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"...Promoting Best Practices in the Management of Public Affairs and Honesty in Private Business Transactions".

Human Rights, Democracy & Good Governance

Human rights, Democracy and Good Governance are indispensable concepts for human development and development as a whole. These three concepts are interrelated and interwoven. The knowledge and culture of human rights is a pace-setter for democracy while the culture of democratic practice is indispensable for good governance hence the equation: Human Rights + Democracy = Good Governance. This is because democratic practice provides for checks and balances.

Human Rights are those inalienable rights of human beings in the political, socio-economic and cultural domains based on the philosophy that all are born equal even though different. When the Bill of Human rights was adopted it embodied three important international instruments namely: the universal Declaration of Human Rights ratified in 1948 by the UN General Assembly; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; and the Covenant on Economic, Social and cultural Rights both signed in 1966.

These three instruments outline the rights of each and everyone to live, work, adequate health and well-being, education, freedom of expression; the development of a culture of human rights promotes peace and democracy, prevents human rights violations and enables people to involve actively in their promotion.

Democracy on its part is a bi-product of Human Rights. Democracy is a political system or regime where the will and aspirations of the people are respected and considered. There is a massive participation and the quest for general good or interest. Democratization there refers to the strengthening of both popular participation in the



By Akana Ajong Eric
Human Rights Department

ity to effectively participate in the political process, free media can simultaneously challenge public action while serving as both an alternate information source and an educational tool.

Good government, the end product of human rights and democracy, means transparency, accountability, decision-making, justice and management. Good governance also refers to the manner in which power is exercised by governments in managing a country's social and economic resources. "Good Governance" also refers to the exercise of power by various levels of government that is effective, honest, equitable, transparent and accountable. Programming for, good governance includes a wide range of activity areas. Public sector development in areas, bureaucratic effectiveness through organisational, administrative and policy reform; decentralising government, both internally and externally (to a range of supranational institutions) extends effectiveness and accountability by bringing government to all appropriate constituency, levels, working against existing and potential corruption enables all the positive attributes of good governance listed above, independent, accessible and even-handed legal and judicial systems underpin honest and equitable, governance, effective urban government satisfies many of the basic needs of large populations, easing the task at more distant level of government.

exercise of power and the accountability of governments to those they govern. It involves building democratic institutions and practices and deepening democratic values in societies. Programming for democratic development includes a range of activity area, which reinforces each other as they work towards a common end.

The implementation of free, fair, multi-party elections is often the first step in this process, a democratic outcome is reinforced by an effective legislature, supported by the strong constitutional and procedural framework and sustained capable legislators; representative democracy gains legitimacy and stability. When it actively consults with non-government stakeholders, who have the capac-

Good Governance

To appreciate the concept of good governance, it would be of great importance to understand what governance is before moving onto the next level – good governance.

The concept of governance is not a new concept; it is as old as human civilization. Governance can be defined as the process of decision making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented). It is the exercise of power and/or authority (political, economic, administrative and otherwise), to manage a country's resources and affairs. Governance could be used in several contexts; it could be cooperate, international, national or local governance.

One can trace its origins as far back as the 80's after the poor results of the Structural Adjustment Programs, which were poorly implemented and as a result, did not achieve the desired

effects. Also, there had been disillusionment from previous development interventions. These defects resulted due to poor management and implementation of policies and resources. In order to tackle the underlying problems, the need for proper decision making principles, policies, government institutions, hence, the term Good Governance.

Good governance entails a competent management of a country's resources and affairs in a manner that is open, transparent, accountable, equitable and responsive to people's needs.

In other words, the characteristics of good governance are; Participatory, consensus oriented, transparent, accountable, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law.

Actors in governance include every person or body involved in the decision making process. These include the government, NGO's, coop-

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eratives, research institutions, finance institutions, religious leaders, political parties, landlords, the media, Multinational corporations, trade unionists, lobbyists, international doors amongst others, may play a role in decision making or can influence the decision making process.

Being a global world, there are various actors that promote good governance and see it as an essential precondition for sustainable development. Two prominent actors in the implementation of Good Governance principles include the IMF and World Bank. This is done through policy advice, technical assistance, promoting transparency and address specific issues such as corruption.



Human Rights & Democracy



By Ete Ekolle
Human Rights Department

EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

Concepts like Good Governance, Human Rights, Corruption, HIPC and Democracy have become omnipresent in Africa's development equation. In this issue we fly through these concepts to ease your understanding of what stakes they represent for developing countries found especially in Africa.

The rights of women and workers are constantly violated hence the need for more sensitization as to their promotion and protection.

In our developing African countries there is an urgent need to fight child labour, child trafficking, Press Censorship, Crime and Corruption because they greatly affect development.

Looking at Africa's development we observe that Good Governance requires the Rule of Law as prescribed by NEPAD that also set as a strategy an African Peer Review System that ensures compliance by all states to certain standards of governance that will lay a favourable environment to Africa's Recovery Plan.

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Mukete Tahle Itoe
Secretary General,
GNGG

Democracy and human rights are distinct yet interrelated concepts, with democracy referring to government by the people, and human rights referring to universal rights that apply to all individuals in all societies.

The National Security Strategy of the United States lists eight demands of human dignity: the rule of law, limits on the absolute power of the state, freedom of speech and freedom of worship, equal justice, respect for women, religious and ethnic tolerance and respect for private property.

Promoting freedom and democracy and protecting human rights around the world is central to all national policy. The values are stipulated in the Universal Declaration for Human Rights and in other global and regional commitments

Essential Elements of a Democracy

According to the University of Alabama, Political Science Department, true democracy as a form of government always has the following characteristics;

- 1) Control over government decisions about policy is constitutionally vested in elected officials.
- 2) Elected officials are chosen in frequent and fairly conducted elections in which coercion is comparatively uncommon.
- 3) Practically all adults have the right to vote in the election of officials.
- 4) Practically all adults have the right to run for elective offices in the government.
- 5) Citizens have the right to express themselves without the danger of severe punishment on political matters broadly defined.
- 6) Citizens have the right to seek alternative sources of information. Moreover, alternative sources exist and are protected by law.
- 7) Citizens also have the right to form relatively independent associations or organizations, including independent political parties and interest groups.
- 8) Popularly elected officials must be able to exercise their constitutional powers without being subjected to overriding opposition from unelected officials.
- 9) The polity must be self-governing; it must be able to act independently of constraints imposed by some other overarching political system.
- 10) Basic human rights must be respected.
- 11) The power of the elected executive must be checked and balanced by the elected legislature and the judiciary.

The Interdependence between democracy and human rights.

- International human rights instruments enshrines many of the principles, norms, standards and values of democracy and may guide the development of domestic democratic traditions and institutions.
- The essential elements of democracy

The essential elements of democracy include respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, such as freedom of association, freedom of expression, freedom of opinion, access to power and exercise in accordance with the rule of law, holding of periodic free and fair elections by universal suffrage and by secret ballot, a multiparty system, the independence of the judiciary, existence of different organizations, transparency and accountability in public administration and free independent and pluralistic media.

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- Democracy, development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing; democracy is based on the freely expressed will of the people to determine their on political, economic, social and cultural systems and their full participation in all aspects of their lives.
- Democracy facilitates the progressive realization of all economic, social and

cultural rights (human rights).

- Democracy is an always-perfectible process that should be measured by the degree to which its principles, norms, standards and values are given effect and contribute to the full realization of all human rights.

- The advance of many countries in the world, in building democratic societies led to a better realization of the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights in those countries. One can identify some conflicting issues between democracy and human rights.

- Democracy might conflict with other liberal values, including human rights, equality for women and minority groups, as well as the rule of law. For instance:

- Russia and Venezuela are democratic governments that violate basic human rights.

- The case of the Afghan converting to Christianity, liable to face execution.

- The victory of the terrorist group Hamas in the recent Palestinian election.

According to the Volokh Conspiracy, the failure to promote liberal values as well as democracy is likely to reduce the extent of our success and imperil long term viability. E.g. the present Afghan and Iraqi regimes are better than the previous governments under the Taliban and Saddam Hussein.

- Can one forgo one for the other? For instance, we talk about freedom of the press. In Cameroon today, the publication of a list of presumed homosexuals on one hand is considered a right by the press, free to publish any information, on the other hand, digging into the private lives of individuals, an abuse of human privacy. How do we reconcile the two?

Democracy and respect for human rights have long been central components of U.S. foreign policy. Supporting democracy not only promotes such fundamental American values as religious freedom and worker rights, but also helps create a more secure, stable, and prosperous global arena in which the United States can advance its national interests. In addition, democracy is the one national interest that helps to secure all the others.

Democratically governed nations are more likely to secure the peace, deter aggression, expand open markets, promote economic development, protect citizens, combat international terrorism and crime, uphold human and worker rights, avoid humanitarian crises and refugee flows, improve the global environment, and protect human health.



Women's Rights Are Human Rights



By Raymond Wung
Human Rights Department.

The Charter of the United Nations includes among its basic principles the achievement of international cooperation in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion (Art. 1, para. 3).

In 1948, three years after the adoption of the Charter, the General Assembly adopted the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, which served as guiding principles on human rights and fundamental freedoms in the constitutions and laws of many of the Member States of the United Nations. The Universal Declaration prohibits all forms of discrimination based on sex and ensures the right to life, liberty and security of person; it recognises equality before the law and equal protection against any discrimination in violation of the Declaration. The **International Bill of Human Rights** strengthens and extends this emphasis on the equal rights of women. The International Bill of Human Rights is a term used to refer collectively to three instruments: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its two Optional Protocols. Taken together, these instruments form the ethical and legal basis for all of the human rights work of the United Nations and provide the foundation upon which the international system for the protection and promotion of human rights has been developed.

