

# Coalition Formation and the Role of Ethnicity in Kenyan General Election, 2022

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## ABSTRACT

The political sector of Kenya provides an interesting perspective into the importance of lineage and ethnicity in Kenyan politics. Kenyan politicians are prone to switching alliances and forming coalitions to fit within their rapidly changing party dynamics and structure which are heavily influenced by ethnic factors. The leaders of these ethnic groups too are more likely to provide support depending on future favorability during the distribution of resources or positions within the new government. This paper reviews relevant literature and uses the social cleavage theory to discuss the importance of ethnicity in the formation of coalitions in Kenyan election of 2022. Through the discussions, the paper points out the instability of coalitions mostly based on ethnicity in Kenya and recommends the pursuit of a national identity instead of an ethnic identity.

**Keywords:** Kenya, Kenyan General Election 2022, Coalition formation, Shifting Alliances, Ethnic Grouping

## INTRODUCTION

Coalitions and alliances are a major part of the electoral systems around the world with a multiparty system. Evans (2019) writes that in such democracies, governments would be typically formed from a coalition of parties who would represent their own agendas and interests (Evans, 2019, p. 1). Establishing a coalition government would allow parties to engage in the decision making processes and have some impact in the policy making role (Evans, 2019, p. 8). Ray and Vohra (2015) mentions that the main idea in a coalition is the formation of a group where the members are able to come to a common consensus regarding the goal of the organization and dealing with the rest of the world (Ray & Vohra, 2015, p. 240).

The multiparty electoral system was established in Kenya through the constitutional reform in 1992. Throughout the years since then, coalitions have become a necessity in the formation and establishment of the Kenyan government. An example of this would be the coalition formation in the Kenyan General Election of 2022 which ended with the William Ruto as the President and United Democratic Alliance (UDA) the leading party. Ruto is also the leader of the alliance, Kenya Kwanza which consisted of 12 independent parties (Otieno, 2022). This paper will focus on the Kenyan General Election of 2022 and discuss the formation of coalition and alliances in the Kenya's political sector.

## Theoretical Framework

One of the established theories of coalition formation is the coalition theory which covers the political aspect of forming coalitions in a political situation. Riker (1984) brought forth the idea of the coalition theory which defined coalitions to be an alliance of 'some part of the authority-possessing group' whose authority is recognized by the others (Riker, 1984, p. 12). . According to him, all the participants in the coalition game are likely to continue with the alliance or coalition 'up to the point of subjective certainty of winning (Riker, 1984, p. 33).' While the coalition theory certainly explains a lot about the formation and dissolution of coalitions in a political situation, there are certain problems as well. Dodd (2015) argues that there is an issue with identifying all the central players of the coalition with the help of this theory. He says that it is difficult to determine the 'relevant units of action: who are the actors in the coalition game?' As it may be difficult to identify the main actors of the 'coalitional game,' the coalition theory may not be appropriate in all situations (Dodd, 2015, p.

210). As such, it become important to find a suitable framework for the Kenyan political context which will be able to shed some light into the formation of coalitions and the main reasons behind it.

The theory that is most appropriate with regards to discussing the formation of coalitions in Kenya is the cleavage theory postulated by Lipset and Rokkan in 1967. They brought forth a set of questions in their seminal work which laid the foundation for understanding the different elements and factors associated with the creation of coalitions in a political setting. While discussing the cleavages within a society, Lipset and Rokkan (1967) firstly ask about the nature of conflicts between different communities and groups and the rate at which these were resolved or overlapped with each other to form other groups. Secondly, why did some of the conflicts create further oppositions and the conditions involved in each of these conflicts and biggest beneficiaries in the cases where these conflicts were resolved. Lastly, the rate at which the political parties were able to garner support amongst the dissatisfied members of the community and their central characteristics (Lipset & Rokkan, 1967, pp. 1–2). Rae and Taylor (1970) further studies the cleavage theory and classified it into race or caste, ideology and organizational membership (Goldberg, 2017, p. 13). Bartolini and Mair (1990) offered some more clarification and labeled the three cleavages as empirical – categorized by social, religious and cultural, normative – categorized by identity and social groups and lastly organizational/ behavioral - categorized by the groups interest through organizational behavior (Goldberg, 2017, p. 13).

