

## **A student's perspective on Kenyan political turmoil**

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International student Loice Ongwela shares her personal experiences during the political turmoil in Kenya.

**Duration:** 5:58

### **Transcript**

My name is Mrs. Loice Ongwela. I'm from Kenya, the southwestern part of Kenya. I basically lived in Eldoret, one of the cities in Western Kenya where I went to school. I took 6 years - that's 4-years taking my bachelors of nursing, and then I took one year internship. And I also got to teach in the same school for about 9-months. I got to know about IU through a collaboration with Indiana University and Moi University. When the nursing school, the IU School of Nursing, came over to look for collaboration with the nursing school. I made friends with the dean, made applications here, was taken and that's how I ended up here. I'm doing my master's in adult health nursing and a minor in nursing education.

I must say Kenya has been very friendly to Americans. I know in my city in Eldoret, they are very concerned about them, their friends there, and how they are feeling right now. I just say it is my prayer that they are safe and those who are coming back, I hope things will be better so they can go back there. We enjoy the people who come from here and stay with people there. They are doing a great job and it's been such a great blessing to the people in Kenya and the cities down there. The work that they are doing is appreciated.

Last year, in December, I went back home. I was actually getting married. I did not expect anything to happen that is out of the ordinary. So, I went to my country, I arrived on 13th December, and for two weeks, I was up and about, doing my own activities, preparing for my wedding. At the same time, there was campaign for general elections going on. As it has been before, there were conflicts and some disputes among the contestants. That went on, but it didn't matter to me. But, then, on the 27th of December, there was a general election. Kenya is about 40 tribes, and most of the tribes voted for the opposition leader, while the major tribe in Kenya, most of them voted for the former president. It seems everyone expected the opposition leader to win. All of the sudden, people were throwing fits. They thought there was something wrong, and, for sure, there's something wrong. Because, after a day, the expectation was turned to something else. The former president was induced as the president, and that was a disappointment to most Kenyans.

Being my wedding day, I never expected something like that to happen. We expected so many visitors for our wedding. But, the next day, there was nowhere to pass, there's no transport. In Kenya, it's mostly public transport, and all the roads were blocked. And people were burning vehicles and homes and tires, and people were fighting each other. It was strange. So, on my wedding morning, the groom and his family weren't able to come. But, somehow, things worked out and he took a bicycle and rode to the wedding. We had the wedding, and that was fine, thank God. But, then, after that, things went worse. The conflict continued, people started fighting among themselves. Even amongst the same tribe, people were fighting themselves. There was

tension in most people, because they were disappointed. Kenya has been a peaceful country, so far, but then that was a shock to many of us.

We have never had anything like that, having people stay where they are, locked indoors, in the villages, you can't move. There are no businesses going on. Even major businesses, banks and all, were not open. That was really bad. But then, after like 10 days, the situation came back to normal, a little bit, because there were talks going on, peace talks, and we had people coming into the country to arbitrate between the two contestants, and we had calm for like 4 days. Well, that's how I was able to come back. I had to take a quick ride to the city, I took my flight, and I came back to Indiana. But after that, things went worse.

It would be my wish that Kenyans got a new perspective. It's time that everyone had their mission right in life. I wish that people maintain peace and they realize that it's no profit to make chaos because of a loss or something like that.