Equality is the cornerstone of every democratic society which aspires to social justice and human rights. In virtually all societies and spheres of activity women are subject to inequalities in Law and in fact. Discrimination against women is widespread. It exists in the family, in the community and in the workplace.

Recent efforts to document the real situation of women worldwide have produced some alarming statistics on the economic and social gaps between women and men. Women are the majority of the world's poor and the number of women living in rural poverty has increased by 50% since 1975. Women are the majority of the world's illiterate; the number rose from 543 million to 597 million between 1970 and 1985. Women in Asia and Africa work 13 hours a week more than men and are mostly unpaid. Worldwide, women hold 30 to 40% less than men for doing equal work. Women hold between 10 and 20 percent of managerial and administrative jobs worldwide and less than 20% of jobs in manufacturing. Women make up less than 5% of the world's heads of State. Women's unpaid housework and family labour, if counted as productive output in national accounts, would increase measures of global output by 25 to 30%.

Discrimination against women is perpetuated by the survival of stereotypes and of traditional cultural and religious practices and beliefs detrimental to women. Traditional cultural practices reflect values and beliefs held by members of a community for periods often spanning generations. Every social grouping in the world has specific traditional cultural practices and beliefs, some of which are beneficial to all members, while others are harmful to a specific group, such as women.

HARMFUL TRADITIONAL PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HEALTH OF THE WOMAN AND THE GIRL CHILD

A Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), or female circumcision as it is sometimes erroneously referred to, involves surgical removal of parts or all of the most sensitive female genital organs. It is an age-old practice that forms an important part of the rites of passage ceremony for some communities, marking the coming of age of the female child. It is believed that, by mutilating the female's genital organs, her sexuality will be controlled; but above all it is to ensure a woman's virginity before marriage and chastity thereafter.

B Son Preference & Implications on the Status of the Girl Child

Many communities show particular preference for the boy child over the girl child. This often mean daughter neglect. This practice denies the girl child good health, education, recreation, economic opportunity and the right to choose a partner.

In areas where overall primary school enrolment is much lower than desired, girls are particularly disadvantaged. Although in many countries school drop-out rates are

steadily falling, they continue to be higher among girls than among boys. The reasons for the high drop-out rate among girls are poverty, early marriage, helping parents with housework and agricultural work, the distance of schools from homes, the high costs of schooling, parents' illiteracy and indifference. Girls begin school very late and withdraw with the onset of puberty. Parents do not see the benefits of girls' education because girls are given away in marriage to serve the husband's family. Sons are given priority in education.

A woman's work never ends, especially in rural areas and in poor urban households.

Evidence indicates, however, that as girls grow older they face discriminatory treatment in gaining access to economic opportunities. Major inequalities persist in unemployment, access to credit, inheritance rights, marriage laws and other socio-economic dispensations. Compared with men, women have fewer opportunities for paid employment and less access to skill training that will make such employment possible. Women are usually restricted to low-paid and casual jobs, or to informal activities. In some communities, women cannot own land. An increasing number of women in most developing countries are occupied in the informal, invisible sectors where national and labour legislation on maternity benefits, equal wages and crèche facilities does not apply.

C. Early Marriage

This practice of giving away girls for marriage at the age of 11, 12 or 13, after which they must start producing children, is prevalent among certain ethnic groups. The principal reasons for this practice are the girls' virginity and the bride-price. Young girls are less likely to have had sexual contact and thus are believed to be virgins upon marriage; this condition raises the family status as well the dowry to be paid by the husband.

Child marriage robs a girl of her childhood - time necessary to develop physically, emotionally and psychologically. In fact, early marriage inflicts great emotional stress as the young woman is removed from her parents' home to that of her husband and in-laws. Her husband, who will invariably be many years her senior, will have little in common with a young teenager. It is with this strange man that she has to develop an intimate emotional and physical relationship. She is obliged to have intercourse, although physically she might not be fully developed. In some countries, girls as young as a few months old are promised to male suitors for marriage.

Health complications that result from early marriage include risk of operative delivery, low weight and malnutrition resulting from frequent pregnancies and lactation in the period of life when young mothers are themselves still growing.

E Violence Against Women

Most of the practices reviewed so far constitute acts of violence against women or the girl child by the family and the community, and often condoned by the state. Other forms of violence against women are rape and domestic violence.

This is the practice where a husband, wife or cohabitant subjects the spouse/partner to physical violence. It is common and frequent in the case where husbands batter their wives or concubines or cohabitants. By extension, domestic violence will also include acts that inflict mental or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty.

THE CONVENTION ON ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)

Although, the International Bill of Human Rights lays down a comprehensive set of rights to which all persons, including women, are entitled, additional means for protecting the human rights of women were seen as necessary because of the mere fact that "humanity" has not been sufficient to guarantee women the protection of their rights. Despite the existence of other instruments, women still do not have equal rights with men. Discrimination against women continues to exist in every society.

The Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was then adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979 to reinforce the provisions of existing international instruments designed to combat the continuing discrimination against women. CEDAW defines discrimination to include acts whose consequences—even when not intended—result in unequal treatment.

Under CEDAW, women are guaranteed *equality before the law; the right to choose their residence or domicile; the right to freely choose a spouse and to enter into*

marriage only with their free and full consent; the same rights and responsibilities during marriage and at its dissolution; the same rights to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children; the rights for both spouses in respect of ownership, acquisition, management, administration, enjoyment and disposition of property.

CEDAW calls on States Parties to modify social and cultural patterns that reinforce the inferiority or superiority of either sex, to eliminate stereotyped gender roles, and to promote the notion that child-rearing is a joint responsibility of women and men. It authorises the use of temporary special measures (such as affirmative action) to accelerate gender equality.

While demanding that women be accorded equal rights with men, the Convention goes further by prescribing the measures to be taken to ensure that women everywhere are able to enjoy the rights to which they are entitled. It clearly defines discrimination against women; requires State Parties to establish legal protection of the rights of women on an equal basis with men and take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women by any person, organisation or enterprise while taking all measures to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women.

The Convention also calls on State Parties to take all appropriate measures to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation by prostitution of women. In the political and public life, State parties should ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right to vote in all elections and be elected to public office and to hold other government posts and positions in non-governmental organisations and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies. It also requires that States Parties permit women, like men, to represent their countries internationally.

The Convention recommends that States ensure to women equal rights with men in the field of education and provide same conditions for career and vocational guidance, for access to studies and for the achievement of diplomas in educational establishments of all categories in rural as well as in urban areas. CEDAW demands that States Parties grant women equal rights to acquire, change, or retain their nationality.

Concerning employment and labour rights, the Convention calls on parties to ensure to women the right to work; to the same employment opportunities; to free choice of profession and employment; to equal remuneration, including benefits. It further recommends that women should not be dismissed on grounds of marriage or pregnancy.

State Parties should also ensure that women participate in economic and social life on a basis of equality of men and women the same rights, particularly the right to bank loans, and other forms of financial credit. Particular attention is also paid to the problems faced by the **rural women** and the role they play in the survival of their families. Here, State parties are told to take all appropriate measures to ensure that on the basis of equality of men and women, that they participate in and benefit from rural development.

CEDAW (also known as the Women's Convention) entered into force in 1981 when it received the requisite number of ratifications. As of December 10 2003, 175 countries (including Cameroon)—more than 90% of UN Member States—had ratified CEDAW.

At the **World Conference on Human Rights** in Vienna in 1993, the slogan "**Women's Rights are Human Rights**" was launched. After the **Beijing Conference** (1995), the World witnessed a rise in general call for women empowerment beginning with the respect of their human rights. The **International Women's Day** and **Mothers' Day** are celebrated annually in the world. To these celebrations have been added **The Day of the Rural Woman** and **The Day of the African Woman**.

It is a pleasure to see that after Margaret Thatcher, Indira Gandhi and Benazir Bhutto, the last decade has seen the rise of female Heads of States in the Philippines, Finland, Germany and Chile. Women are more conscious of their rights and mechanisms for protecting them.



Workers' Rights



By Elsie Fordam
Economic Governance Department

In the last decade, the global expansion of the market economy has produced what some call a "world without walls". In the rush to find cheaper and quicker ways to produce goods and services for the global market place, multinational corporations are moving much of their manufacturing to countries where basic legal protections for workers are non-existent and union organising is prohibited or discouraged. Workers drive the new international economy, yet millions of them – typically women and children – daily endure substandard working conditions ranging from inadequate wages to inhumane hours to life-threatening hazards in the workplace. Workers are largely unprotected from these abuses by either their own governments or the international system. Though the International Labour Organisation has articulated rights standard for 80years, these assume that national governments will enforce them. Unfortunately, many governments lack the capacity and often the will to do so. Even in Cameroon, effective regulation and protection of workers has been eroded at the low-wage end of the labour market. Such consequences have sparked a growing public demand for corporations to take responsibility for a range of Human Rights and environmental problems in countries where they operate.

Human Rights First's own commitment to pursue Labour rights as Human Rights was a response to these developments. The challenge is to create accountability – independent, transparent and enforceable mechanisms – for ensuring that Human Rights standards protect ordinary people.

The constitution guarantees each person's freedom of association, including the right to form or join a trade union of his choice for the protection of his interests. It is an offence under the LRID ACT - arm under the International Labour Organisation – for any person to hinder or penalise a worker who is exercising his rights to join a trade union. It is therefore an offence to dismiss or penalise against a worker so as to enforce a "Close-shop".

