The African Union-Diaspora African-Forum (AU-DAF) has recognized and honored Ms. Nardos Bekele-Thomas as a ‘Woman of Excellence’ for her outstanding contribution to women in Africa. She was honored along Liberia Head of State, Ms. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, former President of Malawi, Ms. Joyce Banda and many other distinguished and deserving award recipients.

In her acceptance speech, Ms. Bekele-Thomas emphasized the role of the Africans in the diaspora in development. ‘For the Africa Union to effectively implement its 2063 development Agenda, it needs funding in addition to building the continent’s technical and technological capacity. All these are within our reach. We must all work together to ensure that the potential of Africans in the diaspora is harnessed.”

Ms. Bekele-Thomas congratulated the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

What’s Inside:

- Nardos Bekele-Thomas presented the 2015 African Women Excellence Award
- New UN programming for Marsabit and Turkana counties
- IOM takes peace and safe migration message to Turkana County
- UN-Habitat reaffirms partnerships with Mombasa, Kilifi and Kisumu counties
- Women political participation under threat in Kenya
- UN peacekeepers honoured at UNON
- Countering violent extremism - put youth at the center of the narrative
- UNESCO holds media stakeholders meeting to analyse impunity and state of journalists’ safety in Kenya
- Women, youth and persons living with disabilities to be included in public procurement in Kenya
- Jazz means courage and standing up for freedom in the spirit of solidarity: International Jazz Day in Nairobi
- Culture and development in the post-2015 Development Agenda

Upcoming Events:

- 4 July  International Day of Cooperatives (first Saturday of July)
- 11 July  World Population Day
- 18 July  Nelson Mandela International Day
- 30 July  World Day against Trafficking in Persons

Ms. Nardos Bekele-Thomas with other recipients of the African Woman of Excellence Award. (photo by RC Office/UNDP)

African Union for creating a forum to discuss and find solutions to development challenges in Africa. Affirming that: “Time has come for Africa to look at its development challenges, including the Sustainable Development Goals as opportunities for social investments by the diaspora”.

The Award was established to recognize women of Africa and the diaspora, who have contributed to the struggle for political, social and economic independence at various levels. Ms. Bekele-Thomas was selected for her many outstanding contributions to women around the world. Ms. Nardos Bekele-Thomas is the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations system in Kenya, and Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). She is a seasoned and experienced development practitioner having contributed immensely to women economic and social empowerment in sub-Saharan Africa where she has worked for over 30 years.


The (AU) Diaspora African Forum Mission is an African Union endorsed non-governmental organization that encourages the full participation of Africans in the diaspora in the building of the African Union.

---

New UN programming for Marsabit and Turkana counties

The UN system in Kenya, under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator, has selected Turkana and Marsabit counties as models for development assistance under the Delivering as One framework. The cross-border and area-based development project is a major milestone in development efforts, particularly targeting some of the far-flung and marginalized regions of Kenya.

Turkana County was selected as the pilot county for Area-Based Programming, due to its low ranking in terms of human development indicators, including higher poverty levels, lower literacy rates, poor infrastructure and social amenities, among others. The UN also has considerable presence in the area providing relief and emergency support to the community. Under the devolved system of governance, the county...
governments have a duty to ensure that citizens’ voices are taken into account in decision and legislation-making processes that will positively impact their lives. It is for this reason that the UN and the County Government signed the Joint Programme document to support the implementation of the Turkana County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP), which is a comprehensive blueprint that will guide the County to realize the socio-economic transformation.

Support to Marsabit County is however unique as it requires cross-border regional cooperation. The two UN country teams in Ethiopia and Kenya, in partnership with the two governments, collaborated to support the county find lasting peace on the border of Marsabit and the southern part of Ethiopia. The conflict between Borana and Gabra communities is mainly due to competition over scarce natural resources, where the population in the largely nomadic community transcends the international boundaries of Ethiopia and Kenya. This has led to proliferation of small arms, and harmful cultural practices such as cattle rustling. The project will assist in the revival of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms of both communities and at the same time, come up with effective and amicable means of resource utilization that is acceptable to all sides. This is expected to encourage cross-border trade, employment-creation and income-generation.

