

WE-THE-PEOPLE IN THE COAST REGION PRESS STATEMENT ON THE STATE OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS IN KENYA

1. **We-the-People** is a congregation of civil society organisations; the academia, the media and citizens in general who have jointly and mutually come together over the past three days to tackle the political stalemate that has engulfed the nation. We are unified and dedicated to non-violence, fairness, truth and free, fair, credible and peaceful election.
2. The discussions and sessions we had have persuaded us that it is not feasible to hold a free, fair and credible election on October 26, 2017 as planned. **We-the-People** consequently insist that the election planned for October 26 is not viable and must be postponed.
3. The situation in the country is horrifying and there is a widening crisis, with ethnic mercenaries mobilising and communities arming themselves; politicians are making inflammatory speeches and fear-provoking ferocity. We are on the precipice of carnage and we are on the way to an upheaval.
4. We are to a great extent distressed at the sight of campaigners for the ruling party including public servants and members of the Cabinet putting on military attire at political gatherings. This ocular threats, bravado and show of might do not portend well for the people of Kenya. This development alone confirms a dangerous yearning for fascism and escape to unreason that is aimed at breeding resentment against the opposition supporters. It is a call to wipe out all the gains our democratic institutions have made and could lead to a full-blown conflagration.
5. The most frightening aspect of this crisis is the unleashing of police death squads upon peaceful processions as a result of what we believe are operational instructions of senior police officers. These squads are charged with eliminating certain communities specifically the Luo community. Carte blanche killing by the state and the police, nevertheless, does virtually nothing to reduce the political tension, it perpetuates the sense that the police are good at killing and are bad at law enforcement thus making the political tension even worse. For policing to truly create security, it must be conducted with respect for the human rights of all, including those who are aggrieved and are peacefully demonstrating.
6. While it is role of the police to maintain law and order during processions and its important to find lasting solution to the security and political tensions, the current approach of targeting opposition communities who are demonstrating is unsustainable, unconstitutional and is dehumanizing.
7. **We-the-People** demand that a national dialogue be convened to tackle the current political crisis in the country. As we arrange for national dialogue, it is imperative that:
 - i. The Chairperson of IEBC Mr Wafula Chebukati, who is the National Returning Officer for the presidential election, without delay seek the direction of the Supreme Court in light of the current state of affairs. It is the truth that the IEBC will not deliver a free, fair and credible election on October 26, 2017.
 - ii. That the political leadership dedicate to the national dialogues, and reduce the escalating tensions in the country. To reduce the tension, the President must not assent to the Election laws Amendment Bill, 2017, while all political stakeholders be obliged not to drum up their followers for violence.

- iii. Security forces must maintain the constitutional right to freedom of assembly and cease acts of viciousness and brutality. The appalling number of deaths and injuries of protestors has been condemned nationally and internationally, and must stop immediately. We insist and demand prompt action from Independent Policing Oversight Authority (IPOA), the Directorate of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) and other related State agencies for accountability and fair dealing for these actions.
8. There is no constitutional crisis. **We-the-People** remind those hanging on to this that the judiciary has in the past assisted the country to change the election dates in 2012 under the current Constitution and can still do so.
9. IEBC has the mandate and the power to defer election date in the event that the situation is hostile and would likely undermine free, fair and credible elections. Additionally, the direction of the Supreme Court on carrying out a fresh election is required after one of the candidates declared his withdrawal from the race on the basis of a 2013 decision. The court had previously observed that a candidate abandoning a fresh presidential race should trigger an entirely fresh election, including the nomination of candidates. The printing of ballot papers and declaration of a voting day cannot override the country's needs for accountability, truth and justice.
10. **We-the-People** conclude that the only way to protect a looming far-reaching violence is to discontinue and call off the election to bestow more time in the country so as to appropriately deal with and resolve the crisis, which includes receiving further instruction and guidance from the courts.

Done in Mombasa AND dated 24th October 2017.

The Coast Civil Society Reference Group Members

1. Action Aid
2. ACTIVISTA
3. Amani Counselling Centre
4. AWAPSA
5. Coast Education Centre (COEC)
6. Coast Interfaith Council of Clerics (CICC)
7. Coast Women in Development (CWID)
8. COFFEY
9. CDP-Kenya

10. Dream Achievers
11. FIDA Kenya
12. FHOK
13. Haki Africa
14. Haki Yetu
15. Haki Centre
16. Human Rights Agenda (HURIA)
17. Muslims for Human Rights (MUHURI)
18. Kwacha Afrika
19. KEMWA
20. KENIN
21. Kenya Community Support Centre (KECOSCE)
22. Kenya land Alliance (Coast)
23. Kenya Muslim Youth Alliance (KIMYA)
24. Kituo Cha Sheria
25. Kwale Human Rights Network (K-HURINET)
26. Independent Medical legal Unit (IMLU)
27. InformAction
28. JUMUIA YA WANAFUNZI PWANI
29. JUHUDI
30. LENGGO
31. LICODEP
32. Light Up Africa
33. Manyatta Youth Entertainment
34. Manyuyu Youth Organization
35. MEWA
36. MINDA Trust

37. MY-ASSEMBLE
38. NCCK
39. Pamoja Trust
40. Pwani Youth Network
41. Rapid Response Team (RRT)
42. REACHOUT
43. Sauti ya Wanawake
44. SIASA PLACE
45. SOLWODI
46. Stretchers Youth Organization
47. Transparency International (TI)
48. Trace Kenya
49. UJAMAA
50. World Grace