A worker has no automatic right to collective bargaining with his employer but is entitled to have his trade union bargain on his behalf if there is a collective labour agreement to that effect.

A worker has the right to be paid the wage agreed by him with his employer of fixed by a collective Labour Agreement. The wage paid to a worker may not legally be less than any minimum wage fixed for the particular category of worker.

An employer is prohibited from paying unequal pay for equal work as a means of discrimination between male and female.

A worker has the right to be provided with a safe and healthy place of work and to operate in a safe system with adequate supervision, and where necessary, to be provided with protective gear and clothing.

A worker who is not liable to instant dismissal, is entitled before termination of the employment in which he had been continuously working for four weeks or more, to

- Not less than two weeks notice if his period of continuous employment less than five years.
- Not less than four weeks notice if his period of continuous employment is five years or more but not less than ten years.
- Not less than six weeks notice if his period of continuous employment is ten years or more but less than fifteen years.

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- Not less than eight weeks notice if his period of continuous employment is fifteen years or more but less than twenty years.

- Not less than twelve weeks if his period of continuous employment is twenty years or more and the notice shall be in writing unless it is given in the presence of a credible witness. In particular cases, a longer notice may be required by agreement or custom.

A worker who has been continuously employed for 104weeks, if made redundant by reason of the down-sizing, cessation, reorganisation or relocation of the employer's business or injury or disease arising out of the nature of his employment, must be paid a redundancy payment which is calculated in

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accordance with the length of his continuous employment and his current rate of pay.

A worker other than a casual worker who becomes ill during the first 12months of his employment if he has worked for his employer for 110days or more shall be entitled during the first year to sick leave with pay for one day for every 27days worked and after the first year, to sick leave with pay for two normal working weeks.

Any worker other than a casual worker who works for 110days and up to 220days with pay in the amount of one day for every 22days worked, and if more than 220days in the year to holiday with pay for two working weeks except in the case of workers with ten years service or more where the leave entitlement is three normal working weeks.

“A worker other than a casual worker who becomes ill during the first 12months of his employment if he has worked for his employer for 110days or more shall be entitled during the first year to sick leave with pay for one day for every 27days worked and after the first year, to sick leave with pay for two normal working weeks”.

A casual worker who has worked for not more than 110days in a year at or before the end of each year of employment must be paid a gratuity of not less than 3percent of the total wages earned by him during the year and sick benefit for ten days.

A female worker is entitled to maternity leave for up to 12weeks (which may be extended by up to 14weeks by presenting a medical certificate in support) including pay for eight weeks if she has been continuously employed by the employer for not less than 52weeks and wishes to be absent from work because of her pregnancy or confinement and intends to return to work with the employer.

Hence, local, national and international Human Rights groups need to work together to leverage consumer interest in labour practices and company brand sensitivity, to help protect workers' rights. Enabling consumers to become well-informed about specific company practices creates the kind of market pressure that strongly encourages compliance with international Human Rights standards in a regular and systematic way.



The Vulnerability of Women to HIV/AIDS & Their Rights



By Grace Jato
Women Empowerment Department

From the moment scientists identified HIV and AIDS, social responses of fear, denial, stigma and discrimination have accompanied the epidemic. Discrimination has spread rapidly fuelling anxiety and prejudice against the groups most affected, as well as those living with HIV and AIDS. The disease is associated with stigma, repression and discrimination. Every country in Africa is faced with HIV and AIDS, and the situation is all the more cause for concern because the main route is heterosexual.

The extreme vulnerability of women, particularly African women to sexually transmitted infections and HIV and AIDS are well known. In Senegal, as in other African countries, the ratio of women infected to the number of men has changed rapidly; in 1986, one woman was infected for every six men, in 1990, one woman was infected for every two men, and in 1999, between 12 and 13 women were infected for every ten men.

For biological, socio/cultural and economic reasons, African women are most vulnerable to the disease. Biological vulnerability is common to all women; they carry a double handicap because they are the receptive sexual partner and have a large area of mucous membrane that is exposed during sexual relations. These factors put them at a considerable disadvantage, since the sperm of infected males has a higher concentration of HIV than vaginal fluid. Women's biological

“For biological, socio/cultural and economic reasons, African women are most vulnerable to the disease. Biological vulnerability is common to all women; they carry a double handicap because they are the receptive sexual partner and have a large area of mucous membrane that is exposed during sexual relations. These factors put them at a considerable disadvantage, since the sperm of infected males has a higher concentration of HIV than vaginal fluid”.

vulnerability is exacerbated in adolescent girls, whose immature vaginal mucous membrane is damaged by sexual rites, practices and violence such as rape, or forced marriages at young age.

In the same connection African women frequently suffer from haemorrhagic complications during childbirth and require blood transfusions. In a situation of poverty where budgetary restrictions severely affect health and other social services, it is impossible to guarantee the screening of blood transfusions.

It is well known that women are victims of gender inequality including lowered access to

education and paid work, as well as to health facilities. African men's relative access to social and economic resources keep them in a dominant social position and gives them the opportunity to impose their views and determine women's behaviour, particularly sexually. Analysis of the African social and cultural context shows that women as a rule are victims. According to some researchers, women at risk of HIV and AIDS in Africa share one thing, their lack of 'empowerment'. Researchers describe married women as passive victims because they risk contracting HIV and AIDS from their husbands.

The same social, cultural and economic environment is responsible for adolescent girls and young women marrying at an early age or having sexual relations with older men, who are more likely to carry the virus. To sum up, men authentic power over women, who are usually in no position to exert control over their sexuality. They may be helpless to protect their health, whether by persuading men to use a condom or by insisting they are faithful.

Despite increasing consensus on what needs to be done to meet human right and gender targets, actions taken have not been sufficient. Responses to women suffering from HIV and AIDS must apply a human rights framework and integrate gender equality concerns in order to reduce vulnerability to infection, advance preventing goals, pro-

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vide equal access to treatment, care and support, and mitigate the social and economic impact of HIV and AIDS on women.

Protecting the rights of people living with HIV and AIDS. Stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV and AIDS and their families foster an environment of denial and silence. Protection of rights to education, employment, treatment and confidentiality for men and women living with HIV continues to be a key area for action. The challenge is to confront stigma and discrimination and create an enabling human rights environment for more open, inclusive and effective responses to the epidemic.

Groups that are marginalized or socially excluded face an increased risk of exposure to HIV infection. Failure to safeguard the rights of marginalized populations, including injecting users, commercial sex workers and men who have sex with men, and to provide them with HIV-related services perpetuates stigma and undermines preventing efforts. The challenge is to protect the rights of marginalized and vulnerable population and ensure they are reached with information, prevention messages and services to limit the spread of HIV within groups and among the wider population.

Inequitable property and inheritance

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rights disempower women, increase vulnerability and aggravate the impacts of AIDS. Women living with HIV and children orphaned by AIDS are often denied rights to inherit property, leaving them without shelter and without access to care, treatment and economic and educational opportunities. This situation creates new cycles of vulnerability and exploitation. The challenge is to reform legislation in order to reduce vulnerability and protect the rights of women, to educate women and communities on their rights and responsibilities with respect to property and inheritance and to ensure that existing legislation is enforced.

Ensuring that women receive equal treatment and care services is a key priority for providing hope, prolonging productive lives, maintaining the integrity of families and lessening the vulnerability of children.



Good Governance Democracy & The Rule of Law



By Berry Afanvi Kodjo
GNGG Convenor, Togo

The perennial debate about development question in Africa and other poor countries around the world has for over some years now shifted from the old strictly macroeconomic-oriented formulas to incorporate factors more and more related to democratic governance, the rule of law, the respect of human rights and accountability norms.

The failure of African countries to achieve a genuine economic takeoff and assure prosperity during the last four decades in spite of massive international financial assistance, the implementation of inadequate development policies added to the mismanagement of public resources by government authorities led the international community, development experts and analysts to put into question the old theories of development.

As you journey across Africa, from West to East, from North to South, as you move from Sierra Leone or Liberia to Ethiopia and Somalia, from Chad and Sudan to Zimbabwe and Malawi, as you observe with increasing horror the routine of poverty and hunger, the rampant corruption and open mismanagement of public resources by government authorities, as you see for yourself how poor leadership and brutal dictatorship have taken control of individuals' life, as you face yourself quite daily the atrocities of civil wars, insecurity and the ravage of deadly endemic diseases such as Tuberculosis, Malaria and HIV/AIDS, as you realise the inexplicable failure of African governments to build basic infrastructures such as roads, schools, hospitals and other important facilities, water and electricity supplies while at the same time authorities themselves and their relatives live in excessive abundance and luxury, you are inevitably faced with the contradictions of a continent which in spite of its abundant natural resources and the continual flow of international aid has proven wrong all development theories that seem to have worked elsewhere.

Who knows what it has become of all the flood of funds poured into Africa these last 40 years or so? Nobody.

Was there any accountability mechanism to check how funds were spent? What was the role and place of people in the development policies implemented so far in African countries? The answer is none.

So how can genuine development policies be worked out and implemented with success if they contradict so openly with good management norms and the goals of people they are supposed to benefit? Is sustainable development possible without a reliable social and political environment capable of sustaining people's confidence in investment and economic activities?

In this article I try to outline the basics of a sustainable and genuine development process in Africa by considering the necessary links between socio-economic growth and the advancement of democracy, the rule of law and the respect of human rights. The difficulties of today while seeming to justify the position of those who are pessimistic about Africa are for me urgent invitations for a more pronounced commitment in working out and implementing fundamental reforms that reinforce the respect of good governance practices on the continent.