To this end, the UN Country Team (UNCT) in Kenya brought together leaders from Turkana and Marsabit counties, development partners, and representatives from government, private sector and philanthropy, to round-table discussions on how to come up with innovative and coordinated ways of addressing the counties’ priority needs.

Speaking at the event, the UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Nardos Bekele-Thomas, said: “It requires a ‘business unusual’ approach to address the needs of the region, by supporting communities to harness opportunities and address their needs in a holistic manner, through the involvement of the various stakeholders.”

The county governments lauded the support from the UN saying the joint programme would ensure faster delivery of services to the people. “If implemented, this programme will lead to harmony between the communities living on the border and help transform the social economy of this region,” commented Governor Ukur Yattani of Marsabit County.

His sentiments were shared by the Turkana County Executive in charge of finance and economic planning, Paul Nabuin: “We want to strengthen systems and minimize duplication because we have shared responsibilities and accountability for resources we receive, both from the county government and development agencies, to the people we serve”.

The UN in Kenya has recruited and deployed joint programme coordinators in both Turkana and Marsabit to provide technical guidance to the UNCT and the county governments on the effective implementation of the joint programmes, as a necessary mechanism for development support in the marginalized areas.

IOM takes peace and safe migration message to Turkana County

LODWAR town in Turkana County came alive between 18 and 23 May, 2015, when the International Organization for Migration (IOM) kicked off a six-day peace building outreach roadshow, to raise awareness on safe migration and the culture of peace.

The roadshow held under the aegis of the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security project, saw residents come out in large numbers as the convoy traversed the hinterland of Lodwar town.

The caravan passed through the 50 Km across Central Turkana and made numerous stops in Kerio, Kalokol, Kataboi, Nakwamekwi, Soweto and California, before culminating in a broad show in Lodwar town on 20 May.

Messages of peace, safe migration, child labour and trafficking embellished the event as the young and old came out to dance, cheer and sing their hearts out.

The enthralled crowds were treated to an array of entertainment staged
by celebrity musicians who kept the audience on their feet as the highly charged convoy slowly snaked along the designated routes.

“This indeed is a noble course that has in the past shown remarkable results. Last year when IOM held a similar roadshow we noticed a marked drop in the number of inter-communal conflict,” said the Chairman of the Turkana County Peace Forum, Boniface Limati.

Buoyed by last year’s successful roadshow in the town, IOM, in the second leg of the tour, took its message on 21 May deeper in Turkana County to buttress the call of peace and safe migration in a bid to enlighten a larger number of locals.

The convoy toured Nadapal, Nadio, Turkwel and made another eight stopovers before coming to an end on 23 May in Lokiriama along the Kenya-Uganda border.

Meanwhile, under the same initiative, IOM project staff, Augustine Lambert and Mayende Marion participated in a community radio talk show at Akicha FM to sensitize the residents on the danger of human trafficking and the need for orderly migration.

UN-Habitat reaffirms partnerships with Mombasa, Kilifi and Kisumu counties

I

In May 2015, UN-Habitat held two different meetings with officials from Mombasa, Kilifi and Kisumu, thus reaffirming the agency’s commitment in assisting the counties achieve their development objectives.

In the first meeting, UN-Habitat undertook a capacity development session for Members of County Assemblies (MCAs) from Mombasa and Kilifi. The session was designed as a follow-up requested by the County government representatives, after a similar one that took place towards the end of last year at Diani, Kwale County.

The sessions are part of UN-Habitat’s support to the Kenya Municipal Programme, under the broad framework of ‘Support to a Sustainable Urban Development Sector in Kenya’, funded by SIDA. The Kenya Constitution of...
2010 and the County Governments Act No. 17 of 2012 of the Kenya legislation have placed the mandate of county legislature and oversight on County Assemblies.

