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Poll question

This week's question: Which level of governance should civil society place primary attention on in its efforts to promote greater democratisation?

- a. global
- b. regional
- c. national
- d. local
- e. equally all of the above

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

Previous question: To have more impact on civil society in the North, CIVICUS needs:

- a. An agenda
- b. Relevant purpose
- c. Clear messaging
- d. All of these

Results: a. - 22.7%, b. - 0%, c. - 13.6%, d. - 63.6%

Resources

"From Political Won't to Political Will: Building Support for Participatory Governance"

Source: *Kumarian Press*

Whilst there is growing consensus worldwide that good governance is participatory governance, approaches that involve citizens in the processes of public decision-making often lack political support and, for a variety of reasons, public officials are often reluctant to adopt such approaches. "From Political Won't to Political Will: Building Support for Participatory Governance", edited by Carmen Malena and published by Kumarian Press, addresses this particular challenge and, through representing the perspectives of both civil society and government actors, explores the reasons for lack of political will and proposes a number of strategies for successfully building political will. To read more, [click here](#).

Report on the civil society (fourth pillar) consultations with the IMF on reform of IMF governance

Source: *New Rules for Global Finance Coalition*

The report aims to summarise the scope and breadth of the consultations held by civil society with the IMF on the current issues of IMF reform under the so-called "fourth pillar." The IMF managing director asked New Rules to coordinate these

From the Desk of the Secretary General



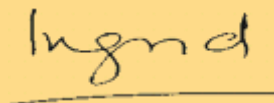
On the International Day of Democracy, A call for introspection

Democracy, like globalisation, is a term that has had its essence wrung out through overuse, misuse and abuse. A Google search for the word throws up over 5 million references. Hymns are written to it. Politicians' speeches are peppered with it. It features most often in the names of countries where it is least practised. From ink-marked fingers registering a vote for the first time to long queues of those whose faces never otherwise feature in the media, and legislators reporting their every passing thought on Twitter, to election campaigns that win corporate marketing awards - the symbolism of democracy often substitutes for its substance.

Two years ago, the United Nations, which, despite its deep flaws, remains humanity's best attempt yet at practising democracy at a global level, designated September 15 to be Global Democracy Day. In their pronouncements on the occasion the Assembly reaffirmed that democracy is "a universal value based on the freely-expressed will of people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural systems, and their full participation in all aspects of life."

For details, [click here](#).

With faith, gratitude and solidarity,



World Democracy Day Articles



The following articles are contributions sent to us for this special issue of e-CIVICUS dedicated to celebrating World Democracy Day (15 September).

A very short tale of two African nations *

By: *Sondra Myers*

Between March 2008 and March 2009 I made three visits to Rwanda and two to Kenya. Not far from each other geographically, these nations are very different in the ways they work. With regard to ethnicity, their attitudes, customs and laws are very different indeed. To read more, [click here](#).

Balfour is a microcosm of what is happening throughout South Africa *

By: *Danny Lurie*

I am the son of a farmer from Balfour, inside the Gert Sibande municipal district of Mpumalanga, South Africa. Toward the end of July 2009, the residents of Siyathemba had had enough. To read more, [click here](#).

Coming of age? The significance and limits of transnational activist networks today

By: *Jan Lüdert*

At the turn of the 20th century I heeded the calling of a transnational activist network critical of globalisation. Attac appealed to me with its pacifist ethos that neo-liberal economic globalisation is not an inevitable destiny but that a different world is indeed possible. To read more, [click here](#).

Nigeria: Democracy dead but not buried

By: *Ben Efe*

For a country that has enormous potential in human and natural resources to be wallowing in poverty and disgrace, something fundamentally is incorrect with the political and social structure. To read more, [click here](#).

The strange trajectory of the democratisation process in Africa *

By: *Siaka Coulibaly*

When talking about democracy, Africa in its whole is always a fascinating case. It is also problematic to evoke the topic of democracy in Africa as much this case is paradoxical. To read more, [click here](#).

