



World Alliance for Citizen
Participation

e-CIVICUS

e-CIVICUS World Assembly Reflection

A Free Weekly Electronic Newsletter Promoting Civic Existence, Expression & Engagement

Please send contributions, comments and questions to editor@civicus.org.

Special edition on the official launch of the campaign



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CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen
Participation

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ABOUT e-CIVICUS

The CIVICUS weekly electronic publication is keeping tens of thousands of people informed of the developments taking place in civil society, the factors that are affecting them and the impact they are having on creating an informed and knowledgeable civil society.

e-CIVICUS WELCOMES CONTRIBUTIONS OF CIVIL SOCIETY NEWS

e-CIVICUS offers a useful channel through which you and your organisation can share your news, publicise your events and articulate the issues you face. Please send us

FROM THE DESK OF CIVICUS' SECRETARY GENERAL

Send your comments and contributions to editor@civicus.org.



Zimbabwe: Time 2 Act!

By Ingrid Srinath, CIVICUS Secretary General

Dear friends and colleagues,

"We need food! Too much! Food, clothing, drugs. We need doctors also. And qualified teachers. My parents died. Passed away by this disease called HIV/AIDS. So I do not know what to eat at Christmas. So that's all I wanted to say." The words of Zibusiso, an 11-year-old boy who the CIVICUS mission to Zimbabwe met in late December, spoke with greater clarity than the grim statistics trickling out of the country. Wherever the mission travelled, it encountered a society in utter breakdown.

As bad as the hunger, or worse, is the terror. Activists arrested, tortured and disappeared and their families and friends intimidated. Even a two-year-old boy was jailed. Despite the threats of immediate and brutal reprisals ordinary people and activists alike continue to fight the regime every day. Many spoke out despite the risks. You can see and hear them, as well as ordinary citizens like young Zibusiso, [click here](#). To read this week's column, [click here](#).

In concert with a coalition of citizen organisations from Zimbabwe, South Africa and beyond, CIVICUS has launched a campaign to draw renewed attention. You too can join the campaign, [click here](#) and search for the group (Save Zimbabwe Now) on Facebook.



Civil society hunger strikers demand an end to suffering in Zimbabwe

Kumi Naidoo, CIVICUS Honorary President has only just decided what he'll eat for breakfast in 21 days

Source: CNN.com

The Save Zimbabwe Now initiative has selected a relay fast as the first campaign to mobilise regional public awareness and build pressure on South African Development Community (SADC) governments to influence the Zimbabwean state to restore dignity, human and democratic rights to its people. "I think I'll probably have a mango and some orange juice," he said. "I don't buy my doctor's advice on just beefing up. I know the first three days is going to be really hard so I don't want to pig out." Dr Naidoo is one of up to 40 public figures in South Africa who started a hunger strike on 21 January to draw attention to the plight of millions of Zimbabweans who suffer severe food shortages every day. Others, such as Archbishop emeritus Desmond Tutu, have vowed to fast for one day a week until a series of demands are met. It's envisaged the hunger strike and fast will last for three

your contributions by Monday for publication in the coming week to editor@civicus.org. All contributions must focus on civil society issues or have a civil society angle. To read the contribution guidelines, [click here](#).

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Civil Society Watch Monthly Bulletin

Civil Society Watch Monthly Bulletin

The CIVICUS e-newsletter Civil

months or until a list of six demands are met. They include an appeal to the SADC, the African Union (AU) and major political parties in the region to end their policy of quiet diplomacy on the issue of Zimbabwe.

