

What's Playing in Africa: Tuesday, September 29, 2009

Produced by the Regional Media Hub: Africa



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The goal of the African Regional Media Hub is to increase official US voices and faces on African television, radio and other media, so that the US government message is visible, active and effective in advocating US policies, priorities, and actions with African audiences.

On the U.S.

<http://www.nation.co.ke/News/politics/-/1064/663932/-/xuc7u4z/-/index.html>

Obama a blessing and a curse for Kenya: PM

Q: Do you think the US letter threatening travel bans against certain Kenyan leaders will help or hinder the reform process?

A: I can only speculate. The letter (from Assistant Secretary of State Johnnie Carson) was basically meant to put people on notice so they can be more proactive. I don't think of it as blackmail. When I spoke with President Obama (on Wednesday evening at a reception Mr. Obama hosted for world leaders), he said we should push harder for reforms. I said we were doing our best.

Q: Can you give some impressions of how President Obama feels about the situation in Kenya?

A: He is genuinely concerned. He wants to help us. But I sometimes think Obama's roots in Kenya can actually be a problem. Kenya is always being held to different standards compared to neighbouring countries. We Kenyans should actually be proud to be held to higher standards rather than saying the standards should be lowered. We should never be complacent.

<http://www.nation.co.ke/News/-/1056/664938/-/unf8f5/-/index.html>

US visa ban threat against leaders is an act of intimidation, says Mutua

The principle here is whether individuals should be given letters for jobs they do in enhancing public policy or in their public capacity. And what we are saying and what the President is saying is that it is disturbing for people who have a disagreement with him or his government to write to individuals. Writing to a Member of Parliament or to civil servants is like gagging them and it is nothing but intimidation. Countries do not talk to an individual, they should talk to the government.

<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article32613>

US prepares to unveil its new Sudan policy

Senior US administration officials are scheduled to meet tomorrow to put the final touches on the long awaited policy review of dealings with Sudan, the Washington Post reported today. The Obama presidential campaign team has promised to release the policy early in the administration term but divisions within the government agencies has slowed down the process. The US special envoy to Sudan Scott Gration appointed last March by Obama has been pushing for a softer approach with Sudan's ruling party, the National Congress Party (NCP).

Governance

<http://www.zimeye.org/?p=9393>

Jestina Mukoko is acquitted

Terrorism charges against Zimbabwean rights activist, Jestina Mukoko have been thrown out after a court ruled she had been inhumanly tortured while in custody. The judgment comes as a refreshing relief as the Supreme Court granted Jestina Mukoko a permanent stay of prosecution after she told how security agents took her from her home and beat her.

<http://www.afrol.com/articles/34279>

Namibia urges for harder line against coups d'état

Governments that come to power through coups d'état should be banned from participating in all United Nations institutions. Namibia's Foreign Minister told the General Assembly today, urging member states to take a tougher line against undemocratic transfers of power. Speaking on the fifth day of the high-level debate, Marco Hausiku said the 192-member General Assembly should "urgently pass a resolution" that prohibits unelected regimes from participating in UN activities.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJJOE58R0CO20090928>

Niger's Tandja wants more power in legislative poll

Campaigning has begun for Niger's October 20 parliamentary election, with President Mamadou Tandja calling on voters in the uranium-mining country to give him and his party the power to complete large-scale projects. Last month Tandja used the same rationale for holding a referendum on changing the constitution to give himself three more years in power without holding an election, and shifting to a fully presidential system of government.

http://www.monitor.co.ug/artman/publish/news/MPs_table_plan_to_abolish_kingdoms_92081.shtml

MPs table plan to abolish kingdoms

NRM MPs yesterday proposed to abolish traditional kingdoms, Daily Monitor has learnt. The proposal, which comes just a day before President Museveni is expected to meet Kabaka Ronald Mutebi to iron out differences between the central government and Buganda Kingdom, is the most radical proposal yet to stop cultural leaders from getting involved in politics. The proposal was made yesterday during a meeting of the ruling NRM's parliamentary caucus.

Conflict

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8278551.stm>

Somali militants execute 'spies'

Islamist militants in Somalia have executed two people they accused of spying for foreign organizations. Hundreds watched as a firing squad arranged by the al-Shabab group shot the pair in the capital, Mogadishu. Al-Shabab officials said the men had been found guilty of working for the US CIA and African Union peacekeepers.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJJOE58S00A20090929>

Guinean forces kill 58 in crackdown: rights group

Guinean security forces killed at least 58 people when they fired live rounds on Monday to disperse thousands of protesters who wanted to hold a rally in a sports stadium, a rights body said. Witnesses said several prominent opposition leaders were arrested and protesters were injured in violence that began when thousands of people took to the streets and met in the stadium despite a massive security operation by authorities.

<http://www.afrol.com/articles/34284>

Global economic crisis to fuel conflict in Africa, experts

The global financial crisis could lead to more conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa, a research from the University of Birmingham has revealed. Africa is already the most conflict-ridden continent in the world, and decreasing income streams could even push some previously stable countries towards fragility, according to the research investigators Shiv Bakrania and Brian Lucas of the University's International Development Department.

