

What's Playing in Africa: Tuesday, October 13, 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.

President Obama's Nobel Peace Prize

<http://www.nation.co.ke/oped/Letters/-/440806/671096/-/iy32du/-/index.html>

Obama deserved Nobel prize for his efforts to promote world peace

The bold decision by US president Barack Obama to unconditionally withdraw the controversial move of building a missile defense shield across Europe is indeed, timely and commendable. This magnanimous decision is not only sensitive but it also charts a new, peaceful and non-confrontational resolving of complex security issues across the world. More importantly, it will eventually reduce animosity and tension between the world military superpowers - the US and Russia. The message President Obama is sending to the whole world is that the era of the US flexing its military might by making unilateral decisions that eventually antagonize the whole world is long gone. Such flexing of muscle promoted military spending and arms race among nations and is untenable when the entire world is reeling under the global financial crunch.

<http://www.mg.co.za/article/2009-10-10-barack-obamas-nobel-prize-why-now>

Barack Obama's Nobel prize: Why now?

The Nobel Peace Prize is an odd thing. It has gone to institutions -- Amnesty, the International Atomic Energy Agency, Médecins Sans Frontières and the UN's peacekeeping forces; to those involved in attempting to make peace despite having blood on their hands, such as Yasser Arafat, and to figures such as Henry Kissinger who was more associated in the public imagination with the war in Vietnam. It has gone to symbols of peace -- such as the Dalai Lama -- and some more questionable figures, such as Mother Teresa. Most notably it has gone to relentless campaigners for human rights, equality and the ending of violence: Jimmy Carter, Aung San Su Kyi, Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela. What unites the best winners is not simply an inspirational discourse but the sense they stand for something. Actions achieved or a long commitment to an ideal, often through hardship.

http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/letters/article03//indexn2_html?pdate=131009&ptitle=Obama's%20Nobel%20Peace%20Prize

Obama's Nobel Peace Prize

SIR: The award of the Nobel Peace Prize to President Barack Obama is arguably one of the most absurd awards that the Nobel committee has ever made. Highly patronizing as it is, it will be received with incredulity around the world. In fact there has rarely been an award that has been so obviously partisan and political in its intention. The award is apparently an encouragement to America's first black president and a way of saying we hope that there is going to be a new direction in Washington's policy. However, all of this undermines the point of a Nobel Peace prize.

On the U.S.

<http://www.nation.co.ke/News/-/1056/671596/-/unyldd/-/index.html>

American in custody over militia claims

Anti-terror police are holding an American who was seized at Liboi, on the Kenya-Somalia border at the weekend.

The officers from the anti-terrorism police unit suspect that the man has links to the al Shabaab militia group, which is linked to the al Qaeda terror network.

Lawless Somalia is viewed by the international community as a breeding ground for al Qaeda-linked groups which have been carrying out an insurgency against the UN-backed administration of President Sheikh Shariff Ahmed.

A witness told *Reuters* that the man was arrested on Sunday by police manning the immigration office at the border town of Liboi in Kenya's North Eastern Province. He was on his way to Qoqani in southern Somalia without any security escort.

Police thought the man's willingness to enter the conflict-torn nation where foreigners are routinely kidnapped for huge ransoms was puzzling, the witness added.

Governance

<http://www.nation.co.ke/News/-/1056/671622/-/unylyj/-/index.html>

Kibaki and Raila meet to set date for Ocampo's arrival

President Kibaki and Prime Minister Raila Odinga met on Monday to decide when International Criminal Court chief prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo would come to Kenya. The two leaders met at State House after receiving Mr. Moreno-Ocampo's request to visit Kenya. The prosecutor's letter was delivered to the two by Justice, Constitutional Affairs and National Cohesion minister Mutula Kilonzo. There was confusion on Monday morning at Harambee House when journalists who expected Mr. Kilonzo to deliver the letter camped outside the building only to be sent away by security officers. The President and PM later launched the Vision 2030 Delivery Board. President Kibaki also received several new envoys before leaving for State House in the afternoon.

