



# KENYA EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE

## CATHOLIC SECRETARIAT

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Our Ref:

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Date:

### **MY PEACE I GIVE YOU**

***Our Dear Kenyans, May the Peace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all***

We the Bishops of Kenya, with deep concern wish to address all our Christians and Kenyans in general, at this critical and crucial moment of our country.

We have witnessed with deep sorrow and concern the outbreak of violence and the breakdown of law and order that has led to, numerous deaths, injuries and destruction of property, creating fear and helplessness that has led many to flee from their homes.

We wish to make a passionate appeal to all Kenyans, men and women, old and youth, from all the political parties, and from all walks of life, to refrain from violence and from the senseless killing of our brothers and sisters!

Our dear people, Kenya is ours together! It is a time to stop and reflect on the consequences of our actions.

We have lived together for all these years as brothers and sisters. There is therefore no reason for us to be used to raise our hand against our neighbor because he or she belongs to a different ethnic group or political affiliation. Life is Sacred! We all belong to one family of God.

We realize that at the root of the escalation of violence is the results of the recently concluded General Elections.

Several allegations of electoral malpractices have been brought forward. We urge that everything possible should be done in order to investigate and establish the truth of these claims, by other means other than violence and destruction of property. We make an appeal to all responsible to seek ways like establishing a Commission to audit and specifically review the tallying of the Parliamentary and Presidential polls.

We must uphold justice, especially in those aggrieved persons, those who feel their rights have been infringed. Those whose property has been looted. Let us open the channels of justice, and forge the proper instruments of making sure justice prevails. We also condemn the shooting of several innocent bystanders, as well as other Kenyans, and urge restraint among the Security Forces.

We appeal specifically to the political leaders (Hon. Mwai Kibaki and Hon. Raila Odinga) to reach out to one another through dialogue in order to seek a solution to the present situation. This country needs peace that is based on justice and true brotherhood. We further urge them to look for independent mediation if need be!

Kenya has always been an island of peace and we pray and urge all Kenyans to take upon themselves to come out clearly now to promote peace and safeguard our beloved Nation.

Our dear people, we must all be responsible for the security and peaceful co-existence in our country

- (a) Let us restrain ourselves from all violent, destructive or divisive behaviour remarks or comments.
- (b) Refuse to take part in any form of destruction, looting or even receiving stolen goods.
- (c) Do not think you are powerless. You can do something. Talk to relatives, friends, neighbours, people you know who can help resolve the current situations.
- (d) Encourage any person involved in or engaged in destructive behaviour to cease from doing so.
- (e) At this time of dire need be ready to share basic goods like food shelter and water with people with greater need than ourselves.
- (f) We especially urge our youth not to be enticed to take up violent means.

We are close to the many who have lost their loved ones in these skirmishes. As we console you, we pray for you to find peace in your hearts. We also feel with those injured, abused and displaced, as we journey with you at this difficult moment.

Once more we offer our mediation in this difficult crisis. We especially urge our priests and religious in our parishes and religious communities to facilitate as much as possible justice, peace and solidarity to those suffering at this moment.

We finally appeal to all Kenyans to have recourse to prayer, and to organize special prayers for peace in our Churches whenever possible.

***'Peace I give you, my own peace, I give you.***

***A Peace with the world cannot give,***

***This is my gift to you! John 14.27***

**"Let Justice be our shield and defender"**

**Signed:**



**His Eminence John Cardinal Njue**

**Archbishop of Nairobi**

**-Apostolic Administrator, Murang'a/Nyeri**

**Chairman, Kenya Episcopal Conference**

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**2<sup>nd</sup> January 2008**