

Kenya launches SMS service to report hate speech

Kenya launched a free text message service on Wednesday (14 July 2010) which allows the public to report examples of hate speech ahead of a constitutional referendum in August. The National Cohesion and Integration Commission said it will monitor the service and respond to hate speech reported to the free SMS number (6397) within 12 hours.

Hate speech fuelled post-election violence in 2007 and is often spread by text messages. Kenyan citizens are due to vote on a new constitution that could reduce presidential powers on 4 August.

Last month six people died in a stampede at a rally in Nairobi organised by the "No" campaign after a grenade was thrown into the crowd. Three MPs were subsequently charged with inciting hate speech.

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