation under either Constitutional or Conventional arrangement (Mapuva, 2010; Nassor & Jem, 2011; Chigora & Guzura, 2011). The former is established consisting of main rival representatives to achieve national consensus (Nassor & Jem, 2011), while the latter is formed by two or more political parties after the election results provide no clear winner (Mason, 2015). Political crisis and civil wars in African countries have made the GNU as among the most preferred solution to political and economic stability.

GENESIS OF THE ZANZIBAR GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY (ZGNU)

Article 9 (3) of the Constitution of Zanzibar (1984), provides:

Structure of the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar will be of National Unity and the performance of its functions will be carried out in procedure that will ensure sustainable unity in the aim to achieve democracy. (Authors' Interpretation)

Since the first multiparty election of 1995, CCM (ruling party) and CUF (Zanzibar's main opposition party) as the popular political parties in Zanzibar, have been engaging in a severe-political competition to run Zanzibar government with an 'electoral wipe-out' in a show elections surrounded with accusations and election riggings (Bakari & Makulilo, 2012). This has led to a state of constant friction and collision between their supporters (Bakari, 2001) and the use of excessive military intervention against the opposition. In all elections, from 1995 to 2015, Zanzibar situation has been critical, abuse of human rights, and the increase of hate-politics are predominately severing political and economic stability (Human Rights Watch, 2011).

Local and International missions tried to resolve the conflicts, however, their efforts were dilly dallied and remained fruitlessly. "Unexpectedly, in 2009, a home-grown initiative between President Amani Karume (CCM) and the Chief Opposition Leader Seif Sharif Hamad (CUF) ended the bitter rivalries between their parties for the adoption of power-sharing arrangement through a Government of National Unity" (Maoulid, 2015). The *modus operandi* of ZGNU is to provide a power-sharing between the winner and the opposition party that has won at least ten percent (Constitution of Zanzibar, 1984) of all presidential votes or managed to have seats in the Zanzibar House of Representatives

(Constitution of Zanzibar, 1984). It consists, the President and the Second-Vice President, with some Ministers from the winning party, together with, the First-Vice Presidents and other Ministers from the opposition party(s). Five years have elapsed from the day the ZGNU was established, a significant period that could provide a reasonable test on the successes and failures it has. As Maina (2011) noted:

While this resolve might sound noble we can only wait to see how this agreement plays out in the coming years of its application and whether it works to transform structures of conflict.

ZANZIBAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Zanzibar's definition of economic development is related to the Zanzibar Development Vision 2020. The main objective of the Vision 2020 is to foster economic sustainable growth and eradicate poverty completely by 2020 (Zanzibar Vision 2020, 2011). Thus the Zanzibar Poverty Reduction Plan was introduced in 2002 as a first step to implement the Vision 2020. This was later followed by the Zanzibar Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (titled in Swahili as Mkakati wa Kukuza Uchumi na Kupunguza Umasikini – MKUZA) which was launched in 2007. Both development documents place emphasis on trade, agriculture and tourism as growth sectors to enhance poverty reduction efforts.

As a result of Vision 2020, the definition of economic development in Zanzibar varies according to the targeted goal. For example the Zanzibar Investment Policy (2003) aims on achieving an economic development by having an educated and healthy society (Zanzibar Vision 2020, 2011). The Zanzibar Tourism Development Policy (2004) states a clear purpose of introducing an alternative tourism method which is viable to the environment by allowing tourism to develop in a sustainability method (Zanzibar Vision 2020, 2011). On the other hand, the Agricultural Sector Policy (2003) aims on an increased and sustainable growth of agricultural production basing on structural changes, increasing productivity, developing new technology and producing new products (Zanzibar Vision 2020, 2011).

In regard to Zanzibar's GDP at market price, it stands at TZS 1,077,000 and the per capita income is estimated to be USD 667 as of 2013 (BoT, 2014). The annual GDP growth rate in 2014 was 7.4 per cent (BoT, 2014). Compared to developed countries, it is clear that Zanzibar is poor and has a relatively very small economy (MKUZA II, 2010). Agriculture has been the backbone of Zanzibar's economy for many years. Although it is small scale farming, agriculture has been the basic occupation for many people with over 70 per cent of population relying on agriculture and fishing for its livelihood (Yussuf, 2014). The main farm

production has been cloves, spices and fruits. The Zanzibar government has also designated tourism as a priority sector of the economy contributing to 80% of the foreign currency (Yussuf, 2014). It contributes to 27% to the Gross Domestic Product and providing directly twenty to fourth thousands jobs (Yussuf, 2014).

