



Concerned Citizens for Peace

Giving a voice to Kenyan citizens to engage and contribute in the creation of peace and hope



Mission statement: to create and to give a voice to the Kenyan citizen to engage and contribute in the creation of peace and hope

Vision: to create a citizen movement that will sustain just peace for all

About the initiative: The concerned citizens for peace initiative came into being on January 1, 2008 after violence erupted in Kenya following claims of rigging and a flawed election process in the country. The original five core members- who included Kenyan peace mediators and members of the civil society- started the group in order to rally for peace and tolerance and to call for dialogue after the country witnessed its worst post-election violence that led to political and ethnic killings and the wanton destruction of property. The group wanted to see a Kenya without violence, a Kenya that is not divided on political or tribal lines. They wanted to see a peaceful Kenya, which had one people who were called Kenyan.

The original five core members included:

- a. **Ambassador Bethuel Kiplagat-** Kenyan renowned peace mediator and former special envoy for Somalia
- b. **General Daniel Opande (Rtd)** - Kenyan renowned Peacekeeper in Liberia
- c. **General Lazaro Sumbeiywo(Rtd)** - served as Kenya's Special Envoy to the IGAD-led Sudanese peace process (1997-98) and then as mediator (2001-05)
- d. **Ms. Dekha Ibrahim Abdi-** 2007 Rights Livelihood Prize Winner
- e. **George Wachira-** A policy Advisor with NPI

The concerned citizens for peace initiative works in two levels:

- a. Creation of a conducive peaceful environment
- b. Encouraging dialogue on pertinent issues during the current crisis

What started off as an initiative by a small group of concerned Kenyans has now come to be seen as a beacon of light during Kenya's darkest moments in its history. Through peace messages in the print and electronic media, mobile phones and word of mouth during the onset of the violence in the country, the initiative has grown from five members with the goodwill of hundreds of concerned Kenyans with the numbers increasing each day. With the goodwill shown by citizens of Kenya from across the country who would like to see a peaceful Kenya, the initiative has been able to harness both intellectual and material capabilities that has led to greater initiatives in the civil society, media, international NGOs, development agencies and the business community in the country.





The concerned citizens for peace initiative meets every day to deliberate on methods of increasing tolerance in the country and encouraging more and more individuals and organizations to play a part in planting seeds of peace and tolerance across the country. The daily meetings held with media representatives, civil society, international NGOs, development agencies and the business community are known as "idea harvesting sessions" and are open to all who may have inputs or ideas. These sessions have played a vital role in creating networks that have played a big part in linking like minded Kenyans and organizations to work together to come up with initiatives to restore peace in the country.

The concerned citizens for peace are not a permanent group of people but would like to be there for Kenya during moments of crisis to light the path to peace for our leaders and fellow Kenyans in moments of confusion and turmoil such as what the country is experiencing at the moment.

A seven point citizens agenda for peace, truth and justice

Having carefully studied the complexity of the challenges facing our nation, the following seven issues should be discussed and resolved as part of the negotiation agenda:

1. ***Restoring peace, reconciliation and national healing*** – This will require all actors to work cooperatively to bring an immediate end to the violence, enable peaceful political activity, actively engage in reconciling communities and encourage peace initiatives. To achieve this agenda we are in contact with Kisumu Central MP elect Hon Shakeel Ahmed who has 130 bodies lying in the mortuary and they require dignified burial as part of the healing process. This initiative requires USD credited to Nairobi Peace Initiative – Africa account, Stanbic Bank Kenya LTD, USD Account Number 0240076031501 Westland Branch, P.O Box 30550 Nairobi. The swift code is SBIC – KE - NXA
2. ***Trust and confidence building for the political players*** – the current crisis has been precipitated by mistrust that has accumulated over time. Deliberate efforts need to be undertaken to rebuild trust and confidence between and among political players to enhance the capacity for dialogue and constructive engagement. All political players must be bound by the agreements reached in the negotiations.

