



BACKGROUND

Kenya has enjoyed a reputation as one of East Africa's most stable nations since achieving independence from the UK in 1963.

Tribal bonds remain strong in Kenya, with the country's 36 million people claiming allegiance to over 40 different tribes.

On 31st December 2007, Election officials announced President Mwai Kibaki the winner with 51.3 percent of the vote, while Odinga garnered 48.7 percent, in the closest presidential vote in Kenyan electoral history. Shortly after, different parts of the country were scarred with simmering ethnic tensions, crime and violence.

Alexander Lambsdorff, the head of the EU Election Observation Mission in Kenya, cited discrepancies in vote counts, election observers being turned away from polling places and observers being refused entrance to the electoral commission vote-counting room.

EFFECT

Approximately 500 people have been killed in the post- election violence and over 250, 000 others displaced. Gangs of young men roamed in some residential areas, evicting those from other tribes later torching their houses and property.

In a particularly disturbing incident, a mob burned a church where Kenyans were seeking refuge from the violence in the city of Eldoret 185 miles northwest of Nairobi. The Red Cross told Associated Press (AP) that at least 50 were burned to death at the church, some of them children.

Displaced people have sought refuge in police stations and churches. The military has mobilised a convoy of lorries to transport people from the affected areas to other calm places. Those affected in the Rift Valley are camping at the Nakuru showground though others are still stranded in their localities. Unfortunately most of the camps are overcrowded and the sanitation facilities are overstretched thus need for more amenities. Medication for the displaced is also limited though some health organizations have set up dispensaries to assist in situations which require urgent medical attention.



Evacuating people from the affected areas



Kenya's national police commissioner has said an investigation into the incident is under way and expressed shock that the violence had occurred in a church. "What we now witness is a cold and calculated plan to organize and engage in massacres," government spokesman Alfred Mutua said.

In a new year's message, the President Mr. Kibaki urged the Kenyans to remain calm. "It now is a time for healing and reconciliation amongst all Kenyans," he said.

Many businesses remained closed for days due to security alert. In some towns looting and torching business premises were recorded. Most of the office workers resumed work on 7th January though many were expected to report back on 3rd January after the December holidays.

In spite of a bountiful harvest peak season in agricultural produce, most of the people are experiencing food shortage since the food crops cannot reach the market due to hampered transportation networks. This has resulted to high prices in food stuff in a period where resources are limited.

HUMANITARIAN AID

The International Red Cross sent staff to the country to assess how to give the Kenyan Red Cross enough provisions to sustain at least 100,000 people with basics for several weeks. Churches, corporate organisations, Non- governmental organisations and individuals have given food stuff and other necessities like blankets. International donors have stepped in to meet the needs of the swelling number of displaced persons.

EFFECT ON ECONOMY

The International business community hopes to see the country back to work and resume its strong economic growth.

Kenya has a large multi- national presence. Shell (RDSA) has established 131 gas stations. More than a week after the election, the biggest obstacle to getting the economy back on track remains transportation. In the skirmishes, a number of fueling stations were razed



down to ashes. Fuel shortages has hit Kenyan cities and Uganda as roadblocks manned by armed gangs have made overland travel far more dangerous. Kenya's status as a regional power depends on the goods and fuel it sends to neighboring nations. Its port at Mombasa is the largest in East Africa.

Randy Fleitman, an economic official at the U.S Embassy in Nairobi says even big American firms like Coca- cola and Del Monte are reporting problems transporting goods and workers. Bout low mobility is the "killer for the small firms, the Kenyan firms."

Kenya has shown impressive growth in recent years and compared with its neighbors, it boasts strong infrastructure and foreign investment. It owes much of its growth to consumer spending and developing industries internally.

Kenya has become a leading exporter of cut flowers to Europe. Northwest of Nairobi in the Rift Valley, immense greenhouses and company housing line the road leading to the popular resort of Lake Naivasha.

There are other reasons to remain optimistic. The country is well established as the region's manufacturing hub. A large and well- educated English-speaking population makes Kenya a potential market for call centers, should the IT infrastructure improve.

Tourists crowd its magnificent beaches sand wildlife reserves, and so far there have not been reports of rioters targeting tourists or damage tourist facilities. However, a group representing large British tour operators has suspended outbound trips until at least Jan 7. It's a symbolic blow to this vital sector. If Kenya does not settle the skirmishes, visitors may target Tanzania which offers similar attractions.

Most parts of the country depend on local industries and micro- enterprise some of which were greatly affected by looting and burning down of premises. This expands the margin of the unemployed thus straining the budget that Kenyans have struggled to maintain through established taxation systems.

NAIROBI STOCK EXCHANGE

On Jan. 2, the first trading day after the election, the Nairobi Stock Exchange lost about 5 percent of its total market capital to close around \$12.3 billion (less than Starbucks). Trading was suspended shortly amid fears for employee safety. In response to the crisis, Standard and Poor's downgraded Kenya's currency rating. At the end of the year 2007, the investors were anticipating two big deals. KenGen, the leading utility, planned to raise \$1 billion to fund increasing electric capacity. The largest telecom, Safaricom, which is partly owned by British giant Vodafone (VOD), expects to sell a stake in an IPO that could be the largest ever in East Africa. Whether these deals go through should be a good measure of investor confidence.



