

Genocide Watch: Kenya

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Genocide Watch has called a Genocide Alert because of genocidal massacres that are increasing daily in Kenya in the wake of a disputed election between President Mwai Kibaki, who is a member of the Kikuyu ethnic group, and Mr. Raila Odinga, who is ethnically a Luo.

Ethnic riots have broken out in Nairobi, Kisumu, Eldoret, and numerous other places in Kenya. People have been pulled from their cars and their identification cards checked for their names, which symbolize their ethnic identity, and then killed if they belong to groups being targeted. Hundreds of people have already been murdered. Today a church in Eldoret was locked and the people inside were burned to death by a mob.

Ethnic massacres are an indicator that the risk of genocide in Kenya has risen to Stage 6, the Preparation stage. Kenya has not yet descended into actual genocide. However, the next stage in the process is actual genocide, and Kenya is close to that stage. Genocide can be bilateral, with perpetrators from two (or more) groups killing members of other groups because of their ethnic identity. Burundi had such bilateral genocide from 1993 – 1995.

President Kibaki claimed victory and was sworn in for another term as President despite strong evidence of election fraud in Kikuyu districts, some of which reported more votes than the voters registered in the districts. The European Commission and African Union have called for independent inquiries into the vote counting process, which the Kenyan Election Commission said gave a narrow victory to Kibaki, despite his party's loss of many seats in Parliament.

Genocide Watch makes the following recommendations:

1. No country should recognize or congratulate President Kibaki for his "re-election" until the results are confirmed by independent election inquiries.
2. Mr. Odinga should publically denounce violence against Kikuyus, and President Kibaki should forbid violence against Luos and other ethnic groups.
3. President Kibaki and Mr. Odinga should declare their willingness to abide by the decision of an independent election inquiry commission whose members are named by both men, including trusted leaders from other African countries.
4. Both President Kibaki and Mr. Odinga should refrain from holding mass rallies, and should firmly forbid their supporters from joining criminal militias that are murdering and looting. Members of such militias should be arrested quickly and tried for their crimes.
5. Religious and civil society groups in Kenya should vigorously oppose the violence and protect people who are targeted because of their ethnic identity.
6. The African Union should begin immediate planning to send well equipped police forces to Kenya to quell the ethnic rioting there. The United Nations should condemn the violence and financially support African Union efforts to mediate the dispute and prevent further violence.