

“You are my Friends if you do what I command you” (John 15:14)

**P.O. BOX 465**  
**KAKAMEGA**

Our Ref: \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Ref: \_\_\_\_\_

**27<sup>th</sup> January 2008**

## **OPEN LETTER** **To the Leaders and Citizens of Kenya**

The Quaker leadership of Kenya gathered together in Sheywe Guest House in Kakamega between 24<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> January 2008.

The Friends Church in Kenya and Friends around the world are concerned with what has befallen Kenya in the last one month. As a peace church, we are horrified by the continued wanton destruction of human life and property.

Kenyans need to learn that any violent action they take against their neighbours is an act against God’s way. Our actions and thoughts therefore must be rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In our last communiqué to the leaders, we implored upon them to uphold the principles of truth, justice, peace, simplicity and humility (Psalms 85:10) and to forgive each other.

We cannot be blind to what is happening to this country and its citizens. During the deliberations and reflections, representatives of the Friends Church realized that the underlying causes of the current conflict have been present since long before the general elections of December 2007. We note in particular: economic injustices, youth disempowerment and frustration, and cleavages of religion, ethnicity, class, gender and age.

### **To our leaders:**

We thank our leaders for starting a process of negotiation, and we believe and trust that they will follow up in earnest with a negotiated settlement. In this context therefore we say to our leaders:

- We do understand your anguish at this time, and we ask you to approach the situation prayerfully. We urge you to relax your “hard line” political demands and dialog more deeply for the benefit of the country, that no segment of Kenyan society emerges as “losers” but we all may “win” in a peaceful society.
- We urge you to reopen schools that have not opened, in order to allow students to continue with their education.
- We urge the leaders and elders of various communities not to incite or manipulate their youths to perpetuate terror among the citizenry, but to encourage and guide them to act responsibly.
- We denounce the instances of excessive force used by the police against the citizens.

### **To our fellow Kenyans:**

- We appreciate the courage and passion that you, our fellow Kenyans, have shown since the beginning of the post-election violence by contributing and supporting the victims of violence, and we urge you all to continue with the same spirit.
- We appeal to you engage in reconciliation among and rehabilitation of displaced people, integrating them back into the places from which they were displaced, not sending them to other parts of the country.
- We remind you that this country and its land belongs to all of us. Let us not destroy it for by doing so, we put our own future generations in jeopardy. We need a negotiated social contract to live together as Kenyans.
- We urge you to resolve problems in a peaceful way, because we know that there is hope for peace in this country.
- We warn you to desist from rumour-mongering which increases hostility and uncertainty, and urge you to use modern means of communication for positive ends.
- We know that those most affected by this conflict and violence are women, children, disabled and the aged. We must address their suffering, and protect and care for them.
- We encourage every Kenyan to look for “that of God” in every person and to treat life as sacred.
- As Kenyans, we urge you to uphold our core national values, practice forgiveness and embrace reconciliation.

### **To our fellow Christians and other Religious groups:**

- As people of faith, we must not engage in violence and revenge because if we do so we betray our faith in God.
- We invite you to join us in praying for deliverance from evil spirits which are at work in our country, and continue to intercede for Kenya.

As a peace church, we are involved in humanitarian, spiritual and social/economic empowerment of our people. We urge everyone to take time to assist his/her neighbour in order to bring normalcy to the affected people, affirming truth, justice, peace and reconciliation in our nation.

Signed,

Jacob Neyole  
Presiding Clerk