3. **Election closure** – The disputed presidential poll has to be brought to closure if Kenyans are to have faith in the electoral process. This will require some form of agreement on the final presidential poll. Any rerun of the election will need to take account of the legal and constitutional implications that impact on the timing and eligibility for such an election.
4. **Composition and duration of a Government of National Unity** – Given the trends in both presidential and parliamentary results, a grand coalition or Government of National Unity will command a significant popular mandate and be well placed to set the pace for some of the deeper issues that have led to the current crisis. It is therefore necessary for the parties to agree the structure, character, and guiding principles for such a Government, as well as its duration. The duration will need to recognize the dispute as well as take account of the time required to put in place the required institutional reforms before the next election.
5. **Priority agenda for the Government of National Unity** – Given the history of mistrust and acrimony experience in the last coalition government, it will be necessary for the GNU to first agree the priority agenda for the government. Agenda must be publicly acknowledged and be the basis for holding the Government to account. The priority agenda should include a mechanism for responding to new developments. Key among the items to be included in the priority agenda include:
 - a. Constituting a body to carry out a comprehensive review of the election process, identify the reforms necessary to restore confidence and spirited public information, education and communication campaigns to reverse the negative perceptions emanating from the disputed poll.
 - b. Constitutional reforms to address some of the deep-rooted issues including an improved electoral framework, revised mechanisms for transfer of power, devolution and distribution of resources for equitable development, structure of Government and powers of the Executive;
 - c. Administrative and legal reform issues to address the weaknesses identified in the electoral process
 - d. The return of internally displaced persons and reconstruction
 - e. Priority initiatives to deliver equitable economic growth
 - f. A comprehensive framework to address land issues
 - g. An anti-corruption agenda and a robust transparent Public Accountability framework.
 - h. The establishment of the truth of the allegations of all forms of ethnic cleansing with a view to restitution and justice
6. **The next Presidential and/or National Elections** - The timing of the next Presidential and/ or National Elections should be agreed as part of the negotiated settlement.
7. **Global agenda to restore international respectability** – The country has suffered considerable damage from the post election violence. Deliberate efforts need to be made to restore our standing in the regional and international arena. A global agenda shared with all stakeholders should be agreed to form part of efforts and reclaiming our pride of place among nations

All Kenyans of goodwill are invited to discuss this framework and endorse it to make it a truly citizen agenda. We also invite friends of Kenya and our international partners to provide support to ensure that the aspirations included in this agenda are realized.

Despite this trying turns and the sufferiHas worked together with the Kenyan media council in creating non-political peace messages that are aired daily on prime time TV and radio for free

Some of the major achievements that the group has been able to accomplish in the past one week (January 1, 2008 to January 7, 2008) include:

1. Have been able to work together with one of Kenya's leading mobile phone companies, CELTEL, to have short message service (SMS) text sent to all subscribers for free calling on them to be peaceful and to shun hatred and tribalism.
2. The UNDP donor coordination group meeting where various donor/development agencies agreed to work together occurred in one of the concerned citizens for peace initiative
3. Has called together, Kenyan Music Celebrities who have agreed to produce music that encourage peace and tolerance. The celebrities are now working on a peace album.
4. The group has been holding meetings with political stakeholders from both ODM and PNU to discuss initiatives on how to end the stalemate currently being experienced by the two political parties.
5. Through the media council, the initiative has been able to encourage media to give media blackouts to politicians perpetuating for hate. All media houses have agreed to forego profits and have refused to air any political adverts with hate messages from any political party.
6. Through its community level initiative, the group has been able to work with Peace net and the Nairobi peace initiative, local civil society groups, to call on politicians to go to their home areas and rally for peace and tolerance, encouraged an initiative for politicians wives to be part of lobbying the citizens for peace.
7. Under the umbrella of the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK) religious leaders have set up four response committees- Communication, spiritual, social and political. They have also set up Social committees working on humanitarian assistance with the Red cross and raising food and non food items and encouraging families to take up displaced people.

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