

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND EAST AFRICAN COOPERATION



Dodoma
29th January 2026

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PRESS RELEASE

Tanzania Deepens Diplomatic Cooperation with the Holy See on Peace, Dialogue and Social Development

The United Republic of Tanzania yesterday reaffirmed its long-standing friendship with the Holy See as the Minister for Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, Hon. Mahmoud Thabit Kombo (MP), was received in audience by His Holiness Pope Leo XIV at the Vatican.

During the audience, Minister Kombo conveyed warm greetings and a special message from H.E. Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania. He expressed the Government's appreciation for the Pope's consistent emphasis on peace, dialogue, and the dignity of the human person; values that Tanzania regards as essential to a stable, just, and compassionate international order.

The Minister underlined that Tanzania has, for many years, drawn strength from its relationship with the Holy See, a partnership characterized by mutual respect, service, and a shared belief in human dignity. He noted that this partnership is visible in everyday Tanzanian life through the Catholic Church's contributions to education, healthcare, and support for those on the margins, complementing national development efforts.

The Government reiterated its deep appreciation for Catholic institutions that continue to support education, health, and social development in Tanzania, as well as for opportunities extended to Tanzanian students in Pontifical institutions. Such exchanges, the Minister noted, are significant in building skills, character, and enduring people-to-people bonds.

Minister Kombo reaffirmed the Government's recognition of the important role played by the Tanzania Episcopal Conference in the social and civic life of the nation. He emphasized Tanzania's commitment to open, respectful, and constructive engagement with the Church at all levels, guided by dialogue, restraint, and the pursuit of the common good.

He further noted that Tanzania values the Catholic Church's moral leadership in promoting unity, compassion, and hope, particularly during moments of political transition.



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The Government welcomed the Church's continued contribution to national cohesion, observing that messages encouraging unity, dialogue, and restraint are deeply appreciated and strengthen the Church's role as a source of peace and moral anchorage within Tanzanian society.

Addressing the violence that occurred in parts of the country following the General Election held on 29 October 2025, Minister Kombo reaffirmed the Government's determination to restore order and return the country to normalcy. He noted that President Samia has directed the national response to focus on rebuilding trust and unity, including through the establishment of an independent review process led by a respected former judge to objectively establish the facts, draw lessons, and help prevent a recurrence.

The Government reiterated the President's commitment to inclusive dialogue with political parties, elders, youth, faith leaders, and civil society, guided by her 4R philosophy: Reconciliation, Resilience, Reforms, and Rebuilding. In this context, the Minister requested His Holiness to continue praying for the success of this national process, as well as for peace, unity, and the well-being of Tanzania and its people.

His Holiness Pope Leo XIV welcomed this request and expressed his readiness to pray for peace, unity, and reconciliation in Tanzania. He fondly recalled his early years in the country, sharing memories of meaningful pastoral engagement within missionary communities in Songea, Morogoro, Arusha, and Dar es Salaam. The Pope noted that these cherished experiences left a lasting impression on his pastoral journey and continue to shape his enduring personal bond with Tanzania and its people.

In addition to the Papal audience, Minister Kombo and his delegation held official talks with Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, the Holy See's Secretary for Relations with States and International Organizations, aimed at further strengthening diplomatic relations and deepening structured cooperation between Tanzania and the Holy See.

During the discussions, Minister Kombo welcomed the Holy See's request for Tanzania to establish a resident diplomatic representation to the Vatican. Tanzania is currently represented by a non-resident Ambassador based in Berlin, H.E. Hassan Iddi Mwamweta, who was present during the engagements.

The Government described the proposed step as a practical measure to consolidate bilateral cooperation and sustain regular engagement on shared priorities.



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The Tanzanian delegation was led by Hon. Mahmoud Thabit Kombo (MP) and included Hon. Palamagamba Kabudi, Minister of State; H.E. Hassan Iddi Mwamweta, Ambassador, non-resident to the Holy See and resident in Berlin; and Ambassador Noel E. Kaganda, Director of Multilateral Cooperation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation.

The Government stated that the Vatican engagement reflects Tanzania's 2026 diplomatic direction, as articulated by President Samia during her address to the diplomatic community in mid-January: Tanzania is "non-aligned but multi-engaged," pursuing a posture of sovereign pragmatism by engaging all partners in good faith while advancing national unity and shared prosperity.

Issued by:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation
United Republic of Tanzania

