



World Alliance for Citizen
Participation

e-CIVICUS

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

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

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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

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 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

FROM THE DESK OF CIVICUS' SECRETARY GENERAL



Dear friends and colleagues,

CIVICUS' 16th anniversary: Growing responsibilities

What's it like to be 16 these days? For many 16 year olds around the world the future has never looked less certain. Many young people, who a year ago imagined they knew exactly what life had in store for them, suddenly find themselves confronted with the possibility that they will not simply graduate, get a job, buy a home and live their dreams. For many more, the future couldn't be more certain. They will, by sheer accident of birth, be condemned to a life eking out a living from the scrap heaps of the rich and powerful. Girls who are already mothers, raising children as malnourished as themselves. Boys who see no choices but drudgery or crime.

Depending on where they live, and their circumstances, 16 is the age at which they might be permitted to consume alcohol, drive a vehicle, vote, or serve in the armed forces. Or make the choice to leave the confines of their families for higher education. Or be conscripted into a guerrilla force. Or find a way to use their talents to shape a better future for their generation. In any event, a time of growing responsibility.

[Read more...](#)

With gratitude, faith and solidarity,

Ingrid Srinath



CIVICUS staff in Johannesburg last week

the contribution guidelines, [click here](#).

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Civil Society Watch Monthly Bulletin

The CIVICUS e-newsletter Civil 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 turns 16 years old today!



Therefore, we would like to hear from all our Members, partners and interested stakeholders about your experiences of CIVICUS over the past 16 years. We invite you to share with us your personal/organisational experiences with CIVICUS, and/or provide suggestions for us to better serve you in the next 16 years, and beyond. And don't forget: Your opinions and input might be published in an upcoming issue of e-CIVICUS, or on our website (www.civicus.org).

Please write to membership@civicus.org with your reflections, memories, contributions, suggestions or opinions. We look forward to hearing from you!

Here are some reflections and comments from staff and Members which we have received so far:



Kumi Naidoo

Honorary President and former Secretary General, CIVICUS

When I started as Secretary General of CIVICUS in October 1998, CIVICUS was a few years old, with four staff and the main activity being the World Assembly. My just-over ten years at CIVICUS has been blessed with meeting some of the most inspirational people in every continent in the world. At a time when materialism and individualism was on the rise, CIVICUS members and partners, provided an alternative way of addressing the challenges that humanity faces. As an experimental movement, addressing the generic challenges that all civil society organisations face, on reflection, we made some strategic choices that we could have done differently. For example, while we did invest a lot of our efforts in working with non-governmental organisations, we needed to do make a greater effort with trade unions, faith-based organisations, social movements and other informal expressions of civil society.



Margaret Fish

Manager, World Assembly, CIVICUS

It's crazy to think that I qualify as a CIVICUS "veteran" since I joined CIVICUS in 2005! That's an indication of the amount of people that flow in and out of this organisation on their career paths. I first worked in Kumi's office as his Executive Assistant, and after a year I joined the World Assembly team under Roseline Zigomo. When she moved on at the end of 2007 I became the World Assembly manager. I have been fortunate to have worked on and attended all three of the Glasgow series of World Assemblies. (Incidentally, the World Assembly was CIVICUS' main activity when it started 16 years ago!).

Congratulation 16th Birthday of CIVICUS to all members. I wish peace to all people of the world in particular to the people of Afghanistan.

Sincere Regards,

Eng.B.Omarzai

Director / Ariana Construction and Rehabilitation Unit (ACRU)

[Read more contributions...](#)

CIVICUS channel on YouTube:
'Time 2 Act' Go to YouTube, [click here](#).



CIVICUS launches its 1
for 1 membership
campaign

Are you one of the
missing 85?

One CIVICUS member for every UN
member state, that's the goal of
CIVICUS' 1 for 1 Membership
campaign, [click here](#).

