

TANSANIA
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The Islamic Economic System

HOW TO STRENGTHEN ITS ROLE IN THE TANSANIAN MARKET ECONOMY?

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On the 10th of July, 2014 KAS Tanzania country office invited together with the highest muslim authorities of KAS' political partner organization, the Association of Quran Teachers in Tanzania (JUWAQUTA), to an Iftar, the traditional evening meal in times of Ramadan once the sun sets. The event took place in the Serena Hotel in Dar es Salaam and was organized as part of a task force meeting of JUWAQUTA on the Islamic economic system which has been taking place at the same day in the afternoon.

The Islamic economic system differs partly from the liberal economic system because it respects and integrates specific Muslim values and traditions. For instance, the charging of interest in bank transactions is prohibited in an Islamic economy as this action stands in direct conflict with the traditional Islamic idea that profits and losses are to be shared equally and that every actor should be involved in the production cycle. Islamic economic thought puts generally special emphasis on the value of the human being in the economy - an aspect that tends to be under-recognized in a free market economy where profit maximization comes at the expense of equality and fairness. The inclusion and just representation of Islamic economic thinking in Tanzania's market economy is therefore by no means evident, despite its large Muslim community.

Against this background, it was already on the 18th and 19th March, 2014 that KAS Tanzania organized jointly with JUWAQUTA a two-day symposium for Islamic Scholars and Sheikhs from all over Tanzania to deliberate on how the Islamic economic model with its values and principles could be better embedded in Tanzania's current economic activities. In response, the religious leaders of JUWAQUTA formed a task force and jointly elaborated concrete steps on

how to enable the Muslim community to make its voice being heard in Tanzania's economic life. It was then during the task force meeting on the 10th of July that the results of the March symposium and the actions taken since then have been reviewed.

The evening ceremony Iftar provided the high religious authorities subsequently with the right occasion to gather and to summarize and jointly reflect upon the insights of the day in a more relaxed environment. Chief Guest has been among others Tanzania's former President and JUWAQUTA patron Ali Hassani Mwinyi. In his speech, he revealed his fierce advocacy of a fair representation of the Islamic economic model and the Muslim community at large in Tanzania's market economy. But not only Ali Hassani Mwinyi, also national JUWAQUTA Chairperson Sheikh Alhad Musa Salum and Deputy Regional Commissioner Raymond Mushi, as well as KAS Representative Stefan Reith, they all gave speeches that buttressed the task force meeting of the day and rounded it off in a nice manner.

All in all, the task force meeting and the Iftar ceremony as organized by KAS and JUWAQUTA took the Muslim community one step further in strengthening their voice in the debate on a sustainable and just economic system in Tanzanian. However, ultimately the two-fold event also fortified the lasting and good partnership between KAS and the religious leaders of JUWAQUTA. As Sheikh Alhad Musa Salum stressed, "we are all human beings of the same origin and we have the right to be here and to sit together and eat". JUWAQUTA is one of the key partners and supporters of the ongoing inter-faith dialogue in Tanzania that is supported by KAS Tanzania through its cooperation with the interreligious council for peace Tanzania (IRCPT) and the respective stakeholders.

Impressum

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