Langs (2019) also demonstrates that even in the present time, social cleavages are dependent on the social backgrounds of the participants and has significant impact on the political behavior of the people (Langs, 2019, p. 17). He also argues that such classes often become politically ‘distinct groups.’ At the same time, historical connection between the distinct groups also cannot be ignored while discussing the participants in specific political settings (Langs, 2019, pp. 31–32).

This paper is going to explore the formation of coalitions before and after the Kenyan General Election of 2022 where amongst other factors, ethnicity was seen to be the driving factor in the formation of the coalitions. As such, the cleavage theory is an appropriate theory to discuss the many angles and perspectives of the coalition formation during the election.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. The Effect of Colonization in Kenya

Since independence, almost all the regimes which ruled Kenya has been motivated by patrimonialism and authoritarianism. This has brought forth many other concerns in the political sector which have had lasting effect on the country (Kwatemba, 2008, p. 89). One of the most important effect of this one sided ruling without any consideration of the general people was Kenya’s reversion towards the previously bureaucratic authoritarianism colonial era (Rwigema, 2022, p. 401). It seems relevant at this point to discuss a little about the colonial history which became a major part of the issues surrounding ethnic grouping in Kenya which in turn contributed to the trend of coalition formation in Kenyan politics.

Onyango and Elliot (2022) wrote that during the colonial period, the colonial governor brought all the unsupervised land used by the people living in those regions under administrative control. Lands that were ‘once communally owned’ became a tool for the colonizers (Onyango & Elliott, 2022, p. 2). Thus, what used to be a collection of stateless societies turned into the modern country of Kenya after colonization by the British. Because of the newly introduced land tenure relations, the previously existing communities, tribes, and structures were forced to migrate or succumb to colonial rule. Such drastic changes in the region brought a lot of issues for the Kenyans. Even after independence, the citizens went through the regimes of Presidents Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel arap Moi, both of whom capitalized on the divide-and-rule policy of the British, which consequently put a lot of emphasis on people’s ethnic differences. Since then, those differences have become the most critical factor during the elections as voters tend to shift towards candidates with the same ethnic background.

Meredith (2011) explains that since the British invasion through the East African Company in 1895, unfair taxes and various laws have forced Kenyans to work as free laborers in farms and other industries. The Europeans split the continent amongst themselves, drew borders without taking ethnicity, religion, linguistic, and other

factors into account, and either split up tribes within two or more countries or forced tribes without any historical background in the same region. Such an impractical way of divvying up has caused numerous clashes between the different tribes whose lingering effects are still seen amongst these tribes from time to time (Meredith, 2011, pp. 4–5). As the British continued their improper rule in Kenya, The Kenya Land and Freedom Army (KLFA), went against the British. While failing to get widespread public recognition, they were successful in creating a rift between the colonizers and the locals (“The Colonization of Kenya,” 2020). A few years after the failure of KLFA, Britain took steps to remove itself from Kenya. A constitution was drafted and set up as part of decolonizing the nation. Rwigema (2022) states that this ‘democratic’ constitution was built on an imperialistic perspective which failed to consider Kenya a country with its culture and society and weakened its administrative structure. The British never considered the local administrative structures and forced Kenya into a ‘modern colonial state.’ With minimal representation from the regular people in the administration and no representation at the parliament before this point, the newly minted structure added to the people's confusion (Rwigema, 2022b, pp. 398–400).

## **B. Presidents Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel Arap Moi**

In 1964, Kenyatta took control as the president his first action was to squash the other parties trying to establish a foothold in the newly decolonized nation. Shilaho (2018) comments that Kenyatta perpetrated the ‘disregard for the rule of law and manipulation of the Constitution’ to serve the few elites allied with him during his time in power. His tactics prevented the development of a society that favored national identities over ethnic and regional ones (Shilaho, 2018, pp. 4–5). Continuing from the British, who instigated ethnic clashes over borders and cultural differences, Kenyatta continued the same and reinforced ethnic identities over national identity and continued the history of violence and authoritarianism in the newly independent country.

