

Legal framework

Kenya is party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights (ACHPR), both of which articulate the right to freedom of religion or belief (FoRB), the former more extensively. The constitution stipulates there shall be no state religion, and prohibits religious discrimination. Article 32 provides for freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion, and the right to manifest one's religion through worship, practice, teaching and observance individually and in community with others. It also states that no one should be forced to act, or participate in an act, that is contrary to their religion or belief.

Articles 134–138 of the Kenyan Penal Code outline offences relating to religion, and while blasphemy laws are not explicitly described, insulting a religion or communicating with the intent to 'wound religious feelings' are classed as misdemeanours that carry a maximum sentence of two years imprisonment, a fine, or both. While these laws remain in the statute books, they are rarely used.

Violations of FoRB are primarily perpetrated by members and sympathisers of the Somali terrorist group al Shabaab. The al Hijra faction of al Shabaab consists predominantly of East Africans, most of whom are reportedly Kenyan nationals. Since October 2011 the group has attacked churches, security installations, infrastructure and villages. The areas of the country that border Somalia experience the majority of attacks.

Anti Finance Bill protests

In May 2024 the government introduced the Finance Bill 2024/2025, which proposed to reduce the budget deficit and borrowing, and fund development projects, by raising USD 2.7 billion in additional taxes. Protesters called out the bill's punitive administrative measures and controversial tax hikes, demanding its repeal and political change. Many believe the hikes would merely fund the extravagant lifestyles of corrupt government officials rather than improve public services.

The government proposed a number of concessions in the hope the bill would pass with public support. However, on the day the revised bill was proposed to parliament, peaceful protesters filled the streets of the capital, Nairobi, to oppose it.¹ Many citizens were already struggling with the cost of living, and the new bill would entail additional levies, including a 16% levy on bread, vegetable oil and sugar, and a new motor vehicle circulation tax at an annual charge of

2.5% of the value of a car, among others.² In addition, the government's tax policies failed to adequately consider the economic and social rights of Kenyans, particularly those struggling to secure adequate housing, food and access to healthcare.

Despite being largely peaceful, anti-tax demonstrations across the country witnessed at least 39 deaths, with allegations of the use of excessive and lethal force by the police and security services. In addition, hundreds of peaceful protestors were arrested, largely in June and July 2024, and there have been reports of involuntary or enforced disappearances.

On 25 June 2024 police officers opened fire on the crowds in Nairobi that had gathered around parliament. Moments later, after the Finance Bill had passed by vote, protesters briefly stormed the building. On that day alone the Law Society of Kenya secured the release of over 300 people detained arbitrarily by the police.³

Following mounting public pressure, President William Ruto announced on 26 June 2024 that he would no longer sign the Finance Bill into law. His attempts to regain control and propose a dialogue with youth, civil society, religious organisations and others on the bill have been overshadowed by violations committed under his watch, including by police officers who used lethal force from the outset against the unarmed, largely peaceful protesters, and the Kenyan army, which was brought in to restore order following approval by Kenya's High Court.

On 25 June 2026 families of those killed during the protests and resulting crackdowns gathered outside parliament to remember their loved ones. The police arrested 355 protesters across the country, and blocked access to key areas of Nairobi.

President Ruto has announced a USD 15 million compensation fund for 2000 victims of 'protest related human rights abuses' between 2017 and 2025,⁴ but this has been questioned by national rights groups who have stated there is a lack of clarity over how the funds will be distributed. The mother of 19-year-old Ibrahim Kamau, who died from gunshot wounds to his neck, spoke to journalists, saying 'only two out of 10 families whose children were shot that day near parliament have been compensated and we are wondering what criteria they are using'.⁵

1 President of the Republic of Kenya, 'Finance Bill Amendments', 18 June 2024 <https://www.president.go.ke/finance-bill-amendments/>

2 Reuters, 'Explainer: What's next after Kenya withdraws finance bill amid protests?', 25 June 2024 <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/kenyas-finance-bill-why-has-it-triggered-protests-2024-06-25/>

3 Kenyan National Commission on Human Rights, 'Retreating into the dark abyss of violations and atrocities! Current state of Human Rights in the Nation', 1 July 2024 <https://www.knchr.org/Articles/ArtMID/2432/ArticleID/1199/Retreating-into-the-dark-abyss-of-violations-and-atrocities-Current-state-of-Human-Rights-in-the-Nation>