Mr. Tubmn Otieno, Clerk to the County Assembly of Mombasa said: “The recognition that the county assembly and political leaders are key stakeholders in urban planning is a milestone in itself.”

In the second meeting, UN-Habitat and its partners met in Kisumu to ensure a multi stakeholder approach in the development of the Kisumu Lakefront. Earlier in the month, the County Governor of Kisumu, Jack Ranguma, invited UN Habitat, Agence Francaise Development, Kisumu Urban Project, Kenya Railways, Kenya Port Authority, Kenya Maritime Authority, Kisumu County government and Kisumu City to discuss the development plans.

The stakeholders’ presentations acknowledged the economic potential of Kisumu nationally and across the East and Central African region, specifically in transport and trade. In addition, Kisumu Lakefront was to be developed to be a tourist destination locally and internationally. This will expand employment opportunities for the many young people currently jobless in the area, providing work in the formal and informal sectors.

---

**Women political participation under threat in Kenya**

---

O N 27 August, 2010 the people of Kenya adopted a new constitution heralded as one of the most progressive in the world. Equity in gender representation was constitutionally mandated. The Supreme Court ruled that the two-thirds gender principle should be implemented progressively and that legislative measures for giving effect to the gender principle should be taken by 27 August, 2015. The Attorney General (AG) appointed a technical working group led by the National Equality and Gender Commission to work out legislative measures to ensure that the deadline of 27 August 2015 was met.

The working group submitted its legislative measures to stakeholder consultations in February 2015. It became apparent that the realization of the two-thirds gender principle was under threat as major stakeholders such as the Kenya Women Parliamentary Association, political parties, the AG’s office and the Executive advocated for progressive realization of the principle.

The Gender Rule Laws Amendment Bill referred to as the ‘Chepkonga Bill’ was passed in a first reading end of April 2015, seeking to amend the Constitution of Kenya to realize the two-thirds gender principle progressively. The ‘Chepkonga Bill’ essentially postpones the realization of the not more than two-thirds gender principle indefinitely and even endangers the 20, 67 actual percent of seats currently filled by women in the National Parliament of Kenya.

Subsequently, the ‘Chepkonga Bill’ brought more than 300 women and men from different civil society and women’s organizations to the streets in a protest march demanding the immediate withdrawal of the Bill. Several bills have been brought to parliament to counteract the “Chepkonga Bill”.

Currently, political representation of...
The Constitution of Kenya 2010, in a bid to promote gender equality, makes provision that not more than two thirds of members of elective and appointed bodies should be of the same gender. The unsolved controversy in how to realize the two-thirds Gender Principle till August 2015 - the deadline set by the Attorney General, brings Kenya on a brink of a constitutional crisis.

Kenyan women stands at 20, 67% versus Rwanda’s 56%, South Africa’s 42%, Tanzania’s 36% and Uganda’s 35%. A progressive realization of the two-thirds gender principle would throw Kenya years back in their path towards gender equality.

UN Women in Kenya has supported the technical working group to develop a framework for the realization of the two-thirds gender principle before the deadline set by the Supreme Court.

Since February 2015, UN Women Kenya, in collaboration with other UN agencies, has facilitated the coordination among eminent women leaders and other stakeholders to realize the principle. Currently all efforts are centered on community mobilization for a referendum to realize the two-thirds gender principle, media outreach, support to the Parliamentary bills and engagement with President Uhuru Kenyatta, to prevent a constitutional crisis.

UN peacekeepers honoured at UNON

As part of activities to commemorate the 2015 International Day of UN Peacekeepers, the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Regional Office for Eastern Africa organized an interactive panel discussion to reflect on the state of UN peacekeeping in Africa over the past five decades.