President Daniel arap Moi was elected in 1978 after the death of President Kenyatta in 1978. Rwigema (2022) comments that while initially seeming to tackle issues of corruption and ‘bureaucratic authoritarianism’ rampant in the country, President Moi started following in Kenyatta’s footsteps and, in 1982, pushed for a constitutional reform which made Kenya a one-party state, something that President Kenyatta failed to achieve (Rwigema, 2022b, p. 401). Adar and Munye (2001) said Moi was more interested in removing everyone against his leadership and began to ‘centralize and personalize power when he took over the presidency.’ He ‘usurped the functions of the other institutions,’ including the judicial system, to such an extent that the idea of separation of powers was rendered ineffective. Moi continued on the ‘gradual Kalenjinization’ of the administrative sectors and ‘de-Kikuyunize’ the civil and state enterprises and posted Kalenjins in essential positions of agriculture, commerce, telecommunication, etc. (Adar & Munyae, 2001, pp. 1–5). Moi’s actions put a lot of pressure on the regular citizens who were reluctant to speak out against the unfair treatment and feared government retaliation regarding resource allocation in their regions (Nyadera et al., 2020, p. 3).

## **C. Kenyan Politics**

One can observe a growing number of trends in the country's political setting. As observed during past elections, politicians join coalitions and alliances individually or as a party depending on the promises offered. Even the current president of Kenya was a member of different parties during each election, revealing a pattern in the political sector of Kenya where coalition formation or shifting alliances is seen as a common phenomenon. Since the reintroduction of the multiparty system through the 1992 constitutional reform, political parties have formed coalitions and challenged President Moi but failed to have any impact because of ethnic influence determining the election results. Mulli (1999) writes that President Moi’s rule flourished under the ‘personal rule’ system, and the president maintained his position by using his ethnic background as capital. In return, the President awarded his ethnic groups with many resources meant for public use only, along with many important positions within the government. President Moi only won the 1992 election, after the introduction of the multiparty system in the constitution, because of the power and influence of the president’s office and primarily because of his masterful use of ethnic groups as bases (Mulli, 1999, pp. 78–80). The same pattern is repeated in the current political sector, where ethnic grouping seems to be the main factor in determining the election results. Despite legitimizing coalition formation in Kenya, because of ethnic influence, coalitions and alliances remain unstable. This Nudges candidates to switch alliances based on the latest offers by the political parties.

Coalition or Alliance formation are a common trend among Kenyan politicians, and this becomes especially significant during the electioneering periods. During the 2012 election, for example, there were many instances of candidates leaving their parties and forming new ones, searching for running mates and changing their decisions in the middle, numerous changes in the coalitions and alliances etc. In 2013, William Ruto's United Republic Party (URP) allied with Raila but was later elected to Deputy President as a member of the Jubilee party in 2017 and the formation of the United Democratic Alliance (UDA) in 2022. All these points towards some sort of calculation within the candidates which is one of the points of discussion for this paper.

## COALITION FORMATION AND ETHNICITY

### A. Political Trends of Kenya

On 29 December 2002, Mwai Kibaki was sworn in as Kenya's third president in front of a million jubilant citizens in Nairobi's Uhuru Park. The Kenya African National Union (KANU) government had been swept from power at the polls by Kibaki's National Rainbow Coalition (NaRC); Kibaki had crushed retiring President Daniel Arap Moi's anointed successor, Uhuru Kenyatta, in the presidential election. On the podium, Kibaki was joined by his leading allies, notably Raila Odinga who had masterminded the election campaign while Kibaki convalesced after a road accident. One interesting aspect in this alliance is the history behind Odinga from the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) and Kenyatta. Odinga asked his supporters to boycott the 2017 election and refused to accept Kenyatta's win in the election. This brought the country in a volatile situation once again after the 2007 election which was marred with violence and racial animosity. In 2018 however, Odinga and Kenyatta is seen to be forming an alliance through a 'informal handshake' and promise of cooperation which continued through the 2022 election (Brechenmacher & Sambuli, 2022, p. 2). In order to achieve their goals, Odinga and Kenyatta chose to forgo their rivalry and joined hand in hand and forget a multi-ethnic alliance (Odinga is from the Luo ethnic group and Kenyatta is from the Kikuyu ethnic group), which promised far-reaching constitutional reform and robust action against corruption, seemed to have finally defeated entrenched authoritarianism in Kenya. The alliance between Odinga and Kenyatta has brought forth other complications in the 2022 election. After the support of Kenyatta, the ruling Jubilee party split up to support their preferred candidates. William Ruto under the banner of the United Democratic Alliance (UDA) and the Kenya Kwanza alliance under the leadership of Ruto as opposed to Odinga's Azimio la Umoja coalition. Brechenmacher and Sambuli (2022) points out that such realignment of the Kenyan political parties is a frequent phenomenon since the introduction of the multi-party politics in 1992. Politicians rally with stronger candidates who promises votes from 'their respective ethno-regional strongholds in exchange for political positions and access to state resources (Brechenmacher & Sambuli, 2022, p. 2).'