4 BBC, 'Families lay flowers on barbed wire barricade on anniversary of deadly Kenya protests', 25 June 2026 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cgqj8kj8wpo>

5 PBS News, 'Hundreds detained in Kenya as protesters mark the anniversary of deadly protests in 2024', 25 June 2026 <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/hundreds-detained-in-kenya-as-protesters-mark-the-anniversary-of-deadly-protests-in-2024>

Use of force in places of worship

On 25 June 2024, when All Saints' Cathedral in Nairobi opened its gates to over 3,000 people peacefully exercising their right to protest, armed police threw tear gas canisters and shot live rounds indiscriminately into the cathedral's compound, affecting those seeking refuge and a service that was taking place in the premises. The church also housed a medical centre treating the injured, including members of police and security teams who were on duty that day.

Civilians caught in the violence were forced to crawl from the main gates of the cathedral to the main sanctuary as live rounds flew overhead. At approximately 4.30pm a contingent of military officers overran the cathedral gates and stormed the compound, threatening everyone they found there. Officers then ordered everyone to lie on the ground as they shot indiscriminately, leaving several bullet casings. One protester informed CSW they were in a group of six people who were moving together from the cathedral gates to the sanctuary, one of whom was killed.

Cathedral personnel attempted to evacuate as many people as possible from the grounds. Staff, including the provost, administrative staff and religious leaders, formed a buffer outside the cathedral for four hours, preventing security personnel from gaining further access to the place of worship and what they feared would be a confrontation with unarmed protesters that could have resulted in a massacre.⁶

On 16 July 2024 police in Nakuru stormed the Chosen Generation Church where Reverend Patrichia Benson was leading a lunchtime prayer service. CCTV footage shows security personnel invading the service and forcing all in attendance to lie on the floor while they fired live rounds. Church leaders later held a press conference in which they condemned the use of excessive force by police in a place of worship.⁷

Enforced disappearances

June, July and August 2024 saw at least 72 documented cases of abductions and releases that may amount to involuntary or enforced disappearances. Some of those targeted were prominent campaigners and opposition politicians, many of whom are believed to have been taken by security forces in unmarked vehicles. Their families searched numerous police stations, hospitals and even morgues, trying to

ascertain their whereabouts. Ongoing impunity and a lack of accountability delayed justice for victims and their families.

In December 2024 the Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC) issued a report noting that the number of documented enforced disappearances was high and not limited to one geographical region. The KHRC also noted that the pattern regularly involved ununiformed armed individuals forcibly detaining individuals who are vocal government critics on online platforms.⁸ The total number of people disappeared between June and December 2024 documented by the KHRC was 82, with 29 still missing at time of publication. When asked about the enforced disappearances during an interview in London in February 2025, the majority leader of Kenya's National Assembly, Kimani Ichung'wah, stated they were not perpetrated by the government.⁹

Attacks on the media

On 16 July 2024 journalist Catherine Wanjeri was shot four times by police officers while covering demonstrations in Nakuru County for the privately-owned MediaMax Limited media group. She required surgery to remove three rubber bullets lodged in her body. The journalist reported that a police officer had threatened her as she covered demonstrations earlier in the month.¹⁰ In September 2024 reports emerged that Ms Wanjeri had been receiving death threats, which she believed were aimed at intimidating her into dropping her case against police.¹¹

Activist Boniface Mwangi was detained on 25 June 2024 on Koinage Street, Nairobi, along with four others, for allegedly inciting violence, breaching peace and blocking a road with a white coffin and seven white crosses bearing the names of people killed by police during the protests. The group was released on a cash bail of KSH 20,000 (approx. USD 155) each.¹²

In an earlier incident, on 24 September 2024, Mr Mwangi had attempted to deliver a list of every individual who was abducted or killed during the protests to the Office of the President at a scheduled official meeting, only to experience an attempted abduction by masked police officers in broad daylight and in front of witnesses, including the media.¹³

Attacks on the media have intensified, particularly as they have covered protests and political rallies, throughout 2026. In June the Kenya Media Sector Working Group (KMSWG), a coalition of 26 media organisations including Kenya Editors'

6 Facebook, All Saints' Cathedral Nairobi, 30 June 2024 <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=984134229873665>

7 Mwakilishi, 'CCTV Footage Reveals Police Raid on Nakuru Church', 16 July 2024 <https://www.mwakilishi.com/article/kenya-news/2024-07-16/cctv-footage-reveals-police-raid-on-nakuru-church>