Democracy and Good Governance, The Difficult Case of Africa

The liberalisation movement and its calls for political and economic reforms have materialised in Africa in the 1990s through popular

claims in favour of civil and political liberties, the demand of multiparty democracy as well as a free and open market system based on competitiveness and transparency.

It is already fifteen years now since African countries have been fighting for democracy and the rule of law. However it is really difficult to admit today whether the rule of law and the cause of good governance and democracy have advanced deeply on the continent. The reason is that there still remain so many contradictions in the system of management of public as well as private affairs in most African states and the economic development prospects of the continent are still quite far from becoming a reality.

Fifteen years after the first popular movements in favour of democracy started in Africa, the black continent remains in spite of all the promises and initiatives that followed the most impoverished corner of the earth. The African renaissance vision toward achieving the economic takeoff of the continent through new leaderships is still an illusion and the objectives set up and adopted by African Head of States in the New Partnership of Africa's Development in 2001 in Abuja, Nigeria, are still far from being achieved.

Continual pauperisation of people, rampant corruption, lack of basic infrastructures, permanent human rights abuses, civil wars and severe deficits in effective democratic governance practices, hunger, the spread of deadly diseases such as Malaria, Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, etc still cripple a continent justly portrayed as the forgotten place on earth.

Why is it that Africa is still lagging behind? And how can this continent get itself out of its endless poverty and instability?

Is the black continent capable of achieving its development goals without a clear and effective option of African nations in favour of democracy and good governance? These questions and many other more have been asked again and again; still without any accurate answer.

If one considers recent developments in countries such as Togo, Zimbabwe, Chad, Uganda, Ethiopia, Eritrea, etc. where the prospects of political instability, disregard to democratic practices, civil wars continue to impose on people unnecessary predicaments, it becomes urgent to re-actualise the debate about Africa and try to appreciate the root causes of the continent's apparent failure in development building.

Now is the time to stand back and appreciate the difficulties and prospects related to the establishment of a political system based on the principles of the rule of law, the respect of human rights and good governance in replacement of more than forty decades of dictatorship and mismanagement of state resources.

The reasons are simple:

Maybe most of us did not take the time to really understand the significance of a system of governance based on democratic principles, its values, its structures and its mechanisms.

Maybe also that we did not take the time to appreciate the real meaning of notions such as the rule of law, good governance, human rights, civil and political liberties and the specific role that individuals and other organised groups of society have to play in a system that promote the triumph of liberal values.

Maybe again that the new rising leaderships in Africa failed to appreciate the imperatives related to development issues and the intrinsic relation that exists between socio-economic development and the effective respect of good governance

and the rule of law.

Understanding the concepts

In fact the growing rhetoric surrounding the notions of democracy, the rule of law and good governance in Africa has created so much confusion in the mind of people at such extent that the actual difference and shade of meaning between the three terms have been usually underestimated.

Whether within public opinion as a whole or in the circle of intellectuals, political leaders as well as civil society groups in particular, there seems to be no real difference between democracy, good governance and the rule of law.

However it is important to underscore here the fact that even if there are some similarities in meaning between these notions, the three concepts are far from being equivalent.

Democracy is a political system of government based on the power and the will of the people. In a democracy, the people are in the heart of the decision making process through their right to vote and chose those who rule them or their representatives and the power they have to control the way public services are administered. A democratic system is based on a constitution, the supreme law of the land adopted by the people and which guarantees and protects the rights of all citizens, the majority as well as the minority and it specifies the different branches of power, the executive, the legislative and the judiciary and their roles.

From one country to another the way the system works can vary considerably. It can be a direct democracy as was the case in the ancient Greek city of Athens or as still practiced in some counties of Switzerland or a representative democracy as in most modern democracies such the United States, Canada, Japan, France, Germany, Great Britain, etc.

As a whole, democracy is as Abraham Lincoln said, "the government of the people, by the people and for the people." All this signifies that in a democracy, the protection of the rights of the people as well as the common good is what remains paramount. So far as the system doesn't work for the common good, so far as elections are not regularly organised on a free and fair basis, so far as the law does not guarantee equality to all in terms of opportunities and protection, then there is no democracy.

What then is the Rule of Law? The rule of law is simply the strict respect and implementation of the rules that govern a state. The rule of law in a democracy for example means that the constitution as well as all the various laws that regulate the different sectors of public life should be applied and respected without any discrimination regarding sex, age, religion, race, social status, etc. The law is law for everybody and every citizen should be treated equally if it comes to its application. The rule of law is the non-discriminatory and transparent respect of the laws that govern the country.

As for good governance, it is all about the best system of management of public as well as private affairs to ensure a maximum productivity to the benefit of different stakeholders in society. Good governance is synonym with good management, accountability, transparency in the management of resources, including the elimination of corruption, mismanagement, money laundering, injustice, impunity, etc.



Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC)



By Ete Ekolle
Human Rights Department

This is a comprehensive approach to debt reduction for heavily indebted country's pursuing IMF and World Bank supported adjustment and reform programs. This initiative was proposed by the IMF and World Bank and agreed by governments around the world. It was founded in 1996 with the aim to ensue that no poor country faces a debt burden it cannot manage. Since its inception, debt reduction packages have been approved for 28 countries with 24 in Africa.

The Country's concerned for this debt initiative are the poorest countries, those that are only eligible for highly concessional assistance form IDA, the part of the World Bank that lends on highly concessional terms and from the IMF's Poverty Reduction Growth facility. Others Countries include those that face an unsustainable debt situation even after the full application of traditional debt relief mechanisms.

However, for any of these poor countries to be eligible, it must:

- Face an unsustainable debt burden beyond traditionally available debt relief mechanism.
- Establish a track record of reform and sound policies through IMF and World Bank supported programs.
- The Country must have developed a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) through a broad based participatory process.

"This initiative was proposed by the IMF and World Bank and agreed by governments around the world. It was founded in 1996 with the aim to ensue that no poor country faces a debt burden it cannot manage." Since its inception, debt reduction packages have been approved for 28 countries with 24 in Africa."

Increased spending on social amenities

Before the HIPC initiative, eligible countries were on average spending slightly more on debt service than on health and education combined.

However, under the IMF and World Bank supported programs, these countries have increased remarkably their expenditures on health, education and other social services, and on average, such spending is almost 4 times the amount of debt service payments.

This initiative of the World Bank and IMF is improving the livelihood, living standards, development in various countries as well as reduc-

"Between the years 1994-2005, debt has been reduced by more than half in relation to both exports and government revenue."

What benefits have been accrued?

Debt reduction.

Between the years 1994-2005, debt has been reduced by more than half in relation to both exports and government revenue.

Corruption!

The term corruption is used widely in international politics today, and has become an issue of major political and economic significance in recent years. What is certain is the necessity to take measures against it which is evident.

Corruption may be defined as the wrong doing by those in special positions of trust. The term is normally applied to self benefiting conduct by public officials and others dedicated to public service.

Corruption is a vice in society that impacts negatively on national and international development. Corruption undermines democratic institutions, retards economic development and contributes to government instability. Corruption attacks the foundation of democratic institutions by distorting electoral processes, perverting the rule of law, and creating bureaucratic quagmires whose only reason for existence is the soliciting of bribes.

Corruption may be politically, economically or militarily masterminded. There are various types of corruption- petty corruption, grand corruption, systematic, endemic, institutional, organized and anarchic corruption. Some International Instruments for the fight against corruption include:

- The **United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC)**, which creates the opportunity to develop a global language about corruption and a coherent implementation strategy.
- The **Global Policy Anti Corruption Unit**,

"Corruption is a vice in society that impacts negatively on national and international development. Corruption undermines democratic institutions, retards economic development and contributes to government instability. Corruption attacks the foundation of democratic institutions by distorting electoral processes, perverting the rule of law, and creating bureaucratic quagmires whose only reason for existence is the soliciting of bribes".

this provides practical assistance and building technical capacity to implement the UNCAC and efforts to concentrate support member states in the development of anti corruption institutions and policies.

- **Transparency International** does not expose corrupt activities or individuals but devices frame-

works on how to combat and tackle corruption.

Some of the problems associated or derived from a corrupt society, could be grouped under social, economic and political effects. Politically, a corrupt society suffers from weak governments; weak government institutions such as the judiciary, police and the civil service, military take over because of lack of confidence in the ruling government. In other words, corruption breeds impunity and undermines vital government institutions.

Economically, there is an increase in the poverty level, there is a fall in production and inequality of the population is exacerbated.

Socially, there is rivalry amongst the various indigenous groups and this could lead to a civil war.

"Some of the problems associated or derived from a corrupt society, could be grouped under social, economic and political effects. Politically, a corrupt society suffers from weak governments; weak government institutions such as the judiciary, police and the civil service, military take over because of lack of confidence in the ruling government. In other words, corruption breeds impunity and undermines vital government institutions. Economically, there is an increase in the poverty level, there is a fall in production and inequality of the population is exacerbated. Socially, there is rivalry amongst the various indigenous groups and this could lead to a civil war"

Child Labour and Child Trafficking



By George Mbella

Child Labour and Child Trafficking in the South West Province have become a cause for concern in the South West Province. Children (below 18) are trafficked from the poor rural areas, into booming towns like Kumba, Tiko, Buea and Limbe. The rate is becoming alarming.