Kenyatta and Ruto also campaigned together previously in the last three elections in 2002, 2007 and 2013. They were both indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) after the election violence in 2007. They still persisted together until after the 2017 election when Ruto condemned both Kenyatta and Odinga as being 'embodiments of dynastic politics and entitlement (Shilaho, 2022).'

This should also be noted that despite Ruto's condemnation of Kenyatta and Odinga being 'dynastic,' and his promises to change the political culture and patronage, his administration acted in similar manners to their predecessors in the president's office. Josse-Durand and Kamencu (2023) points out that after being in power, the regime replaced the police chiefs they were uncomfortable with and begun purging the 'pro-Azimio elements within the police service and the electoral commission (Josse-Durand & Kamencu, 2023, p. 25).'

Cheeseman (2008) comments that Kibaki was finally able to defeat Kenyatta, President Moi's successor in the 2002 election using his National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) party, which was also a 'multi-ethnic alliance' and offered to take steps against corruption in Kenya. Later in 2005, some parties in the coalition refused to acknowledge the constitutional referendum and split up from NARC and later decided to run against Kibaki in the 2007 election (Cheeseman, 2008, pp. 166, 174).

The previously allied Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) party members from the government were stripped of their powers and formed the ODM in response. This brief history of the 2005 election portrays the effectiveness of a coalition government and the fragile nature of the coalitions because of individual and party interests. Clashes between the leaderships, disagreements over power-sharing have been identified as other reasons for the



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instability of coalition governments in Kenya.

Political scientists have been concerned with the Kenyan political sector following these changes and the constitutional reforms. They have identified a few characteristics of the Kenyan political field as it enables us to make the necessary comparisons. Nyadera, Agwanda, and Maulani (2020) said that the formation of coalitions, the dominance of the executive branch of the government, a lack of ideological-based party system, the system of majoritarian model of election (practiced before 2013), the effect of ethnic background, a highly centralized system of government, constitutional rigidity, etc. were some of the critical aspects of Kenyan politics since the independence. These characteristics have influenced the current trends in Kenyan politics. It should be noted that some of these have been constitutionally reformed in the last few decades (Nyadera et al., 2020, pp. 8–10). Such characteristics have already been discussed while exploring the history of Kenyan politics, like the dominance of the executive branch, a lack of freedom of expression by the media and people, a centralized form of administration, and the lack of an ideology based political system owing to the ethnic divide created by the British and perpetuated by Kenyatta and Moi.

Kamunde-Aquino (2014) writes that since independence, there have been numerous amendments to the constitution, and a close reading of those changes can explain the causes of many conflicts and the current state of politics in Kenya. Multiple amendments since independence in the Kenyan constitution allowed the president of Kenya to rule the country at his discretion without the support of the parliament and the people. The last three amendments in 1991, 1997, and 2008, finally brought the country to a state where Kenya became a multi-party state; some of the president's powers were removed, and introduced coalition government by establishing the office of the prime minister and deputy prime minister (Kamunde-Aquino, 2014). Despite these changes in the government, because of the politician's tendency to focus on ethnic connections and regional ties to be elected, coalition formation became linked with ethnicity in the country. Such a change has brought forth a trend of coalition calculation where voters are more likely to choose someone based on their ethnic background instead of their election manifesto. As such, coalition formation and making alliances has become the norm during the electioneering period in Kenya.

