



WildlifeDirect (Kenya)
P O Box 24467 Code 00502
Nairobi, Kenya

PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WildlifeDirect calls for rule of law as bloodbath escalates in Laikipia County

Nairobi-April 24, 2017: WildlifeDirect has called for the national security apparatus to accelerate efforts to achieve rule of law in Laikipia County where many lives have been lost, people injured and millions of dollars lost due to property damage. The targeting of foreign born owners and managers of conservancies have hit both local and international headlines, but even more disturbing are the numbers of unreported killings of Kenyan small scale farmers and herders. In addition there has been a slaughter of endangered wildlife including grevy's zebras, elephants, lions and giraffes.

People, wildlife and cattle have been caught in the crossfire and the polarized commentary on social media may be emboldening the criminals.

The latest shooting of conservationist Kuki Gallmann comes after the shooting of OCPD, Rumuruti on February 7 and the killing of one of the directors of Sosian Ranch, Tristan Voorspuy on March 5. This is compounded by documented incidences of armed violence, threats, intimidation, stock theft, vandalism, poaching, human wildlife conflict and illegal grazing.

Laikipia is world famous for its wildlife spectacles, and is one of the few conservation areas in Kenya that has seen an increase in endangered wildlife numbers in recent years. The fallout of this politically motivated chaos could lead to significant loss of endangered species. Hard won conservation success will be undone leading to further loss of life, property, loss of tourism revenues, jobs and livelihoods.

We call on the government through the National Security Council, Ministry of Interior and Coordination and the National Police Service to afford protection of the right to security, of every person in without exception. The citizens of this country who comes with all colors and creed have legitimate expectations from the Legitimate State in protecting their lives and property as set in Bill of rights as set out in Chapter 4 of our Constitution.

Drought has now been declared a National Disaster but efforts are inadequate to alleviate the security challenges and more than 50 lives have been lost in the last 6 months.

Disarming the militias and destocking the herders' livestock through Disaster Management Fund will go along way in easing the pressure for water and pasture in the short term.

"In a civilized society like ours, with the most progressive constitution in the world, this is an open shut case for Class suit for Negligence on the part of the State for Compensation for loss of lives and property. The state has been caught sleeping on the job hence, Article 23(3)(e) of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010 should be invoked as matters of urgency by herders, small scale farmers and

Conservancy owners,” Edward Muriu, Board member of WildlifeDirect and a Constitutional Lawyer said.

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For more information please contact: Patricia Sewe, Communications Manager

Email: psewe@wildlifedirect.org

Telephone: +254 (0)705-133509