Why Kumi Naidoo is fasting: "Over Christmas, when we went to Zimbabwe, we saw a people and a country ravaged by want, destitution, fear and terror. We do not wish to battle this cruel and apathetic regime with guns or weapons, but we will oppose them with our bodies and our consciences through fasting. We want the Zimbabwean people to know that we united our resolve to oppose the brutality they suffer with every bit of our beings". *For details, [click here](#).*



Rights activist Graça Machel blames SADC for death in Zimbabwe

Source: Association for Zimbabwe Journalists

"The blood of those dying on daily basis in Zimbabwe will be laid on the feet of Southern African Development Community (SADC) leadership as they are failing to undertake duties they are elected to do" said rights activist Graça Machel in Johannesburg on 21 January. Machel, who is also a member of The Elders' group who were barred from entering Zimbabwe last November 2008 by the Mugabe regime, was speaking at the launch of a regional fasting that is meant to last for three months over the Zimbabwe crisis. Organisers of this fasting campaign believe 'politicians alone could not solve the crisis'. *For details, [click here](#).*

Failure of African leadership is prolonging human rights crisis in Zimbabwe

Source: Amnesty International

Amnesty International harshly criticised the African Union's (AU) lack of action on Zimbabwe, as detained Zimbabwean human rights activist Jestina Mukoko appeared in a court in Harare today after having been tortured. "Ongoing arrests of human rights and political activists appear to be part of a wider strategy to silence critics of the government, and the AU needs to make a strong statement that this is unacceptable to African leadership," said Veronique Aubert, Deputy Programme Director for Amnesty International's Africa Programme. *For details, [click here](#).*

CIVICUS Poll Question

This week's question:

Are African leaders playing a positive role in Zimbabwe?

- a. No, you've got to be kidding!
- b. Yes, they are doing their best
- c. Somewhat, though they can do much more

To answer the question, [click here](#).

Previous question:

Does civil society have a role to play in the Gaza crisis?

- a. No, the problem is out of civil society's hands
- b. Yes, strong action by civil society can end the war
- c. Not sure

Results: a. - 17.7%, b. - 77.4%, c. - 4.8%

Society Watch Monthly Bulletin is an action-oriented newsletter distributed to over 7,400 people, featuring insightful interviews, updates on threats to civil society, and analyses of current situations. Read more at www.civicus.org.

CIVICUS blog

Our recently launched blog gives you the opportunity to use your voice and engage with the rest of civil society. Please visit <http://civicus.civiblog.org>.

JOIN e-CIVICUS - BECOME A CONTRIBUTING FRIEND

e-CIVICUS keeps tens of thousands of people and organisations informed of the many developments taking place in civil society around the world. This e-publication seeks to encourage and amplify the voices of those struggling for a more just world. As a subscriber, you know the value e-CIVICUS can bring to your work.

Do you have friends who work for a more just world? Why don't you suggest they register for a free subscription? They can send an e-mail to subscriptions@civicus.org or fill out the subscription form [here](#). Alternatively, please forward their e-mail addresses to us and we'll contact them on your behalf.

Please send your contributions by Monday every week to editor@civicus.org. All contributions must be focused on civil society issues or have a civil society angle.

CIVICUS channel on YouTube

MUST WATCH: A video archive of CIVICUS films is being posted on YouTube. At present, the most popular video is the three-part film on the CIVICUS visit to Zimbabwe: 'Time 2 Act'. Go to YouTube, [click here](#).

Join the Fast and Add comments to 'Save Zimbabwe Now' campaign on Facebook

MUST JOIN: To support the campaign search FaceBook for events called Save Zimbabwe Now for details of the Johannesburg launch. Please invite your friends to come along too. Get people to join the solidarity fast. Some people like Kumi Naidoo, CIVICUS Honorary President are doing 21 days straight while others are fasting every Wednesday. With enough people participating, we can really begin this movement with a successful solidarity initiative which will lead to further more action inducing events. The official launch of this movement took place in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 21 January, [click here](#).

e-CIVICUS DIALOGUES



Letter to President Obama calling for a more right and egalitarian society

By Riccardo Alfonso, Editor of Fidest Press Agency in Rome, www.fidest.net and e-CIVICUS contributor

