

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.

Human Rights

<http://www.congoplanet.com/article.jsp?id=45261531>

Human Rights Watch Chalks New Allegations Against Congo, Rwanda Troops

Four days after Congo Government spokesman Lambert Mende lambasted Human Rights Watch about what he called "exaggerated" allegations on the situation in eastern Congo and the Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC) military operation (Kimia II) against the Rwandan Hutu militia (FDLR), the NGO responded with new allegations against the FARDC and their Rwandan Defense Force (RDF) allies in another operation (Umoja Wetu) earlier this year against the FDLR. The NGO is now claiming that Congolese soldiers killed "at least 270 civilians between the towns of Nyabiondo and Pinga in a remote part of North Kivu province since March. Many of them had been killed during two massacres in August at Mashango and Ndoruma villages". The NGO claims that "Congolese army soldiers had deliberately killed at least 505 civilians from the start of operation Kimia II in March through September". The NGO also now claims that "another 198 civilians were deliberately killed by Congolese army soldiers and their Rwandan army allies during an earlier five-week joint operation, known as Umoja Wetu, in late January and February". Human Rights Watch has published countless "reports" on the situation in eastern Congo.

<http://www.mg.co.za/article/2009-11-04-stop-abuses-in-zim-rights-body-urges-says>

Stop abuses in Zim, rights body urges says

Southern African leaders must pressure Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe's party to end human rights abuses when they meet to discuss the current impasse in the country's unity government, a rights body said on Wednesday. "Recent reports that Zanu-PF continues to arrest and harass human rights and civil society activists should act as a warning to the regional leaders that Zimbabwe may slide back into violence and chaos if they do not take decisive action," the Africa director of Human Rights Watch, Georgette Gagnon, said. "Regional leaders should set concrete benchmarks and consider targeted sanctions if any of Zimbabwe's parties do not comply with the provisions of the power-sharing agreement," she added.

<http://www.afrol.com/articles/34605>

Strip Gambia off AU human rights body"

The world's major association of human rights organisations has called on the African Union (AU) to consider moving the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) from its headquarters in The Gambia, as it is now impossible for human rights groups to participate in sessions there. The International Federation Leagues of Human Rights (FIDH), an umbrella organisation grouping human rights groups from all over the world, today in a statement said it did not want to participate in the upcoming session of the ACHPR, to be held in its Banjul headquarters 11-25 November. FIDH feared for the safety of its delegates due to the hostile climate in The Gambia.

Corruption

<http://www.thisdayonline.com/nview.php?id=158888>

CBN Wants Banks to Report Politicians' Deals

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) is working on a plan to make banks report suspicious cash transactions by politically exposed persons (PEPs). The banking watchdog boss, Mallam Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, also said yesterday at the end of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting in Abuja that the CBN might soon start buying margin loans to boost lending. The proposed banking regulation, which is a draft manual on anti-money laundering, published on the CBN website, will require banks to report large movements of cash between accounts by PEPs. The banking watchdog defines "politically

exposed persons" as individuals who are or have been entrusted with prominent public functions both in Nigeria and foreign countries and those associated with them.

<http://www.mg.co.za/article/2009-11-04-new-witness-alleges-selebi-was-bribed>

New witness alleges Selebi was bribed

There are now officially two witnesses who allege they saw former police National Commissioner Jackie Selebi being bribed. The state's second witness in Selebi's corruption trial, Dianne Muller, took the stand on Wednesday morning, telling the court that she saw Selebi being given money and clothing by her former fiancée, drug-lord Glenn Agliotti. The trim, delicate looking blonde, with her maroon painted nails and perfectly tailored black suit, explained how she had personally packed R110 000 into a white bank bag, which she gave to Agliotti in the boardroom of her Midrand office. She then watched Agliotti slide the package across the table to Selebi, who was seated at the table.

