



NATIONAL INITIATIVE FOR CIVIC EDUCATION PUBLIC TRUST



PRESS RELEASE

PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE AND SOCIAL COHESION AMONG MALAWIANS DURING THE 2014 ELECTIONS CAMPAIGN PERIOD

The National Initiative for Civic Education (NICE) Public Trust has noted with concerns the current level of political intolerance leading to violence and tensions in some parts of the country. NICE therefore is intensifying on the need for a violence free campaign in view of the 2014 campaign.

With the concerns being raised in different parts of the country with regard to the conflicts erupting, NICE would like to remind all Malawian citizens of their responsibility to peaceful elections. In the same vein, NICE wishes to condemn any acts that are aimed at confusing registered voters through violent acts perpetuated by some political parties and their supporters.

NICE therefore informs all the political parties and all electoral stakeholders to take note of their responsibility towards the upcoming tripartite elections through the following;

- a) All political parties must avoid the use of hate speeches and inflammatory messages during the campaigns.
- b) All political parties must concentrate on issue based talks during their campaigns.
- c) Role of Political leaders in peaceful campaign must be emphasized through issue based messages.
- d) Role of faith based organization and NICE in contributing towards peaceful co-existence as well as peace education.

NICE in one of its operational areas is mandated to promote peaceful coexistence and social cohesion among Malawians. As it is with the past, experience has shown that during elections, interparty conflicts erupt; hence NICE has created strategies which aim at minimizing these conflicts. In the Program Estimate 1, NICE has been implementing activities that are aimed at promoting peaceful co-existence among political parties and their supporters. Some of the activities implemented include; promotion of awareness on tolerance and capacity building of local structures such as Multiparty liaison Committees in different districts.

NICE is duty bound in promoting peaceful co-existence and social cohesion among different actors like political, religious and cultural actors in Malawian society hence it will continue to support/ conduct joint trainings & monitoring of Multi-Party Liaison Committees and subsequent cascading of the same in constituencies.

NICE, finally, wishes to remind all politicians and aspiring candidates to get involved in issue-based campaigns and convince voters to vote for them through their manifestos that contain issue based messages and not by asking or encouraging their supporters to incite violence. Remember, peaceful coexistence and social cohesion among religious groups, political leaders and their supporters can be achieved if all concerned parties take part in promoting tolerance.