You won the first American dream. What does it mean for U.S. policies on research, environment, health and space? What does it mean for the rest of the world and the European Union (EU) in particular? Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80 per cent compared to 1990 by 2050 with an initial target back to 1990 levels by 2020; engage with the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the UN Kyoto Protocol, focus on efficiency and energy savings. *For details, [click here](#).*

Are terror laws just? -- Civil society debates in India

By Vinay Sitapati, ExpressIndia

"Human rights are for human beings," Joginder Singh, former CBI director provocatively said, "Not for inhuman terrorists." Singh was speaking at the half-day seminar on 'Refugee Protection at a Time of Crisis: Migrants, Terrorists, and Refugees in India', organised by the Public Interest Legal Support and Research Centre (PILSARC) in association with the Delhi Administration Officers Academic Forum (DAOAFA), on 17 January. Singh was defending the tough new anti-terror laws the UPA government has passed but his comments drew sharp responses. Supreme Court lawyer Prashant Bhushan said the new laws were draconian, while senior journalist Siddharth Varadarajan said no false dichotomy should be made between human rights and the police. "The choice is not between a hard or soft state but between an intelligent or stupid state," Varadarajan said. *For details, [click here](#).*

The anti-racism debate -- Durban World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) Review

By Navanethem Pillay, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

I grew up in Durban, South Africa, under a system of apartheid that institutionalised racial discrimination, denying equal rights of citizenship to all those who were not white. I later sat as a judge on the Rwanda Tribunal, where I came to know in painful detail, killing by killing, the unimaginable destruction of humanity when ethnic hatred explodes into genocide. I know that the consequences of allowing discrimination, inequality and intolerance to fester and spiral out of control can be genocidal. But South Africa's experience shows that with political will and a commitment to act, discrimination, inequality and intolerance can be overcome. We have just witnessed the election of the first African-American president of the United States, a country where racial segregation is as vivid a memory for some as it is for me. *For details, [click here](#).*

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CIVIL SOCIETY NEWS

**world
social
forum**
2009
um outro mundo é possível

Indigenous mobilisation will be the biggest in World Social Forum history

Source: World Social Forum (WSF), 27 January - 1 February 2009, Belem do Para, Brazil

In 2009, indigenous peoples mobilisation will be largest in the World Social Forum history. Belém will become the destiny for around three thousand indigenous people from all over the world, debating their reality and demanding humanity to support a worldwide campaign in defense of planet Earth. Around 27 per cent of the Amazon territory in its nine countries is composed by indigenous lands and 10 per cent of the Latin America population (around 44 million people) is composed by 522 different originary peoples. They are children and adults that struggle and resist, that suffer irreversible losses caused by predatory neoliberal capitalism, pushed by the expansion of transnational corporation activities -- mining, oil companies, hydroelectric power stations, wood extracting companies, soy agribusiness, among others -- over the indigenous lands. *For details, [click here](#).*

**It Won't Stop
Until We Talk**

A joint call for reconciliation and peace from Israeli and Palestinian families

Source: Parents Circle - Families Forum

To those who can make a difference to the daily reality of the Palestinian and Israeli people. To those who know that the negotiation of a cease fire is not enough and that it would only mean a temporary hiatus until the next round of killing. To those who understand that freedom of movement and the right to an independent and viable state for the Palestinian nation is a basic requisite for solving the conflict. To those who understand that Israel's need for security is legitimate and that without it, no solution is possible. To those who care about both peoples. To those who only care about one side. *For details, [click here](#).*

World Council of Churches urges cooperation on radical new agenda with Obama

Source: Ekklesia, a new way of thinking

Poverty, violence and war are among the "enormous and formidable" challenges of the present time, representatives of member churches of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in the United States have pointed out to President Barack Obama on the occasion of his inauguration. "Ours is not to point fingers at your new administration and say 'Fix it,'" members of the Board of the US Conference for the WCC wrote in a letter to Obama dated 20 January. *For details, [click here](#).*



Alliance magazine interview with Astrid Bonfield -- campaign to ban cluster bombs globally

