News



A protester shouts in front of a burning barricade Oct. 30 in a slum area of Nairobi, Kenya. Kenyan Catholic bishops have announced plans to convene a national dialogue forum in the face of a political crisis, which they say has left the country's ordinary people on the brink of despair. (CNS/Reuters/Goran Tomasevic)

Frederick Nzwili

View Author Profile

Catholic News Service

View Author Profile

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

NAIROBI, Kenya — November 9, 2017

Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

Kenyan Catholic bishops have announced plans to convene a national dialogue forum in the face of a political crisis, which they say has left the country's ordinary people on the brink of despair.

The bishops said the forum would assemble all sectors to set an agenda for honest discussions and resolutions on the way forward for the country. Urgent matters to be addressed include difficulties of the elections and reforms, national healing and reconciliation, good governance challenges, transparency, poverty, employment, economic inequality conflict resolution and injustices, among other issues.

"This is the forum we believe will offer an opportunity to all Kenyans, especially the key political players, to engage constructively in a bid to chart the way forward for Kenya," said Bishop Philip Anyolo, chairman of the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops, in a statement Nov. 9.

The bishops met in Nakuru ahead of the burial of Eldoret Bishop Cornelius Korir, who died suddenly Oct. 30. Bishop Korir was to be buried in a small chapel inside Sacred Heart Cathedral in Eldoret Nov. 11.

"We know how much he sacrificed and risked his life to maintain peace, harmony and justice," said Anyolo.

Dubbed "the peace bishop," Korir was trying to help resolve the political crisis. Since the Supreme Court's Sept. 1 nullification of President Uhuru Kenyatta's re-election, the country has faced political pressures.

Raila Odinga, the National Super Alliance leader, boycotted a re-vote Oct. 26 and urged street protests and economic boycotts. Although Kenyatta was declared the winner of the October election, the decision again is being challenged in the Supreme Court.

Advertisement

The bishops said everyone is required to promote unity and reconciliation.

"We ... will spearhead peace initiatives and invite our brothers from other religious faiths and people of good will to join us," said Anyolo.

While applauding the tremendous hope the citizens have shown, the bishops warned of growing inequality, extreme poverty, uncontrolled looting of public resources, political manipulation of citizens and radicalization of politics.