



18 September 2009
Edition No: 456

In this issue

- [World Democracy Day Articles](#)
- [Resources](#)
- [Events](#)
- [News in brief](#)
- [Opportunities](#)
- [Book Reviews](#)
- [Appointments](#)

Poll question

This week's question: What is the greatest potential risk of transparency for CSOs?

- Loss of competitive advantage
 - Loss of funding
 - Political harassment
 - Loss of credibility/legitimacy
 - Other
 - Transparency has only positive consequences
- To answer the question, [click here](#)

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

- global
 - regional
 - national
 - local
 - equally all of the above
- Results: a. - 10.5%, b. - 5.3%, c. - 5.3%, d. - 42.1%, e. - 36.8%**

 I believe that with today's technologies including instant communications, it is easier than ever before to place focused attention on local governance, the rippling effect of which would soon have global impact. - **Danny Lurie**, CIVICUS member

Events

2010 NGO Global Forum for Women: Beijing +15
27 & 28 February, 2010

2010 marks the 15th anniversary of the Beijing World Conference on Women. In recognition of this anniversary, the NGO Committee on the Status of Women, NY, is organising an NGO Global Women's Forum to consider implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA). For more details, [click here](#).

Video: Beyond Elections: Redefining democracy in the Americas

28 September, Pretoria, South Africa
In celebration of Right-to-Know Day, Idasa is screening a documentary entitled, "Beyond Elections: Redefining

From the Desk of the Secretary General



Thank you for your contributions: 'World Democracy Day' Special Issue

The Special Issue of e-CIVICUS last week for World Democracy Day received an unprecedented response from our members and readers. The theme clearly resonated strongly since we received about 50 contributions from all over the world. Many of these were from CIVICUS members but there were an equal number from other readers. Thanks to all of you, this was an issue of e-CIVICUS whose content was truly original and developed especially for the civil society weekly newsletter. The issue – as well as the new design for e-CIVICUS - has received very positive feedback from many of you.

In fact, we still have contributions coming in for the Special Issue on World Democracy Day which we continue to upload to our website (please [click here](#)). A couple of recent articles have been featured in this week's issue too. We would not want to miss out on any of your insightful contributions. If you have theme suggestions for future issues of e-CIVICUS or any other comments please forward them to [editor\(at\)civicus.org](mailto:editor(at)civicus.org)

Some of you may have visited the [CIVICUS profile on Facebook](#). In this issue of e-CIVICUS, we feature a few comments from our Facebook visitors on the poll question which was featured in last week's e-CIVICUS. We simply love to hear from you; and since CIVICUS is a 'platform' for civil society please do continue to use our communications tools to share your thoughts. As we seek to increase and improve the way that we communicate to and for you, your collaboration with our efforts remains very critical.

With faith, gratitude and solidarity,

Ingrid

World Democracy Day Articles

Good governance from the demand side – a Mwananchi perspective

By: Elijah Chiwota

Mwananchi, Swahili for citizen, is the name of a programme funded by the Governance and Transparency Fund (GTF), created by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development as a vehicle to implement its 2006 White Paper recommendations to "do much more at the grassroots end of political governance." To read more, [click here](#).

We need a new political initiative for a more powerful ECOSOC

By: Peter Hesse

"Just as there was a devoted think tank officially charged by the USA, Great Britain, the Soviet Union and China in 1944 to develop the security structure of the United Nations in Dumbarton Oaks near Washington, D.C., USA, we today need a renewal of such a think tank in some neutral place in the world. To read more, [click here](#).

Media relations and democracy - An analysis of communication through media relations practice and its role in liberal democratic societies

By: Valentina Bau

Whilst most academic writing on media focuses on the role that the media play in influencing society, this paper explores how media content is itself shaped by the practice of media relations, and the impact this has on society. To read more, [click here](#).

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

News in brief

Young feminist speaks out against the Honduran coup

In the midst of a women's human rights mission to Honduras, 17-21 August, Carrie Wilson of JASS interviewed Lidize, a young Honduran member of Feminists in Resistance. This alliance of feminists and

Democracy in the Americas". It reviews attempts in Brazil, Argentina, and most recently Venezuela, to expand the concept of democracy to allow residents to participate directly in planning and the allocation of funds. Across the Americas, social movements and constitutional assemblies are taking authority away from the ruling elites and putting power into the hands of their members and citizens. The film features interviews with cooperative and community members, elected representatives, academics, and activists from Brazil, Canada, Venezuela, Argentina, United States, Uruguay, Chile, Colombia, and more. There will be cocktails before the film at 16:00 at the Idasa offices in Pretoria, South Africa. The film begins at 16:45. RSVP to Hakima Haithar: hhaithar@idasa.org.za.