Source: Caroline Hartnell, Editor, *Alliance magazine*, www.alliancemagazine.org

The ground-breaking Oslo Treaty banning cluster munitions was adopted by 107 states in Dublin in May 2008 and signed in Oslo on 3 December. The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund has been supporting the campaign for a global ban on cluster bombs since 2003. Caroline Hartnell

talked to Chief Executive Astrid Bonfield about the challenges of supporting campaigning, especially for a foundation committed to spend out by 2013; what it feels like to have funded a successful campaign; and what failing to achieve a ban would have felt like. *For details, [click here](#).*

Russian human rights lawyer murdered

Source: JURIST Legal News and Research Services

Prominent Russian human rights lawyer, Stanislav Markelov, was shot dead by a masked gunman in Moscow on Monday, 19 January. Markelov, known for his work on high profile human rights cases including representing journalist Anna Politkovskaya was protesting the early release of Colonel Yuri Budanov. Anastasia Baburova, a journalist covering Markelov for the Russian newspaper Novaya Gazeta, also died after being shot in the head by the gunman. Markelov had argued against the release of Budanov, who was convicted of strangling a Chechen woman that he believed was a rebel sniper. Budanov speculated that the shooting was an attempt to increase tensions between Russians and Chechens. *For details, [click here](#).*

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GLOBAL CALL TO ACTION AGAINST POVERTY (GCAP) AND UN MILLENNIUM CAMPAIGN (UNMC)

GCAP to mark its Fourth birthday at World Social Forum in Belem

Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP)

Four years ago GCAP was launched in Brazil at the Porto Alegre World Social Forum among a crowd of 12,000 people in a sports stadium. Brazilian President, Luis Inacio Lula da Silva was there alongside several activists from every continent. He raised his arm with them all wearing a white band to mark the birth of a new movement and celebrate developing countries joining together to make sure that the voices of people living in poverty are heard. He mentioned that there have been significant steps in this direction but that in 2005 there would be a huge movement from southern leaders to create the conditions for poverty to be addressed. Today, the memory of that great year of action remains fresh in the minds of many civil society activists who are still involved with GCAP. The lack of progress on eradicating poverty has made it clear that there can be no time to slack off and the symbol of the white band remains important in uniting people. *For details, [click here](#).*

Madrid High Level Meeting a chance for spotlight on food crisis again

Source: Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP)

The Spanish Government has put out a Proposal on the Process Towards an Inclusive Global Partnership on Agriculture and Food Security (GPAFS) in an attempt to capture many of the ideas that have been circulating in the last months from various forums. The idea is that it will constitute the informal discussions during the Madrid High Level Meeting on Agriculture and Food Security (26 - 27 January), in order to muster as much consensus as possible on how the Process towards GPAFS could look like after Madrid. GCAP will present a position before the meeting based on the lack of delivery on some of the promises made in Rome and stating again the need to put the food price crisis on an equal footing to the financial crisis to give voice to the hundred of thousands who are plunging into abject poverty already this year. *For details, [click here](#).*

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs)

Education for all and Millennium Development Goals

Min Bahadur Ranabhat, University of London, UK

Economic growth and development will have no meaning if poverty continues and people live without having enough food to eat, and basic education and health services for their capacity building. As

such, countries have targeted for its alleviation. This is reflected in the Millennium Summit of 2000 where 189 countries had agreed to set targets known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Since 1950s, Nepalese education services have been offered by the several policy, planning and development efforts of the school education in Nepal. *For details, [click here](#).*

Attacks on Palestine hinder UNESCO goals

Source: PRENSA LATINA, Latin American News Agency

Perez Roque, as president of the Non-Aligned Movement (NOAL), expressed concern before the Third World organisation, about the aggression of which the Palestinian people from the Gaza Strip are being victims. "This invasion affects not only the civil population, but also culture and education," he said. That the Palestinian people have their own independent State is a priority to the NOAL, the foreign minister said. He ratified Cuba's promise to fulfill the Millennium Development Goals in the Island and contribute to their achievement in other countries. It is our will, despite the difficulties imposed by the US economic, trade and financial blockade for almost half a century, to continue working for the objectives proposed by the international entity, he stated. Matsuura showed satisfaction about strengthening the Cuba-United Nation Fund for Education, Science, Culture, Communication and Information (UNESCO) relations and thanked Cuba's efforts to fulfill the Millennium Development Goals. *For details, [click here](#).*

Is Africa reporting development?

