

28 February 2013      New ICRtoP blog post:      [All eyes on upcoming elections as Kenya works to prevent the recurrence of atrocities](#)

## All eyes on upcoming elections as Kenya works to prevent the recurrence of atrocities

*The people of Kenya are just days away from casting their ballots on 4 March in the country's first election since the 2007 presidential race which [resulted](#) in unprecedented ethnic violence, leaving over 1000 people dead and 600,000 more displaced. A country with over 70 distinct [ethnic groups](#) – the five largest being Kikuyu, Luo, Luhya, Kalenjin, and Kamba - Kenya's past elections have largely witnessed voting along ethnic lines. This year, eight candidates are [running](#), among them Uhuru Kenyatta and his running-mate, William Ruto, both of whom have been [indicted](#) by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for their alleged role in the commission of crimes against humanity following the 2007 elections. While the Kenyan government has undertaken a range of measures to prevent a repeat of 2007's deadly crisis, including the [adoption](#) of a new constitution to redistribute political power, the [training](#) of police and civil society to identify and monitor hate speech, and [educating](#) the Kenyan population on the newly established electoral process, civil society organizations have raised alarm to the sizeable risk of violence that remains. As several NGOs, including [Human Rights Watch](#) (HRW), have reported, Kenya has already experienced election-related inter-communal attacks that left over 400 dead and upwards of 118,000 displaced during 2012 and early 2013. This election, which is [expected](#) to be extremely close and require a second round, known as a "run off" (scheduled for 11 April), will prove a great test for the Kenyan government as it works to uphold its responsibility to protect its population from the recurrence of mass atrocities, as well as ensure a free, fair and transparent presidential race.*

In this blog, ICRtoP provides a comprehensive overview of the risk to populations, as well as the range of national, regional and international efforts taken thus far to prevent the recurrence of election-related violence.

**These preventive efforts drive at the very heart of RtoP, which not only calls for states to halt mass atrocities, but to protect populations from genocide, crimes against humanity,**

**and ethnic cleansing. The people of Kenya deserve the opportunity to elect a new president without the fear of mass atrocities; the time for preventive action is now.**

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