SUCSESSES OF THE ZGNU

Law has played an important role in reshaping the present political structures and economic patterns of Zanzibar under the ZGNU. Amongst its list of achievements that the ZGNU could count are; the restoration of unity and political stability as well as accountability and well being of sustainable economic development.

Government Accountability

For CUF as main opposition party to form ZGNU with CCM as the winner and its long-run rivalry after 2010, was taken by many as silence killing of democracy in Zanzibar (Matheson, 2012). Nevertheless, joining in the government was a better option, because it offered the hope that the opposition and leading party play a watch dog role to each other, a form of “checks and balances” that improves government service delivery and accountability (Matheson, 2012).

Since coming into force in 2010 of the ZGNU, there have been encouraging level of political accountability, where all parties have been advocating peace, solidarity and place the country’s interests first. For instances in many of the Zanzibar House of Representatives discussions, back benchers play critical role to the Governmental debates the main division was between the government and the ‘back-benchers’ instead of the parties. Debates were conducted in a sense that their degree of influence and accountability to question what the government was doing received much consideration and there were strong bond of unity when Zanzibari interests were not fully utilised by the Government (Zanzibar House of Representatives, 2012). There was a clear-strong cooperation between CCM and CUF and a notable decrease in political tensions, along with a noticeable increase in transparency of a political decision-making process, freedom of expression, and political stability (Nassor & Jose, 2014).

Unity and Political Stability

Before the constitutional assimilation of ZGNU, there was a huge-social marginalisation that split Zanzibar society right in the middle (Shivji, 2016). Coming to the ZGNU was the only opportunity, which Zanzibari employed to bury hatred and vengeances for the future (Hamad, 2011). The good example of unity that was shown by the President and his two-

vice Presidents together with Zanzibar people was a big achievement of ZGNU (Yussuf, 2012).

Continuity

The Constitution provides that any proposal to change the structure of ZGNU must first be submitted for people's approval, a consequence that will directly involve the Zanzibari through a referendum (Nassor & Jose, 2014; Sisk, 2003). There have, however, been claims raised to dissolve ZGNU which were somehow accepted after the election re-run in 2016. Those who wish the dissolution might, nevertheless, be discouraged taking in consideration with the political environment in Zanzibar and the benefits ZGNU has proved. To wipe out or submit logic criticisms against a constitutionally assimilated government especially the one intended to bury hatred for prosperity is not by a day, "the critics would have to demonstrate that the system has not achieved what it was intended to achieve and cannot be improved" (Maphai, 1996).

Overall Economic Performance

BoT 2008 records a GDP of 6.50, with an increase to 7.40 by 2014 (BoT, 2014). The least GDP between 2008 and 2014 was that of 5.40 in 2009 (BoT, 2009). Since the introduction of ZGNU in 2010, Zanzibar has witnessed a growth of GDP from 6.50, 6.80, 7.00 to 7.40 in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 respectively (BoT, 2011; BoT, 2012; BoT, 2013; BoT, 2014). The main activities that significantly contributed to the economic growth under ZGNU were transport, communication, construction, financial intermediation, hotels, restaurants, trade and repairs (BoT, 2014).

Additionally enough, to ensure sustainable economic development, ZGNU has consolidated economic rebalancing through a change in the price of cloves (McLaughlin, 2014), whereby, farmers receive around 70-80% of the World Market price. Before the coming of ZGNU farmers were used to be paid peanut (Salim, 2014) as punishment against Pemba's lack of political support to the CCM government (Onyango & Nassali, 2003).

Gross Capital Formation

Capital formation in Zanzibar continued to exhibit upward trend since 2011, averaging TZS 76 billion for the period 2011 – 2014. During 2013, investment increased to 258.9 billion TZS, up from 183.2 billion TZS recorded in 2012 (BoT, 2012; BoT, 2013). Comparing to the Pre-ZGNU period, capital formation was 139.3 billion TZS in 2008 and by the introduction of ZGNU in 2010, it escalated to 233.9 billion TZS by year 2014 (BoT, 2014). The overall gross capital formation shows a sustainable economic development (Table 1).