Source: guardian.co.uk

The Ugandan press is beginning to pay more attention to issues of development, such as poverty, public health, environmental changes. But it takes a strong editor to publish articles on this subject, rather than high politics or celebrity news, writes Richard M Kavuma. During the Polis seminar last week on whether the media can do development, Julius Mucunguzi, a communications officer at the Commonwealth Secretariat, spoke of the increasing realisation by journalists in Uganda that they can report on "the unsexy" issues and still capture readers' attention. *For details, [click here](#).*

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GET INVOLVED!

Sign the Petition: Ask the World's Economic leaders to make microfinance a focus

Source: Lend to end poverty.org (ACCION International)

In just a few weeks, the world's economic leaders will gather at the World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting 2009 to discuss the current financial crisis. This meeting is a powerful opportunity to advocate for those hardest hit by the crisis -- the 3+ billion people around the world currently living on less than \$ 2 a day. Microfinance provides the world's poor with the tools and resources they need to permanently lift themselves and their families out of poverty. But there is an urgent need to expand these services as microfinance is currently reaching only 10 - 20 per cent of the estimated 500 million poor entrepreneurs who would benefit from it. Please join ACCION International to urge world economic leaders to promote and prioritise microfinance at the upcoming conference and help eradicate poverty. *For details, [click here](#).*

Donate to the Solidarity Fund

Source: [World Social Forum \(WSF\)](http://World Social Forum (WSF))

In order to allow the participation of organisations attending the World Social Forum (WSF) from all over the world, a Solidarity Fund was established. This Fund is financed by international and national organisations and will help, as much as possible in a balanced participation, in accordance with the priorities decided at the last meeting of the IC (International Council), as indigenous and traditional peoples, and then, organisations and entities from countries that historically were not part of the Forum process, but since the Global Action Day of in January 2008, began to participate. Every WSF participant is invited to contribute to the Solidarity Fund, increasing participation and widening the

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ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

King Khalid Foundation Responsible Competitiveness Award

25 -27 January 2009, Source: AccountAbility, www.accountability21.net

Presented by the King Khalid Foundation this annual award will be offered to the top three performers (companies) as per the Saudi Responsible Competitiveness Index (RCI) assessment and ranking developed by AccountAbility. The inaugural awards ceremony will be launched at the 2009 Global Competitiveness Forum in Riyadh. The Saudi RCI is part of the Saudi Arabian Responsible Competitiveness Initiative launched by the Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority (SAGIA) supported by AccountAbility and Tamkeen. "Responsible Competitiveness is an essential ingredient for effective global markets. It blends forward-looking corporate strategies, innovative public policies, and a vibrant, engaged civil society," says Pascal Lamy, Director General, World Trade Organisation (WTO). *For details, [click here](#).*

NGOs challenge UN Global Compact to uphold its "integrity measures"

Source: Corporate Social Responsibility Newswire

Following the refusal by the UN Global Compact (UNGC) to accept and act on a formal complaint of "systematic or egregious abuse" of the Global Compact's overall aims and principles by PetroChina, a UNGC participant, the NGOs that submitted the complaint plan to escalate the matter to the UNGC's Board of Directors. The complaint, submitted by Investors Against Genocide (IAG) and Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations (SOMO), asks the UNGC to formally apply its established "Integrity Measures". If after three months, there is no satisfactory resolution of the issues raised, the groups ask that the UNGC remove PetroChina from the list of participants. The UNGC's Integrity Measures define steps to safeguard the reputation, integrity and good efforts of the Global Compact and its participants. *For details, [click here](#).*