TRIBUTE

A tribute to Dr Tajudeen Abdul-Raheem

CIVICUS is deeply saddened by the passing of Dr Tajudeen Abdul-Raheem, who was fatally injured in a car accident in Nairobi, Kenya in the early hours of Africa Day, 25 May 2009. Taju was the Director of the UN Millennium Campaign for Africa, coordinating outreach on the Millennium Development Goals, but has also been a Director of Justice Africa, Chairperson for the Pan African Development Education and Advocacy Programme (PADEAP) and Chair of the International Governing Council of the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD). He was an inspiration to all at CIVICUS.

Through his work with CIVICUS and the Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP), he demonstrated this passion in his every action. Although he was a busy man, he was generous with his time, especially when it involved a struggle for justice. He was supportive of our efforts around the Aid Effectiveness Conference in Ghana last year in September. He joined us when we urged action on Zimbabwe, calling on Africans to unite during the innumerable crises that faced the country. And when two courageous GCAP campaigners, Daniel Bekele and Netsanet Demissie, were unjustly imprisoned in Ethiopia, he personally lobbied the government for their release. *For details, [click here](#).*

CIVICUS Poll Question

This week's question:

At 16, which of CIVICUS' three Strategic Directions is the most important?

- a. Protect rights of civil society actors
- b. Strengthen good practice within civil society
- c. Strengthen civil society's ability to influence policies & practices of Govts/Int institutions/Pvt sector
- d. All of these!

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

Previous question: Which of CIVICUS' information and communication technology (ICT) products do you find the most useful?

- a. e-CIVICUS
- b. www.civicus.org
- c. [CSI blog](#)
- d. [Facebook profiles](#)
- e. [You Tube channel](#)
- f. Programme newsletters/bulletins
- g. All of the above

Results: a. - 33.3%, b. - 14.8%, c. - 14.8%, d - 14.8%, e - 11.1%, f - 7.4%, g - 3.7%

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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.

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MEMBERS LETTERS

YouthLaunch

By Jennifer Lester Development Specialist

YouthLaunch, an Austin-based nonprofit organization that promotes the empowerment of young people through service, awards its Scholarship for Outstanding Service to three service-oriented youth every year—and its most recent winners are extraordinary young Texans who have devoted their efforts to aiding crises in Africa. Tyler Folse, who hails from Houston, Texas, won one of the 2009 scholarships for his initiative to aid the humanitarian crisis in Darfur. Concerned about the lack of medical care and safe drinking water for families fleeing violence in Sudan, Tyler began a project that shared information about Darfur with the community and raised money for the International Relief Committee, which provides aid to Sudanese refugees. In his sophomore year, he held a garage sale that raised \$1900 for the IRC. *For details, [click here](#).*

CIVIL SOCIETY NEWS



Martin Ennals Award 2009 goes to Human Rights Defender from Iran

Source: Martin Ennals Foundation

Emad Baghi, a leading Iranian human rights defender based in Tehran. He founded the Society for the Defense of Prisoners' Rights, and has been a vigorous and outspoken opponent of the death penalty in Iran. His campaigning includes a scholarly examination of Islamic law (shari'a) on the subject, in which he demonstrates the absence of any doctrinal requirement for maintaining capital punishment. In addition, Baghi's inventory of death row prisoners in Iran, including juvenile offenders, has been an important resource for UN human rights bodies as well as human rights groups outside the country. Baghi has spent four years in prison over the past decade for his campaigning against the death penalty and other rights activities. Currently out of jail, he still faces charges relating to his work for the defense of prisoners rights. *For details, [click here](#).*



Uzbeks sow seeds of trouble in cotton industry despite official ban on

child labor

Source: Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty

Students in Uzbekistan's Ferghana Province are busy these days working on an unusual homework assignment: Teachers have instructed them to make at least 200 paper funnels each, add soil, and plant cotton seeds inside them. "They told us to take sheets of notebook paper, glue both sides, and leave its narrow end open," one 11-year-old tells RFE/RL's Uzbek Service, adding that he's spending most of his spare time these days making the things. "We made some the other day, but they told us to make more, and to make them differently." *For details, [click here](#).*

Present state of CSOs sustaining Japanese civil society

By Tatsuo Ohta (President & CEO, Japan Association of Charitable Organisations)

