



WOZA MOYA

WOMEN OF ZIMBABWE ARISE (WOZA) April 2016

WOZA means 'Come forward'.
By women for women and with women, across race, colour, creed, class or political persuasion.
Empowering women to be courageous, caring, committed and in communication with their communities.



Zimbabwe Education system is in a mess! Teachers remain unpaid. The Constitution recognises the right to free basic primary Education. Instead of working to implement this the Ministry of Education is violating our children's freedom of conscience. The Ministry is putting children wellbeing at risk by this Pledge business. In the Constitution section 19 clearly spells out the role of the state to take legislative and other measures to ensure that children are protected from abuse beyond their age.

As the first term ended in March 2016 parents received an **ultimatum** from the school heads instructing them to buy presents and demanding that on the 3rd of May 2016 which is the beginning of the second term they are to come to school with their children. The parents were told that during assembly their children will recite the "National Pledge", and at the end parents are to ululate and hug their children then give them the presents. Children have been trying to learn and recite this pledge during the school holidays without parents being aware that they are neglecting to ask themselves if this 'pledge' will add value to their children's education and build character in the way a parent desires.

Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) along with many civic society organisations call on parents to urgently think about this pledge and question the agenda and why it has been imposed. They should also question why the ministry seeks to distract them from the really important issue of free primary education according to the constitution.

Parents should go to the school and demand clarification about the "National Pledge by the opening of second term. Some Civic leaders and parents who have done this are alarmed at what they were told by school heads:

1. It is a directive from Minister Dokora that every child should be able to recite the 'National Pledge'. They are expected to recite this immediately following the Lord's Prayer they should do so making the required salutations, left hand across chest and the right salutes. From the 3rd of May 2016 children are supposed to do this daily.
2. On the opening day the parents must come bearing presents, participate, cheers, hugs and give their children the presents.
3. The pledge is an oath and a promise by children that they will work for their country and not leave Zimbabwe despite the economic hardships.
4. They salute during reciting the pledge to show that they are now soldiers of Zimbabwe. The next generation of police officers.
5. Dokora even went further to come up with an oath for infants attending the early child development classes that he has not bothered to fund. The pledge for infant pupils reads:

"Almighty God, in whose hands our future lies, I salute the national flag, I commit to honesty and dignity of hard work."

6. WOZA object to the wording of the pledge for junior and secondary pupils which **falsely** says they are beneficiaries of Zimbabwe natural resources – **these are being looted by leaders not given to our children**. On 18 April 2016 at Independence Days the President R.G. Mugabe even admitted that 15 million United States dollars has been looted. He then scolded war veterans for taking government loans and not repaying them. So who is benefitting from the countries natural resources? If there was free primary education as was promised during the liberation war children could say they have benefitted but Dokora and his ministry do not genuinely care about children.

Any responsible parent or citizen should strongly reject this directive for the following reasons;

1. This pledge is part of the government's efforts to brainwash our children through propaganda and in some cases lies.
2. It is an open secret that our children are not "proud inheritors of the riches of our natural resources" but instead inheritors of poverty and misery caused by thievery and looting of our natural resources by the duty bears in government.
3. Why does the pledge have to confine children to Zimbabwe- where there is looting and bad governance? They have a constitutional right and freedom of movement. The children of Ministers' should be the ones saying such a pledge as it is money from natural resources that has sent them out the country for better private education.
4. The pledge is insensitive to the victims of Gukurahandi in Midlands and Matabeleland as it is asking our children to "*Respecting the brave fathers and mothers who lost lives in the Chimurenga/ Umvukela and national liberation struggles*" but says nothing about atrocities of the Gukurahandi which is still affecting some of them and there are still no graves to visit and pay respects for losing their lives to our so called liberators.
5. It is both uncultured and unchristian and a bad example to force children to make such an oath that is a heap of lies. It is UNCONSTITUTIONAL to force an opinion, religion and bigotry belief on children and make parents come to watch their children being abused in this way.

WOZA is asking you to stand up for your child and protect them from this abuse by doing the following actions:

ISSUE	ACTION PLAN
The National pledge is a means of indoctrination and brain washing of our country's youth and takes away their " <i>Freedom of Conscience</i> ". It is a violation of our constitutional right freedom of Conscience!	Play your role as a responsible parent and gently with love in your heart explain to your child what your views are and ask them to tell other children not to take the pledge. Play your role as a citizen and make sure the country leaders respect the constitution.
Zimbabwe is a democratic government and not a Military state!	Refuse to allow your child to salute as if they are soldiers.
Taking an oath is against Christians' religious beliefs! This pledge has been equalled to the Lord's Prayer.	Please make sure you attend church and pray for the country and especially for the Minister Dokora to be saved from this serious mistake.
Parents, guardians and children were not consulted on this decision! And is not a priority free primary education is a priority.	Refuse to allow the Ministry to dictate such things. Tell your SDC representative to write an objection letter to the School head. Also sign any petition against the pledge so that you stand up and be counted.
Parents do not burden your-selves with more economic hardships by buying presents. Rather explain to your children why they should not recite the Pledge, there's nothing national about it.	Go to the school heads before opening day and give the headmaster a written refusal for your child to participate in the national pledge. Make the school head or official sign receipt of the REFUSAL letter. If you do not write something you will not be able to sue the school for forcing your child to participate.
Schools should only be a space for constructive learning and not a space for political propaganda.	Boycott the opening day and do not allow your children to attend school

**Let us demand the respect of the constitution by all officials, parents and children!!
Denounce this pledge and explain to your children why this oath is a false prophet!
Our children are our future lets protect them for a brighter future!
Spread the word to other parents and guardians!**