Governance

http://www.monitor.co.ug/artman/publish/news/East_African_countries_to_have_common_electoral_laws_94044.shtml

East African countries to have common electoral laws

Plans are underway to create joint laws which will govern elections in all East Africa countries, the first Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for East African Affairs, Mr Eriya Kategaya, has said. Mr Kategaya told journalists in Kampala yesterday that the East African Community (EAC) secretariat is formulating electoral practices which will apply in all member states. He added that this is being done to fast track the political federation of East Africa. "The secretariat has already been organising meetings with electoral commissions of different countries which form the EAC. They are trying to look at what are the best electoral laws which can work in both countries," Mr Kategaya said. Once the process is finished, Mr Kategaya said, the EAC secretariat will table broad electoral regulations, tackling issues of electoral malpractices and, consequently reduce election-related violence.

<http://www.afrol.com/articles/34598>

Equatorial Guinea pardons putschists

Equatoguinean President Teodoro Nguema Obiang today issued a decree pardoning the five foreign masterminds behind an alleged coup attempt in March 2004. These include South African Nicolaas du Toit and Briton Thomas Mann, who will be freed during few days. In two decrees, sent to afrol News by Equatoguinean government officials, President Obiang orders the pardoning, release and expulsion of the five foreigners sentenced in June 2008 and held in Malabo prisons since their arrest in 2004.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJQE5A301820091104>

Guinea military junta must step down: opposition

Guinea's military junta must step down to end a crisis stemming from a bloody crackdown on protesters, opposition leaders said on Tuesday. Rising tension in the West African mining powerhouse has threatened to destabilise a region in which several countries are still recovering from recent civil wars. "The solution to the Guinean crisis is the departure of the military junta," said Mamadou Mouctar Diallo, head of one of the main Guinean opposition groups, after talks with mediators in neighbouring Burkina Faso.

The head of the Guinean junta, Captain Moussa Dadis Camara, called late on Monday for direct talks with the opposition.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJQE5A301S20091104>

South Sudan "overwhelmingly" wants independence: minister

Sudan's foreign minister said on Tuesday the country's oil-producing south "overwhelmingly" wanted to declare independence in a looming referendum. Deng Alor, a southerner, also accused the north of fighting a proxy war and destroying hopes of a unified state.

The comments were made at a highly-charged symposium on Sudan's future that analysts said lifted the lid on a growing political rift in Africa's largest state. His statements were dismissed by a leading northerner. Sudan's mostly Muslim north fought a two-decade civil war with southerners, who largely follow Christianity and traditional beliefs.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJQE5A30BJ20091104>

Sudan's Bashir to visit Turkey despite warrant

Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir will visit Turkey next week for the first time since an international court asked for his arrest, government sources said, in a test of Ankara's support for international justice. Predominantly Muslim Turkey has not ratified the 2002 Rome Statute that established the International Criminal Court (ICC), but it is under pressure to do so to bring it closer to European Union standards. Rights groups say Turkey, anxious to secure entry into the EU, is obliged to arrest Bashir when he lands in Istanbul for a summit of Islamic nations.

<http://www.nation.co.ke/News/africa/-/1066/681458/-/1355jt8z/-/index.html>

Malawi president to take over as AU chairman

Malawian President Bingu wa Mutharika is likely to take over African Union chairmanship from Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi next January, African Union sources have said. An African Union senior official told the Nation in Addis Ababa President Mutharika is preparing to take over AU's rotating chairmanship of 53 member states organisation. Only Malawi and Lesotho bid for the AU chairmanship which changes annually and was supposed to be taken over by a southern Africa country for 2010. President Mutharika's chairmanship was endorsed by Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) foreign affairs ministers gathered in DR Congo last month.

<http://www.nation.co.ke/News/africa/-/1066/681716/-/1355hkgz/-/index.html>

Madagascar leaders in Addis for crisis talks

Four Madagascar political leaders meet in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for two days of dialogue in a bid to end the 17-month old political crisis, despite deepening rivalry between them. Leaders of four political camps in Madagascar, including transitional president Andry Rajoelina and former presidents Marc Ravalomanana, Didier Ratsiraka and Albert Zafy meet in Addis Ababa, African Union headquarters, for their fourth face-to-face negotiations. The previous three round of negotiations could not resolve the political stalemate in the Indian Ocean Island.