Grass root(er)s: Green e-activists of Eastern Europe enter politics

consultations, with the technical support of the Fund External Relations staff. Feedback has been gathered by means of an independent website; through the use of extensive email lists; and through a number of video conferences with civil society organisations in various regions of the world. An independent scholar has then been asked to report on the consultations. For details, [click here](#).

South Asian youth declaration on climate change

Read the declaration made by youth at the South Asian Youth Summit on Climate Change held on 6 September 2009 in Dhulikhel, Nepal. Youth express their concerns and are deeply perturbed by the impacts and causes of climate change on human and natural systems and reaffirm the fundamental relationship between human and natural systems. For details, [click here](#).

We Welcome Contributions

e-CIVICUS is 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. To read the contribution guidelines, [click here](#).

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Events

International CEDAW conference: Womankind and One World Action

11 November, *The Human Rights Action Centre, London*

In one voice let us take this opportunity to develop a way forward for civil society – a robust UK sector-wide strategy that seeks to ensure the government fully commits to its international obligations under CEDAW in advancing women's participation, building women's capacities, and promoting women's empowerment. For more details contact Marie Birchall or Kathrine Hilario at cedawevent@oneworldaction.org.

Moving Stars and Earth for Water: Poetic Social Mission event

9 October, *Onedrop.org*

From Star City in Russia, where he began to train for the first social and artistic mission in space, Guy Laliberté, founder of Cirque du Soleil® and the ONE DROP Foundation, unveiled the details of the global event Poetic Social Mission: Moving Stars and Earth for Water, a world première which will be presented on onedrop.org next October 9, at 8:00 p.m. EDT. For more details, [click here](#).

High level consultation of senior religious leaders, government representatives and representatives of the United Nations

23 September, *New York*

Religions for Peace in partnership with the Global Campaign for Climate Action (GCCA) will hold a consultation of senior religious leaders on 23 September to advocate to governments to seal the deal at COP 15. A broad-based multi-religious delegation with senior religious leaders, representing major faiths, will hold a dialogue with policy makers and media to advocate for a fair, ambitious and binding agreement that secures climate justice for all in Copenhagen. For details contact Rori Picker Neiss, [rori.picker.neiss\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:rori.picker.neiss(at)gmail.com).

Book Reviews

The Challenge for Africa

Source: *Random House, Inc.*

Wangari Maathai, Nobel Peace Prize laureate and founder of the Green Belt Movement, offers a refreshingly unique perspective on the challenges facing Africa, even as she calls

Source: *Association for Progressive Communications*

The greens are growing like weeds in Bulgaria and Hungary and recently ecologists in Bulgaria made significant headway on yet another battle against a Goliath, preventing the further destruction along the Black Sea coast and high mountains to make way for luxury housing. To read more, [click here](#).

Nigeria's 10 years of uninterrupted democracy

By: *Charles Okoh*

29 May 2009 marked 10 years of uninterrupted democracy in Nigeria. For us it is an experience we have never enjoyed and so it is difficult to tell how much we missed it in the first place. Democracy, many have argued, is not flawless but so far we are yet to see a better alternative to it. To read more, [click here](#).

Ordinary Africans play key role in holding governments accountable

By: *Warren Krafchik and Gary Hawes*

This summer brought a flurry of calls on African governments to end corruption, enforce the rule of law, and deliver results for their people. To read more, [click here](#).

Did we abandon democracy in town hall meetings?: A reaction to the current U.S. healthcare reform movement in the U.S.

By: *Erlyn Erawan-Coppage*

Healthcare has been a hot topic in the U.S. lately, even though the country has been in a crisis for a long time. The Obama administration is trying to change this by increasing accessibility, improving quality of services, and regulating the control of insurances in order to make it just and fair for everyone, to name just a few key points in the healthcare reform bill. To read more, [click here](#).

Justice, politics

By: *Peter Daub, chairman, Free Consumers Association*

Don't do anything upon someone else that you would not do upon yourself! That's the basic rule of the world of justice and all kinds of laws and regulations internationally. Although it sounds so simple, it has been embattled throughout the centuries! To read more, [click here](#).

