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## **World AIDS Campaign Calls for International Attention to the HIV Emergency in the Midst of the Kenya Political Crisis**

**Organisations representing the World AIDS Campaign Global Steering Committee:**

**Youth**  
Youth Coalition

**Faith**  
Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance

**Labour**  
Global Unions AIDS Programme

**Women**  
International Women's AIDS Caucus

**People living with HIV/AIDS**  
Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS

International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS

**Business**  
Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

**Media**  
Global Media AIDS Initiative

**Non-voting members:**  
Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS)

Global Fund to fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

Today, the World AIDS Campaign and its Global Steering Committee (GSC), called on governments, UN agencies, international and non-governmental organisations to give urgent attention to the devastating impact of the political crisis in Kenya on people living with HIV and putting women and children at a greater risk of infection.

The political unrest and violence in Kenya impacts many people, costs lives, and harms the economy of the nation. However, the life-threatening effect on people living with HIV and those who are vulnerable to infection has received little attention. The silence must be broken when it comes to this hidden emergency within an emergency.

Some of the examples reported to the GSC include:

- People living with HIV forced to discontinue their daily treatment of antiretrovirals because they can not easily access the clinics that are providing treatment due to the violence or forced relocation
- Dramatically increased cases of rape of women and children, making them especially vulnerable to infection, and an increase in reports of sexual assaults on men as well; professional care for rape victims is far too limited and not accessible for all in need
- Displaced persons, even when treatment is available, may have escaped their homes without the medical documents to document their status and entitle them to needed drugs
- People living with HIV are afraid to disclose their status and to ask for help, because of being stigmatised, discriminated against or facing even more violence.

Mr. Prateek Suman, Chair of the World AIDS Campaign GSC said, "We must keep the promise of access to treatment, care and support for people living with HIV in the current crisis in Kenya."

Ms. Elizabeth Akinyi, a GSC member who is based in Kenya and who represents the International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS said, "In many cases, fear, stigma and violence are preventing people in Kenya living with HIV and AIDS access to treatment, care and support. We are especially concerned for women, who often times face these challenges in addition to being the primary care givers for their children. It is critical for people living with HIV and AIDS, especially women, to not only have access to treatment, and other basic needs such as food, but also that they not be afraid to seek the help they need."

The World AIDS Campaign calls on governments, UN agencies, international and non-governmental organisations to:

- Fully assess the specialised needs around HIV and AIDS in the context of the crisis;
- Plan and rapidly implement programmatic responses that meet these specialised needs;
- Coordinate responses with one another more effectively; and
- Speak out publicly about this issue, seeking to reduce stigma and gender-based violence.

Allan Ragi, Executive director, Kenya AIDS NGOs Consortium (KANCO) reinforced this stating, "It is imperative that these actions be taken urgently to avoid negating the gains made in the fight against HIV and AIDS in the last five years. If action is not expeditiously taken, the risk of new infections and death as a result of the political crisis and violence cannot be overstated."



***The World AIDS Campaign supports, strengthens and connects campaigns that hold leaders accountable for their promises on HIV and AIDS. "Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise." is the slogan for the World AIDS Campaign from 2005-2010. The World AIDS Campaign has offices in Amsterdam and Cape Town.***  
**[www.worldaidscampaign.org](http://www.worldaidscampaign.org)**

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**For more information, about the situation in Kenya:**

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