

Joint Statement by Heads of Mission in Kenya

On The Presidential Election

September 19, 2017

As Kenyans await the Supreme Court's release of its full ruling on the presidential election, we urge leaders and citizens to refrain from rhetoric and actions that incite hatred and violence. Now is the time to focus on preparing for the new poll, which, in line with the Court's order and the Constitution, must be run by the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission and be held by the end of October.

In recent months Kenya has witnessed an upsurge in troubling "fake news," hate speech, and ethnic profiling. In addition, there have been unfounded attacks on individuals and institutions, for instance on the judiciary and the IEBC. While we support freedom of speech, baseless attacks and lies must stop, and leaders on all sides should work to ensure they do. They risk undermining Kenya's Constitution, the rule of law, and the nation's peace and security.

In particular, we condemn the malicious "Judicial Capture" documents that have been publicly circulating. They contain false statements that could endanger lives. We urge the Kenyan authorities to hold to account those responsible for hate speech and incitement and to ensure the safety of those wrongly attacked, including members of our own Mission staffs. We and our teams will continue to act with complete impartiality, in line with our shared commitment to Kenya's Constitution and its institutions.

We will continue to work with the IEBC and with all Kenyans who seek to ensure the new presidential election is free, fair, and credible. A successful poll will require goodwill and flexibility from leaders and citizens alike. Politics must not be a matter of life or death. We urge everyone to keep the peace and to respect the Constitution, its values, and the institutions it established. As partners, we stand with Kenyans who seek to move the country forward and to strengthen the country's democracy.

Robert F. Godec
Ambassador of the United States

Nic Hailey
High Commissioner for the United Kingdom

Stefano A. Dejak
Ambassador of the European Union

Victor Conrad Rønneberg
Ambassador of Norway

Mette Knudsen
Ambassador of Denmark

Jutta Frasch
Ambassador of Germany

Frans Makken
Ambassador of the Netherlands

Mauro Massoni
Ambassador of Italy

Sara Hradecky
High Commissioner for Canada

Fredrik Folkunger
Chargé d'Affaires a.i., Sweden

Vincent Willekens
Chargé d'Affaires a.i., Belgium

Tarja Fernández
Ambassador of Finland

Antoine Sivan
Ambassador of France

Ralf Heckner
Ambassador of Switzerland

Quinton Devlin
Chargé d'Affaires a.i., Australia

Sergiusz Wolski,
Chargé d'Affaires a.i., Poland