

Kenya 2022 Elections Risk Monitor Weekly Report

06th June 2022

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Summary

- Alleged 'hate speech' phrases flagged by the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC), including **madoadoa**, were used in a political rally in Nairobi on 05th June, sparking widespread debate across social media. This highlights the NCIC list's lack of deterrent effect and could lead to further violations.
- The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) disqualified several aspirants from running for political seats over integrity and technicality issues while several presidential candidates protested their disqualification from the ballot.

Last 7 days

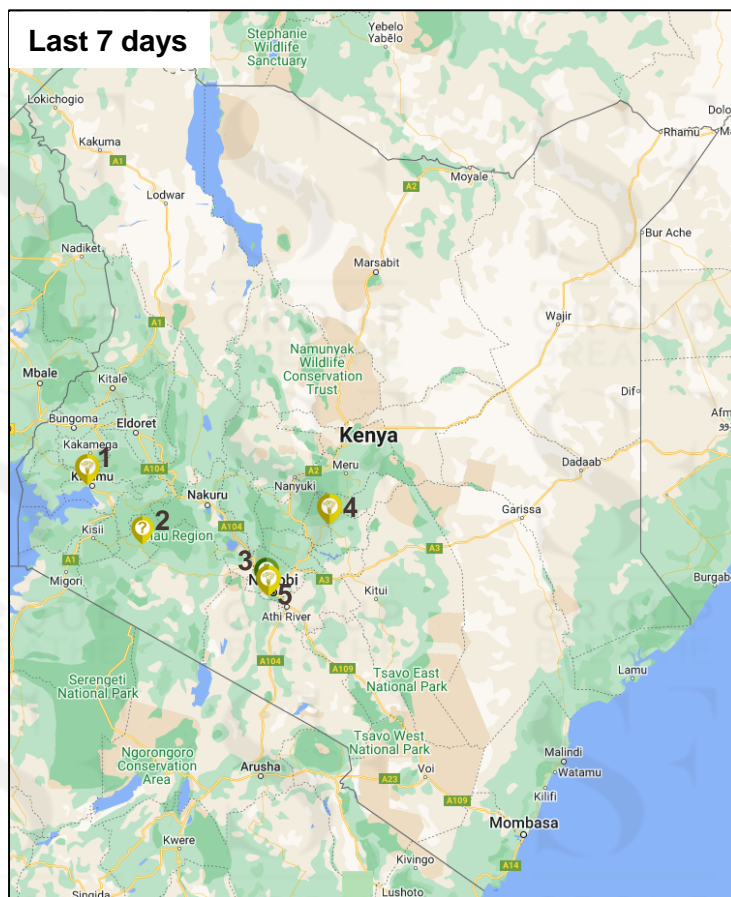
1 – 04th June – Election Violence, Kiremba Grounds, Kisumu County – Supporters of Kisumu Central Member of Parliament (MP), identified as Fred Ouda, clashed with supporters of Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) MP aspirant in the oncoming elections, identified as Joshua Oron, during a political campaign hosted by Kisumu Governor Anyang Nyong'o in Kiremba Grounds, Kisumu County.

2 – 03rd June – Other, Bomet County – An election campaign billboard affiliated with the 'Azimio la Umoja' Coalition was vandalised by unidentified suspects in Bomet, Bomet County.

3 – 01st June – Government Security Response, Kibarage, Nairobi County – Three suspects were arrested in Kibarage, Nairobi, Nairobi County, for allegedly kidnapping the security guard of Nairobi Woman Representative Esther Passaris, and demanding a KES 100,000 (USD 855.80) ransom. Esther Passaris reported the incident to the police who then later arrested one suspect, leading them to Kibarage where the victim was being held.

4 – 01st June – Election Violence, Embu, Embu County – Opposing political groups clashed during Madrake Day celebrations in Embu, Embu County. Government security forces managed to restore calm. No arrests were reported.

5 – 30th May – Protest, Bomas of Kenya, Lang'ata, Nairobi County – Reports suggest that a presidential aspirant for the 09th August 2022 General Election identified as Mwangi wa Iria has blocked the entrance of Bomas of Kenya in Lang'ata, Nairobi County, seeking audience with officials from the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC). It was indicated that the individual protested after being left out of a list of presidential aspirants seeking clearance to run by the Commission.



Outlook - Next 7 days

- 06th June – Kenya Kwanza Coalition Political Campaign, Garissa County.
- 06th June – Azimio La Umoja Manifesto launch, Nyayo National Stadium, Nairobi County.
- 13th to 19th June – Azimio La Umoja Coalition Political Campaign, Kisii, Nyamira, Homa Bay, Migori, Siaya and Kisumu Counties.
- 15th June – Kenya Kwanza Economic Forum Discussions, Turkana County.