Public Benefit Corporations (PBCs) in Japan facing a new era in legal framework by the enforcement of new charity laws as from 1 December, 2008 that will give greater support for encouraging their voluntary, creative and prospective activities in the future and will ensure that the role of civil society is given greater recognition in country. Japan now has a new independent body similar to the Charity Commission for England and Wales and the considerable growth in activities of PBCs is expected here after. *For details, [click here](#).*

Turkmenistan grants mass prisoner pardon

By Isabel Gorst, Gundogar.org



The president of Turkmenistan pardoned 1,671 prisoners, in a move that appeared designed to appease international concern about the country's abysmal human rights record. The amnesty, granted on the eve of Turkmenistan's day of National Revival and Unity, was a "tribute to the ancient humanitarian traditions of the nation enshrined in the constitution", Gurbanguly Berdimukhammedov, Turkmenistan's president, told state television. *For details, [click here](#).*

Cholera still stalks Zimbabwe

Source: Head Down Eyes Open - Blog Spot



It is likely that at some point in the coming week, the 100,000th case of cholera will be officially reported in Zimbabwe. So far, 98,309 cases have been reported, with some 4,283 deaths. [The last time I posted on this topic](#), Zimbabwe was making news and the cholera crisis was top of the news agenda. Yet, in the interim three months, while Zimbabwe has faded as a news story cases of cholera have doubled and nearly 4'300 people have now died from a disease that is easily prevented. *For details, [click here](#).*

Over 20,000 died in Sri Lanka rebels' defeat: report

Source: Reuters

More than 20,000 Tamil civilians were killed in the final days of Sri Lanka's military operation to defeat Tamil Tigers rebels, The Times newspaper reported. *For details, [click here](#).*

GET INVOLVED!

The CIVICUS Civil Society Index Blog is online!

Keep abreast of recent activities within the CSI team and program. Visit <http://civilsocietyindex.wordpress.com> and share the link with your colleagues, networks and stakeholders. This new blog will provide CSI partners as well as interested parties all over the world a more informal and interactive way of giving and getting updates during this implementation phase, and will serve as a hub of information for you to disseminate, access and interact with throughout the project. *For details, [click here](#).*

Build a UN that really works for all women!

Source: Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) Campaign

In New York, UN Member States are negotiating gender equality architecture reform. Now is the time to remind them that women all over the world are watching. If you haven't already, please sign and disseminate the GEAR Campaign petition to create a new, stronger and consolidated entity with increased resources and meaningful civil society participation. Click here to sign the online petition and help us reach our goal of 10,000 signatures. *For details, [click here](#).*

[Read more...](#)

GLOBAL INSTITUTIONS UPDATE



Prioritising human rights

Source: United Nations Human Rights

Launching her Office's latest yearly report on its human rights work around the world, the 2008 Report on Activities and Results, High Commissioner Navi Pillay called 2008 a "landmark year for the human rights community," pointing to a number of significant institutional reforms, new international legal instruments and a series of historic milestones, among them the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As the organisation with the lead responsibility for implementing the UN's human rights programme, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has assumed an increasingly important role globally. *For details, [click here](#).*

UN conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis postponed to 24-26 June

Source: UN - Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS)

The General Assembly this morning announced its decision to reschedule the Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development to 24 - 26 June 2009, from its previously-scheduled dates of 1 - 3 June. Opening the meeting, General Assembly President Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann said given the ongoing dire and critical global financial and economic situation and the utmost urgency for Member States and the UN system to find a common and lasting solution soon, and on the request of Member States, he proposed to reschedule the Conference. *For details, [click here](#).*

[Read more...](#)

PROFILES



DONOR: The Lemelson Foundation

Established by Jerome Lemelson, one of U.S. history's most prolific inventors, the Foundation's programs in the U.S. and developing countries recognise and celebrate accomplished inventors; provide financial and mentoring support to grassroots inventors; offer hands-on opportunities that enable young people to develop their budding scientific curiosity; and disseminate technologies that improve people's lives. To date, the Foundation has donated or committed more than \$150 million in support of its mission. The Foundation solicits proposals for specific projects and programs from selected institutions and organisations working in its areas of interest. Due to its small staff, The Foundation does not accept unsolicited proposals. Additionally, it does not provide funding for protection or commercialisation of intellectual property. *For details, [click here](#).*

