

CSOs in street march to back Museveni's stand



Citizens during a public march along Jinja Road in Kampala against MPs' move to exempt the allowances from being taxed. 9th December 2016 | ©CSBAG, 2016

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and other concerned citizens from up country have launched countrywide campaign by marching in Kampala streets in support of President Yoweri Museveni's original stand against MPs tax allowance exemption. The protest march was flagged off by Imam Kasozi in the company of Julius Mukunda the Coordinator of Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG), Fredrick Kawooya Policy Manager at Action Aid Uganda, Nelly Busingye SEATINI's Programme Officer and KACITA's official at Kampala Railway Grounds.

The street march which started which from Kampala Railways Grounds, ended at Uganda Manufacturers Association (UMA) Ground where hundreds of citizens appended their signatures petitioning the President to reject the new clause in the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill.

The protest march follows MPs adamant stand that they should be exempted from paying tax on their allowances even after President Yoweri Museveni refused to assent to the Income Tax Amendment Bill 2016 arguing that they should pay.

While addressing the congregation, Imam Kasozi encouraged the legislators to pay their taxes and not to deceive citizens that they should be exempted while disguising and confusing the public on the taxes they pay. "We are aware that our MPs pay taxes on their salaries, however their allowances are much higher than the salaries meaning if this exemption is allowed, they will pay lesser than what is required of them. This burdens us a citizens and so we call on all of you to rally your MPs to abandon this move. Imam called on citizens

The CSOs condemned the MPs move saying it's unconstitutional. They argued that in 2012 Parliament passed an amendment where an employee who earns more than UGX10m in a month actually pays 40% as PAYE and now the same Parliament doesn't want to pay taxes under the new law it passed. "40% is probably the highest PAYE in the world. How can the same Parliament that passed a PAYE rate of 40% turn around and exempt their own income/allowances from tax?" Mukunda the Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group Coordinator asked.

To drive their point home the civil society drew the attention of lawmakers that they should be at the fore front advocating for equitable tax justice system given the existing social service challenges.

The street protest launch today Thursday Dec 8, 2016 marks the countrywide campaign that is going to be carried in all districts across the country.



Fred Kawooya Actionaid Uganda, Paul Okiring Teso Anti-Corruption Coalition, Imam Kasozi, Julius Mukunda- CSBAG, Angella Rwenzori Anti-Corruption coalition, and Nelly BUingye SEATINI Uganda during the march.



Citizens signing open letters to the President asking him not to assent to the Tax Amendment Bill, 2016



I pay tax on my allowances, so should my MP