Mr. Kilonzo, who had requested for the meeting with the two leaders, was slotted to meet them at 5pm.

<http://www.nation.co.ke/News/africa/-/1066/671640/-/135r26qz/-/index.html>

Gabon court rejects challenges to Bongo poll win

Gabon's Constitutional Court rejected on Monday challenges launched by the opposition to Ali Ben Bongo's victory in an August presidential election, paving the way for Ben Bongo to replace his father as president. Violence erupted in two of the oil-producer's major cities shortly after the poll result was first announced but a disjointed collection of opposition parties failed to convince the court to reverse Ben Bongo's win in a drawn-out challenge. "The election of Ali Ben Bongo Ondimba as president of the Republic of Gabon is confirmed," Court President Marie Madeleine Mborantsuo, said in a decision read out on state television on Monday evening. According to the final tally, Ben Bongo scored 41.8 percent of the vote. Veteran opposition leader Pierre Mamboundou replaced Andre Mba Obame, a former interior minister, in second place but Ben Bongo's main rivals still lagged with just over 25 percent each. The result from just two polling stations were cancelled.

<http://www.nation.co.ke/News/africa/-/1066/671642/-/135r26oz/-/index.html>

Ruling party win likely as Botswana set to vote

It is all systems go on Friday Africa's oldest multiparty democracy, Botswana holds its 10th general elections since independence from Britain in 1966. The Botswana Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) has achieved a milestone by making arrangements to allow 1,641 voters based abroad to cast their ballot in advance on September 29. But a similar exercise meant to cater for the 11,000 people involved in running the elections like IEC staff, state security officers and civil servants flopped after mistakes were discovered in the ballot papers. With a population of about 1.9 million, Botswana currently has 723,617 registered voters, its highest number so far. There are 403,056 female voters while men make up 320,561. The country has 490 polling districts and 2,288 polling stations.

Conflict

http://www.garoweonline.com/artman2/publish/Somalia_27/Kenya_closes_Somalia_border_after_Al_Shabaab_threat.shtml

Kenya 'closes' Somalia border after Al Shabaab threat

The Kenyan government has closed its border with Somalia following threats by Somali insurgents, Radio Garowe reports. Local sources the Kenyan border towns of Mandera and Wajer have reported the arrival of Kenyan troops and ongoing military movements in the region. "This [Sunday] morning, we were refused to cross the Kenyan border and we saw many students denied to attend schools in

Mandera," said a Somali businessman in Beled Hawo, a town in Gedo region in southwestern Somalia adjacent to Mandera.

http://www.garoweonline.com/artman2/publish/Opinion_20/The_failure_of_the_international_community_and_the_resilience_of_Somalis.shtml

The failure of the international community and the resilience of Somalis

Somalia is officially classified as a failed state where warlords, Islamic extremists, suicide bombings, piracy, secessionists, poverty and anarchy prevail and are the norms of everyday life. Believe it or not the Somali question remains one of the most difficult, unabated and unresolved conflicts in modern times while other major post-cold war conflicts in Europe and Africa have been resolved. In case you have forgotten, the unbearable roar of guns and bombs explosions in former-Yugoslavia that we used to see and hear through our TV screens, seem to have been silenced by, among other things, a massive military intervention supported by a long term political commitment and diplomacy as is the case in the Balkan, or through a peace keeping mission initiated by an individual country like the UK experiment in Sierra Leon where British forces have helped end a long civil war.

<http://www.panapress.com/freenews.asp?code=eng026993&dte=12/10/2009>

International Commission of Inquiry to probe Guinea massacre

The International Contact Group on Guinea (ICG-G) Monday called for the establishment of an International Commission of Inquiry to investigate the 28 Sept. 2009 killing of 157 unarmed civilians and the rape of women during a protest in the Guinean capital, Conakry, against alleged plans by junta leader Moussa Dadis Camara to participate in the country's forthcoming presidential election.