Significant Stories

Kalonzo announces his return to the Azimio coalition

Wiper Party leader, Kalonzo Musyoka, has reportedly reunited with the Azimio la Umoja coalition barely a month after announcing his withdrawal from the coalition. Whilst making the announcement, Mr Kalonzo urged the Kamba community to bear with him and support his political move – stating that it was in their best interest.

Following Raila Odinga's announcement that Martha Karua would act as his running mate, Kalonzo stated that he would run for the presidency himself. However, The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) blocked his application to run due to not meeting the criteria or requirements needed.

NCIC survey raises red flag on election violence hotspots

A report published by the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) has highlighted six counties that are likely to experience election-related violence ahead of the 09th August general elections: Nairobi, Nakuru, Kericho, Kisumu, Uasin Gishu and Mombasa.

The relevant vulnerabilities were classified into three categories: pre-existing conflict factors with an index of 53.58%, potential triggers (53.4%) and weak institutional capacities (53.32%).

Pre-existing conflict factors include informal settlements with a high population, inequality across ethnic communities, competition over scarce resources, the existence of organised criminal gangs, the proliferation of small arms, drug and substance abuse, and history of election violence among others.

Potential triggers of violence were identified as levels of hate speech, contestation in party primaries, non-acceptance of election results, fake news, harassment of political party agents, results

contrary to opinion polls and disruption of mainstream media.

Weak institutional capacities refers to the potential use of force by the police, low trust in the IEBC, low trust in the Judiciary, inadequate conflict resolution capacities, and lack of enactment of peace policies as some of the factors likely to predispose the country to electoral violence.

Raila Odinga assures EU envoys of stronger ties if he wins

Azimio la Umoja presidential candidate, Raila Odinga, assured European Union (EU) leader that, if his presidential campaign is successful, he shall work to strengthen Kenya's ties with EU states. Citing Kenya's status within the region and its regional economic impact, Odinga stated that his administration would enhance and deepen mutually-beneficial ties.

The meeting came not long after Odinga met with religious leaders in Kiambu County, which was also attended by Interior Principal Secretary Karanja Kibicho, is said to have been focused on peaceful campaigns ahead of the August polls.

William Ruto withdraws from participating in presidential debates

Deputy President, and Kenya Kwanza presidential candidate, William Ruto, has reportedly announced his withdrawal from presidential debates. Citing marginalisation and bias media coverage, Mr Ruto urged the media to play a rightful role of informing and cultivating an all-inclusive discourse, further demanding fair play in the coverage of political campaigns ahead of the August polls.

Furthermore, in an address to EU leaders, Mr Ruto stressed the apparent advantages of his party's political and economic policies ahead of the 09th August general elections.

Weekly Status Check: Key Indicators

The Weekly Status Check of Key Indicators is a recurring feature of the Weekly Risk Monitor and provides a snapshot of our assessment of how key indicators of political violence and popular disorder might change in the coming week. It is intended to enable preparation for potential instability and action to be taken where it may be required.

Ser	Description	Last week	This week	Notes
1	Level of new voter registration			Contributes to turnout and legitimacy; especially among youth / new voters
2	Level of 'othering' rhetoric and hate speech			Use of <i>madoadoa</i> at 05 th June rally highlights lack of deterrence of NCIC 'hate speech' list
3	Negotiation / announcement of alliances, coalition, new backers			Helps 'bake in' electoral mathematics, pointing to likely winner: could catalyse violence by disadvantaged side NB: Unexpected / unpopular shift of support from one camp to another could be a major catalyst for unrest
4	Unrest identified outside 'traditional' areas			Implies higher levels of uncertainty, greater likelihood of chaotic election day, and weakened/stretched security force capability
5	Suspension of specific 'bluetick' social media accounts			Likely catalyst for unrest among supporters; allegations of partiality from affected side
6	Threats from regional terrorist groups			The emergence in official online propaganda outlets or social media of credible threats from groups such as al Shabaab to target Kenya's national or commercial infrastructure or the elections infrastructure itself
7	Activity / posture of international companies /foreign nationals (draw down of staff etc.)			Unexpected or unexplained recommendations by govts or action by major companies could precipitate copy-cat / herd behaviour among others
8	Excessive use of force by police during rallies			Especially if perceived to be partial to one candidate
9	Closure of the internet			Likely to be inflammatory, even for only short a period
10	Publication of controversial polling results			

Weekly Status Check: 'Wild cards'

The Weekly Status Check of Wild Cards is Intended to provide a simple guide to our assessment of the likelihood and impact of unpredictable events which could cause instability.

