

**Kenya: A Plea for Peace
Re-Run Presidential Election in October 2017**

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Two watershed events happened in the recent history of Kenya: the elections of August 8, 2017 and the subsequent annulment of the Presidential Election on September 1, 2017. Ordinarily, these seem innocuous but anybody conversant with the realities on the ground in Kenya would be concerned, hence the need to call for peace in the build-up to the repetition of the Presidential Elections in less than 60 days and immediately after. The travails and trials experienced in watering the soil of democracy should not always be with the blood of the people of Kenya.

The praise of International Election Observers of the Kenyan Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), the country's electoral body, after the voting on August 8, 2017, was understandable based on their observations at the polling stations. The harm seemed to have been done in the transmission of results.

The declaration returned President Uhuru Kenyatta elected. Honourable Raila Odinga eventually took the civil path and approached the Supreme Court of Kenya. The Court subsequently annulled the elections on the grounds of "illegalities and irregularities".

The Judiciary lived up to what was expected of it in the Kenya law as a strong institution and a neutral arbiter. The IEBC has started carrying out the decision of the Supreme Court which we believe will be done to the letter. We appreciate the IEBC in this respect. We look forward to a consultative process as the IEBC sets in motion the machinery for what should be a transparently free, fair and credible election. While we await a detailed judgment as promised by the Supreme Court, we enjoin the two major players in the Kenyan Presidential poll - Kenyatta and Raila - to tread cautiously, shun hate speeches and face their respective electioneering campaigns responsibly in a manner that would encourage faithful and transparent transmission of the actual accounts from the polling stations.

We appreciate the immediate statement and promise of President Kenyatta to abide by the verdict of the Court. Adopting or resorting to violence and foul language would do more harm than good to the unity and development of Kenya. We advise that both the incumbent and challenger should be more circumspect because the election is a means to an end and not the end in itself.

We plead that the two leaders demonstrably commit themselves to the quest for the welfare of their people who they are canvassing for votes to lead. Successive elections and their aftermath in Kenya have elicited more of hate than love and that is not a tenet to be propagated.

Finally, we call on global democrats and friends of our common humanity not to rest on their oars until both leaders accede to tread on the path of peace and good conscience and to follow the narrow but moral path to govern Kenyans. It is imperative that the next election should be seen as free, fair, credible and reflecting the wish and desire of Kenyan people in all aspects. We also plead that all eyes should be on the IEBC, with all assistance possible, towards an orderly polling and a credible one that ensures that technology is not manipulated to benefit either candidate. In this respect, we call on international organisations to which Kenya belongs and especially the UN, AU, EAC, Commonwealth and IGAD to assist in bolstering the sovereignty of the people of Kenya so that what IEBC will transmit in the repeated Presidential Election is transparently the wish of the people of Kenya.

Peace and justice must patently go together and thereby avoid blood-letting in Kenya as a result of elections.
People of Kenya must live in peace, security and harmony after the elections.