International Day of Democracy *

Source: *FEMNET*

The United Nations General Assembly in its Resolution A/RES/62/7 voted to observe this day every year, in recognition of the efforts of the International Conference of New or Restored Democracies (ICNRD) movement that for 20 years has focused the world's attention on the urgent need for the promotion and consolidation of democracy at all levels. To read more, [click here](#).

Democracy in Ethiopia *

Source: *Organisation for Social Justice in Ethiopia*

The history of Non Governmental Organisations dates back no more than four decades in Ethiopia. They were mainly engaged and their primary area of focus was in relief work and service delivery. It is only in the last 10 years or so that organisations started to work actively on rights issues. To read more, [click here](#).

Strengthening our nation's democracy

By: *Susanna Haas Lyons*

An impressive group of American experts and advocates of democracy reform came together in summer 2009 to create new momentum and plans for strengthening democracy by engaging all citizens in the selection of their leaders, influencing laws and regulations, and taking public action. To read more, [click here](#).

Terrors of democracy *

By: *Edwin Nebolisa Nwakaeme*

"In Africa the rule of law is a bastard, it is born of so many wayward fathers and is itself socially delinquent and morally bankrupt". The late Nigerian superstar, Afro beat king and human rights activist, Fela Anikulapo Kuti once described democracy as a demonstration of madness. To read more, [click here](#).

Better health care depends on a stronger democracy

Source: *Everyday Democracy*

A Statement from Everyday Democracy, AmericaSpeaks, Demos, and Professor Archon Fung of Harvard's Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation. As noted in a recent New York Times piece, "Joe the Citizen" is feeling squeezed out of the current health care debate in the United States. To read more, [click here](#).

To protect freedom of expression in Russia *

By: *Ernst Troyan and Lena Hades*

The modern world cannot exist without modern art. And the language of modern art is as important as the language of the daily news - the daily news for the protection of rights and freedoms, and the language of modern art for protection of the spiritual freedom of a human being. To read more, [click here](#).

Faith leaders and civil society groups urge UN to fight corruption that increases poverty

Source: *Christian Aid*

More than 50 faith leaders from all over the world have written a letter to UN General-Secretary, Ban Ki-moon, calling on world leaders to step up the fight against corruption. Faith leaders and civil society groups are together calling for urgent action on the agreement of a review mechanism at the United Nations Convention against Corruption. For details, [click here](#).

We thank all our contributors for your valued response!
For more World Democracy Day articles, [click here](#)

for a moral revolution among Africans themselves, who, she argues, are culturally deracinated, adrift between worlds. For details, [click here](#).

For more book reviews, [click here](#)

Letters to the Editor

Dear Stephanie

On behalf of CIVICUS, I would like to thank you for your important and insightful letter concerning traditional knowledge and human rights value systems in Africa. I agree with you fully - incorporating traditional institutions into development frameworks is not only effective, but essential to ensure ownership and long term realisation of such values. However, in national contexts where human rights are violated, such as in some totalitarian and closed regimes, I think it is imperative to utilise all means of information dissemination, advocacy and capacity building to promote freedom of speech, association and assembly. Choice is the most fundamental and universal of human freedoms. CIVICUS is working with international civil society to help realise that choice for an equitable, rights based approach to international governance and development.

With kind regards,

Sonia Zilberman

Officer, Civil Society Watch Programme

CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation

tcktctck with CIVICUS: 'Global Climate Wake Up Call'

CIVICUS joins the 'Global Climate Wake Up Call' on 21 September by participating in an unique campaign. At 1pm (South African time), CIVICUS and its Members and partners will set off alarms on their mobile phones and become a part of the global campaign by tcktctck. This initiative is strongly supported by Hillside Digital, a CIVICUS member, who will film the event. For details, [click here](#).