These children are made to work for very long hours with little or no pay under inhuman working conditions. They could be seen in our homes, farms, markets, eating houses, shops and motor parks, working tirelessly during school hours. Some have simply become slaves, enduring insults, degrading and inhuman punishments involving the worst corporal and mental abuses.

Opinions blame the rise of the phenomenon on poverty, ignorance and misrepresentation.

Most of these children come from very poor families back in the rural areas where people live for less than 5 fcs a day. They are usually trafficked to the big towns by intermediaries, usually relatives, who promise jobs, professional training, school and money to the Parents.

Once in town, these children are trafficked to work as house helps, street vendors, eating-house servants and worst of all, as prostitutes. Their presence in these places during school hours is not a cause for concern for many Cameroonians since most households are guilty in this matter.

Around the world, pressure has been mounted for so many years by the **International Labour Organisation (ILO)** for a halt to Child Labour, in all its forms.

Human Rights Watch has defined Child Trafficking as *the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purposes of sexual or labour exploitation, forced labour or slavery*. This international NGO has also described child trafficking as a human rights tragedy especially in West Africa where girls are trafficked into domestic and market work while boys are trafficked into agricultural work. They are recruited on false promises of education, professional training and paid unemployment, transported within and across national borders under sometimes threatening conditions; ordered into hazardous, exploitative labour, subjected to physical or mental abuse by their employers. Boys work on the farms 7 days a week, for long hours. Girls come to town under conditions of child trafficking and are forced into sex work after escaping or being abandoned. Thus many children who are victims of physical and emotional abuse, often escape to live in the street.

Studies have revealed that Cameroon is a destination country for Nigerian children trafficked and exploited in commercial agriculture, prostitution and street vending, or in small shops. Cameroon is also a transit state for Togolese, Nigerian and Benin's children heading to Gabon. In 2001, a ship with 250 children destined for slave labour was turned away from the Douala seaport. In 2003, a boat ferrying hundreds of trafficked girls sank off the coast of Cameroon, killing nine.

For many years International opinion was very hard on Cameroon's role in child trafficking.

An **ILO Study** conducted in 2000 in Yaounde, Douala and one other town revealed that trafficking accounted 84% of child labourers. In most cases, the report continued, intermediaries presented themselves as businessmen, approaching parents with large families or custodians of orphans and promising to assist the child with education or professional training. The intermediary paid parents an average of 16000 FCFA before trans-



porting the child to a city where the intermediary would subject the child to forced labour with little remuneration.

In 2004, News reached home from Michigan in the USA, where a Cameroonian couple (names withheld) was indicted on a human trafficking charge. The couple was charged with forcing a juvenile Cameroonian girl into 'involuntary servitude for financial gain'. According to the 3 count indictment, the couple had violated US Federal Law by fraudulently bringing a 14 year old Cameroonian into the United States and using her as an unpaid domestic servant in their Michigan home for almost 4 years. The wife was accused of forcing the girl to cook, clean and take care of her young children for no pay, beginning when the girl was only 11, and beat the girl. In defence, the woman's lawyer claimed that her actions were in keeping with cultural norms of her native Cameroon.

The **US State Department Trafficking in Persons Report** published in June 2005 described Cameroon as '*... a source, transit and destination country for women and children trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation and forced labour*'. The report went further to describe that besides trafficking young girls to Europe, principally, France, Switzerland and the United Kingdom for commercial sexual exploitation using fraudulent marriage proposals, girls are also trafficked internally from Anglophone areas to Francophone cities such as Douala and Yaounde, to work in exploitative conditions as domestics, eating-house servants, street vendors, or prostitutes. The report confirmed that children are also trafficked for forced labour on cocoa plantations.

The **US 2005 Human Rights Country Report** also revealed the same findings showing evidence of a woman caught transporting young girls to Gabon. It also cited the case of a network of nationals and foreigners who had gathered small boys to take them to football clubs in Europe with the hidden aim of introducing these children into homosexual prostitution rings.

The **June 2005 US State Department Trafficking in Persons Report** had criticised Cameroon for its failure to show evidence of increasing efforts to fight trafficking, particularly in the area of law enforcement. The

Report advised Cameroon to coordinate national efforts, develop a system to collect case data, and educate officials and communities about the signs and dangers of trafficking.

This advice did not fall on deaf ears as the Cameroonian Government decided to take bold initiatives to combat the phenomenon. During the launching of the **2006 ILO Global Report on Child Labour and Child Trafficking** in Yaounde on May 5 2006, the Prime Minister, H.E. Chief Inoni Ephraim reiterated Government's total condemnation of the phenomenon and outlined government strategy to fight it. Government policy initiated by the Head of State and executed by Government heavily leaned on the reinforcement of the institutional framework. That had started way back in 2001 with the ratification of **Convention C138** on the minimum working age and did same in 2002 with ILO's similar convention related to the worst forms of child labour. In 2002 Cameroon participated at the launching of the sub-regional project for the fight against child trafficking for exploitation in Central and West Africa, called **LUTRENA**, and in 2003 with **WACAP** (West Africa Cocoa/Commercial Agriculture Project). With these two projects, the Prime Minister noted that much progress had been made. 1109 children working in cocoa farms had been taken off and 379 of them were readmitted to schools and vocational training centres. He added an **Anti-Child Trafficking Law** was promulgated into Law on December 29 2005 by the Head of State, H.E. Paul Biya.

After stating that a child as any person aged less than 18 years, this Law defines Child Trafficking as the act of facilitating or ensuring movement of a child within and out of Cameroon in order to reap, directly or indirectly, a financial, material or other advantage. Child Labour is also defined as the recruitment, transfer, lodging or receipt of children for exploitation, by threats, by force or other form of constraint, by kidnapping, fraud, misrepresentation or profiting from a situation of vulnerability, by offer, or acceptance of advantage in order to obtain the consent of any person having authority over a child.

Article 4 punishes anybody involved, even occasionally, in child trafficking or child labour with imprisonment of 10 to 20 years and a fine of between 50000 to 1 million francs.

Press Freedom



By Ruth Samba
Media Department

Freedom of the press (or press freedom) is the guarantee by a government of free public speech often through a state constitution for its citizens and associations of individuals extended to members of news gathering organisations, and their published reporting. It also extends to news gathering, and processes involved in obtaining information for the public consumption.

Eriboh and Tanjong (1998) advocate press freedom when they hold that the right to communicate freely without fear, coercion, and reprisal is a natural right of the people and the press. The right is violated in many countries trapped in the vicious circle of a gagged press and underdevelopment.

Journalists are considered as mediators in a democratic society which ensure press freedom. Therefore, the role of the journalist is to enable the various social components of society to communicate with each other. They are ascribed the primary function of facilitating communication among all groups which take part in shaping socio-economic and political phenomena and thereby creating focused public opinion. But these seldom prevail.

Most governments show that they are more interested in containing the press politically than in providing its practitioners the enabling environment they need for professional excellence and independence. This has brought about the underdevelopment of the press by imposing on it a series of constraints.

The first main threat to free-



flow of information is largely from wielders of political power. Merrill (1995) remarks that in the Arab world, the press merely functions under rigid rules, invariably as an arm of government to propagate government policies.

The government is directly responsible for the repressive press laws and their day-to-day application; and given that the government has consistently worked to keep the press divided through thwarting attempts to create strong unions of media practitioners.

The legal framework under which the press operates in most parts of the world leaves the little doubt about how the law makers see journalists as potential trouble makers who must be policed. If one were to judge by the intensity of censorship, the cases of intimidation, invasion or confiscation by the police or military, it would be difficult to claim that the January 1996 law of liberalisation has changed much in practice.

Threats to press freedom could also come from big businessmen such as experienced in the West and more and more so in Africa. Even though journalists are a part of the working class, they tend to adopt and reproduce the views of the owners of the press and the ruling oligar-

chies in many developing countries. This is because their livelihood depends on these business moguls.

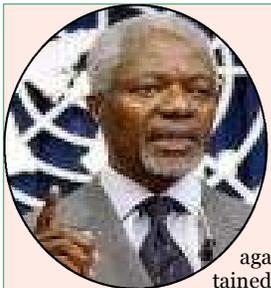
It is worth noting that among the internal constraints to press freedom is the inadequacy of professionalism and unity among journalists. Journalists and their newspapers suffered as victims of the repressive press laws, yet they are unable to organise themselves into a strong union capable of defending and promoting their interest. (Nyamnjoh, 1996)

Journalists in Africa should form a united body in values and aspirations as their colleagues in the developed world to ensure that exceptions to the right to information are minimised and cannot be used capriciously to hide or corrupt information of public interest.

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) with its Executive Director in the person of Ann Cooper is fighting a relentless battle to guarantee the right to freedom of the press worldwide. Notable efforts include:

- CPJ urged Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika to revoke a February 27 decree that further restricts freedom of expression and places sharp new limits on discussion of the conflict that ravaged Algeria in the 1990s.

- On the 22nd of March 2006, CPJ called for the release of documentary filmmaker Wu Hao whose detention has only now been made public. Wu was detained on February 22 in Beijing, apparently without charge. 'Wu must be released immediately,' said Ann Cooper, 'His detention is one more of example of China's desperate attempt to restrain journalists who seek legitimately to explore and understand the dynamics of its rapidly changing society.'



WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY

Information is all around us. With the proliferation of so-called new media, new technologies and new ways of distributing content, information has become more accessible. It is also becoming more diverse. Mainstream media reporting, for example is being supplemented by "participatory media" such as blogs.

