The electioneering process in Africa has often become synonymous to defending one’s ethnic identity at whatever cost. Compounded by political manipulation and/or corruption, as well as by the perception that only one’s community member could serve better its interests, this situation has often resulted in frictions between ethnic groups living in the same geographical area. It is against this background that this study was commissioned to examine the intricacies of electoral processes in Eastern, Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa with the view of identifying conditions for a peaceful democratic order in the region. While the relevance of the issues raised and recommended actions may vary from country to country, they all point to the need to uphold the principles of participatory democratic governance. As no system is good for all times, this implies creating room for debate, deliberation and dialogue as a way of resolving our differences instead of resorting to killing one another. Thus, the metaphor “Using the ballot to stop the bullet” is also to express the task and challenge before us, that is, to create freer and more humane effective participatory democratic governance systems.