



Kenya Muslims Offering to Protect Christian Churches

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A leading member of Kenya's Inter-Religious Council says Muslim leaders are offering to protect Christian churches following deadly attacks on Sunday.

In an interview with VOA, Mustafa Ali welcomed the gesture, which he described as "unprecedented."

"The Muslim leaderships in the country, particularly in northeastern Kenya, are saying that they are offering Muslims themselves to guard the churches, particularly on Sundays as Christians go to the churches and pray."

Ali said Christian-Muslim relations in Kenya are generally very good, unlike in Nigeria — where officials blame rising violence partly on tension between Christians and Muslims.

Gunmen attacked two Christian churches in the Kenyan town of Garrisa on Sunday, killing 17 people and wounding dozens of others. No one has claimed responsibility for the violence.

On Monday, Prime Minister Raila Odinga said the attacks were aimed at sparking conflict between Christians and Muslims in Kenya, and urged Kenyans not to allow it to happen.

Mr. Odinga said the violence was the work of "terrorists" upset about Kenya's pursuit of al-Shabab in neighboring Somalia.

Kenya sent troops into Somalia in October to fight the Islamist militant group, which Kenya blames for a series of cross-border kidnappings and attacks.