<http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/-/2558/670830/-/qxs6gjz/-/index.html>

EA force to end conflict

It is now only a matter of time before a unified regional standby force is created to counter conflict and terrorism within the East African Community as well as to suppress piracy on the Indian Ocean. This issue dominated debate at last week's regional conference on peace and security. The three-day conference — the first of its kind under the EAC — adopted 14 key recommendations — top among those the formation of a standby brigade, which will also respond to natural calamities that may hit member states.

<http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/opOrEd/comment/-/434750/670938/-/aq9uaf/-/index.html>

Why everyone's talking guns

Mid-last week, the British Broadcasting Corporation broke a story pointing to the possibility of arming, with conventional weapons, of both the Kalenjin and the Gikuyu communities in the Rift Valley. The story was picked up the next day by local media houses — with key quotations to back up the BBC claims being given by Ken Wafula, who works with a human rights organization in Eldoret. The government, predictably, came out to deny the possibility — arguing that its intelligence did not indicate that the story could be true.

<http://www.nation.co.ke/News/africa/-/1066/671506/-/135r32kz/-/index.html>

Somali Islamists give NGOs 15 days ultimatum

Islamists Hizbu Islam have directed all NGOs operating in their territory to register with the movement. Addressing a press conference in Mogadishu on Sunday, Hizbu Islam's public services officer, Sheikh Sulayman Sahal Muuse Abu Hanifa, told all local and international NGOs to report to his office for formal registration within 15 days, with effect from October 10. Hizbu Islam is the second largest Islamist group opposing the Transitional Federal Government in Somalia.

Sheikh Abu Hanifa pointed out that it was mandatory to know what services the NGOs were offering to the public. "Local and international NGOs," said Sheikh Abu Hanifa; "must submit their programmes and activities without failure." The sheikh warned the agencies against evasion.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE59C05M20091013>

Township protests flare up in S.Africa

Thousands of protesters took to the streets of several South African townships on Tuesday, demanding improved infrastructure for sanitation, electricity and housing, media reported. Talk Radio 702 said protesters in the Standerton township of the north-eastern region of Mpumalanga had barricaded roads leading into the township and were marching to the municipal offices, calling for an

end to corruption in local government. SABC radio SAFM said tensions were running high at Palm Ridge township east of Johannesburg with a heavy police presence after protests turned violent on Monday.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJ0E59C01120091013>

Somalis brought to Spain to face hijacking charge

Two Somalis suspected of taking part in hijacking a Spanish fishing boat which is still under the control of pirates were brought to Madrid on Monday to face piracy charges, a defense ministry spokesman said. The two unnamed men were caught by the Spanish navy trying to make their way ashore from the vicinity of the Alakrana, a tuna fishing boat, shortly after it was overrun by pirates in the Indian Ocean on October 2. They will be taken to a Madrid court on Tuesday.

Corruption

http://www.nguardiannews.com/news/article02//indexn2_html?pdate=131009&ptitle=How%20officials%20aided%20%20N6.5b%20aviation%20fraud.%20by%20witness

How officials aided N6.5b aviation fraud, by witness

AVIATION Ministry officials signed documents as owners of the ghost firms that bid for the N6.5 billion safe tower project, a court was told in Abuja yesterday.

The revelation was part of the statement of one of the prosecution witnesses in the ongoing trial of former Minister of Aviation, Prof. Babalola Borishade and three others for forgery and corruption while executing the controversial safe tower project. The three others are: former Managing Director of Nigeria Airspace Management Agency (NAMA), Roland Iyayi, Managing Director of Avsatel Communication Limited, George Eider and T. A. Dairo, who was personal assistant to the then Minister of Aviation.

