



## **world without wars and violence**

International Humanist Organisation  
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### **ON THE UPRISE OF VIOLENCE AT THE KENYA COAST**

**World without Wars is greatly concerned by the rise in violent activities taking place in the coastal region of Kenya.**

We believe the root cause of the tribal violence in Tana Delta County to be politically instigated, disguised as border conflict between two tribes co-habiting the area. This has led to two weeks of organized raids and retaliatory attacks resulting in the slaughter of more than 60 innocent lives, the destruction of property, displacement of families after their houses were razed to the ground and an ensuing humanitarian crisis. The massacre has led to the deployment of over 100 police officers in an operation to disarm the locals who are able to access small arms all too easily.

In Mombasa County, the residents have faced three days of religious violence between Muslims and their Christian counterparts sparked by the killing of a sheikh. Several churches have been burnt by arsonists supported by criminals who have taken advantage of the polarized situation to loot and destroy property in the town. Three lives including two police officers have been lost in the ensuing melee. Nevertheless the town has experienced relative calm and the joint efforts by Muslim and Christian clerics to mend fences following the skirmishes in Mombasa are laudable.

We denounce the heinous acts experienced in this region of the country as barbaric, ungodly and in complete defiance of the spirit of good neighbourliness that rejects violence in all its forms. With an election on the horizon it is more important than ever that we remember that Kenya was on the brink of genocide in 2008 and we could end up there again if we do not make efforts to embrace nonviolence in all aspect of our lives.

We denounce those who are responsible for this violence; the criminal thugs, the irresponsible politicians who promote tribal divisions, and the neighbours who ignore the suffering of those around them and do nothing to assist.

There are many alternative ways of airing grievances and solving differences of any magnitude other than resorting to violent means.

We wish to encourage all Kenyan citizens to be respectful of each other and embrace genuine dialogue in cases of conflict, to promote peaceful coexistence and treat our neighbours as we would like to be treated. Today, everybody is in no doubt that the country needs a peaceful electioneering period and not the bloody one already being exhibited at the coast.

We call on the authorities of the area and across Kenya to promote disarmament of small arms.

We call on religious leaders to continue their good efforts to promote tolerance and respect for others.

We call on politicians to take more steps to resolve the economic hardship and the tribal manipulation that leads to so much violence among the people of Kenya.

Finally we call on all Kenyans to join in efforts to prevent violent conflicts whatever the basis may be: religion, tribe, gender, race or any other excuse. We should all accept that peace is the responsibility of all of us, that nonviolence is the only way to resolve conflict and in this light each of us should be asking ourselves what role we are playing to achieve a peaceful and nonviolent society.