Food Crisis

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJJOE58S03J20090929>

WFP says faces 'moment of distress' to feed hungry

The U.N. World Food Program said on Monday it was facing a "moment of distress" in feeding the world's hungry, with billions of dollars needed amid a severe funding shortfall due to the global financial crisis. "It is critical that people understand the extent of the problem," WFP Executive Director Josette Sheeran told reporters on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly. "We need to raise about five, six billion dollars right now with the crisis," said Sheeran, whose Rome-based WFP is voluntarily funded.

<http://www.afrol.com/articles/34282>

FAO urges policy improvement to turn around Africa's fortunes

The recent positive performance of agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa indicates a break with the past and the outlook for the sector is improving. However "concerted and purposeful policy action" is required to maintain the momentum, according to a new FAO discussion paper. After decades of decline, the sub-Saharan agricultural sector - 80 percent of which consists of smallholder farmers - grew more than 3.5 percent in 2008, well above the 2 percent rate of population growth.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8279796.stm>

Oxfam launches East Africa appeal

Oxfam has launched an emergency appeal for £9.5m (\$15m) to reach millions of people threatened by hunger in Ethiopia and other East African countries. The UK-based agency says thousands of animals have already died because of a drought which is the worst in 10 years. Warning signs indicate that the lives and livelihoods of 23 million people are threatened - twice as many as the last serious crisis in 2006.

Economic

<http://www.businessdailyafrica.com/-/539552/665020/-/58q9fg/-/index.html>

Total gets Sh7.5bn loan to buy Chevron's Kenya assets

Oil marketer, Total, has turned to local banks for money to conclude the buyout of American rival Chevron's assets in Kenya, it has emerged. The French multi-national, through its Kenyan subsidiary, has signed a Sh7.5 billion loan agreement with local lenders pulling through the first such mega loan in Kenya since the onset of the global financial crisis late last year. Managing director Felix Majekodunmi said a consortium of six local banks had signed up to offer a Sh4.7 billion syndicated five-year loan to the oil marketer and that an additional Sh2.8 billion would be raised through "short term facilities."

<http://www.nguardiannews.com/news/article04//indexn2.html?pdate=290909&ptitle=ITUC,%20ILO%20hinge%20developing%20nations'%20growth%20on%20IMF,%20World%20Bank%20reforms>

ITUC, ILO hinge developing nations' growth on IMF, World Bank reforms

THE recently concluded meeting of the G20 leading economies may not succeed in assisting developing nations to mitigate the effect of the economic meltdown, except the operations of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank are re-engineered towards helping poor nations. The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and International Labor Organization (ILO) stated yesterday in separate statements made available to The Guardian from their headquarters in Brussels, Belgium and Geneva, Switzerland respectively, in which they warned against complacency, saying the battle was still far from being won.

Climate

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8057316.stm>

Kenya's heart stops pumping

High in the hills of Kenya's Mau forest, some 20,000 families are facing eviction from their farms - accused of contributing to an ecological disaster which has crippled the country. The authorities are to start the process of removing them any day now. Farmers will be asked to surrender their title deeds for inspection.

If their documents are genuine, they have a chance of being resettled, or compensated.

http://www.monitor.co.ug/artman/publish/opinions/Time_for_world_leaders_to_deliver_on_climate_change_92063.shtml

Time for world leaders to deliver on climate change

Climate change is happening faster than we believed only two years ago. Continuing with business as usual almost certainly means dangerous, perhaps catastrophic, climate change during the course of this century, perhaps as early as 2050. This is the most important challenge for this generation of politicians.

I am now very concerned about the prospects for Copenhagen. The negotiations are dangerously close to deadlock at the moment – and such a deadlock may go far beyond a simple negotiating stand-off that we can fix next year. It risks being an acrimonious collapse, perhaps on the basis of a deep split between the developed and developing countries. The world right now cannot afford such a disastrous outcome.

Of Interest

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJQE58S02Y20090929>

Gaddafi, Chavez seek a new definition of terrorism

Libya's Muammar Gaddafi and Venezuela's Hugo Chavez called on Monday for a new global definition of terrorism. Meeting a day after the end of a summit of African and South American leaders in Venezuela, the two men signed a declaration urging a global conference be held to sketch out new terms defining terrorism. Neither spoke publicly about the document, which rejects "attempts to link the legitimate struggle of the people for liberty and self-determination" with terrorism, according to a Venezuelan government website.

http://www.monitor.co.ug/artman/publish/news/Sixteen_children_defiled_daily_says_new_report_92080.shtml

Sixteen children defiled daily, says new report

Sixteen Ugandan children were sexually abused daily in the first six months of the year, a new report says. According to the report by the African Network for Prevention against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN) Uganda Chapter, between January and June 2009, a total of 9,480 child-abuse-related cases were reported to various sources including the Police, ANPPCAN Uganda and the print media.