

## Prime Minister receives Citizens' petition against MPs tax exemption



Ambassador Nathan Irumba submitting the citizens Petition to the Prime Minister Rugunda on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2016

**The Prime Minister, Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda, has received a citizen's petition of 4.2 million signatures against MPs tax exemption ploy.**

The citizens' petition was handed to the Premier by the Executive Members of Civil Society at the Office of the Prime Minister today Friday, 6<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

The civil society who submitted the petition on behalf of the citizens from over 80 districts included Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG), SEATINI, Lira NGO Forum, Anti-Corruption Coalition Uganda (ACCU) Uganda National NGO Forum, Action Aid Uganda, Uganda Debt Network, Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC).

"We bring you this petition because as citizens we find this move of MPs' amending the Income Tax to evade tax on their allowances deplorable. If all Ugandans paid their fair share of taxes, Uganda Tax GDP ratio would increase greatly to meet the growing demands for quality service delivery," Ambassador Nathan Irumba said.

The CSOs informed the Prime Minister that Citizens appended their signatures to the petition particular with a request for the President not to assent to the Amended Income Tax Bill, 2016. "We have collected 4,201,098 signatures from over 80 districts across the country and it is a citizens' request for the President to use his powers under Article 91 of the Constitution to return the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2016 to Parliament for reconsideration." Irumba stated.

The civil society, requested that the Parliament instead should advocate for a fair and more equitable just system that seeks to increase the revenue base and to push for a salary review commission to harmonize salaries and emoluments of all public officers.

The CSOs also noted that if taxing allowances is unfair the lawmakers should call for the exemption of salaried workers for both private and public.

The submission of the citizens' petitions to Rugunda follows a campaign that was launched on April 20, 2016 to mobilize 5 million signatures to petition the Prime Minister and the President over MP's adamant stand on exempting their allowance from being taxed.

"On behalf of all citizens that have appended their signatures to petition H.E President, we humbly request you as the leader of Government Business to advise the President to return the Amended Income Tax Bill to Parliament for consideration. Our utmost desire is to see that every Uganda pays his/her fair share of taxes," they said.



CSO representative pause for a group photo with the PM

In his remarks Rugunda, was happy to receive the CSOs and welcomed the latter's move saying it is a constructive engagement.

"I am happy with this time of interface. We need to graduate from confrontation way of doing things to constructive methods," Rugunda said.

He hailed the CSOs for their efforts in mobilizing citizens to append their signatures to the petition. "It's a healthy process their point of view can be considered," he said.

He assured the team that the citizens' views will be considered and the necessary action shall be taken. "After due process management (Cabinet) will examine issues of citizens because this is their way of communicating with the Executive to ensure better governance of society."