



Press release

Dangerous political stand-off, uncontested election and assaults on institutions damage Kenya's democracy

Nairobi, 31 October 2017

The European Union election observation mission (EU EOM) Kenya 2017 today issued its [preliminary statement](#) on the 26 October presidential election, pointing to actions on both sides of the political divide that damaged the electoral process, and calling for urgent political dialogue.

Chief Observer, Marietje Schaake (Member of the European Parliament), said: “Actions by both sides have put the people and institutions of Kenya in an extremely difficult position. These include attacks on the judiciary as well as the IEBC, the introduction of changes to the legal framework without consensus, obstruction of the electoral process and officials, and some disproportionate actions by the security forces.”

Ms Schaake emphasized: “The violence has resulted in the loss of people's lives and is harming the nation.” She again called for an end to violence and for an urgent dialogue between the main political leaders.

“More than ever there is a need in Kenya for political leaders to take up their responsibility and find a way out of the impasse through direct talks at the highest level. Institutions need to be allowed to function with full independence and without interference or intimidation. This is all part of honouring Kenya's progressive Constitution and respecting citizens' rights. I am convinced the vast majority of Kenyans want nothing more than a peaceful society and a well-functioning democracy.”

The EU EOM has issued a number of recommendations, including that grievances over the electoral processes be addressed through judicial channels for legally-mandated remedy, and that the courts in turn be able to operate freely without intimidation.

The Chief Observer added: “Security agencies must serve all Kenyans equally, and be fully accountable, including by providing public information on forces deployed and actions taken. There should be independent investigation into their actions and any casualties, with information made public on subsequent measures taken.”

The EU EOM will continue observing the process independently and impartially, including the response to results and the petitions process. A final report with recommendations will be released in approximately two months. The mission has been in-country since mid-June.

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