## **B. Ethnicity in the Formation of Coalitions**

Kwatemba (2008) quotes scholars like Brown and Nnoli (2020, 1995) to define and establish the importance of ethnicity in Kenya. Brown defined an ethnic group as a community with shared ancestry and its members having specific characteristics in terms of language, religion, and origin. According to Nnoli, ethnic backgrounds are an organizing factor in the fight against 'domination, oppression and exploitation by and unresponsive government.' Kwatemba supports Nnoli's arguments by giving examples starting from colonial rule to explore the effects of ethnicity in Kenya. With the division of the region, different ethnic groups were forced to live in proximity, and there was a vast cultural clash. This hostility remained present without any efforts to engineer any harmonization between them. During this time of the one-party system, Kenyatta and Moi 'manipulated ethnicity for political as well as economic ends,' and because of rampant 'state-repression,' opposing this situation became exceedingly difficult. Kwatemba also criticizes the system of neopatrimonialism (since colonization, the term neopatrimonialism has been in use since 'African Political systems can no longer be treated as purely traditional'(Cheeseman, Bertrand, et al., 2019)) in Kenya, which both Kenyatta and Moi practiced during their regime since it helped negate the legalities imposed by the nation's constitution. This neopatrimonialism system that the two presidents cooked up dwelt on their ethnic identities. President Moi even started forming a 'kitchen cabinet' with people from his community (Kwatemba, 2008, pp. 77–107).

Shilaho (2018) comments that while the British were responsible for introducing the 'divide and rule' to control the different ethnic groups, it was mostly the post-colonial politicians who maintained ethnic differences to retain the existing colonial structure. They were prone to 'campaign on the basis of tribalism.' Shilaho also discussed the reasons for the economic disparity between the different ethnic groups, contributing to resentments and subsequent violence during elections. According to him, some ethnic groups like the Luhya, Luo and the Kikuyu were faster than the other tribes in adopting to the colonial rules which favored them during this time and later during the post-colonial time since they were already familiar with the administrative structure, education system, and the government. Despite their differences, there was a semblance of unity amongst the ethnic groups, which Kenyatta and his allies neglected and 'perpetuated the divide-and-rule' for their benefit. Shilaho also

quotes Cheeseman in this context and says that in Tanzania, the British did not ‘politicize ethnic identities’ and saved the trouble for Nyerere to deal with ethnically allied communities (Shilaho, 2018, pp. 1, 32-35, 37).

Bedasso (2017) commented that one of the major reasons behind the ethnic divide was employment which at the time was highly depended on the public sector and consequently on ‘ethnic allegiances (Bedasso, 2017, p. 20).’ He also pointed out that 4 out of 5 general elections in Kenya showed that the winning candidates received more than 73.5% votes from their home province compared to other places (Bedasso, 2017, p. 20). This gap clearly points towards the ethnic divide being very significant in determining the results of the Kenyan elections.

Coalition formation is entirely dependent upon ethnic influence and backgrounds in Kenya. While in a multiparty political system, individual parties may find it particularly difficult to attain most of the votes required to form a government, in the case of Kenya, ethnic groups mostly dictate voting patterns. Shilaho (2018) observes that within the newly formed multi-party system, candidates from minority ethnic groups did not stand any chance unless they were in ‘ethnic alliances.’ During the multi-party system, the colonial divide and rule system was further influenced by the politicians, and ethnic identity was favored even more than national identity (Shilaho, 2018, p. 18). Meredith (2011) points out that in the elections after independence, the politicians were focused on national identities, and ethnicity did not have much influence. Soon however, people started fearing discrepancies in resource distribution, and some politicians took advantage of this fear and ignorance to garner support through ethnic connections instead of policy-oriented politics (Meredith, 2011, p. 156). Ndegwa (1997) gives examples from the 1997 election and states that voting patterns and being elected to the parliament depend on ethnic connections in Kenya. After the constitutional amendment and the introduction of the multiparty system in 1992, the KANU politicians decided that some areas in the Rift valley were ‘KANU Zones’ where other parties and politicians were not allowed to campaign, bringing forth the idea of ‘ethnic citizenship’ which trumped ‘national citizenship (Ndegwa, 1997, p. 610).’ Long and Gibson (2015) agree that Kenya houses approximately 40 major ethnic groups (the real number is over 100 according to the 2019 census but for many of the ethnic groups, the proportionate percentage is less than 0.001% (KENAS, 2024)), with none having a clear majority over the others, and ethnic identities provide the voters with a ‘shortcut’ to understanding the candidate. Long and Gibson conclude from their study that in the 2007 election, while ethnic communities like the Kikuyu, Luo, and Kamba provided overwhelming support to their chosen politician, factors like ‘performance and consistency’ were equally important for the voters to make their decisions (Long & Gibson, 2015, pp. 830–840). While Long and Gibson’s argument introduces other factors separate from ethnicity in determining the results of the elections, the ethnic factor still plays a significant role.

