

Symposium Concept Note

Fourth Annual Symposium

Preventing and Managing Violent Election Related Conflicts in Africa: Exploring Good Practices



Background

For the past three years, EISA has held an annual symposium, each of which focused upon a selected democracy and governance issue. The First Annual Symposium, in November 2006, examined the challenges of conflict, democracy and development in Africa. The Second, in October 2007, focused policy discussion around the prospects for sustainable democratic governance in Africa in an environment of dire socio economic conditions and entrenched poverty. The third, in October 2008, dealt with the challenges facing civil society engagement with the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).

The Fourth Symposium will be held this year with the theme **Preventing and Managing Violent Election Related Conflicts in Africa: Exploring Good Practices**. It will focus upon the problem of persistent, violent election related conflicts in Africa with a view to understanding their causes, magnitude and consequences for democratic governance. The conference will explore ways in which these conflicts can be prevented, managed and resolved and, in the process, share best practices from across the continent.

Keynote Address: speaker to be confirmed.

Goal and Objectives

The goal of the Symposium is to examine the democratic value of elections by focusing on election related conflicts and how they can be prevented, managed and resolved with a view to deepening democracy, ensuring stability and promoting peace and security.

The specific objectives of the Symposium are to:

- provide a platform for dialogue on elections and conflict among key stakeholders in Africa, highlighting best practices and challenges;
- share best practices for the prevention, management and resolution of election related conflict and propose appropriate electoral reforms;
- explore alternative, constructive mechanisms to complement what already exist in various African countries in managing election disputes and violent conflicts;
- review the intervention strategies of continental inter governmental bodies (AU, PAP, APRM, RECs, etc) in handling election disputes and conflicts and propose reforms where appropriate;
- review the intervention strategies of international development partners (donors) assisting African states in dealing with election disputes and conflicts;
- disseminate the Symposium proceedings throughout Africa and beyond through press releases, internet and other publications.

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Stakeholders

These include election management bodies (EMBs), government executive, judiciary and legislative branches, political parties, civil society organisations (CSOs), the media, the donor community, development agencies, the African Union Commission, Pan African Parliament, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), regional economic communities, academia, UNECA and other international actors.

Donors/Supporting Agencies

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