8 Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, 'Statement on the Recent Surge of Abductions/Enforced Disappearances in Kenya', 27 December 2024 <https://www.knchr.org/Articles/ArtMID/2432/ArticleID/1213/Statement-on-the-Recent-Surge-of-AbductionsEnforced-Disappearances-in-Kenya>

9 YouTube, 'Inequality, corruption and police brutality in Kenya: Mehdi Hasan & Kimani Ichung'wah Head to Head', 27 February 2025 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZSIA7ZB9i00>

10 The Nation Kenya, 'Nakuru journalist shot by police: 'Nobody can convince me I was not the target'', 22 July 2024 <https://nation.africa/kenya/counties/nakuru/nakuru-journalist-shot-by-police-nobody-can-convince-me-i-was-not-the-target-4695820>

11 Women Press freedom, Kenya: 'Catherine Wanjeri Kariuki Shot by Police Now Receives Death Threats', 3 September 2024 <https://www.womeninjournalism.org/alerts/kenya-catherine-wanjeri-kariuki-shot-by-police-now-receives-death-threats>

12 The Nation Kenya, 'Activist Boniface Mwangi and four others freed on cash bail', 26 July 2024 <https://nation.africa/kenya/news/activist-boniface-mwangi-and-four-others-freed-on-cash-bail-4703328>

13 Instagram, Boniface Mwangi @bonifacemwangi, 24 September 2024 https://www.instagram.com/p/DATzliRuNRT/?img_index=9

Guild, Kenya Union of Journalists and the Media Council of Kenya, called for urgent action to protect journalists ahead of the 2027 elections.¹⁴ During a press conference organised by the KMSWG, Secretary-General of the Kenya Union of Journalists Erick Oduor described a growing pattern of violence, harassment and intimidation directed towards journalists, preventing them from conducting their work. Mr Oduor stated that the coalition had met with senior police officials to raise the matter, but despite receiving commitments to protect journalists, no action had been taken.

On 16 August, two AFP journalists travelled to Homa Bay to cover a Linda Mwananchi ('protect the citizen') rally, part of a grassroots campaign initiated by Senator Edwin Sifuna that attempts to put citizens at the heart of governance, and a part of the political movement. When the journalists arrived in Homa Bay the area was deserted due to security concerns; however, there were armed youth barricading a major road who subsequently attacked freelance video journalist Fred Ooko and photojournalist Brian Ongoro. Their camera equipment, phones and press ID cards were also taken.¹⁵

Journalists from the National Media Group who have been following the Linda Mwananchi rally reported that thugs pelted their vehicle with stones and they were forced to find an alternative travel route.

Concerns regarding the safety of journalists were heightened further when Alex Kiprotich, the associate editor at Standard Group, was abducted by armed men, thought to be members of a police unit, who had followed and intercepted his vehicle at around 9.20pm on 1 September as he travelled to Nakuru. The encounter was caught on dash cam and posted online immediately.¹⁶ Mr Kiprotich was later found in the early hours of 2 September, having been dumped over 200km away, near Masinga Dam. On 27 June he narrowly escaped a similar incident in which armed men attempted to seize him from his vehicle as he drove to work in Nakuru.¹⁷

Religious Organisations Bill

Kenya requires religious organisations to be registered under the Societies Act Cap 108 of the Laws of Kenya, which came into force in 1968.

On 11 November 2014, in a move several observers viewed as a violation of Article 32 of the constitution, the former Attorney General imposed a moratorium on the registration of religious organisations pending the gazetting of new regulations, citing, among other things, the need to curb

alleged illegal activities in churches following the exposure of the misconduct of a self-styled prophet.¹⁸

The ban was eventually lifted on 13 June 2022, when the Registrar of Societies issued strict new administrative guidelines, including that clergy must have either a diploma or degree in theology from a recognised theological institution, must show evidence of tax compliance, and must be recommended by a respected registered religious society.

Then in May 2023 President Ruto commissioned a taskforce to review the legal and regulatory framework governing religious organisations, this time in response to the 'Shakahola massacre', in which a charismatic self-proclaimed pastor, Paul Mackenzie, who had created a religious doomsday cult in the forests of Malindi, was accused of encouraging his followers to starve to death and arrested. 429 bodies were discovered in mass graves there, and those who were rescued were hospitalised, with many showing symptoms of starvation.