Ferree (2022) also reiterates Ndegwa’s comments about ethnicity and its role in Kenyan elections. Ferree identifies three significant features. Firstly, voters prefer candidates from the same ethnic background because of the possible distribution of future resources within their ethnic group. Secondly, claims of a better system of accountability between the voters and the candidates based on their ‘ethnic networks,’ and lastly, some scholars see such voting as a way for the voters to practice a ‘form of expressive identity politics’ (Ferree, 2022, p. 1). The main concern about Ferree’s argument is defining identity since it can encapsulate ethnic and national identities. In the case of Kenya, having explored the role of the British and the subsequent Presidents, ethnic identity seems to be prioritized over national identity.

Cheeseman (2019) mentions the latest constitutional reform in Kenya, which stripped the president of a lot of power and made changes in the electoral system by introducing the ‘absolute majority’ rule to secure a victory which would have a second round as well if no one managed to secure over 50%+1 vote in the election (Cheeseman, Kanyinga, et al., 2019, p. 7). Cheeseman (2022) also argues that since the major ethnic groups make up only a small percentage of the total population, securing support from multiple communities to form a stable coalition is a must for any candidate to get elected. This forces the candidates to compete and the politicians, instead of creating a harmonious community relationship, start focusing on ethnic identities of the communities which further reinforces the ethnic division. He concludes with the BTI report that the politicians themselves are not interested in resolving ethnic conflicts so that when the time arises, they can keep on exploiting the communities for their agendas (Cheeseman, 2022).

Cheeseman (2008) also mentions that since many voters and candidates were reluctant to form alliances with other political parties, the Moi administration successfully continued their regime until 2002. Kenyan politics

took a new turn in 2002 when Kibaki won the elections through an adequately formed coalition of two parties. Kibaki won again in 2007, but this victory was marred by violence among party followers and ethnic groups. This instance of violence hints that the coalitions were fragile in their structures and cooperation and were subject to reformation based on the candidates and their supporting ethnic groups (Cheeseman, 2008). According to Kisaka and Nyadera (2019), such strong feelings of ethnicity and identity make it difficult to form successful coalitions in Kenya. Voters from one ethnic group are more likely to walk away and support another set of coalitions since, for them, the candidate is prioritized when compared to the party or party ideology. Since ideological clashes between political parties and candidates are more likely, coalition retention becomes exceedingly difficult and may become deciding factor in the consequent elections (Kisaka & Nyadera, 2019, p. 174).

Ethnicity can therefore be considered the most critical factor in forming coalitions in Kenya. Hasan (2016) mentions that the main reason behind the ethnic cleavages in Kenya is rooted from the 'informal state institutions' built up during the colonial era and from 'coalition building (Hassan, 2016, p. 519).' A successful alliance with various ethnic groups can ensure success in the elections, whereas an unstable coalition can be the fallback for a political union. In Kenya, despite the presence of such opposing political factors which oppose the formation of coalitions, the importance of coalitions in such a political setting also cannot be ignored. As such, research into such a sector seems to be highly relevant and necessary.

## CONCLUSION

Having explored the various aspects of coalition formation and its impact in the Kenyan elections, the impact of the ethnic identities in their formation can be clearly seen. The instability of the coalitions and alliances formed during the electioneering period in Kenya have been seen to be fragile and unstable. Forming coalitions and making alliances are frequent in most countries with a multi-party system. Based on the electoral system, sometimes coalitions can be the only way to form a ruling government. As such, mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation between the different political parties are necessary for it to be stable.

Properly structured organizations and constant monitoring through relevant authorities are necessary to form stable coalitions. Similarly, steps should be taken to address the issue of ethnic grouping in Kenya, and a national identity can be fostered to replace ethnic ones. These steps will help reduce or eliminate clashes resulting from ethnic differences among the citizens.

Kenyan politicians should also take a different approach during their campaigns instead of solely focusing on their ethnic connections. Even though these connections offer temporary footholds during the electioneering period, they make it more complex and subject to failure in the long run. The many instances of post-election violence can also be attributed to members from different ethnic groups as coalitions formed with ethnic connections collide after their inevitable failure. These issues are understandable considering the young democracy of Kenya, but it is high time politicians took a different approach to prioritizing ethnic identities over national ones. Instead, Kenya should move towards more ideological-based politics, which would unite the communities instead of splitting them into their ethnic groups.

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