But as media and journalists evolve, certain bedrock principles remain paramount. On **World Press Freedom Day**, I again declare my firm support for the universal right to freedom of expression. Many members of the press have been killed, maimed, detained or targeted in other ways for pursuing the right in good conscience. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, 47 were killed in 2005, and 11 have lost lives so far this year. It is tragic and unacceptable that the number of journalists killed in the line of duty has become a barometer for measuring press freedom. I urge all governments to reaffirm their commitment to the "right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers", as set out in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Right. At the same time, I appeal to everyone to exercise that right responsibly and, where possible, proactively. Media have a powerful influence on human behaviour. As such, and as the General Assembly affirmed in its recent resolution establishing the new Human Rights Council, they have "an important role to play in promoting tolerance, respect for and freedom of religion and belief." Media should not be vehicles for incitement or degradation, or for spreading hatred. It must be possible to exercise discretion without encroaching on freedoms.

On World Press Freedom Day, let us recognise that national and global media not only report on change, but are themselves agents of change. We should all be grateful for the work and imagination of the press. I trust old and new media alike will be able to continue their work, unencumbered by threats, fear or other constraint.

By Kofi Annan



Cutting Crime Rates is Essential For Africa's Development



By Akana Ajong Eric
Environmental Governance Department

Crime is increasing almost everywhere in the world. The cost of crime and criminal justice is crippling for many developing countries. Crime scares away investors and undermines the confidence of the people in the organs of the state.

But to effectively control crime, social and economic conditions must improve.

"Freedom from crime, safety from violence at home and on the street, public safety are essential ingredients of sustainable development. **To feel safe from crime is as important to a person as access to food, shelter, education and health**", says the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice which has developed global guidelines in an effort to fight crime.

Available data suggest that crime is increasing all over the world. Robbery, burglary and other inter-personal crimes are believed to have doubled or tripled in industrialised countries over the past 30 years. In many other countries, rapid economic and political transition has been associated with a similar escalation of crime rates in a single decade. Urban areas are the most affected: today, more than half of the world's population living in cities of more than 100 000 people are victims of a crime at least once in five years. As more and more people leave the countryside for the city, crime rates seem locked into an inexorable upward spiral.

Crime rates and types are unevenly spread across cities and regions, and between the countries of the North and the South. Many cities in the South have experienced rapid increases in crime, particularly crimes of violence. For example 7 358 people were murdered in 1995 in Sao Paulo.

The level and type of crime are the result of a range of local, national and regional factors, including traditional culture and belief, political and economic stability, the quality of policing, and the availability of guns and other weapons.

Overcrowded prisons are breeding grounds for further crime. The frustration of youngsters with no future turns into violent protest and crime. Today, many youths in the Moslem world find a haven in joining terrorist organisation since this organisation pay and promise them colossal sums of money. These youths join such organisations because of poverty, injustice, inequality and social deprivation- they no longer hope of a better life ahead. For example, Palestinian, Iraqi, Syrian, Pakistani, Saudi and Afghan youths. According to them, Al Qaeda, Hamas, Herzbollah, Taliban, Matyr Brigade etc etc offer them hope, divinity and eternity.

But perception of crime may be out of proportion with reality. People commonly believe their society is more violent than ever before. However, many countries of the north were more violent during the early years of industrialisation. Increasing fear of crime, therefore, is not linked in any simple way to growth in actual levels of crime and frequently continues to increase even when crime rates themselves decline. Analysts believe that this accelerating fear of crime is fuelled by ever-faster global communications and greater exposure of crime in the media. The widespread conception that crime is out of control is just as damaging to a country's ability to attract investment as actual levels of crime. Social and political stability are further casualties.

Crime and Development

Cutting crime rates is essential for sustainable development. The Goldstone Commission Report of 1993-that is an inquiry into the causes of civil violence sweeping South African cities-concluded that "development has to be delivered to eliminate the socio-economic triggers of violence". However it is not clear whether development is directly or indirectly linked to crime. Does the development process itself trigger crime, or should the blame fall on the inequality that development often brings about? Many argue that it the very lack of development that causes crime. There is current research to support either position.

It seems to be certain, though, that urbanisation, rapid liberalisation of the economy, political upheaval, violent conflict and inadequate policing are among the many and complex factors-often linked to poverty and inequality-contributing to growing levels of crime.

The global mushrooming of cities is a global phenomenon. Urbanisation uproots and dislocates communities and creates new inequalities between the haves and the have-nots. At the same time, traditional value systems and structures that once served to restrict criminal behaviour are undermined. People become isolated, alienated

and less constrained by social norms. As the rural population of Asia, Latin America and Africa pour into the cities, semi-legal shanty towns appear and grow to accommodate them. Life for hundreds of millions of rural migrants means no security of tenure, and little or no work and illegality can soon become their only option.

Cities in the South have predominantly young population, especially young men- who are the main perpetrators of crime.

In many third world countries especially in Africa, *violent conflicts is another leading factor of an explosion of crime. It uproots and destroys communities, deprives people of their livelihoods, takes young men away from their families and habituates them to violence, rape and killing. Perhaps above all, it saturates a society with guns.* We are all living witnesses of the level of crime in Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Burundi, Sudan, and Rwanda in Africa; Iraq and Afghanistan in the Middle East and Asia respectively. Structural Adjustment Programmes of the World Bank and the IMF in developing countries which have led to increasing unemployment and cuts in government spending in Education and health programmes, have also contributed to rising crime levels. Liberalisation of trade increases foreign investments, and a rise in international tourism have led to city streets full of expensive foreign cars-the case of Yaounde and Douala in Cameroon; shops full of imported luxury goods-Chinese and other foreign goods in towns and cities in Cameroon- a provocative sight for those marginalised by such reforms.

Satellite TV which brings the lure of the affluent society even into the shanty towns of the poor is seen as another factor promoting crime and lawlessness. In the ghettos (quartier Elobi) of Yaounde and Douala with 3000fca one can pay the monthly subscription for Cable TV. The images and actions seen on these satellite TV (violent war films, armed burglary, obscene scenes, pornographic films, killings etc) have instilled a "culture of guns" consequently accelerating crime in diverse forms. Today, cases of rape are common in Cameroon.

As governments that have tried to "crackdown on crime" have discovered, raising the level of policing alone seldom produces the required reduction in crime rates. **A sustained reduction is more likely to result from a policing strategy that addresses the underlying causes of lawlessness, rooted in urban deprivation and inequality.** Nevertheless, public confidence in the police and their effectiveness is acting against crime are crucial factors influencing crime rates. An effective police is large, adequately paid and highly trained, ideals that are beyond the reach of many cities of the South. As a result the police is corrupt in many countries. For instance, government estimates suggest that *70% or more of all police personnel in Rio de Janeiro are involved in some form of corruption, ranging from bribe-taking to cocaine-trafficking. While in Mexico city and in Cameroon as a whole, policemen are reported to derive a significant proportion of their income by extortion from motorists (taxi drivers, inter-urban drivers and bendskin).* Many of the problems of corruption can be linked to low pay, low morale and lack of trust in the police force.

The Cost of Crime

Although crime rates are high and increasing worldwide, the cost is disproportionately crippling to countries of the South. *Fighting crime can impose a terrible drain on the financial resources of the poorer countries.* The global economic cost of urban violence amounts to trillions of US dollars. *Crime does not only victimise the individual, but can also destroy communities, ruin businesses and empty state coffers.* In the United States alone, the cost of urban crime in 1993 was estimated at \$425 billion. In South Africa, the cost of crime was more than \$7 billion or 18 per cent of the national budget for 1996/97. "Crime and violence are draining resources from families, households, businesses and government...These costs are completely unsustainable in a developing economy" says a report on the NEDCOR Project on Crime, Violence and Investment in South Africa.

High levels of crime scare away foreign tourists and are discouraging both investment and development aid.

Crime nurtures an atmosphere of violence, social insecurity and economic instability and deters companies, governments and aid agencies alike. Companies that do set up in cities with high crime rates have to budget specially for the potential cost of theft or

damage, or the need to hire extra protection against them. They also have to pay premium salaries to their foreign staff to compensate them for "hardship posts". Often, however companies rather avoid cities where the lives of their staff is in danger. For example Karachi, Kabul, Mexico city etc. A high level of corruption also tends to work against foreign investment, because it increases transaction costs. Likewise, it contributes to lower aid levels as "donor fatigue" increases when public money is siphoned away from development projects into private pockets.

Dangers to democracy

Crime also exacts a political cost. Fear and insecurity from crime prompt demands for swift and ruthless action by law enforcement agencies. *Governments may seize the opportunity to strengthen a state's repressive apparatus, eroding civil rights by targeting dissidents or political opponents as well as criminals.* Where people have no confidence in the state's ability to protect them from crime, alternative forms of crime control, ranging from private vigilantes and death squads, can emerge. **Even worse, the inability of an elected government to control crime is frequently cited as part of the "justification" for the military to step in and seize power.** All too often, the price paid for high levels of crime includes a tragic diminution of democracy and human rights.

In Brazil, the rich urban elite has so little faith in the criminal justice system that it pays off-duty police-men, or professional killers, to catch and deter offenders. In Kenya, the state effectively turns a blind eye to brutal forms of mob justice dished out on the streets, mainly for petty crimes such as small-scale theft.

The unchecked growth of organised crime has given rise to widespread extortion and 'protection' rackets in which local businesses are forced to pay unofficial extra taxes to criminal gangs or face depredation.

Curbing Crime

Governments, law enforcers, NGOs and development agencies increasingly accept that reducing crime is essential if the countries of the South are to have sustainable development. The Global Plan of Action of the UN Conference on Human Settlements(Habitat II) in June 1996 spelt out for the first time a coordinated global policy on the prevention of crime and insecurity in cities.