The Kenyan Senate subsequently launched an investigation with the stated aim of proposing legislation to protect citizens from extremists and cult leaders. The resulting bill proposes oversight of theological training, a code of conduct and minimum qualification for religious leaders, and a review of doctrine, teaching and dispute resolution. Religious organisations would be required to follow financial processes and reporting procedures for all non-taxable income. The bill proposes that religious organisations maintain lists of members which will be available for inspection when requested, and also grants powers to registrars to not only require documentary evidence of the work of an organisation, but also to make physical inspections of its properties.

The bill may indeed be aimed at ensuring the welfare of citizens and ending abuses in unregulated cult-like organisations. However, there are sufficient appropriate charges under the penal code and in current registration requirements which, if enforced, would address any issues arising from the massacre. The bill's provisions could also facilitate significant governmental overreach. The requirements for officials to assess doctrine, theological curricula, and the qualifications of religious leaders could result in the state mandating the principles of a religious creed. Additionally, while maintaining lists of members is important administratively for religious organisations, the provision allowing for governmental inspection of membership could potentially be misused to monitor the

14 IAWRT-KE, 'Kenya Media Sector Working Group Demands Greater Protection for Journalists Ahead of 2027 Elections', 29 July 2026 <https://iawrt.or.ke/kenya-media-sector-working-group-demands-greater-protection-for-journalists-ahead-of-2027-elections/>

15 Daily Nation, 'Journalists attacked, equipment stolen in Homa Bay political violence', 16 August 2026 <https://nation.africa/kenya/counties/homa-bay/journalists-attacked-equipment-stolen-in-homa-bay-political-violence-5560392>

16 Reuters, 'Kenyan editor found safe after abduction, employer says', 2 September 2026 <https://www.reuters.com/business/media-telecom/kenyan-editor-found-safe-after-abduction-standard-group-says-2026-09-02/>

17 Citizen Digital, 'Standard Group CEO Chaacha Mwita narrates Alex Kiprotich abduction ordeal', 2 September 2026 <https://citizen.digital/article/standard-group-ceo-chaacha-mwita-narrates-alex-kiprotich-abduction-ordeal-n389454>

18 BereanKenyan, 'Prophet Kanyari and the Crisis of African Christianity', 23 April 2015 <https://bereankenyan.wordpress.com/2015/04/23/prophet-kanyari-and-the-crisis-of-african-christianity/>

religious activities of citizens, rather than to ensure their protection.

Churches have objected to the bill, opting instead for self-regulation. A consortium of stakeholders has created a code of conduct for churches to which many continue to subscribe, while the government recently asserted that it has no intention of regulating religion.

Discrimination and al Shabaab activity

In predominantly Muslim areas of northern Kenya, non-Muslims complain of the inability to purchase land, difficulties in opening places of worship, and the targeting and undermining of their businesses, despite constitutional prohibitions on discrimination on the grounds of religion, conscience or belief contained in Article 27 (4).

In addition, areas bordering Somalia continue to suffer terrorist violence. On 23 March 2025 police personnel were attacked in northeast Kenya as they were preparing for morning prayers. Six were killed and four were hospitalised. No group claimed responsibility, but the Garissa County Commissioner Mohamed Mwabudzo stated that the attacks followed the patterns of previous al Shabaab activity in the border region. The targeted personnel were reservists – local volunteers who support the police in securing remote areas.¹⁹ The attack came as the US government issued travel warnings regarding Garissa County and areas close to the Kenya-Somalia border.

Earlier, on 17 February the National Intelligence Service (NIS) had arrested 13 people in Kajiado County suspected of planning largescale attacks in Nairobi during Ramadan. The al Shabaab cell consisted of 10 Kenyans, two Tanzanians and a Ugandan, was based in the Dadaab refugee camp, and was caught with five AK-47s, 600 rounds of ammunition, pistols, grenades and explosives. Their accounts were subsequently frozen by the Financial Reporting Centre under terrorism funding provisions.²⁰

On 24 July 2026 al Shabaab fighters attacked the villages of Fino and Arabia in Mandera North simultaneously. The attacks followed a pre-emptive raid on around 30 militants by Kenyan forces on 13 July in which at least 11 terrorists were killed and seven injured as they gathered at a makeshift camp in Mandera County to attack villages along the border. Those who were not injured fled into Somalia, and the security forces recovered ammunition and several documents belonging to al Shabaab at the scene, including receipts for payment of mandatory religious taxes.²¹

On 28 July, five members of a Special Operations counter-terrorism unit were killed when they came under attack near the Kenya-Somalia border in Mandera County. The vehicle of a separate team that went to assist the unit under attack subsequently struck a roadside bomb, but none of the occupants were killed.²²

