



## **STATEMENT ON THE POLICE RAID AT A NASA TALLYING CENTRE**

Kura Yangu Sauti Yangu has noted reports that suspected security officials last night raided an office that serves as a tallying centre for the opposition, NASA coalition. There was some confusion as to what actually happened, because of conflicting media reports. The initial report was that a raid by suspected police officers at the tallying centre situated at Sifa House was underway. However, this report was soon followed by another which indicated that the first report was a hoax as no raid was underway at the building in question.

This report was soon followed by a detailed statement issued in the name of Dennis Onyango, who has been a long-term spokesman for NASA presidential candidate which asserted that a raid had indeed taken place. This morning, leaders of the NASA coalition invited the media to a different location in Nairobi, whose premises said to be the venue of a tallying centre appeared vandalised.

At a major public rally to conclude the campaign process that has been going on ahead of the polling on 8<sup>th</sup> August, NASA repeated the claim about the raid on its premises and read out the names of five police officers that they said were part of a larger group of police officers that carried out the raid. All those involved were said to have been wearing hoods, presumably to conceal their identities. At the NASA rally, the registration number of a car that had allegedly been used in the raid was also provided.

In an interview with a NASA official, Kura Yangu Sauti Yangu established that the site that had been raided was one of many tallying centres that the NASA has in Nairobi and that the coalition regards it as one of its most secret locations. According to the official we spoke to, the confusion about the exact location that had been raided was caused by an assumption by the official who sent the initial report to the media, that the site raided was too secretive for the authorities to ever find it and that the Sifa house location which is NASA's most open site was the one he assumed to have been raided.

The interview also established that a concurrent raid had taken place at the residential premises of two foreign nationals who were presumably working for NASA. Kura Yangu has since learnt that the government intends to deport the two, one a US and the other a Canadian national.

The official claims that no lasting damage had been caused to NASA's plans around the tallying of results.

This incident merits an independent investigation. At the time of writing this note, there has been no official reaction to the claims made by NASA.

There is already significant tension in the country ahead of the elections next week. This incident will not help to bring down those tensions. There is a perception that, besides the democratic contest that is represented by the elections, there is a parallel power struggle which seeks to abridge the democratic process. The police raid will go a long way towards solidifying a view that the government is no longer committed to fairness in the management of the forthcoming elections.

There is also a perception of significant internal divisions within the security sector which leads to the leakage of what would have been secret information. The raiders, allegedly hooded, could not have been identified without someone in the police service providing this information. The appearance of these internal divisions may become an important factor if, down the line, there develops a major dispute around the elections. The capacity of the government to maintain a unified command of the security forces may come under strain.

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