The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) has urged all UN bodies concerned with development, and the International financial Institutions, "to give appropriate consideration to the inclusion in their assistance programmes of projects dealing with urban crime prevention". A small but growing amount of foreign aid is being channelled into improving crime prevention and criminal justice systems in the South. For example, Britain's Department for International Development (DFID) has increased programmes for police training, development and support over the past four years and now helps local police services in more than 40 countries. The French government has from time to time given technical assistance to the Cameroon police force and the National Gendarmerie.

The German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is engaged in combating drug production and drug trafficking which is a major cause of international organised crime and undermines the political, economic and social stability of many third world countries, especially in Latin America. The Foreign Ministry also has a programme to support security forces including police in developing countries with training and equipment in an effort to strengthen state institutions and combat crime.

Criminal justice systems modelled on those of the wealthy countries of the North may be inappropriate for dealing with the problems of developing countries. New forms of cheap, decentralised justice need to be promoted, stressing prevention and involving of communities. Such systems already exist in some countries such as the Barangay courts in the Philippines or neighbourhood courts in Latin America, which function either with or without professional judges, are local, inexpensive, and fast. They rely on oral communication and deal with peoples everyday problems.

In the long term, however, crime prevention is inseparable from social development. Violence and Crime are usually the result of inequality and poverty, and they certainly breed fastest in a society characterised by extremes of inequality and social exclusion. Ultimately, *only measures that protect communities from deprivation, joblessness, injustice and insecurity will also make them safer from crime.*



Africa's Recovery Plan A Chance For Africa



By Akana Ajong Eric
Environmental Governance Department

Africa's leaders are actively working on set of new continent-wide development strategies. With the gap between the world's rich and poor nations growing ever wider, the overall goal is to end the "marginalisation of Africa and the global social exclusion of her people" says South African president, Thabo Mbeki. As these African presidents have repeatedly affirmed since 2001, their plans will rely as much as possible on Africa's efforts and resources. This reflects their growing disillusionment with the assistance and policy advice offered by Africa's traditional donors; anger over the continent's exclusion from opportunities offered by globalization and the belief that something different is needed to bring Africa out of the cycle of slow growth and deepening poverty. It will be 'a plan by Africa, for the people of Africa' stressed Olesegun Obasanjo, president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Africa's Recovery Plan otherwise called "New Partnership for Africa's Development" (NEPAD) has been born out of two distinct development initiatives-the Millennium Partnership for the African Recovery Programme (MPARP) coordinated by presidents Thabo Mbeki, Olesegun Obasanjo and Abdelaziz Bouteflika; and the OMEGA plan initiated by Senegalese president Abdoulaye Wade.

It should be noted that these two initiatives have won the approval of a cross-section of the African society and the international community. The UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) welcomed this initiative of the African Recovery plan. According to M.K.Y.Amoako, Executive Secretary of ECA, how does this New Initiative serve as the nerve centre of all UN actions in Africa?

The Millennium Plan

South African president with his other colleagues from Nigeria, Senegal, Algeria and Tanzania place most of these broader considerations specifically within the African context during several panels and meetings devoted to the African Millennium Initiative. This programme according to them may offer a way to redefine how Africa interacts with the rest of the world, while simultaneously getting its development agenda on track.. The main priorities of the Millennium plan highlighted by Thabo Mbeki and fellow statesmen were:

1. Creating Peace, Security and Stability, in part through further efforts to expand and consolidate democratic reforms in Africa. This should entail "an end to coup d'etats and imposition of military governments on the people of Africa, an end to destructive and violent conflicts, and the defeat of the elitist class that corruptly enriches itself at the expense of the people".
2. Investing in Africa's people, through a comprehensive strategy for the development of human resources including health, education and training.
3. Promoting industrialisation on the basis of Africa's plentiful agricultural and mineral resources thereby broadening the continent's economic diversity, harnessing and developing its comparative advantage in the world economy.
4. Increasing investment in the New Information and Communication Technologies (NTIC) in order to bridge the 'digital divide' that now separates Africa from the developed world. The UN



Secretary General, Kofi Anan, noted at Davos that all of Sub-Saharan Africa has less internet access than the borough of Manhattan in New York city. Most Africans live at least 2 hours or more from the nearest telephone.

5. Developing basic infrastructure such as roads, railways and electric systems. Today, Africa has just 171 000km of tarred roads less than Poland alone.

6. Establishing funding mechanisms to support all these efforts. These mechanisms should finance projects at the national level, but above all should support regional and continent-wide projects and programmes.

Financing, promoters of the Millennium plan, insist, should be mobilised as much as possible by African countries, with less reliance on traditional sources as donor agencies. "We must and can move away from measures that further entrench the dependence of Africa on aid" said Mbeki. "To reduce aid dependence, greater efforts are required to involve the private sector in Africa. We must take all necessary measures to encourage our own domestic African investors to invest in Africa rather than contribute to capital flight out of Africa" warned Mbeki. This also means attracting more foreign investment as Manuel Trevor, South African finance minister observed in Davos (the World Economic Summit held in Davos, Switzerland). Additionally, more revenue can be generated through increased exports. But as Manuel Trevor strongly argued, this requires opening up markets of the more developed economies to exports from Africa.

African leaders are increasingly critical of the established practices of the main donor countries and agencies. African leaders insist that the continent's relationship with external institutions be more equitable on the basis of genuine 'partnership'. To make this possible, international institutions need to be reformed. President Thabo Mbeki urged the WTO (World Trade Organisation), " to give greater weight to the concerns of the countries of the South" His finance minister Trevor, proposed that the world Bank and the IMF stop giving more voting power to the largest economies and adopt the " one nation, one vote system" of the UN General Assembly.

Omega Plan

The Omega Plan initiated by Abdoulaye Wade, overlaps in many respects with the OAU venture. This plan is based on the premise that eco-

nomie growth and development in Africa will be strong and sustainable only if countries invest more heavily in 4 priority areas: Infrastructure, Education and Training, Health, and Agriculture.

Since his election victory in March 2000, Mr Wade's emphasis on skills and training already has prompted new efforts in Senegal to promote higher education, even at the risk of conflict with the World Bank. Such a focus is essential, he argues, for Africa to boost its productivity and face up to the stiff competition of an increasingly globalised world economy. "If we can move towards more equality in education and infrastructure", he said, in Davos, " then Africa could be part of World trade".

Better transport connections among African countries are also vital to help promote regional trade and integration, Mr Wade added. Existing transport links established in the colonial era, generally run from the interior to the port cities along the coast, but much less between neighbouring countries themselves. He noted that it is impossible to drive directly to Dakar from Rabat, the capital of Morocco.

Mr Wade has described the Omega plan as 'Keynesian' in inspiration, implying a central role for government in promoting investment in these key sectors. Yet he also emphasizes the importance of domestic and foreign private investment in helping to finance infrastructural projects. He also stands for privatization. His mention of privatization at the World Economic Forum in Davos, prompted some debate with Mr Jackson Shamenda, president of the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions, arguing that African leaders should not abandon their responsibilities to society through privatization.

One apparent difference between the Millennium and Omega Plans, is the weight given to traditional sources of financing -Mr Wade seems even more critical of external development assistance than the other presidents. He refers to Africa's past reliance on aid and loans as " a complete failure" which has brought few lasting benefits but has increased the continent's debt burden. Another problem with the current aid process is the piecemeal nature, the Senegalese president warned. "If we continue to build a small airport here, a stretch of road there, it will take 50 or 100years to overcome the gap in infrastructure.

Mr Gnounh Toure, one of Wade's economic advisers, raised an additional concern: that aid often comes with excessive conditionality and undue donor influence over national policies. At a meeting with the IMF and World Bank in Dakar, Mr Wade had sharp words for the Bretton Woods institutions, these institutions were not created with Africa's interest in mind, and their constant intervention in Africa has resulted in the continent's indebtedness.

For the International Community to better support Africa, Wade proposed the creation of a new international fund managed by the UN, to provide very long-term concessional loans (not due for 50 years) for projects in the 4 priority areas highlighted in the Omega Plan, that is, Infrastructure; Education and Training; Health; and Agriculture.



The African Peer Review System



The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is an instrument voluntarily acceded to by member states of the African Union as an African self-monitoring mechanism. Membership is open to all members.

The APRM has a mandate to ensure that the policies and practices of participatory states conform to the agreed political, economic and corporate governance values, codes, and standards contained in the Declaration of Democracy, political, economic and corporate governance.

The purpose of this instrument is to foster the adoption of policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated sub regional and continental economic integration through sharing experiences and reinforcement of successful and best practice, including identifying deficiencies and assessing the needs of capacity building.

It would be of great importance to take a look at the issues that are reviewed by this instrument. First of all, for a government to be reviewed, there are certain problems which have plagued the society and which it would like to get rid of and make a better society. The process entails periodic reviews of the policies and practices of participating states to ascertain progress being made towards achieving mutually agreed goals and compliance with agreed political, economic and corporate values, and codes and standards.

The thematic areas include;

- A) Democracy and Political Governance.
- B) Economic Governance and Management.
- C) Corporate Governance and
- D) Socio-Economic development.

Secondly, the process assesses the impact of domestic policies not only on internal political instability and economic growth, but also on neighboring country's. By doing so, it promotes mutual accountability, as well as compliance with best practice.

