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Kenya: Urgent Talks Needed to End Violence, Solve Crisis

Brussels, 3 January 2008 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC has called on Mwai Kibaki, who was declared winner of the country's December 27 Presidential election amidst claims of serious electoral fraud, to take part in urgent dialogue with the opposition in order to stop the wave of sectarian violence which is believed to have cost the lives of some 300 people. The ITUC call echoes that of its Kenyan affiliate COTU, which has appealed for calm and tolerance and called for Kibaki to initiate talks with the opposition.

"The main political parties must sit down together immediately to work on ending the violence and intimidation. Central to this will be ensuring that the allegations of vote-rigging, which have been backed by independent observers, are fully investigated and dealt with so that the people of Kenya can be sure that their democratic rights are fully respected", said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder. "Without this, the people of Kenya risk a political, social and economic catastrophe which could also have serious consequences for other countries in the region", he added.

Founded on 1 November 2006, the ITUC represents 168 million workers in 153 countries and territories and has 305 national affiliates.

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