Ser	'Wild Card'	Status	Notes
1	Death or incapacity of either candidate or key figures in their campaigns		Likelihood: LOW Confidence: MODERATE Would probably lead to a suspension of the presidential elections and constitutional wrangling Even a genuine natural / unsuspecting death likely to be treated as suspicious Feed conspiracy theories; amplified by social media
2	Resignation of high-profile staff from candidates' campaigns or governance bodies including IEBC		Likelihood: HIGH Confidence: MODERATE Would heighten suspicions of bribery/coercion; call into question legitimacy of beneficiary's campaign
3	Unexpected re-alignment between parties / shift of allegiance to rival		Likelihood: HIGH Confidence: MODERATE As above
4	Mass casualty terrorist attack in a major city		Likelihood: MODERATE Confidence: HIGH Major attack would overshadow campaign; might lead to calls for postponement Could be used for political ends, potentially to suspend polling
5	Major media scandal affecting one or other candidate or supporter		Likelihood: HIGH Confidence: MODERATE Likely to lead of allegations of dirty tricks by disadvantaged side
6	Unconstitutional action IEBC postpones the elections.		Likelihood: LOW Confidence: HIGH Not possible under the current constitution. Likely to be condemned by both sides
7	Unconstitutional action: Kenyatta suspends constitution to run for third term.		Likelihood: VERY LOW. Confidence: HIGH <i>Highly inflammatory</i>

Review of Scenarios as at 06th June 2022

This section provides an update on our assessments of the most likely outcomes and their potential impacts. It builds on a more comprehensive review in our Overview & Scenarios report dated 11th April.

SCENARIOS	Notes	
	1 Central Scenario	<p>No change</p> <p>Raila Odinga (RAO) – Narrow victory after run-off</p> <p>Ensures the greatest possible continuity of policy and stability for the political and business environment.</p> <p>Outbreaks of violent unrest both politically and ethnically charged likely in key locations, especially in flashpoint areas and William Samoei Ruto (WSR) strongholds.</p>
	2 Least Disruptive	<p>No change</p> <p>Raila Odinga – Decisive victory with or without run-off</p> <p>Sporadic unrest from WSR supporters with political incitement in social spaces for an extended period; allegations of a system rigged by the dynasties of Kenyatta and Odinga, and other State-backed actors.</p> <p>A decisive victory reduces the level of unrest</p>
	3A Plausible Most Disruptive Case	<p>No change</p> <p>Low legitimacy, inconclusive results, protracted challenges</p> <p>This scenario is based upon a disordered and confused conduct of the elections campaign and polling on 09th August, shows that neither RAO or WSR achieved 25 per cent of the vote in the required counties.</p> <p>The political space and the elections campaign is marred by credible allegations of voter rigging or unconstitutional behaviour.</p> <p>In this environment, it is likely that low registration and poor voter turnout may culminate into an inconclusive, illegitimate result rejected by both main candidates, and/or an indecisive run-off.</p>
	3B Alternative Plausible Most Disruptive Case	<p>No change</p> <p>William Samoei Ruto (WSR) – Decisive victory with or without run-off</p> <p>A decisive victory for WSR with or without a run-off is likely to create an uncertain socio-political environment spill over to international stakeholders.</p> <p>Such a result is likely to create an uneasy political space and also civil space with WSR recurrently linked to graft allegations, hostile business expansion, corruption, and at times targeted killings or force disappearances of dissidents of him and his network.</p> <p>The threat and risk of such occurrences regularly linked to WSR warrants concern and has presently intensified the political space of speculation and apprehensive socio-political environment.</p>

Planning factors likely to apply to all Scenarios:

1. Intimidation of candidates and activists, including threats of violence, will occur, in many cases overtly, throughout the campaign.
2. Low youth employment rates exacerbate the potential for large-scale violence, including street battles in some neighbourhoods.
3. The result will almost certainly be challenged, whichever candidate wins, and lead to a run-off. There is no consensus among our analysts on whether a challenge and run-off is in fact critical in order for any result to be legitimate, but the resilience and perceived neutrality of the constitution will be central.
4. Violence will occur in known flashpoint neighbourhoods across the country, primarily in the immediate aftermath of the results being announced.
5. The potential for violence is assessed as highest during the tally period (09th to 28th August), when rumours, allegations and deliberate mis-information are likely to have greatest traction.
6. Social media, particularly WhatsApp and Facebook groups, will be particularly important this year.
7. Misinformation or disinformation will abound, including from external, regional actors, state and non-state groups.
8. Most parties will make use of a range of communications channels to make accusations of unfairness or lack of legitimacy in the electoral process or their opponents' conduct, highlighting any irregularities and with frequent and intemperate accusations of cheating. Accusations of vote rigging, bussing of candidates, tampering with registration etc. will proliferate.
9. Other regional actors, including al Shabaab, will try to exploit divisions within Kenyan society - online influences.

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