

## TANZANIA

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## INTERRELIGIOUS YOUTH-NETWORK: CONTRIBUTION OF YOUTH FOR PEACEBUILDING IN TANZANIA

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of May 2017 the Interreligious Council for Peace Tanzania (IRCPT) and the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) organized, after a first meeting in March, a follow-up workshop for the Tanzania Youth Interfaith Network (TYIN) in Dar es Salaam to conceive and promote the joint work of the representatives of the youth organizations of the churches and religious communities involved.

As foundation for the joint interreligious commitment the "Memorandum of Understanding" (MoU) and its further elaboration were once again at the center of the event. This pioneering declaration of intent for peacebuilding through the religious institutions was signed, after several years of negotiations, a few months ago and is now to be adapted for the TYI Network.

After welcoming notes of Godwin Mongi (IRCPT) and Richard Shaba (KAS), who both emphasized the importance of the MoU and stressed that the gathered representatives of the youth network should be aware of their role as representatives for the entire religiously organized youth, a common prayer was spoken and the workshop then started with a round of introductions of the participants.

The first unit of the workshop included team building activities since the future projects and activities of TYIN are to be jointly developed and organized by these members, and as Godwin Mongi emphasized, they

should establish good relations among themselves first.



Godwin Mongi (IRCPT): „We represent thousands and thousands of other youths.“

Subsequently, Rogers Fungo (IRCPT) continued the discussion with regard to the content of the MoU while simultaneously differentiating the individual faiths. He illustrated the necessity of interreligious work by naming everyday differences in the coexistence of religions, such as classmates who could not visit each other at home because of varying food regulations. Understanding and tolerance, he said needed to be encouraged and the work of TYIN could contribute to that.

To reflect and specify the role and the responsibilities of TYIN had also been the homework for the representatives of the various youth organizations. The results were prepared to be presented during a 20 minute group work.

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V.

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Members of CCT during Group work

Representatives of the Tanzania Episcopal Conference (TEC), Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT), Baraza Kuu La Waislamu Tanzania (BAKWATA), Christian Pentecostal Churches of Tanzania (CPCT), Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat Tanzania and Baraza Kuu then presented their ideas and considerations, in order to define joint priorities in a general discussion.

Thus, the main objectives of TYIN's commitment in the next six months are to strengthen the public's awareness of inter-religious work through debates, discussions, songs, etc., as well as establishing and consolidating its own position as a focal point. Apart from this, the members of TYIN agreed to work towards the enlargement and strengthening of the youth network. But also internally, it is necessary to create structures. In line with the MoU of the IRCPT, the Youth Network wants to elaborate guidelines which provide a framework for the management.

As soon as these plans have been implemented and the network has been sufficiently broadened, in addition to peacebuilding projects, the purpose of the overall strengthening and economic development of the municipalities is to be part of TYIN's tasks. In this context, the locally operating Village Community Banks (VICOBA) have been mentioned several times. These cooperative banks exist particularly in rural areas and enable the formation of companies through microcredits; but they also offer insurance in case of illness or death. A col-

laboration between TYIN and these banks could support projects that are in line with the second half of the double target of the MoU, namely to promote the prosperity of the population.

Towards the end of the workshop it once again got very concrete with the discussion about the creation of a Facebook account. Who maintains the Facebook page of the group? Who is taking photos? What contents correspond to the message that TYIN wants to send? For these and other matters, a task force has been formed, which shall devote itself to this and other assignments within the next weeks and months.



*„Dini mbalimbali!“ „Upendo na Amani“ („Different religions!“ „Love and Peace!“) is the TYI-Networks greeting.*

A next meeting of the TYIN members was arranged for the following Saturday and with a joint lunch, group photo and further discussions in smaller circles, the workshop ended and everyone said goodbye to start their journey back before it started raining again.



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