



Kenya: Kibaki Calls for Somalia Support

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Nairobi — President Kibaki has opened the Global Peace Convention in Nairobi with a call to the international community to support the region's efforts of restoring security in the lawless Somalia.

In addition, the President said the upcoming referendum in southern Sudan presented challenges that required immense support for the full implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. "Kenya continues to play a key role in search for lasting peace in the Sudan and Somalia.

"I take this opportunity to call upon the international community to support the efforts of IGAD (Intergovernmental Authority on Development) towards addressing the security situation in Somalia," President Kibaki said Thursday at the Kenyatta International Conference Centre, Nairobi.

On Sudan, President Kibaki called for sobriety on the part of the Sudanese as the South prepares for a referendum on January 9 for self-determination. Already, the process of registering voters for the exercise is underway in the South and neighbouring countries where many eligible southerners reside.

"We must ensure that the Comprehensive Peace Agreement for the Sudan is fully implemented," he adding that internal peace was of paramount importance as they determine the future of their country.

Prime Minister Raila Odinga said that besides managing conflicts, there was need to address rising poverty and unemployment levels, ignorance and disease which are some of the root causes of disagreements.

"Kenya is now ripe for takeoff. We must not squander the opportunity before us. We must firmly deal with the four great enemies of mankind poverty, ignorance, disease and bad governance," the PM said.

Together with President Kibaki, he stressed the need to unite the different ethnic groups. Mr Odinga also urged parents and teachers to inculcate values of unity in children at a tender age. Vice President Kalonzo Musyoka also urged the peoples Somalia and Sudan to give peace a chance.

The convention is organised by the Global Peace Festival Foundation, an international peace and development organisation, with the objective to hold discussions around the theme One Family under God: Conflict Resolution, Peace and Development.

GPFF's chairman is Dr Hyun Jin Moon, the eldest son of Rev. Sun Myung Moon who founded the Unification Church.

The Convention that ends in Nairobi Friday is a culmination of other Global Peace Festivals held this year in Kathmandu (Nepal), Jakarta (Indonesia), Seoul (South Korea) and Asuncion (Paraguay).

In his address, Dr Moon applauded President Kibaki, Mr Odinga and Mr Musyoka for their statesmanship in steering the country to path of peace and development after the post-election violence. He also congratulated Kenyans on adopting the new constitution.

"It suggests that Kenyans are people of principles and values, who are willing to break away from all wars." The President also urged Kenyans to support the full implementation of the constitution, which he reiterated would pave the way for lasting peace in the country.

"The successful implementation of the Constitution will pay a peace dividend," the Head of State said.