

## Protests – A Colonial Tool to Secure Political End Game of the Elites and Not Masses

### News:

Kenya's opposition leader Raila Odinga is leading weekly protests against high living costs and alleged fraud in last year's vote. The protesters have accused President William Ruto of mismanagement, while his supporters have accused Odinga of using anger over rising prices, a global phenomenon, to press for political concessions and a possible role in government. The government says the vote was fair, and is defending its economic record calling for the protests to stop. Violence has marred these protests with reports of deaths and loss properties recorded. This has prompted pleas for calm from civic leaders who said they feared a descent into ethnically-charged violence.

### Comment:

The anti-Government demonstrations are the first major outbreak of political unrest since Ruto took office more than six months ago after defeating Odinga in an election his rival claims were rigged. The poor economic situation in Kenya has been exploited by the opposition leaders led by Raila Odinga as much as exploited by the current during the campaign period under the slogan "Hustler". Although these protests have remained confined to Raila supporters, the Government has felt some heat.

It is naïve of people with intellect to believe that the ongoing protests, that the opposition and current regime have irreconcilable differences based on ideological variations. Since both are political agents for the Western colonial and imperial influences. The economic hardship impacting rising cost of living emanates from capitalist economic system which makes price as the sole determinant factor in production, distribution and consumption of the commodities and services. Currently, the global financial crisis witnessed is an indication of system failure. This implies the economic situation is a Kenyan issue rather a global phenomenon due to an already crushing Capitalist system.

Mass action, including protests, has played a significant role in shaping the political landscape of African countries. The protests in Tunisia during the Arab Spring which led to the ousting of President Zine El Abidine Bin Ali was compromised in favor of the Western interests. The Sudanese protests in 2019, which began as a response to rising food prices and evolved into a larger movement calling for the ousting of President Omar al-Bashir was compromised too. The protests ultimately succeeded, and a transitional government were established. However all mass protests have ended into a political compromise between the political class and not the desired end of the masses i.e. bringing real political and economic reforms!

Scrutinizing the current situation politically, it is likely the truce will be reached between opposition and Government. With the visit of US Senator Chris Coons, a close ally of President Joe Biden, who has already engaged Kenya's political leadership on the current situation. Notably, US officials led by Delaware Senator Chris Coons — key architecture credited for designing 2018 Handshake. US ambassador Meg Whitman met Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua on Wednesday 29th March 2023 before meeting Mr Odinga in the evening. Western diplomatic missions are exerting pressure on Government and opposition to come to terms. Ironically, this mission is in contrary with their own democratic principles such as constitutionalism and rule of law! Furthermore, it is crystal clear that Democracy is nonfunctional political framework which the West use as Trojan-Horse to secure their political, economic and strategic interest.

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by**

**Shabani Mwalimu**

**Media Representative of Hizb ut Tahrir in Kenya**