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CIVIL SOCIETY ACTIVISM AND GLOBAL INSTITUTIONS

Private sector and Civil Society Forum tackles global financial crisis, role of Arab institutions

Source: Arab Times

The first session of the 'Private Sector and Civil Society Forum', held on the sidelines of the Arab Economic Summit, was dedicated to discussing the global economic crisis and the role of Arab institutions in tackling this issue. Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) Sheikh Salem Abdulaziz Al-Sabah presented the major elements of the current global financial meltdown and the main lessons that could be learned from it in order to seek means to protect the Arab financial and banking sectors from negative impacts. He said the economic crisis was rooted in the fast-paced expansion in banking activities around the world over the past few years, especially in advanced countries. *For details, [click here](#).*

Global Trade Unions urge World Bank and IMF to take action against growing world-wide unemployment

Source: International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)

Commitments to strengthen social programmes for workers hit by the economic crisis and to increase action on core labour standards were made by World Bank President, Robert Zoellick and International Monetary Fund (IMF), Managing Director, Dominique Strauss-Kahn. This was done at the conclusion of two days of meetings with an 85-member international trade union delegation led by

the President and General Secretary of the ITUC, General Secretaries of Global Union Federations and the Trade Union Advisory Committee. ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder reminded the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) that unions should be brought in as full partners to the processes currently taking place for establishing a new regulatory framework for the global financial system. *For details, [click here](#).*

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CLIMATE JUSTICE

Civil society in Philippines -- Poor need to be heard in climate negotiations

Source: J. Torres, GMA News.TV

A network of civil society groups on 19 January asserted that the opinion of poor Filipinos should be heard during global climate change negotiations. In a forum held at the University of the Philippines. The Philippine Climate Watch Alliance, the largest grassroots-based network of Philippine organizations on climate change, said "poor Filipino communities do care about how climate change is going to affect their lives and livelihoods". *For details, [click here](#).*



Climate change threatens food security in southern Africa

Source: Miriam Mannak, Inter Press Service (IPS) Africa

Climate change will have a significant impact on southern Africa's already compromised food security, environmental experts warned at the fifth Alexander von Humboldt International Conference at the University of Cape Town (UCT) in South Africa. The meeting, held during 11-16 January, drew climate change experts and environmental scientists from around the world. According to the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations, one in three people living in Sub-Saharan Africa were chronically hungry in 2007. The region is also hardest hit by extreme poverty, harbouring 75 percent of people worldwide that live on less than a dollar a day. Since 2007, erratic rainfall has led to increased food shortages in southern Africa where droughts damaged and destroyed maize crops in Lesotho, Namibia, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zimbabwe and South Africa. *For details, [click here](#).*

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PROFILES



DONOR: W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Established in 1930 by the breakfast cereal pioneer W.K. Kellogg, the Foundation recently updated their programme framework to concentrate on food systems and rural development, health, philanthropy and volunteerism. The Foundation works in the USA, seven Southern Africa countries (Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe), Latin America and the Caribbean. The strategies differ regionally. There are no specific deadlines for proposal submission as the proposals are reviewed as received. A three months review period should be expected by the grant seeker for feedback on the proposal status. *For details, [click here](#).*



MEMBER: Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM)

Established in 1958 with the mission of 'Divine and Humanitarian Service', DAM is now one of the leading voluntary development organisations in Bangladesh. It has played a pioneering role on many fronts to enhance human well-being in general and redress human sufferings. DAM enjoys consultative status with UN ECOSOC, operational relations with UNESCO and associated status with UN DPI. DAM's programs include: early childhood care & development, formal and non-formal primary and secondary education; life-skills development of adults and adolescents; ICT

education; agriculture diversifications and intensifications; market oriented skills development; micro-credit support; disaster risk reduction; total community sanitation; community base health services and systems development; prevention of drugs addiction and HIV-AIDS; fight against cancer; prevention and protection of women and children from violence, abuse, child labour and trafficking; protection of minorities from social and economic discriminations; etc. *For details, [click here](#).*