Revenue Performance

Revenue outturn as at end of 2008 was 110.3 billion TZS. In 2014, income has increased by threefold at a record of 330.7 billion TZS. A constant growth of revenue can be studied from 139.7, 149.5, 181.5, 220.0 and 266.2 in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 respectively. Measuring up to the Pre-ZGNU period, revenue performance was 186.3 billion TZS in 2008 and when the ZGNU came into being in 2010, it shot up to 469 billion TZS by year 2014 (BoT, 2008; BoT, 2014). The improved performance was on account of ZGNU enhanced efforts to expand revenue collection through transfer of PAYE from the Union Government, relative increase in tourism related activities and increase in imports after completion of port rehabilitation (BoT 2008; BoT, 2014).

Table 1: Zanzibar Economic Development 2008-2014

	Pre-ZGNU			Post-ZGNU			
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Overall economic performance	6.50	5.40	6.70	6.50	6.80	7.00	7.40
Gross capital formation	139.3*	145.2*	175.9*	200.9*	183.2*	258.9*	233.9*
Revenue performance	110.3*	139.7*	149.5*	181.5*	220.0*	266.2*	330.7*
Government expenditure	186.3*	203.4*	286.3*	348.0*	374.0*	514.3*	469.0*
Development expenditure	61.8*	65.5*	118.7*	159.7*	140.1*	214.1*	141.7*
Development debt	128.2*	228.7*	140.4*	161.8*	226.0*	264.1*	299.3*
External debt	62.7**	62.1**	62.5**	79.4 **	111.7**	128.3**	129.8**

* billion Tanzanian Shillings (TZS); ** million US Dollars (USD)

FAILURES OF THE ZGNU

Although the ZGNU faced a fatal political death after March 2016, there has been a good step taken for political and economic stability from 2010 to 2015 as enumerated above. Nevertheless, during its five year survival, the ZGNU depicted sporadic hostilities of political violence, denial of fundamental rights and inflammatory words of racism deface the quality of ZGNU. The following are some of the failures and reason behind limping of ZGNU as a panacea to political stability and sustainable economic development.

Unidentified of the Root Cause of the Problem

Any formation of a GNU must be complemented with a plan to resolve the root causes of violence, without which this form of Government will not have served any meaningful purpose (Maina, 2011). The root cause of Zanzibar political problem has to be traced into two aspects; a historical-social marginalisation and absence of a free fair election. The former is, somehow, less common (Matheson, 2012) but needs tolerable treatment while the later persistently endangers political stability to every election since the establishment of political parties in 1950's (Michael, 1965; Hamad, 2011; Bakari, 2001).

Had the root cause been identified; the proposal for ZGNU would have composed reform of having an independent Electoral Commission that would minimise political influence to its appointing authority. As the lesson from Kenya (Kenya National Assembly, 1998), these reforms would have been directed for future elections. Unfortunately the ZGNU proposal (Zanzibar House of Representatives, 2010) discussed nothing to election reforms and it is clear that the proposed structure was "to postpone conflicts rather than to solve it" (Cheeseman & Tendi, 2010) as witnessed in the 2015 political deadlock due to the nullification of the October 2015 election results by the Zanzibar Electoral Commission (Commonwealth Observer Group, 2015).

Inferiority that ZGNU could break the Union

Formation of ZGNU was taken curiously by those who questioned the position of Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania (1977) within the new structure that was proposed for Zanzibar. The first reason was the different political party's policies that CCM and CUF have towards the Union. While CCM professes a two tier government (Tanzania and Zanzibar) CUF supports a three tier government (Tanganyika, Zanzibar and Tanzania). There are those who are anxious that, difference in policies would disturb and destabilise the Union. Others have gone further to question the constitutional power mandated upon Zanzibar President to call for a referendum. That if it happen the Zanzibar Government is led by CUF; they may initiate a referendum against the Union (Bakari & Makulilo, 2012). There is, however, nothing to be afraid from. If England did not bar Scotland to conduct the referendum in September 2014 why should Tanzania? (Torrance, 2013; Othman, 2013).