MEDIATION

Archbishop Desmond Tutu visited Kenya trying to mediate a solution to the violence that followed December 27 elections. "People have been incensed by the level of corruption," he said:

He spoke to CNN as an uneasy calm hung over the Kenyan capital Friday, after almost a week of violence that, according to government figures, has left at least 500 people dead and up to 250,000 people internally displaced.



Bishop Tutu, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, added he was still hopeful a diplomatic solution could be found to ending the violence that accompanied the disputed election result. Tutu said ethnic differences should not be allowed to split the country apart. "Our diversity is not something to divide us," he told CNN.

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice also has sent diplomat Jendayi Frazer, to meet with Kibaki, [Odinga](#) and other political leaders, State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said.

"It is important for the Kenyan people and their democracy to work within the confines of their law and constitution to find a political way forward and, most importantly, to bring about an end to the violence," said U.S. State Department spokesman Sean McCormack.

Ghanaian President John Kufuor, the head of the African Union, arrived in Nairobi, the Kenyan capital, to act as a mediator. The Ghanaian president held separate meetings with President Kibaki and Hon. Raila.

Peace keeping missioners include US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Ms. Jendayi Frazer and US ambassador Michael Ranneberger, among other African Presidents.

"It's hard-pressed to comprehend here how this could have gone so wrong in terms of Kenya being on its way to some stability and then having this election turn into such a violent situation," said White House press secretary Dana Perino in a statement on behalf of the Bush administration.



SITUATION ON THE GROUND



Nakuru. The displaced are camped at Nakuru show ground.

Kenyans continues to appeal to all humanitarian organizations, religious organizations and well wishers to step in and assist many Kenyans who are in dire need of basic necessities such as food, clothing, bedding, medication and sanitation facilities.

- ◆ Internally Displaced persons (IDP's) who had been stranded in Eldoret as a result of barricaded roads were given police and military escort and evacuated to Nakuru on Saturday 5th January 2008. However some are still stranded in Eldoret while the need for humanitarian assistance has gone up in Nakuru.
- ◆ In the Coast Province, Internally displaced persons are seeking shelter at Moi International Airport football ground in Changamwe and in various areas in Mombasa.
- ◆ People evicted from their homes in Saboti, constituency, Transmara are starving and need food and other basic commodities. The displaced are camping at Kiungani, Kiminini, Sihendu, Liungani, and Kitale police station.
- ◆ About 100 people have been camping at Juja Police station since 5th January 2008 after receiving threatening leaflets. Several families from Gitambaya village have been camping at Ruiru Prison.
- ◆ Estimated 1,500 people have been stranded at Burnt Forest, at the junction to Kapsabet near the GSU post. They are calling for humanitarian assistance.
- ◆ Over 5,400 Kenyans have fled to Uganda escaping the violence in Western and Nyanza provinces. There is an appeal for their safety in Uganda.
- ◆ Over 150 displaced persons are still stuck at Siaya Police station due to crisis of public transportation.
- ◆ Lugari DC quoted that a total of 21,000 people are displaced and taking refuge at Lumakanda, Lugari and Turbo areas.

INTERVENTIONS

- ◆ Over 10,000 people have been safely evacuated from Eldoret to Nakuru and other safer places under police and military escort. There are also efforts to rescue people affected in Keiyo, Marakwet and Nandi in North Rift Region.
- ◆ Community mediators are working on conflict resolution strategies in Uasin Gishu to assist in addressing the situation. A crisis response group has been formed in North Rift (Eldoret) headed by Bishop Cornelius Korir to coordinate humanitarian and safety interventions
- ◆ In Nairobi, religious leaders have called on all stakeholders to promote peace at this crucial time in the history of Kenya.
- ◆ Bishop Desmond Tutu visited the country and expressed the need for mediation and reconciliation. He met Hon. Raila Odinga and the President Mwai Kibaki individually between 3rd and 4th December 2008.



- ◆ Nine media houses issued a joint statement through the Media Council of Kenya and dedicated 1 hour national prayers for the country on Sunday 6th January 2008 which was aired simultaneously by media houses. Different religious leaders interceded for peace and prayed for people suffering physically and emotionally across the country.
- ◆ The World Food Programme has released 670 tonnes of food as a humanitarian response to the current crisis.
- ◆ The Kenya Red Cross has since distributed 124 tonnes of food to the displaced in Eldoret.

PRAYER POINTS

- Peace in the nation
- Peace talks to continue and lasting solutions agreed upon
- God's wisdom to leaders and mediators to make the right decisions for the country
- Healing and reconciliation at the community level i.e. peaceful co- existence
- Support for the affected to resume normal lives
- Security in the nation
- Learning institutions- travel safety for the students, availability of finances for school needs and requirements

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