On 27 August five leaders from Alungu, Mandera County, were freed after local elders intervened to negotiate their release. The group was reportedly abducted by suspected al Shabaab militants near the Somalia border on 24 August. The kidnappers are reported to have demanded three goats or 6,000 KSH (USD 46) per person, though it is unclear whether any ransom was paid. The men were released to their families and were reported to be in good health.²³

Al Shabaab has also increased its attacks in Somalia. On 18 March 2025 a bomb attack on the convoy of Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud close to the presidential palace killed four people, although the president was unharmed. The group also targeted a compound near the airport in Mogadishu housing African Union and UN officials and several foreign embassies.²⁴ At the time of writing Somali forces and al Shabaab were battling for control of the strategic town of Basra, 30km away from the capital, Mogadishu, with each side claiming to have inflicted heavy losses on the other.

2026 attacks on places of worship

On 25 January 2026 police and masked assailants surrounded the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) Witima Parish, Nyeri County. The group fired live rounds and threw teargas into the church, with images shared on social media showing congregants covering their noses and mouths and several individuals fainting.

Responding to the attack in the press, Bishop Gerald Muriithi of the Mount Kenya West Diocese of the Anglican Church of Kenya stated: 'As a church we feel that our right to worship was violated, little children were traumatised, aged parents were harassed, the clergy were terrified and intimidated and political leaders were harassed.'

The bishop also claimed that masked 'goons' set fire to the car of former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, who was attending the service, and slashed the tires of other vehicles in the presence of police who did nothing to stop them.

The attack was reminiscent of one of the worst incidents of the 2007 post-election violence, in which 36 members of

19 BBC, 'Six Kenyan police personnel killed in ambush near Somalia', 23 March 2025 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c4g0v7zy0v7o>

20 The Tanzania Times, 'The case of Tanzanian suspects among the 13 terrorists who planned to attack Kenya's capital city', 20 February 2026 <https://tanzaniatimes.net/the-case-of-tanzanian-suspects-among-the-13-terrorists-who-planned-to-attack-kenyas-capital-city/>

21 Garowe Online, 'Kenyan forces kill 11 suspected al-Shabaab militants in border raid', 13 July 2026 <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/world/africa/kenyan-forces-kill-11-suspected-al-shabaab-militants-in-border-raid>

22 Al Jazeera, 'Al-Shabab kills five Kenyan security personnel in ambush', 29 July 2026 <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2026/7/29/al-shabab-kills-five-kenyan-security-personnel-in-ambush>

23 The Star, 'Five Mandera herders abducted by al-Shabaab freed after elders intervene', 27 August 2026 <https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2026-08-27-mandera-herders-abducted-by-shabaab-militants-freed>

24 UN Security Council Report 'April 2025 Monthly Forecast – Somalia', 31 March 2025 <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2025-04/somalia-40.php>

the Kikuyu tribe – most of them women and children – were killed when youth primarily from the Kalenjin community surrounded and set fire to the Kiambaa Assemblies of God Church in which they had sought shelter in the Eldoret area of the Rift Valley. The incident was one of the violations that formed part of the prosecution case against President Ruto at the International Criminal Court (ICC). The ICC eventually dismissed the case due to insufficient evidence, whilst acknowledging serious witness intimidation and political interference.

On 12 June the Kenya Human Rights Commission, alongside civil society organisations, faith-based institutions, economists and concerned citizens, convened a public forum at All Saints' Cathedral in Nairobi to examine whether public submissions had been reflected in Kenya's 2026-27 budget. Shortly after the forum began, over 30 government-hired assailants stormed the venue, disrupting the meeting and threatening participants. Police claimed to have arrested one suspect, however uncertainty has since arisen regarding whether the arrest was made, and if the suspect remains in custody if so.²⁵

With Kenya due to hold elections in 2027, both the attacks and the persisting political tensions following the anti-tax protests have raised concerns of a resurgence of electoral violence.

