

## ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

The Presidential and Parliamentary elections in Sierra Leone are scheduled to take place on the 17th November 2012. There are growing concerns about the outcome of the electoral process, whether the elections will consolidate or endanger the fragile peace in the country. Judging by the headlines in the local newspapers in recent time, it appears that the political climate does not hold promise of a peaceful democratic transition. The headlines speak to the pervasive violence that have characterized the 2012 electoral process: “Fire for Fire”, “2012 Election will not be violent free”, “Worries over inadequate Biometric Machines”, “Bye-election violence”, “Political violence and the 2012 election”, “Violence erupts in the Bye-election”, “Political class is a disgrace”, and many more.

These headlines reflect the bellicose language and violent confrontations between supporters of the ruling All Peoples' Congress (APC) and the Sierra Leone Peoples' Party (SLPP), the main opposition party on the one hand and on the other among members of the same political parties to secure ticket to run in the parliamentary elections. WANEP's early warning system records on a daily basis incidents of election-related violence in communities across the country. The reports have been thoroughly analyzed and meanings drawn out to inform this policy brief.

This policy brief gives an overview of the current political dynamics in the country, highlights, factors driving tensions, presents likely best and worst case scenarios and conclude with recommendations to draw the attention of key political actors, policy and decision-makers, and the wider stakeholders to the rising tide of political violence facing the November 2012 elections in a bid to take early and timely actions to ensure a peaceful outcome. ....

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