



AZAPO

AZANIAN PEOPLE'S ORGANISATION

TO: ALL MEDIA HOUSES FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FROM: AZAPO SECRETARY FOR PUBLICITY & INFORMATION

DATE: June 27, 2024

SUBJECT: AZAPO CONDEMNS THE LOSS OF LIVES DURING THE PROTEST IN KENYA

AZAPO commends Ruto for ultimately seeing reason and agreeing not to sign the ill-conceived Finance Bill of 2024 as tabled by the country's Finance Minister on 13th June 2024. This act by President has come, regrettably, after loss of life and destruction of property. Over twenty people dead and scores injured; all in a futile attempt to break the will of the people and bring an end to their legitimate concerns.

Although, the Finance Bill was the last straw on the camel's back and sparked the riots, however, the Bill will go down in history as an indictment on lawmakers that have grown distant from the dire material welfare of their own citizens. Taking \$2,7 billion (roughly R51 billion) out of pockets of Kenyans was bound to lead to social eruptions and city-to-city protests by every citizen of Kenya, led by a courageous youth.

In a country where a third of the country's 52 million population is ravaged by poverty, the last thing to do is to impose such ill-conceived and wide-ranging (bread, cooking oil, diapers, sanitary towels, banking transactions, etc.,) regressive tax proposals.

AZAPO condemns the Government of Kenya for not heeding early on the cry of the ordinary citizens struggling to make ends meet. Had the government of William Ruto been caring and compassionate enough, it would have called for dialogue and avoided the unnecessary loss of lives.

AZAPO's counsel to politicians like Ruto is that the most important equation in politics is the people, and not the faceless markets nor the whimsical desires of the elite. We observe the tendency of political elites globally to test the patience of the citizens to the limit and unleash deadly force against spontaneous reaction by the people. Who can forget the Marikana massacre? This situation in Kenya aptly confirms this observation. -

Although AZAPO welcomes the action by the President, it is patently clear this is not enough. Kenya must address its deeper issues and sober heads are needed. We call on Kenya to seek stability and for the Government to promote people-oriented development based on the will of the suffering masses of ordinary Kenyans.

We remind President Ruto that his campaign portrayed him as the "Man of the People" who had emerged to cut the elitist political history of Kenya from independence, and we hope he will reset himself to that noble vision and not be remembered as Chief Nanga who forgot his own people.

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Issued by **AZAPO** Department of Publicity and Information (DPI).

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