

Kenya – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 10 March 2009

Information on the practise of devil worship in Kenya

A December 2004 *Telegraph* news article states:

“Church elders in Kenya have begun to destroy some of the country's most valuable and historic colonial-era religious imagery after a commission ruled that early Scottish missionaries to East Africa were “probably devil-worshippers”.

A group led by senior Presbyterian officials has already torn down symbols at St Andrew's in Nairobi, the main Scottish church in the country, prompting condemnation from British diplomats, politicians and parishioners.

A campaign has been launched to prevent the desecration of the country's oldest surviving Presbyterian church, built in 1907, which the group is threatening to “cleanse” this weekend. Opponents are threatening physical resistance to end what is being described as Kenya's “Iconoclastic Fury”.

Among the images destroyed at St Andrew's are 30 stained-glass windows, tapestries, wrought-iron grilles, Royal Air Force shields and memorials to parishioners killed in the East Africa campaigns of the two world wars.

The Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, the Rev David Githii, said a commission appointed to look at the symbols had concluded that they were masonic.

Many Kenyan Christians believe there is a link between Freemasons and Satanists. Fear of devil worship runs deep in Kenya; a presidential inquiry into the practice ordered six years ago, reported that Satanic rituals, practices and symbols had become institutionalised.” (*Telegraph* (16 December 2004) – *Iconoclasts turn their fury on Kenya's colonial past*)

A December 2004 *All Africa* news article states:

“Nairobi — One of the symbols at the St Andrews PCEA Church, in Nairobi. Church elders want them destroyed for alleged links to devil worship.

A dispute over Freemasonry has split one of Kenya's largest churches, the PCEA, leading to the removal of priceless historical fittings from its prayer houses.

Two factions are locked in an expensive and potentially destructive wrangle over symbols and artefacts used in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa for many years, but which critics are now linking to Freemasonry and demanding they be destroyed.

The row found vent in a newspaper advertisement, last week, signed by four of the church's biggest names - including the Moderator, Rev Dr David Githii - which argued that one could not be a Christian and a Freemason at the same time.

At least 30 stained glass windows and metal grilles more than a century old have previously been removed from St Andrews Church - the main seat of the PCEA - and destroyed by supporters of one faction, who claim the designs are similar to symbols used by Freemasons, said by their critics to worship an alien God and to hold un-Christian principles" (All Africa (08 December 2004) – Kenya: *'Satan Symbols' Split PCEA Down Middle*)

An April 2002 *Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada* response states:

"Specific information on state protection for individuals targeted by cult members or devil worshippers could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate. However, the U.S. State's Department Annual International Religious Freedom for 2001,

in August 1999, the Government presented to Parliament and thereby effectively published the 1994 widely-publicized report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Devil Worship. President Moi appointed the Commission in 1994 in response to public concern about a perceived resurgence of witchcraft, ritual murders, and other ostensibly "Satanic" practices associated with aspects of traditional indigenous religions. The Commission's report included numerous reports of ritual murder, human sacrifice, cannibalism, and feats of magic allegedly done by using powers acquired through such acts. It also reported that "Satanists" had infiltrated nonindigenous religious groups and other organizations, making them "doorways" to Satanism. The Commission is no longer functioning, and the Government took no action to follow up on the report.

...

The Government historically has been unsympathetic to tribal religious groups that have engendered protest movements. The Government frequently harassed and periodically arrested and detained members of the Mungiki, a small, controversial, cultural and political movement based in part on Kikuyu ethnic traditions, which espouses political views and cultural practices that are controversial in mainstream Kenyan society ..." (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (05 April 2002) - Kenya: *State protection for individuals targeted by cult members or devil worshippers; official government position on cults*)

An August 1999 *BBC News* report states:

"A presidential inquiry has concluded that devil worship is commonplace in Kenya and has recommended establishing a special police force to investigate crimes of the occult.

The report says its tentacles reach into schools, churches and even government offices, with an assistant minister and his wife cited as known satanists.

Archbishop Nicodemus Kirima, who chaired the commission of senior religious leaders, told the BBC that their investigation was launched to find out whether devil worship was linked to ritualised killings or other unlawful activities.

It was presented to the president as long ago as 1995, but has still not been released publicly and was only recently made available to religious leaders.” (BBC News (04 August 1999) – *World: Africa Devil worship ‘widespread’ in Kenya*)

References:

All Africa (08 December 2004) – *Kenya: ‘Satan Symbols’ Split PCEA Down Middle*

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200412071448.html>

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<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/412011.stm>

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<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?page=printdoc&docid=3df4be5314>

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Telegraph (16 December 2004) – *Iconclasts turn their fury on Kenya’s colonial past*

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/kenya/1479163/Iconoclasts-turn-their-fury-on-Kenyas-colonial-past.html>

(Accessed 10 March 2009)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

Sources Consulted:

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Freedom House
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Human Rights Watch
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IRB: Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada
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Lexis Nexis
Refugee Documentation Centre Query Database
United Kingdom: Home Office
UNHCR Refworld
United States Department of State