Human Rights

http://www.monitor.co.ug/artman/publish/news/Army_still_top_rights_abuser_92874.shtml

Army still top rights abuser

A government institution yesterday indicted the national army for continuing to torture civilians despite their intensified sensitisation and awareness about human rights observance. The Uganda Human Rights Commission, created under the (amended) 1995 Constitution, says in a new report that even after they and other private actors taught security forces across the country basics of human rights, the Police still huddle suspects in tiny cells while the army maltreat detainees in strange ways.

<http://www.zimeye.org/?p=9723>

Zimbabwe's Prime Minister Tsvangirai holds his prestigious awards. Tsvangirai won the International Bar Association award for his fight for human rights; he becomes the first non lawyer to win the award. He was also given the International Lifetime Achievement Award 2009 from the Spanish Foundation Cristóbal Gabarrón, for his fight for peace and democracy. He also had a near miss on the highly acclaimed Nobel Peace prize which was given to US President Barack Obama.

http://www.nguardiannews.com/africa/article02//indexn2_html?pdate=131009&ptitle=Zimbabwean%20court%20dismiss%20plot%20to%20kill%20Mugabe

Zimbabwean court dismiss plot to kill Mugabe

THE Zimbabwe Supreme Court has dismissed the prosecution of leading rights activist, Jestina Mukoko, over an alleged plot to overthrow President Mugabe, saying the state had violated her rights. "The state through its agents, violated the applicant's constitutional right, entitling the applicant permanent stay of criminal prosecution," said judge Godfrey Chidyausiku. Mukoko was seized from her home in December 2008 and detained at an unknown place, before being held at the notorious Chikurubi prison outside Harare.

Economic

<http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=170209>

Fight For Ghana's Oil: Exxon vs China

The government is divided over whether to cut a deal with a leading Chinese oil company or with Exxon Mobil Corp. to develop a giant offshore oil field.

But govt officials seem to agree on one thing: They want to be done with Kosmos Energy, the tiny Dallas-based explorer that found the oil field in 2007. Kosmos has been trying to sell its 23.5% stake in the Jubilee field off the coast of Ghana, a substantial discovery that holds an estimated 1.8 billion

barrels of oil. Last week, the company entered into what it calls a binding agreement to sell its stake to Exxon for a price tag of about \$4 billion.

Climate

<http://www.mg.co.za/article/2009-10-13-greenpeace-sets-sights-on-south-africa>

Greenpeace sets sights on South Africa

South Africa can cut its annual greenhouse gas emissions by more than 200-million tons by 2050 without sacrificing economic growth if it uses energy more efficiently and increases wind and solar power production, Greenpeace said on Monday. South Africa could find economic opportunity, becoming the continent's hub for green technologies now more commonly found in North America, Asia and Europe, said Brad Smith, co-author of a new report on South Africa by Greenpeace and the European Renewable Energy Council, a Brussels-based campaign group.

Food Crisis

<http://www.nation.co.ke/News/africa/-/1066/671510/-/135r31uz/-/index.html>

Senegal floods keep thousands from school

In spite of the millions of dollars in foreign aid to combat floods in Senegal, waterlogged classrooms are depriving thousands of pupils a life-time opportunity.

The floods were caused by the heavy rains from April to September that also affected Togo, Benin, Niger, Burkina Faso and Sierra Leone. Education ministry sources say most of the affected primary schools are in the Dakar suburbs, where an estimated 260,000 Senegalese were dislodged by the floods — the first time in nearly half a century

Of Interest

<http://www.panapress.com/freenews.asp?code=eng026961&dte=12/10/2009>

African leaders agree to fight against fake drugs

African Heads of State and representatives of the international community, on Monday in Cotonou, the capital of Benin, pledged to fight against the manufacturing and marketing of counterfeit drugs. In a statement, titled "Call of Cotonou", read by former French President Jacques Chirac, participants agreed to work together to stop the illicit production and trade on fake medicines.