North-east coast expose

Source: *Trinidad and Tobago Guardian*

Hundreds of representatives from 53 Commonwealth countries will see that the T&T Government's Vision 2020 dream is yet to create a sparkle in the eyes of residents on Trinidad's rural north-east coast. The representatives, members of the Commonwealth People's Forum (CPF), will spend November 26 in the area as guests of the Toco Foundation. The CPF is a forerunner of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), to be held in Port-of-Spain from 27 to 29 November. For details, [click here](#).

Interview with a civil society activist

Source: *CSW Monthly Bulletin*

Interview with Irfan Mufti of 'Pur Amn Pakistan' (Peaceful Pakistan), which is made up of leading civil society groups, youth movements, women's movements, media associations, labour groups, bar councils and other human rights defenders. He is also the national convener of the Pakistan Social Forum and is working towards promoting dialogue with CSOs and movements all across South and West Asia and planning an Asian Social Forum in early 2010. For details, [click here](#).

Difficult times ahead for charities in India

By: *Noshir H. Dadrawala*

The Finance Act 2008 and the proposed New Direct Tax Code will have far reaching consequences for charitable organisations in India. For details, [click here](#).

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Check out our video channel:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/civicusworldalliance>

CIVICUS Member profile

Pa-Solo Foundation

Pa-Solo Foundation was established in Nigeria in December 2007 with the mission of 'Providing General Social development and Humanitarian Services. Pa-Solo Foundation is established by the directors of At Pa-solo Dot Com Ltd to address issues of: Health, Hunger, Mass Literacy, Youth development and skills acquisition programmes. Pa-Solo Foundation enjoys the membership of CIVICUS and the President/Executive director is a member of Rotary Club International. Pa-Solo Foundation have, in conjunction with the Rotary Club of Festac, metropolitan Lagos, district 9110 Nigeria, concluded a childcare documentary on the causes of, implications for and solutions to high infant morbidity rate. A million copies will be made so as to reach all mothers of children between 0 and 5 in third world countries of the world. Our current projects are: procurement of ambulances for accident victims assistance, accessibility of funds for the mass-production of our completed child care documentary, funding for a youth skills programme on music/arts. Our mission is to provide an efficient accident victim assistance programme in Nigeria, help Nigerian youths acquire useful skills to alleviate poverty, and to help all mothers in underdeveloped and developing countries know how to reduce the high infant mortality rate of children between 0 and 5. We have the required workforce, experience and contacts, but need cars, ambulances and equipment - visual, audio-visual and recording machines. For more information, please visit www.pasolexgroup.blogspot.com/.

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.

Senior Researcher - Security Sector Governance in Africa Application Deadline: 15 September 2009

Institute for Security Studies (ISS)

Location: Pretoria, South Africa

For details, [click here](#).

Junior Researcher - Security Sector Governance in Africa Application Deadline: 15 September 2009

Institute for Security Studies (ISS)

Location: Pretoria, South Africa

For details, [click here](#).

Advocacy and Networking Officer

Application Deadline: 21 September 2009

European Network on Debt and Development

Location: Brussels, Belgium

For details, [click here](#).

Program Manager, Civil Society

Application Deadline: Open Until Filled

Institute for Sustainable Communities

Location: Thailand

For details, [click here](#).

Opportunities

Governing for development: Evolving opportunities and challenges for development actors under the Paris Declaration

Deadline: 30 November 2009

This training programme (from 14 January to 17 February 2010) is organised for the sixth time by the Institute for Development Policy and Management (IOB). It targets senior staff from civil society organisations, government officials and local experts working for the donor community in low-income countries. Candidates must be professionally involved in the topic of the training. The selected participants will receive a full scholarship that will cover most of the expenses during their stay in Belgium. To download the application form, [click here](#). For further details, [click here](#).

Human Rights Small Grants Scheme

Deadline: 2 October, 2009

The 2009-10 Human Rights Small Grants Scheme (HRSGS) is now open for applications. In 2009-10 the HRSGS has expanded its geographical focus to include all of Africa and Latin America, in addition to the Asia-Pacific, Caribbean and Middle East. For further details on eligible countries under the scheme and for details on how to apply, [click here](#).

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