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](#).

The content of e-CIVICUS may be translated into other languages and reproduced elsewhere, as long as due acknowledgment is made to CIVICUS.

DISCLAIMER: Although CIVICUS makes all reasonable efforts to obtain prima-facie reliable content for e-CIVICUS, CIVICUS cannot guarantee the accuracy of the reports, views or opinions of third parties

Book Reviews

Creating a Nation of Joiners: Democracy and Civil Society in Early National Massachusetts

Source: *Harvard University Press, 2008*

The United States is a nation of joiners. Ever since Alexis de Tocqueville published his observations in *Democracy in America*, Americans have recognised the distinctiveness of their voluntary tradition. In a work of political, legal, social and intellectual history focusing on the grassroots actions of ordinary people, Neem traces the origins of this venerable tradition to the vexed beginnings of American democracy in Massachusetts. For details, [click here](#).

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

Letters to the Editor

Dear colleagues

I could not agree more with all previous discussants on the need for human rights education in Africa. The flippancy violations and abuse of human rights perpetuated in most quarters in African societies goes to explain the level of ignorance as far as the subject is concerned. Most customs and traditions inherently compromise the rights of their subjects while most discriminatory practices find justifications in traditions. I need not say that education remains the best tool for social change.

As we work towards attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, we must realise that we need more than government and international organisations to bring about sustainable development. [Read more...](#)

With kind regards,

Eche Stephen Idoko
Nigeria

Find Us

facebook

[Become a CIVICUS Facebook fan and get updates on our](#)

women's organisations is actively resisting the coup of 28 June and demanding a return to democratic institutions. Feminists in Resistance worked with the Petateras, Radio Feminista, JASS and other allies, to mobilise the human rights mission along with an Observatorio de la Transgresión Feminista (Feminist Resistance Watch) to accompany the Honduran women in solidarity, and to document and increase international awareness of the impact of the current political crisis on women. For details, [click here](#).

IPU president: "The world's citizens want more political tolerance"

Source: *Inter Parliamentary Union*

In a statement issued on the second International Day of Democracy, IPU President Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab urges all parliaments and their Speakers to "act decisively to enhance political tolerance". Drawing on the findings of a survey of world public opinion on political tolerance, President Gurirab notes that there is "huge popular aspiration across the world for more democracy" yet "many people are not convinced by the way democracy is working in practice". President Gurirab delivered the statement at the parliamentary conference on democracy in Africa, organised by the IPU and the Parliament of Botswana, which has brought together delegates from more than 25 African parliaments to seek ways to strengthen parliament and democracy on the continent. For details, [click here](#).

Niger: President Tandja pushes Niger to the brink of political conflict

Source: *allAfrica.com*

President Mamadou Tandja of Niger is toying with his country like his personal property. Last Tuesday, the country held a referendum to adopt a new constitution which seeks to extend the President's stay in office three years beyond the expiration of his second-four year term in December 2009. The same constitution will permit him to contest the presidential seat as many times as he desires. For details, [click here](#).

Global fundraising confidence survey

Source: *The Management Centre (=mc)*

The past year has been tough for some, with half of not-for-profit organisations reporting a decline in income, but one third (33%) of fundraisers have successfully bucked the trend and generated additional income despite the recession, according to The Management Centre's Global Fundraising Confidence Survey 2009. For details, [click here](#).

Honduras envoy says "ordered out" of U.N. rights body

Source: *Reuters*

The Honduran ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva said on Monday he had been ordered out of the U.N. Human Rights Council after other Latin American countries accused him of representing an "illegal" regime. After a day of confusion which stalled the start of the three-week session of the 47-nation council, envoy J. Delmer Urbizo left the hall declaring loudly in English and Spanish: "We will be back! Volveremos!" For details, [click here](#).