Structural Inefficiency and Misrepresentation within ZGNU

The structural composition conferred exclusive power to Zanzibar President. Appointments of Ministers, Principal Secretaries, Directors and all heads of public sectors remain to be under the President. Even though the First-Vice-President is the Chief Advisor of the President, the

President is not bound to accept the advice from anyone (Constitution of Zanzibar, 1984). The political situation in Zanzibar has created a mistrust-working behaviour that it is likely for the President to appoint those who are loyal and steadfast with him and his party. “It is hard to form a sufficient stable government where trust is absent between groups of the same society” (McCulloch, 2014). Distrust, ill-will and constant tensions among the parties undermine government stability and reduce the likelihood that the GNU would dissolve without conflict (Blake et al, 2015). There have been widespread criticisms against Mr. President’s appointees as incompetent to cater the needs of the ZGNU. Nonetheless he took those critics in blind eyes. It has to be remembered that placing in power individuals and groups not fully committed to power-sharing arrangement for the benefit of the entire populace will undermine the longer-term goal of preventing resurgence of conflict (Sriram & Zahar, 2009).

High Development Expenditures

Total development expenditure reached TZS 214.1 billion TZS in 2013, while in 2008 records show that it was 61.8 billion TZS – the lowest figure in between 2008 to 2014 (BoT, 2013; BoT, 2008). However, development expenditure for 2013 was 41.6% below the annual estimates of TZS 341.1 billion TZS, mainly on account of low outturn of donor funds particularly for development projects (BoT, 2013). The same applies in 2011; the development expenditure was 159.7 billion TZS which is 36.4% below the annual estimate of TZS 251.2 billion TZS (BoT, 2011). For 2012, development expenditure was 140.1 billion TZS which is 63% below the annual estimate of TZS 378.9 billion TZS (BoT, 2012). As the years go by, expenditures of ZGNU keeps on rising and hence undermining Zanzibar’s sustainable economic development.

Increase of ZGNU Expenditures

In 2013, total ZGNU expenditure reached TZS 514.3 billion TZS, while in 2008 records show that it was 186.3 billion TZS – the lowest figure in between 2008 to 2014 (BoT 2013; BoT, 2008). However, expenditure for 2013 was 21.1% below the annual estimates of TZS 651.9 billion, mainly on account of low outturn of donor funds particularly for development projects (BoT, 2013). The same applies in 2011; the GNU expenditure was 348.0 billion TZS which is 21.7% below the annual estimate of TZS 444.6 billion TZS (BoT, 2011). For 2012, Zanzibar Government expenditure was 374.0 billion TZS which is 39% below the annual estimate of TZS 613.1 billion TZS (BoT, 2012). Annual targeted estimate keeps on dropping against ZGNU expenditure. Where there is a deficiency of 21.7% in 2011 to 39% in 2012, something must be done to stabilize the economy.

Escalation of Development Debts

Zanzibar total development debt stock increased from 128.2 billion TZS in 2008 to 299.3 billion TZS in 2014, an increase of 57% (BoT, 2008; BoT, 2014). In 2010, development debt stood at 140.4 billion TZS and kept on escalating to 161.8, 226.0 to 264.1 billion TZS in 2011, 2012 and 2013 respectively (BoT, 2011; BoT, 2012; BoT, 2013). Not surprising that the current government will now spend more on debt repayment.

Rise of External Debts

Zanzibar total external debt stock increased from 62.7 million USD in 2008 to 129.8 million USD in 2014, an increase of 52% (BoT, 2008; BoT, 2014). In 2009, development debt stood at 62.1 million USD and kept on rising to 62.5, 79.4, 11.7 to 128.3 million USD in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 respectively (BoT, 2010; BoT, 2011; BoT, 2012; BoT 2013). Poverty remained to be the major reason for ZGNU in borrowing. Unless improvements are made in access to water, health and shelter, external debts will keep on rising every year.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The life of ZGNU during the five year period was not in any way a fairy tale or a love story with a happy ending. ZGNU breathed life and was therefore realistic. Difficult decisions were made to not only introduce it, but dissolving it. This study has analysed clearly with evidence the goods and the bads of the ZGNU. It is high time to take into account the benefits while at the same time redefining the challenges that faced the GNU.

This study has notably found that political and economic stability and the prosperity of the ZGNU remain under the auspices of having, among others, an Independent Electoral Commission that does not espouse to any political party or appointing authority. Politicians must be clear that, despite the challenges, the ZGNU has maintained and created a conducive and stable political situation that is prerequisite to sustainable socio-economic development in Zanzibar. They must further, work hand in glove, round the clock to make sure that ZGNU comes back to life stronger, healthier and progressing for the betterment and well-being of Zanzibar. Where there is no unity there is neither sustainable socio-economic development nor peace.

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