Elections, Violence and International Criminal Justice: The Case of Kenya

1st Käte Hamburger Dialogue

on 15th April 2013, 17.00 – 19.00 h

at the German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), Tulpenfeld 6, 53113 Bonn

The March 4 general elections in Kenya have attracted much international attention. The victory of the Uhuru Kenyatta/William Ruto ticket on the first ballot, by the slimmest of majorities, took most observers by surprise. Though widespread violence did not break out this time, despite irregularities, the potential for conflict remains, notably in response to the courts’ decision on the validity of the results, whether they confirm them or instead invalidate the first-round victory and force a second round to be held on April 11. If Kenyatta and Ruto assume office, they will soon after head to The Hague to face charges at the International Criminal Court (ICC) for crimes against humanity committed in the aftermath of the 2007 elections. So far, though African and Asian countries have extended their congratulations to Kenyatta, the UN and Western donors have been reluctant to endorse an alleged perpetrator of massive human rights abuses. These events raise numerous questions on the actions of the international community and domestic actors since the crisis in 2007/2008 and how the scenario will play out under very tense circumstances.

The Käte Hamburger Dialogue brings together German and international experts to discuss the process and outcome of Kenya’s 2013 elections as an example of the possibilities and limits of democracy promotion and violence prevention by the international community. In particular, it will focus on the relationship and possible trade-offs between domestic stability, elections and international justice. Most recent developments in Kenya will thus be put into the broader context of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) that Kofi Annan invoked in its preventive dimension during his mediation efforts in 2008.
The programme is as follows:

17.00 h Welcome
Prof. Tobias Debiel, Director of Käte Hamburger Kolleg / Centre for Global Cooperation Research (KHK/GCR 21) and of the Institute for Development and Peace (INEF)
Dr Jörg Faust, Head of Department "Governance, Statehood, Security", DIE

17.10 h Panel Discussion
Dr Ekuru Aukot, Advocate at the High Court of Kenya, former Director and ex-officio member of the Committee of Experts on the Review of the new Constitution of Kenya
Dr Gabrielle Lynch, Associate Professor of Comparative Politics at the University of Warwick
Dr Stephen Brown, Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Ottawa and Senior Fellow at KHK/GCR21
Chair: Angelika Spelten, Senior Researcher at INEF and Team Member of FriEnt (Working Group on Peace and Development)

18.00 h Discussion with the Audience

18.50 h Wrap up and Conclusion
Dr Julia Leininger, Senior Researcher and Regional Coordinator for Sub-Saharan Africa, DIE

19.00 h Reception

In addition to the Käte Hamburger Lectures, which so far included presentations by Timothy Garton Ash, Thomas Pogge and David Chandler, the Käte Hamburger Dialogues are a key element to involve the general public as well as academic community in the work of the Centre. Moderated discussions between fellows and other experts allow for in-depth analysis, pointed assessments and controversial exchange on the Centre’s research and current political events and debates. With “Elections, Violence and International Criminal Justice: The Case of Kenya”, the Käte Hamburger Kolleg launches its public Dialogue series on a timely and highly relevant topic.

The Käte Hamburger Kolleg / Centre of Global Cooperation Research (KHK/GCR21) is an interdisciplinary research institute of the University of Duisburg-Essen. Participating institutes are the German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), Bonn, the Institute for Development and Peace/Institut für Entwicklung und Frieden (INEF), Duisburg, and The Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities/Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut (KWI), Essen. The Board of Directors consists of Prof. Dr. Tobias Debiel (INEF), Prof. Dr. Claus Leggewie (KWI) and Prof. Dr. Dirk Messner (DIE). The Executive Director is Dr. Markus Böckenförde, LL.M.