GA adopts resolution to establish a new women's entity

Source: *UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service*

After three years of extensive consultations, the UN General Assembly, adopted a resolution on 14 September that takes the next step in the process that seeks to establish a new United Nations entity focused on the rights of women. Four United Nations agencies and offices will be amalgamated to create a new single entity within the Organisation to promote the rights and well-being of women worldwide and to work towards gender equality. For details, [click here](#).

AMARC-WIN 2009-16 Days broadcast campaign to end violence against women!

Source: *Women's International Network of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC-WIN)*

From 25 November to 10 December, the Women's International Network of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC-WIN) will highlight the 16 days of activism against gender violence with an Internet campaign to honour groups and individuals who have committed to bringing VAW to the forefront of global attention, to encouraging everyone in their various capacities to take action to end VAW, and to demanding accountability for all of the promises made to eliminate VAW. For details, [click here](#).

CIVICUS Member profile

Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM)

Established in 1958 by Hazrat Khan Bahadur Ahsanullah(r) with the motto of 'Divine & Humanitarian Service' Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) is working as a Non-Governmental Voluntary Organisation to mitigate human suffering by improving the socio-economic status of poor people living below the poverty line. The focus of the organisation is generally on marginalised people in struggling situations, particularly women & adolescent girls with a view to promote human development, freeing them from the curse of illiteracy, poverty, malnutrition, ill health, disease, deprivation and exploitation. Of all the DAM institutions, most noteworthy is the establishment of the first private sector Technical University in 1995, namely the Ahsanullah Institute of Science & Technology (AUST) and the 500 bed International Standard Cancer Hospital with budgeted costs of USD 36.97 million which is expected to start operation by the end of 2009. For more information, please visit www.ahsaniamission.org.

Resources

Review and response to the Copenhagen Consensus' "Fix the Climate" initiative

Source: *AccountAbility*

AccountAbility has been working with the European Climate Foundation, The Energy Foundation and other collaborators in Project Catalyst to develop a rapid response briefing to help people to understand and respond to the Copenhagen Consensus findings. This is part of their wider climate change portfolio of work focused on institutional arrangements for an effective deal, the role of adaptation and business, and the links between climate management, industrial and economic policy and national competitiveness. To read the response, [click here](#).

Art as resistance

[activities in your news feed!](#)



Check out our video channel:

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

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.

Social Affairs Officer

Application Deadline: 21 September 2009

UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Location: New York

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](#).

Programme Manager, Civil Society

Application Deadline: Open Until Filled

Institute for Sustainable Communities

Location: Thailand

For details, [click here](#).

Source: Truth Out

Soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan have tough truths to tell, and it has been well demonstrated that the establishment media does not want to broadcast these. Given the lack of an outlet for anti-war voices in the corporate media, many contemporary veterans and active-duty soldiers have embraced the arts as a tool for resistance, communication and healing. To read more, [click here](#).

Climate change tool helps identify vulnerable farmers

Source: *IRIN News*

The production of maize, South Africa's staple food, could drop by as much as 30 percent in another two decades as climate change brings more intense droughts, but little is known about how this will affect farmers. Now, an analytical tool based on a study, Mapping South African Farming Sector Vulnerability to Climate Change and Variability, has been developed to help policy-planners identify the communities most vulnerable to climate change and help them prepare for radically different farming conditions. For details, [click here](#).

Opportunities

Youth solidarity fund from the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Secretariat

Deadline: 30 September 2009

Fellowship opportunity for NGO leaders and professionals to study international development, explore funding partnerships and build civil society contacts. For details, [click here](#).

EC call for proposals on migration and development

Deadline: 13 November 2009

The European Commission has launched a Call for Proposals to provide funding for NGOs and other entities around the world on migration and development. For details, [click here](#).

Tell a friend

Would you like to share this newsletter with a friend? Please forward their e-mail address to subscriptions@civicus.org.

Unsubscribe: To unsubscribe from e-CIVICUS, get a password reminder, or change your subscription options by entering your subscription email address: [Click here](#).

CONTACT US

EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

Devendra Tak

Ingrid Srinath

P.O. Box 933

Southdale, 2135

South Africa

1420K Street NW,

Suite 900

Washington D.C.

20005 USA

EDITORS

Jessica Hume

Daniel Gray

COPY EDITOR

Margaret Fish

Tel: +27 11 833 5959

Fax: +27 11 833 7997

Tel: +202 331-8518

Fax: +202 331-8774

www.civicus.org