



Summit for democracy and Kenya commitments



Kenya in S4D process

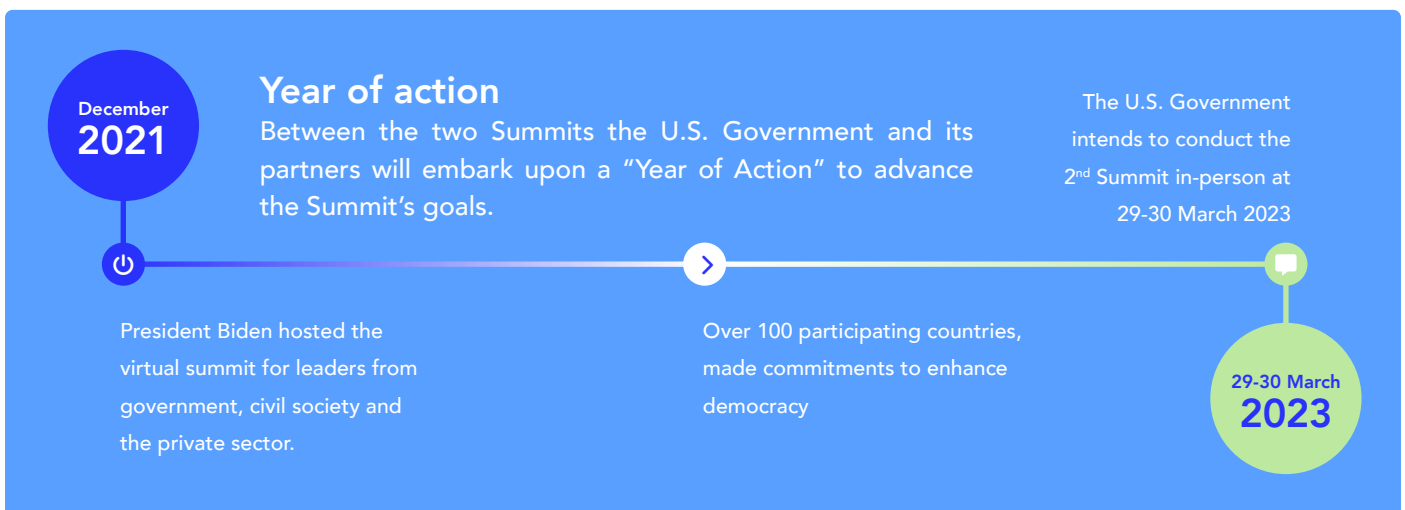


Funded by
the European Union

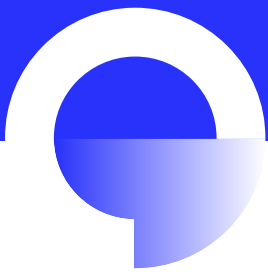


The information provided in this factsheet was compiled by Leah Kimati, consultant, with support from International IDEA. The methodology included a desk study, interviews and a survey completed by civil society organisations on the Summit for Democracy, challenges and opportunities. The information and recommendations provided in this factsheet were drafted by the consultant and discussed during a workshop with civil society organisations on 26th October 2022. Views expressed in this factsheet do not necessarily represent the views of International IDEA, or those of its Board or Council members.

The Summit for Democracy is an initiative headed by the United States Government to discuss how to advance the Summit's three broad themes: strengthening democracy and defending against authoritarianism; addressing and fighting corruption; and advancing respect for human rights. The initiative brings together leaders from governments, civil society and the private sector to set forth an affirmative agenda for democratic renewal and to tackle the greatest threats faced by democracies through collective action.



The Summit for Democracy is organized around two summits. The first summit took place in December 2021. Governments in attendance made a series of commitments around these topics, with progress against these promises to be supported and monitored through the Year of Action (YoA), leading to a 2nd Summit for Democracy (S4D2) scheduled for the 29th and 30th of March 2023. The YoA presents an opportunity for the commitments made in the first summit to be implemented and for civil society to monitor their progress. The Summit for Democracy as a process is an extraordinary opportunity to galvanize attention and mobilize international action; and the process associated with it is a critical platform for engagement around the world.



Commitments

Kenya participated in the S4D process under the leadership of President Uhuru Kenyatta. Its resulting commitments include:

- Strengthen ongoing efforts against corruption by developing accountable institutions and promoting local, organic solutions.
- Restore and entrench democracy in the region by supporting reconciliation in Ethiopia, peace and stability in Sudan and South Sudan, and the stabilization of Somalia.
- Seek to deliver UN Security Council mandate on broad policy pillars including regional peace and security, counterterrorism, peace support operations and climate-related security.