Economic

<http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=171348>

China To Help Build New Foreign Ministry

The Chinese government has agreed to construct a modern office complex for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Work on the office complex, to be located at the former International Students Hostel at the Airport Junction in Accra, is to begin by the end of this year and is expected to be completed within two years. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alhaji Mohammed Mumuni, made this known yesterday when the Embassy of the People's Republic of China donated office equipment to the ministry.

<http://www.mg.co.za/article/2009-11-04-china-tries-to-wean-africa-investors-off-state-loans>

China tries to wean Africa investors off state loans

Chinese investors in Africa, long used to low-interest policy loans, are being reluctantly pushed towards commercial lending as Chinese investment in the continent outpaces Beijing's willingness to take on risk. Investors are unenthusiastic about the change, which generally means more scrutiny over each project. In turn they also want more guarantees from African governments before committing to projects, bankers and executives told Reuters. Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao meets African leaders in Egypt this weekend, with investment and aid projects high on the agenda. Chinese projects in Africa have traditionally been negotiated with the Beijing government's help, and funded with loans on preferential terms from state-owned banks that support government policy objectives. But private firms have poured into Africa in recent years, and even state-owned firms have exceeded the willingness of policy banks to lend.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJ0E5A307020091104>

Brazil, others squeeze China in scramble for Africa

China is leading the pack in the 21st century 'scramble for Africa' but anybody who thinks Beijing has the continent sewn up need only glance at the passport of Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. By the time he first visited the European Union in 2007, four years after coming to office, Lula had racked up six trips to Africa, covering 16 countries. Then, in July, he was guest of honour at an African Union summit in Libya, a reminder to Beijing ahead of its second Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in Egypt on November 8-9 that it is not alone in courting the continent and its raw materials.

Agriculture

<http://www.afrol.com/articles/34599>

Ghana fit to double cocoa production

The Ghanaian government and its cocoa industry is gearing up to meet the aim of producing one million metric tonnes of cocoa by 2012. Ghana's Cocoa Marketing Company is already preparing to address bottlenecks in distribution, marketing and sales. Ghanaian Deputy Minister of Finance Fiifi Kwezey today reminded the Cocoa Marketing Company (CMC) to "equip itself" to adequately deal with the pressures that would come with the one million metric tonne production envisaged by the year 2012. The Deputy Minister was inaugurating an eight-member Board of Directors to oversee the affairs of the CMC.

<http://www.afrol.com/articles/34602>

Maize research splendid investment for Africa

A new book looking at the history and effect on maize research in West and Central Africa reveals it is among the best spent funds to achieve poverty reduction. Every million US\$ spent on maize research had lifted 35,000 Africans out of poverty, it claims. Author Arega Alene of the new book "The Economic and Poverty Impacts of Maize Research in West and Central Africa" analyses three and half decades of maize research in African farming communities and he is finding big benefits.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJQE5A30B420091104>

Arab bank to step up support for African agriculture

The Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) is to step up funding for agriculture projects to help governments stave off future food price crises and droughts, the bank's director general said. Abdelaziz Khelef told Reuters the bank would increase total commitments to \$1 billion under a new 2010-2014 five-year plan, a \$100 million increase from the previous plan. A quarter of that money would now go to agricultural and food security projects, up from less than 20 per cent in the last five-year period, he added.

Climate

<http://www.afrol.com/articles/34604>

Africa plays it tough at climate talks

The group of African countries won a major diplomatic victory at the UN climate talks in Barcelona today after announcing their boycott of the talks due to too low CO2 cuts by industrial countries. Bigger cuts are now back on the negotiation table.

More than 50 African nations today boycotted the UN climate talks that are to prepare the December Copenhagen climate summit. Several meetings thus had to be cancelled and the entire Barcelona process was on its way to be derailed after the surprise tough action by the African block.