



Kenya in Crisis – 2007. Could it happen again in 2012?

May 9, 2012

11:30am – 1:30pm (light lunch provided)
Freeman Commons, 205 Humphrey School

Registration required: <http://kenyacrisis.eventbrite.com>

Featuring:

Bjarte Tørå

Senior project leader in Kenya, Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights
www.oslocenter.no/en/about/employee/bjarte-tora/

Susan Benesch

Senior Fellow, World Policy Institute
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Discussion moderated by:

Orlyn Kringstad

Executive Director, The Oslo Center and CIL Executive Leadership Fellow

“NAIROBI, Kenya — It took all of about 15 minutes on Sunday, after Kenya’s president was declared the winner of a deeply controversial election, for the country to explode.

Thousands of young men burst out of Kibera, a shantytown of one million people, waving sticks, smashing shacks, burning tires and hurling stones. Soldiers poured into the streets to fight them. In several cities across Kenya, witnesses said, gangs went house to house, dragging out people of certain tribes and clubbing them to death.” Jeffrey Gettleman, NY Times, Dec. 31, 2007

Kenya had been smoldering for months, not just in historically brutal political infighting between the two major political factions, but now becoming more ethnic in nature, bringing rising hateful rhetoric between the followers of President Mwai Kibaki and his opponent Raila Odinga. In the weeks and months following the election charges of ethnic cleansing and genocide were made by both sides against the other. Mediation brought the sides together.

The Oslo Center Norway is engaged in Kenya for the second time in five years to assist in the upcoming election process. The Oslo Center is in Kenya to help prepare for elections to ensure that violence does not break out again. The senior OCN project leader in Kenya is Bjarte Tørå. Susan Benesch, Senior Project Leader at World Policy Institute has done extensive research in how hateful rhetoric leads to a breakdown in fragile, emerging democracies and in the worst case can lead to genocide. The previous election in Kenya is an example of such a scenario.

Bjarte Tørå and Susan Benesch will discuss the current scenario in Kenya and what is being done to facilitate fair non-violent elections in 2013.

The Center for Integrative Leadership’s mission is to discover and disseminate transformative knowledge about leadership across sectors to advance the common good