[Read more profiles...](#)

BOOKS, REPORTS & RESOURCES



Former Kazakh presidential son-in-law publishes Tell-All book

Source: Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty

The launch of yet another criminal case against me and my book confirms once again that all facts in my book are based on credible information and this is absolute truth. If Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev really lives in fear of being betrayed by those within his inner circle - including his own family - the recent publication of a tell-all book by his former son-in-law provides ample justification. In "Godfather-In-Law," former presidential son-in-law Rakhat Aliiev reveals what he says are intimate details of Nazarbaev's public and private life, inside information accumulated over years in key government positions, and plenty of family - and allegedly, state - secrets. *For details, [click here](#).*

CIDSE annual report 2008

Source: CIDSE - International alliance of Catholic development agencies

2008 Annual Report is now available in [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#). It provides an overview of activities in a year marked by global crises, looking at how we responded to them in our work centred on support to the world's poorest. *For details, [click here](#).*



COHRE publication on human rights and MDGs

Source: Centre On Housing Rights And Evictions (COHRE)

The Right to Water Programme (RWP) of the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) has released a report which addresses the need for MDG-based policy making on water and sanitation to incorporate human rights standards. The publication analyses MDG-based policies and sector strategies from five countries, identifying current trends and any critical gaps. It reviews the extent to which such policies are consistent with, are conflicting or fail to reflect human rights principles. It also shows how gaps in MDG-based policy making can be usefully filled by more explicit and systematic consideration of human rights standards. *For details, [click here](#).*



Arab world making progress in Responsible Competitiveness

Source: AccountAbility

The report 'Responsible Competitiveness in the Arab World 2009' at the World Economic Forum on the Middle East on 16 May 2009. This report is the first systematic assesment of regional performance for 15 Arab nations using new customised benchmarking and includes essays from the regions thought-leaders on issues such as water scarcity, Islamic finance and green buildings. It also makes the point that at the heart of responsible competitiveness is a vibrant and engaged civil society. *For details, [click here](#).*



The Barefoot Guide to working with organisations and social change

Source: The Barefoot Guide

This is a practical, do-it-yourself guide for leaders and facilitators wanting to help organisations to function and to develop in more healthy, human and effective ways as they strive to make their contributions to a more humane society. It has been developed by the Barefoot Collective. The guide, with its supporting website, includes tried and tested concepts, approaches, stories and activities. Its purpose is to help stimulate and enrich the practice of anyone supporting organisations and social movements in their challenges of working, learning, growing and changing to meet the needs of our complex world. Although it is aimed at leaders and facilitators of civil society organisations, we hope it will be useful to anyone interested in fostering healthy human organisation in any sphere of life. *For details, [click here](#).*

CONFERENCES & EVENTS

3rd Global Warming and Climate Change Conference & Industry

26-30 June, 2009 at The Hyde Park Hotel, London

Entitled "Bringing Sustainable Development Down to Earth", the GWCCN 09 conference will highlight the role of individuals, groups and grassroots efforts in "green-building" initiatives. The conference will explore what we can do as ordinary citizens in addressing the adverse effects of Global Warming and Climate Change. *For details email, gwccn09@uku.co.uk.*

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: 15 June 2009

CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation

Location: Johannesburg, South Africa

For details, [click here](#).

Communications Officer

Application Deadline: 5 June 2009

Global Campaign for Education (GCE)

Location: Johannesburg, South Africa

For details, [click here](#).

Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) Asia Pacific Regional Coordinator

Application Deadline: 1 June 2009

GCE Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF)

Location: Mumbai, Manila or Canberra

For details, [click here](#).

Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) Asia Pacific Capacity Development & Advocacy Support Officers

Application Deadline: 1 June 2009

GCE Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF)

Location: South East Asia, Manila

For details, [click here](#).

Senior Programme Coordinator Global Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres Programme

Application Deadline: 15 June 2009

Transparency International

Location: TI Secretariat, Berlin, Germany

For details, [click here](#).

CONTACT e-CIVICUS

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