[Read more on the previous member profiles...](#)

BOOKS, REPORTS & RESOURCES

State of the World's Children 2009

Source: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

UNICEF's flagship publication, 'The State of the World's Children 2009' launched in South Africa addresses maternal mortality, one of the most intractable problems for development work. Having a child remains one of the biggest health risks for women worldwide. Fifteen hundred women die every day while giving birth. That's a half a million mothers every year. "It's really an unconscionable number of deaths. It's a human tragedy on a massive scale," says UNICEF Chief of Health, Dr. Peter Salama. *For details, [click here](#).*

Paper: Regional Financial Interlinkages and Financial Contagion within Europe

Prepared by Zsófia Árvai, Karl Driessen, and Ýnci Ötker-Robe

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) paper focuses on financial interlinkages within Europe and potential contagion channeled through these interlinkages. It discusses the increased role of external financing as a source of funding for credit growth; analyzes potential channels of contagion through financial linkages; and assesses the magnitude of cross-border exposures between emerging and western European countries. *For details, [click here](#).*

Report: Awarding the losers -- A case of the ECK of Kenya and ZEC of Zimbabwe

Source: Anti-Corruption Trust of Southern Africa (ACT-Southern Africa)

The conduct of the Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK) and the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) during the 2007 and 2008 elections respectively casts doubt into their independence, impartiality, professionalism, integrity and transparency in the delivery of free and fair elections to the electorate. Kenyan general elections were held on 27 December 2007 whilst the Zimbabwean harmonized elections were held on 29 March 2008, followed by the 'one man' Presidential run-off election that took place on 27 June 2008. The conduct of the ECK and ZEC triggered conflicts that resulted in loss of life, internal displacements and extreme insecurity in the two countries. In Kenya alone, the violence left more than 1,200 people dead and 350,000 uprooted. In Zimbabwe, at least 160 people were killed and about 30,000 were internally displaced. *For details, [click here](#).*

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CONFERENCES & EVENTS

Civil society and the upcoming High Level Meeting for Food Security for All

26-27 January 2009, Madrid, Spain

The World President Rev. David Beckmann was one of only three civil society leaders to address the 2008 summit in Rome. This year's U.N. High Level Meeting for Food Security for All aims to offer continuity to the United Nations Global Action Plan, and to design a road map that will guarantee the fulfillment of the objectives and commitments made during the last summit. President Obama faces many challenges as he enters office. Fighting the hunger crisis must be a priority issue. This will

reworking the way it handles foreign aid. The G8's proposal for a global partnership on food and agriculture is a good idea. This partnership needs to include voices from outside of governments, especially civil society. *For details, [click here](#).*

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FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

UNESCO World Press Freedom Prize

Application Deadline: 31 January 2009

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) invites member states, regional and international organisations, and professional and non-governmental organisations working in the field of journalism and freedom of expression to nominate candidates for the UNESCO World Press Freedom Prize. The US\$ 25,000 award honours a journalist or organisation that has made a notable contribution to the defence and promotion of press freedom anywhere in the world, especially if this involved risk. The prize is awarded every year on World Press Freedom Day. *For details, [click here](#).*

Scholar Rescue Fund Fellowship

Application Deadline: 31 January 2009

Professors, established researchers and other senior academics from any country, field or discipline may qualify. Preference is given to scholars with a Ph.D. or other highest degree in their field; who have extensive teaching or research experience at a university, college or other institution of higher learning; who demonstrate superior academic accomplishment or promise; who are facing or have recently fled from direct and immediate threats; and whose selection is likely to benefit the academic community in the home and/or host country or region. Applications from female scholars and under-represented groups are strongly encouraged. *For details, [click here](#).*