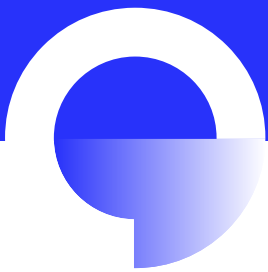
Implementation of commitments

So far, there is very little, if any progress, that can be specifically attributed to the commitments made during the S4D summit. This is because the commitments were very vague, were never popularized, the government

did not develop an implementation framework and they were made at a time of intense politicking in the country during the campaigns for the 2022 elections. Nonetheless, the country has made some incremental strides to fighting corruption and contributing regionally to peace and security through several other initiatives.

Fight against corruption: Kenya's membership in the Open Governance Partnership (OGP) has strengthened some of the country's actions in the fight against corruption through adopting the 2020–2022 action plan, where the government has made key commitments related to the creation of a public beneficial register, the adoption of open contracting data standards in all public procurements, the implementation of the Access to Information Act, the promotion of meaningful participation in legislative processes and the improving of access to justice. While the country continues to face challenges in reporting anti-corruption progress, the regular monitoring of commitments' implementation makes it possible for the public and civil society to keep the anti-corruption concerns on the agenda.





Support reconciliation efforts in Ethiopia, Somalia and South Sudan:

Kenya is supporting conflict mediation efforts in Ethiopia, Somali and South Sudan. Former President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya was one of the mediators that brokered the peace agreement between the Ethiopian Government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) in South Africa on 2 November 2022. Kenya is also home to the International Peace Support Training Centre (IPSTC) a regional center of excellence that trains for peace support operations in Africa and beyond. Kenya is actively participated in the United Nations and the African Union's peacekeeping missions, such as the AU Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), the UN-AU Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) and the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) (Kenya Ministry of Defence 2022).

Regional peace and security, counterterrorism, peace support operations and climate-related security:

Kenya has undertaken several counterterrorism measures both internally and regionally, including through their involvement in international and regional cooperative efforts in counter terrorism, such as their membership in the AU and as member of its Peace and Security Committee. However, there have been no concrete measures that can be attributed to the S4D commitment specifically.

Recommendations

- The S4D commitments in Kenya have benefitted from broader consultations among Kenyans to ensure a shared understanding and prioritization of these commitments.

- Collaboration between all actors is required. The success of implementing these commitments in supporting democracy at home depends on local actors; both state and non-state. The S4D process in Kenya should create a broad ownership by public institutions, civil society and citizens at large, as well as mechanisms of coordination between state actors.
- Kenya could have made commitments that were more measurable and include a specific plan for implementation. These commitments should align with Kenya's long-term priorities including Vision 2030.
- The President could have included commitments related to issues of electoral integrity, devolution and youth political participation.





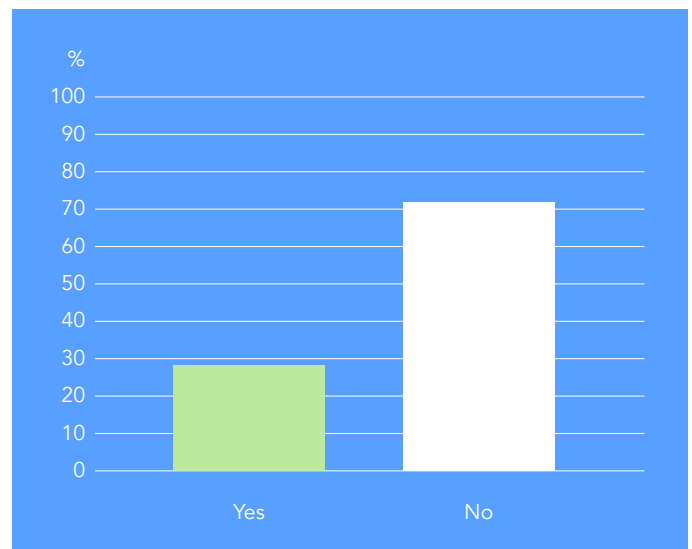
Summit for Democracy survey

In August 2022, International IDEA conducted a survey and a focus-group discussion to further understand public perceptions of the Summit for Democracy. 200 questionnaires were administered using a bounded randomized approach that ensured inclusion and with a focus on young people.

