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*Africa Regional Hub of a global network of individuals and organisations committed to positive action to transform conflict*

## **STATEMENT TO THE KENYAN GOVERNMENT ON THE ATTACK IN NAIROBI'S EASTLEIGH AREA**

**1 April 2014**

We condemn in the strongest terms the bombing in Nairobi's Eastleigh area on the 31 March 2014. We are outraged by the reports of two blasts in the country's capital that took the lives of 5 civilians and critically injured 9 other civilians. In the past such attacks have been associated with Somalia's armed group Al-Shabaab but we jump to no conclusions in this regard, only to denounce the action of whatever group is found to be responsible.

We urge the Kenyan people to remain in solidarity with their fellow Somali brothers and sisters who are themselves not responsible for the past actions of the Somali armed group or terrorist movements. All Kenyans have suffered as a result of these attacks and our hearts go out to all who have been affected. We urge the Kenyan government to consider its options cautiously in cognisance of the delicacy of the national and regional dynamics.

The Kenyan government has to date played a considerable role in the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in the efforts to curb the violent militarised bouts that are initiated by the Al-Shabaab group in Somalia.

We call upon the East African Community (EAC) at this crucial time to stand firm as it seeks to fulfill its mandate, and to ensure that the government of Kenya responds to the bombings in a cautious manner which ensures the protection of civilians and promotes the principles that are stated in the EAC Treaty which provide for undertaking approaches for a peaceful settlement of disputes, and peaceful co-existence.

We call upon the EAC to ensure that it acts jointly with the African Union in addressing the need to find peaceful measures to address the attacks. We, at ACTION Support Centre remain concerned about militarised and polarising responses in the past, and we urge the EAC to adopt a firm position on the matter and play a more pro-active role in ensuring that the Kenyan government authorities promote dialogue and build relationships, as a necessary peaceful measure in resolving the conflict in Kenya and Somalia, and that the underlying systemic and structural causes of conflict in the region receive equal attention. The role of the EAC to monitor the progress and compliance with the principles of its mandate remains crucial, and should remain in consonance with the vision and aspirations of the African Union.

We firmly believe that it is only through the implementation of the principles of the EAC Treaty and partnership with the African Union, that the Kenyan government will be able to respond accordingly through the use of peaceful negotiations, and that the Kenyan government can come to the realisation that violence does not necessitate an armed response, but raises the need to include the assailants in forums of dialogue to better understand their demands and include them in the roadmap for peace consolidation. The ACTION Support Centre remains committed to the achievement of sustainable peace in Kenya and throughout Africa, and calls on all Africans to unify behind a shared solidarity agenda.

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