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Press Release

14th June, 2021

JCTR'S MESSAGE OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH

The Ministry of Health has expressed worry that that the COVID-19 situation in Zambia is getting worse and that the current infection rate has already surpassed the worst of the second wave. The Ministry of Health has noted that social gatherings including political activities in communities have continued to push the numbers up. According to the Ministry of Health, the country is now facing a real risk of having its health care system overwhelmed by COVID-19.

JCTR therefore joins the Ministry of Health in calling on all the leaders in all sectors of our society to demonstrate their love for the people of Zambia by immediately halting all activities that inevitably occasion a public gathering including political activities, inspection of development projects, social and religious events and other events that have a tendency of drawing crowds of people in one place. We reiterate the Ministry's position that this current COVID-19 situation calls for all of us to show solidarity and commitment to save our country from the imminent health and socio-economic catastrophe by doing what is right – that is, avoiding super spreader events and ensuring adherence to the 5 golden rules.

JCTR is also saddened by the rising incidents of political violence recently. Violence in any shape or form has no place in our Christian nation. We agree with one Joseph Moyo of the African Woman Foundation (TAWF) that we all must view violence as violence regardless of the perpetrator and, or the recipient. It is worrying and disheartening that Zambia is slowly slipping into a situation of civil strife with rising spate of violent attacks between UPND and PF cadres in the run up to the 12th August General Elections.

JCTR believes that it is possible to stop political violence if political leaders do not only stop at casually condemning violence but also engage at a deeper level with their followers and honestly bring home and inculcate the message of non-violence, tolerance, mutual respect and upholding for human dignity and sanctity of life. JCTR has confidence that with good leadership in the UPND and PF political camps it is possible to completely stem out political violence. The Zambian people will hold both UPND and PF leaders responsible for any unnecessary loss of property and life due to political violence.

JCTR would also like to call for an even play field in the coverage of political party messages in the public media. During this campaign period, every Zambian has the right to be well informed of various political party messages through the public broadcaster. The public media must endeavour to create a situation in which every political party has a fair and equal chance of succeeding in order to guarantee a free, fair and credible General Elections on the 12th August.

Note: Attribute statement to Fr. Alex Muyebe, S.J., JCTR Executive Director. For further clarifications contact the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) on 0954755319. Email: media.information@jctr.org.zm. Martin Mwamba Road, Plot 3813 Martin Mwamba Road, Olympia Park – Lusaka. P. O. Box 37774 Lusaka