The various types of reviews include;

1. Country Review which is the base review carried out within 18months of a country becoming a member of the APRM process. Periodic Review, which takes every 2-4 years.
2. A member country can ask for a review that is not part of the periodically mandated reviews.
3. Early signs of impending political or economic crisis in a member country would also be sufficient cause for instituting a review. This review process has five stages;

Stage 1- involves a study of the political and economic

corporate government and development environment to be reviewed. This is done based on documentation reports prepared by the APRM secretariat, international, regional, sub-regional and national institutions.

Stage 2- The review team visits the country in question with the aim to carry out the widest possible consultations with government official, parliamentarians, representatives of the civil society (media, academia, trade unions, business and professional bodies).

Stage 3- The team prepares its report based on the secretariats findings and consultation process.

Stage 4- The report is submitted to the participating heads of state and government through the APRM secretariat for consideration and adoption.

Stage 5- Results are formally tabled in key regional and sub regional structures. If the values, goals and objectives of the review process is adhered to and not just one of the usual conferences held that make no difference to a society, therefore, the various members have taken a great step in improving economic, political, social and moral well being of that society.

Does Africa Really Matter



By Elsie Fordam
Economic Governance Department

Africa will develop whether it is "forgotten by the West" or not. It may take a little more effort, focusing and prioritisation; but Africa will develop with or without aid. Aid, without strings, is a welcome catalyst in the development process in Africa.

However, aid is not an essential condition of development. In fact, aid is an obligation for the West to compensate for the plunder of Africa in the past.

The greatest structural constraint that has inhibited Africa's growth in the last 40years of independence has been the phenomenon of sustained state intervention in business. Instead of the post-independence African state playing the role of regulation, it played the role of businessmen relying on a low-cultured bureaucracy to be in the vanguard of profit making. In most cases, the bureaucracy succeeded in losing money, not in gaining profits. Where there was no outright nationalisation, there was political intervention in profit making because of corruption and ignorance of inexperienced political elite.

The suffocation of the profit making efforts by the peoples of Africa under the post-independence African states helped to perpetuate the structural distortion caused by colonialism over the last 500years. The greatest social distortion was the prevention of the emergence of the middle class and in many cases the complete destruction of the feudal class that had emerged. This left only the peasant class. The mode of production of the peasant class is subsistence farming with an occasional cash crop. This means that the African peasantry (who in many countries form the bulk of the population), are only peripherally connected to the money economy.

Given the ever declining commodity

prices, the prospects for the African peasants saving money and therefore, investing in order to expand their operations, are remote. Similarly remote are the prospects for the necessary social change from a subsistence-based peasant society to a skilled middle class one, such as those we find in Europe and the United States. If the post-independence African state had not suffocated the freedom of the entrepreneur, the socio-economic configuration in Africa would have registered significant changes by now.

The absence of the middle class does not only mean the absence of savings and entrepreneurship; it also means the absence of cosmopolitan outlook. While the middle class tend to be cosmopolitan and profit oriented, the peasant societies suffer from parochialism and ideological opposition to enlightenment. Therefore, the political crises that have been endemic in Africa are, in part, explained by this structural distortion.

The medicine for this structural distortion may lie in a formula that ensures the following;

- Democratic governance taking forms that are locally determined;
- A liberal economic policy framework that gives maximum freedom to entrepreneurs so that they can increase their turnover, increase the volume of incomes and, therefore, increase the volume of savings. Eventually, investments will increase and this freedom will benefit booth local and foreign investors;
- Universal education that develops the human being and prepares him/her for the socio-economic changes;
- Infrastructure (especially roads, power, water and health units) that will make it easy for businessmen to make profits;

- Regional integration is another indispensable factor in the process of transformation. An aggressive production program needs market outlets to sustain it. Hence, integrating markets is an important stimulus for expanding both the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Gross National Product (GNP) of the African countries.

If the above is done, Africa will develop rapidly with or without aid. If not, no amount of aid and "not being forgotten by the West" will cause sustained development in Africa. The point worth emphasising here is that, while in the era of colonialism, Africa's stagnation was caused by exogenous factors, since independence, endogenous factors have played a bigger role in stunting Africa's development. It is these endogenous constraints that must be addressed if Africa is to develop.

The African continent, which accounts for 30million sq. kilometres of the globe and 700million of its population, certainly matters.

The question of whether Africa matters is only being raised because the crucial constraining factors like the ones enumerated above have not yet been addressed. Provided these constraints are solved, Africa will develop whether the West "forgets it" or not. The key for developing Africa is more with the African leaders than with the West. Owing to the predatory acts of the West against Africa in the past, however, there is a strong, moral, case for the West helping deserving countries that have sound, internal economic and political management.

The Human Rights Council

By Ete Ekolle
Human Rights Department



On March 15, 2006, 170 members of the UN agreed to establish a new Human Rights Council to replace the discredited Commission on Human Rights. The establishment of a new body represented a major advance for the protection of human rights worldwide. This was the result of a Swiss initiative.

The origins of this new body could be traced back to March 2005 when the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, fed up with the tattered credibility of the UN, unveiled a proposal to replace the Commission with a smaller, permanent human rights council with tougher membership criteria. The purpose was to protect the UN's human rights role against manipulation by those who had become quite adept at gaining the system to their own advantage.

Based in Geneva and established as a subsidiary organ to the General Assembly, the body will consist of 47 members elected by secret ballot by an absolute majority. Members of the Council will serve for a period of 3 years and will not be eligible for immediate re-election after two consecutive terms.

The selection of members will represent equitable geographic distribution, where by, Africa will have 13 seats, Asia 13 seats, Eastern Europe 6, Latin America and the Caribbean 8 and 7 for Western Europe and other Countries. The Council will meet 3 times a year for a maximum of 10 weeks, and will be able to hold special sessions at the request of a member.

Why the Commission on Human Rights has been discredited.



The Commission on Human Rights has been criticized for "declining credibility and professionalism".

- It has been criticized for allowing some members to escape condemnation. Some Countries have blocked scrutiny of their human rights record. For example, China, regularly defeated efforts to dis-

cuss its records.

- Kofi Anan had condemned the Human Rights Commission by saying it had been discredited by human rights abusers who joined to protect themselves from criticism, or to criticize another Country. For instance, Libya, a country with grave human rights abuse recently chaired the Commission. In 2004, the Commission declined to take action against Sudan despite the abuse by government forces in the region. Thereafter, the Sudanese

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GNNG News Glance

The Parrot

GNNG Joins La Francophonie

The International Organization of the Francophone that spans French speaking countries in the world has recorded 8946 a membership membership status. The Permanent Council of the Francophonie met in Paris on April 26 2005 in the 54th session. It was held in the presence of the Secretary General, Bernard Akabou.

Journalists trained to Give Government A Hard Time!

The British High Commission in Cameroon recently organized a training workshop for the media. The workshop was held at the British High Commission in Yaounde. The workshop was held from 14th to 18th November 2005. The workshop was held in the presence of the British High Commission in Yaounde. The workshop was held in the presence of the British High Commission in Yaounde.

Anti-Corruption Observatory launches campaign against Corruption

The National Anti-Corruption Observatory has begun a nationwide awareness campaign against corruption. The campaign is aimed at raising awareness among the public about the dangers of corruption and the need to report corrupt practices.

PM Inves Ministers to Fight Corruption and promote Good Governance

The Prime Minister, Mr. Chief Obiang, has called on all Ministers to take the lead in the fight against corruption and to promote good governance. He emphasized that corruption is a major obstacle to the development of the country and that Ministers must be role models in this regard.

Arrest of Corrupt State Officials Begins!

The National Anti-Corruption Observatory has announced the arrest of several state officials involved in corrupt practices. The arrests are part of a nationwide campaign to root out corruption in the public sector.

Dutch Ambassador Speaks Up Against Corruption

The Dutch Ambassador in Cameroon, Mr. J. van der Meer, has spoken out against corruption in the country. He expressed his disappointment over the prevalence of corrupt practices and urged the Cameroonian government to take stronger measures to combat corruption.

Corruption in the USA

Several articles detailing corruption cases in the United States, including the arrest of a state official and the conviction of a businessman for bribery.

Irish Lawyer & Politician Face Corruption Charges

An Irish lawyer and politician has been charged with corruption. The charges relate to alleged misuse of public funds and the manipulation of contracts.

How Corruption Scandal Shakes the UI

A corruption scandal involving the University of Ibadan (UI) has caused significant concern. The scandal involves the alleged misappropriation of university funds and the manipulation of exam results.

Human Rights, Democracy & Good Governance Education Manual

GNNG Annual Report 2004/2005

Women's Rights Flyers

Human Rights, Democracy & Good Governance EDUCATION MANUAL For Secondary Schools

This manual provides comprehensive information on human rights, democracy, and good governance for secondary school students. It includes definitions, examples, and exercises to help students understand and apply these concepts in their daily lives.

The Global Network For Good Governance ANNUAL REPORT 2004/2005

This report details the activities and achievements of the Global Network for Good Governance (GNGG) over the 2004/2005 period. It highlights the network's efforts in promoting transparency, accountability, and good governance across various countries.

Women's Rights are Human Rights

This flyer features portraits of women and emphasizes that women's rights are an integral part of human rights. It calls for the elimination of gender discrimination and the promotion of gender equality.

The Good Governance Observer

THE BELL

The Good Governance Observer

A quarterly publication focusing on good governance and sustainable development. The current issue features articles on the challenges of development in Africa and the role of the private sector in economic growth.

THE BELL

A news outlet reporting on local and national events. The current issue highlights the completion of the HIPC program and the challenges facing South West mayors.