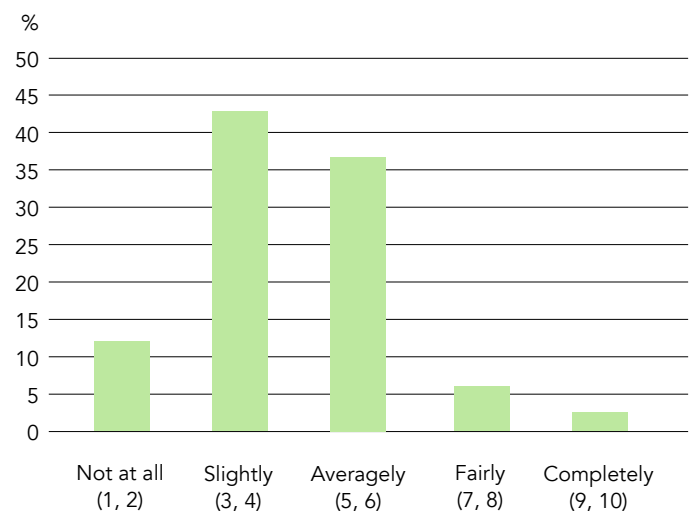
While the commitments made at the S4D were aimed at enhancing democracy in Kenya, unfortunately, very few Kenyan civil society organizations were aware either of the summit or of the commitments made by the government on their behalf. Only 28 per cent of the respondents had heard of the S4D in the survey.

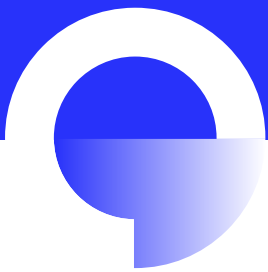
Kenyan civil society were generally not optimistic that the S4D commitments made could help address the challenges democracy faces in the country. Only less than 10 per cent of the respondents felt that the commitments could either fairly (6 per cent) or completely (2.5 per cent) address these challenges. A significant 45 per cent felt that the commitments could only slightly help address the challenges facing democracy in Kenya.

Do you know about the Summit for Democracy convened by the US administration in December 2021?



To what extent do you think the Summit for Democracy commitments made by Kenyan president could help to address the challenges democracy faces in Kenya?

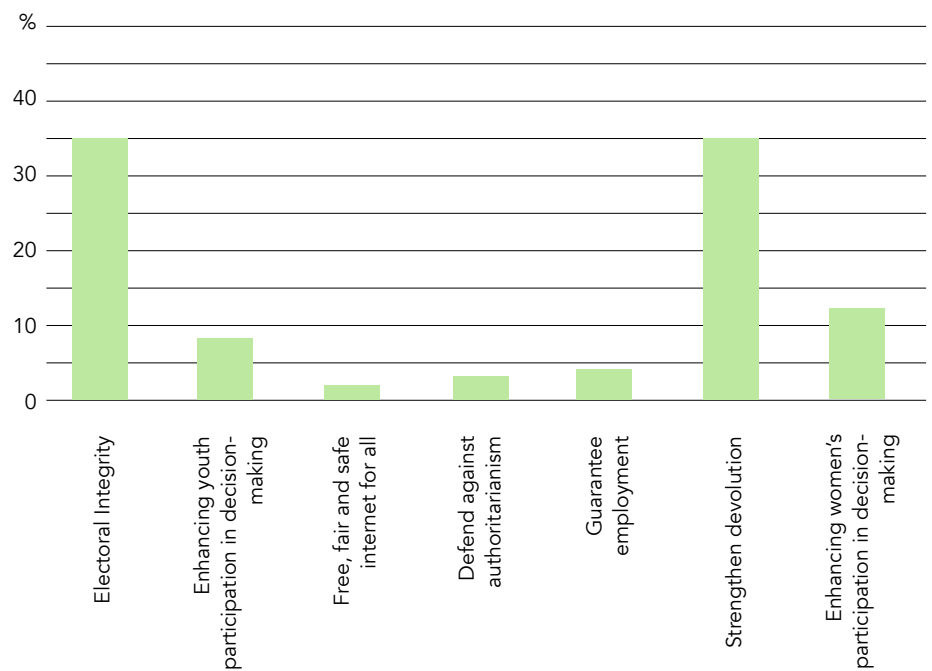


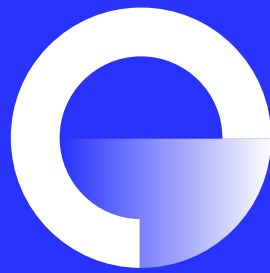


Summit for Democracy survey

To further enhance democracy, respondents felt that the government should prioritize electoral integrity (35 per cent), strengthening devolution (34 per cent), enhancing women participation in decision-making (13 per cent) and enhancing youth participation in decision-making (9 per cent). It was also clear that the government needed to revamp the war against corruption and deal with the state of poverty and unemployment especially among the youth.

If Kenya government could make additional commitments to strengthen democracy what would these address?





Summit for democracy and Kenya commitments



Kenya in S4D process



Funded by
the European Union



International IDEA – Regional Europe Office

Avenue des Arts 41, 7th, 1040 Brussels, Belgium • Tel: +32 (0) 2511 0894

idea.euo@idea.int • www.idea.int