Recommendations

To the government of Kenya:

- Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, and end this practice, releasing every individual who has been detained arbitrarily.
- Refrain from formulating additional registration requirements for religious organisations, and instead utilise existing laws to penalise corruption, maladministration and other malfeasance by such institutions and their officials.
- Review and revise vague and broadly worded legislation that could infringe unduly on the right to freedom of expression, including Articles 134 and 138 of the Penal Code, ensuring laws, policies and practices conform with international standards.
- Conduct detailed investigations into allegations of extrajudicial killings, torture and enforced disappearances, ensuring that perpetrators are brought to justice.
- Respect, protect and fulfil the freedoms of association, of expression, of the press, and the right to peaceful assembly, in line with Kenya's constitutional, regional and international legal obligations.
- Investigate all incidents of attacks on places of worship by state and non-state actors and ensure that all perpetrators are brought to justice. Ensure that police

and security officials respect the rule of law, including the high court orders against the use of tear gas or conducting operations in places of worship. Ensure that any compensation that is due to repair damage or support victims is made promptly.

- Take steps to guarantee the safety of all citizens ahead of and during the 2027 elections, and to ensure free and fair elections, in line with the stipulations of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, which Kenya signed, ratified and acceded to.
- Conduct coordinated assessments, along with the government of Somalia, of the al Shabaab counter-terrorism strategy and its potential impact on civilians, ensuring that all counter-terrorism measures conform with the law and with international standards.
- Ensure that citizens, particularly non-Muslims in areas near the Somali border and in Garissa and Lamu Counties, can practise their religion or belief without fear or hindrance.
- Issue a standing invitation to the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism.
- Strengthen human rights training within the security forces to ensure that officers operate in accordance with Kenya's constitutional and international legal obligations.
- Urgently formulate poverty alleviation and income generating initiatives targeting unemployed youth to render them less susceptible to financial inducements from terrorist recruiters.
- Address and resolve historical grievances that are manipulated by al Shabaab to recruit Kenyan nationals to its cause.

To the government of the United Kingdom:

- Urge the government of Kenya to ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and ensure independent, transparent investigations into all cases of abduction, arbitrary detention, and enforced disappearance, with appropriate legal action taken against perpetrators.
- Encourage the government of Kenya to refrain from imposing restrictive or doctrinal oversight on religious organisations under the guise of regulation. Emphasise the importance of upholding Article 32 of the constitution, promoting self-regulation within faith communities, and utilising existing laws to address fraud or abuse.
- Urge the government of Kenya to uphold the freedoms of expression and association, and the right to peaceful assembly, and to cease the harassment, arbitrary detention, and intimidation of journalists, activists, and peaceful protestors. Support capacity-building for

²⁵ The Star, 'NERIMA: All Saints attack shows state and goons are two sides of the same coin', 18 June 2026 <https://www.the-star.co.ke/opinion/star-blogs/2026-06-18-nerima-all-saints-attack-shows-state-and-goons-are-two-sides-of-the-same-coin>

human rights protection within Kenyan law enforcement agencies.

- In collaboration with regional and international partners, encourage Kenya to develop civilian-protective counter-terrorism strategies in Garissa, Lamu and other border counties, ensuring that responses to al Shabaab do not infringe on FoRB or disproportionately impact minority communities.
- Support and assist an international and independent election observation mission for the 2027 elections.
- Urge the government of Kenya, at every appropriate opportunity, to implement the recommendations highlighted above 'To the government of Kenya'.

government of Kenya, including during high-level visits and other bilateral exchanges.

- Urge the government of Kenya, at every appropriate opportunity, to implement the recommendations highlighted above 'To the government of Kenya'.

To the United Nations and Member States:

- Encourage the government of Kenya to ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, to end the practice of enforced disappearances, and to respect, protect and fulfil the freedoms of association, expression, the press, and the right to peaceful assembly, in line with its constitutional and international legal obligations.
- Urge the OHCHR, and all relevant UN mechanisms, including the Special Procedures and Treaty Bodies, to include the situation of FoRB in their reporting on Kenya, addressing the specific vulnerabilities and violations faced by religious and belief communities.
- Utilise the Universal Periodic Review process to raise FoRB concerns, and offer recommendations to advance the right to FoRB in the country.
- Encourage the government of Kenya to issue invitations to the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, the Special Rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression, the Special Rapporteur on freedom of assembly and association, and the Special Rapporteur on FoRB.
- Strengthen counter-terrorism cooperation and support for Kenya, with a focus on Garissa and Lamu Counties.
- Assist the government of Kenya in providing for the humanitarian needs of communities displaced or affected adversely by al Shabaab violence in Garissa and Lamu Counties.
- Call on the government of Kenya to conduct impartial and timely investigations into discrimination, violations and abuses targeting religious or belief minorities, ensuring that perpetrators are held to account.
- Ensure that the concerns highlighted in this briefing are consistently raised in public and in private with the

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