Asia Pacific Rice Film Award 2008

Application Deadline: 31 January 2009

Film-makers and new media artists across the Asia Pacific region are invited to enter their audio-visual creations for this award recognising excellence in films on rice-related issues. Presented by Pesticide Action Network Asia and the Pacific (PAN AP), TVE Asia Pacific (TVEAP), and Public Media Agency (PMA) of Malaysia, the competition is open to both fictional and factual films on the theme of Asia's rice heritage and the threats it faces in this era of globalisation. The films may have been produced using professional video, home video, mobile phones or cinematic equipment. *For details, [click here](#).*

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WORKSHOPS & COURSES

Civil society under threat workshop at the World Social Forum 2009

29 January 2009, 15.30 to 18.30 pm, Belem do Para, Brazil

CIVICUS, Amnesty International, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) will host a workshop at the World Social Forum (WSF). The workshop aims to identify trends in the restriction of civil society around the world, as well as discuss its collective responses. The existence of civil society rests on guarantees of the freedoms of expression, association and assembly. When these freedoms are restricted, civil society struggles to perform its vital roles as watchdogs on government excesses, protectors of human rights and providers of social services. Many countries have laws,

[here](#).

Rights are essential for poverty eradication

29 January 2009, 8.30 to 11.30 am, Belem do Para, Brazil

The debate on poverty is dominated with economic indicators and development models that promise monetary solutions. These efforts alone have not yet born fruit for the world's poorest countries. Clearly, something is missing. Poverty is a cycle of abuse. Together, as individual rights holders and as civil society, Amnesty International, Social Watch, AWID is organising the forum at the World Social Forum (WSF) to discuss and promote a human rights framework for understanding poverty and its causes; to consider a HR solution to poverty; and to explore how civil society can mobilise by promoting active participation in decision making processes, promoting access to justice for victims of HR violations and making use of the accountability mechanisms available. *For details, [click here](#).*

[Read more...](#)

CALL FOR PAPERS, SUBMISSIONS, SURVEYS & NOMINATIONS

Calls for proposals -- World Bank Civil Society Fund 2009

Deadline for submission: 20 March 2009

The World Bank in Vietnam announced the start of the Civil Society Fund 2009 for the country with the total amount equivalent to VND 692 million. The Civil Society Fund (formerly known as Small Grants Program) of the World Bank was created in 1983 as a way of supporting small, nonprofit, civil society organizations (CSOs). The Social Development Civil Society Fund (Civil Society Fund or CSF) seeds and supports activities that build capacity to enhance development outcomes. *For details, [click here](#).*

Call for submissions -- Gender, Diversity, Elections and the Media

Deadline for submission of abstracts: 2 February 2009

The Gender and Media Diversity Journal is the biennial journal of the Gender and Media Diversity Centre (GMDC). The GMDC is a physical and virtual resource centre based in Southern Africa, managed by Gender Links and the Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA) Network, with linkages in Africa and across the globe. The journal provides up-to-date and cutting edge information on media diversity in Southern Africa and the space for the dissemination of research findings and projects; case studies; campaigns; policy developments; and opinion and debate on media practice in the region. *For details, [click here](#).*

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APPOINTMENTS

This week, new civil society job openings have been added to the CIVICUS website. Please [click here](#).

Should you wish to publish a **New Vacancy**, please click on [Add job](#). Please add an expiry date for applications.

JOBS OF THE WEEK

Web and New Media Editor

Application Deadline: 13 February 2009

CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation

Location: Johannesburg, South Africa
For details, [click here](#).

Civil Society Index Programme Officer

Application Deadline: Position vacant until filled
CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation
Location: Johannesburg, South Africa
For details, [click here](#).

Senior Associate Practice Manager

Application Deadline: 06 February 2009
Gender at Work
Location: Glen Echo, USA
For details, [click here](#).

CONTACT e-CIVICUS

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