



Political leaders should be sensitive to the cultural ethos

SAMUEL BALIGIDDE > SOCIETY

Political leaders, especially our honourable representatives, should not just speak for us, but to us and if they want 'another rap' in the musical accompaniment sense of the yester-years, ought to be sensitive to cultural ethos if not as part of observance of courtesy, etiquette and correct form, then at least for the following reasons, which some of them have arrogantly chosen to perforate, as lawyers might say, at their own [political] peril.

Incidentally, a large number of former opposition politicians too, who allowed themselves to be persuaded that working with the ruling party was much more agreeable than challenging it, could face the same fate when they get to their inevitable political sell-by dates.

Sticking to only what they ideologically know and not bothering to check up on the grounds of such knowledge with specific reference to its limits as well as the validity of what they claim they don't know might switch their political careers into self-destructive mode. There are many approaches to explaining this. The Uganda National Commission for Unesco, which in familiar revolutionary speak every 'sharp cadre' or in ordinary man's language national politician and leader worth the description should of necessity acquaint themselves with, published the education for sustainable implementation strategy containing a situational analysis and rationale for ESD in Uganda in 2010.

Among the others highlighted in bold print are the "socio-economic domain, political and environment context, globalisation, economic impact,

Traditions. Identity-based networks, such as the cultural and traditional institutions, do not prevent modernisation and urbanisation but enhance it through mobilising their members against erosion of core local traditions.

governance and human rights, which lists a litany of shortfalls as freedom of expression, privatisation schemes, election malpractices and violence, corruption, negative cultural practices against women, unsustainable development programmes, non-commitment to set policies, human rights abuse and internal conflicts; traditional value systems, cultural diversity and utilisation of tribal structures", underscoring their crucial value in the implementation of the much-hyped millennium development goals.

It is also emphatically stated therein that Uganda's traditional socio-economic and political systems play key roles in ensuring social cohesion; instilling correct values, cultures and social norms that promote sustainable propagation of sustainable development in our society. It is clearly stated that cultural leaders are effective in mobilising the people in community work (*bulungibwansi*), the construction of public infrastructure, good practices of hygiene, immunisation (which the cultural leaders in this and other countries have actively promoted in collaboration with central governments with resounding

success and universal education others. That, the systems for en African values and norms which been pitifully eroded by western tion and by the adoption of dec western lifestyles are with the c ration and support of national g ments being revamped by the v cultural and traditional institut some politicians including min MPs seem to be disdainful of, i mologically instructive.

It is discomfoting to note th sides correct judgement, good and norms such as farming me that in the past prevented soi' in central and western Ugand of ensuring food security in t West Nile and eastern Ugand. tional health eating habits ch by menus that featured vege nutritional and medicinal be regrettably disappearing wi tion.

Identity-based networks, cultural and traditional inst not prevent modernisation sation but enhance it throu: ing their members against core local traditions, value: language, discipline, respe and their property.

As philosopher Edmund served four centuries ago, tions, like old men, deserv Without taking his live-wi of context, in contempora he said is still valid, isn't i

Mr Baligidde is a lecturer at U- University - Nkozi.