The discussions, titled ‘Peacekeeping in Perspective: Reflections from Africa on the Past Five Decades’, brought together a distinguished group of panelists including Kenya’s Ambassador to the UN Office at Nairobi (UNON) Dr. Martin Kimani, the Executive Director of the African Peace Support Trainers Association (APSTA), Retired Ghanaian Colonel Festus Aboagye, two representatives from the Kenya Military, Lt. Col. Joyce Sitienei and Ms. Catherine Agbo.
Njeru, youth activist, Felix Lone, and Pernilla Ryden, a Senior Political Affairs Officer in the Office of the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region.

In his introductory remarks, the moderator, Mr. Abdul Rahman Lamin, UNESCO’s Social and Human Sciences Specialist, highlighted the evolution of UN peacekeeping since 1948, when the first such operation was established and deployed to the Middle East, by the UN Security Council, to observe the truce between the Arabs and Israelis. Mr. Lamin explored the implications of peacekeeping in Africa, which is currently home to half of the total number of peacekeeping operations globally, bringing to fore issues of sovereignty, the relationship between such operations and African regional and sub-regional organizations, including the AU, EAC, ECOWAS and SADC, among others.

During his intervention, Rtd. Col. Festus Aboagye acknowledged the efforts and sacrifices of those who keep the peace, noting that part of the factors that lead to such operations have to do with the fundamental collapse of social and political structures, thus precipitating conflict. He identified what he referred to as “a new normal”, with Africa as the disproportionate recipient of peacekeeping operations globally, especially since the end of the cold war. Col. Aboagye attributed the emergence of this “new normal” to the shift from an impotent charter regime to a more masculine approach, and from a more political-economic focus to regional security mechanisms. He pointed out to what he described as Africa’s “double jeopardy” whereby on one hand, the continent faces the challenge of generating capacity for Africa peace missions, while on the other, contributing immensely to UN peacekeeping operations globally. He therefore identified the need to develop and implement an effective training architecture and centres of excellence so as to build capacity for Africa and its member states.

In his presentation, Ambassador Martin Kimani, emphasized the need to promote robust global governance to enhance peace and security that will eventually support long term peacekeeping where necessary. He highlighted Kenya’s high ranking globally in promoting peace and security, and specifically drew attention to the country’s contributions to UN peacekeeping. Ambassador Kimani noted as an example, Kenya’s contribution to peacekeeping in Somalia in an effort to stabilize the country and bring peace, urging the international community to take on its fair share of responsibility in supporting the AU led peacekeeping operations in Somalia.

Lt. Col. Joyce Sitienei reiterated Kenya’s commitment to global peace and security as demonstrated by the deployment of thousands of troops to conflict zones across the globe. She explained to the audience the duties undertaken by the military in peacekeeping operations, emphasizing on the thorough training before deployment. Ms. Catherine Njeru complemented Lt. Col. Sitienei contribution by specifically highlighting the role and place of the youth and women in working with peacekeeping operations. She noted that the youth can play a vital multidimensional role as peacekeepers by becoming human rights advisors, supply managers, electoral observers, press officers and military observers, among others.

Speaking about the youth, Felix Lone stressed the need for youth integration in all aspects of peace building and not to be viewed as threats. He described the youth’s potential as an opportunity waiting to be harnessed. He called for support to the political and social structures in conflict areas to avoid the danger of dependency on peacekeeping missions.

During her intervention, Ms. Pernilla Ryden noted the increase in the number of UN peacekeeping operations in Africa, without a corresponding increase in the budget to support those operations. She underlined the role of preventive diplomacy by reminding the audience: “remember that since peace and stability start with an individual, more emphasis should be placed on preventive diplomacy before peacekeeping missions, and this can be partially achieved by involving the civil society and youth in peace activities in the region”.

The forum attracted an audience that included the diplomatic community, university students and the media.

On 29 May, which is the International Day of UN Peacekeepers, a wreath-laying ceremony was held to pay tribute to those who have lost their lives in the line of duty, and to thank all those who have served or are currently serving in UN peacekeeping operations around the world. The ceremony started with a march in the UN complex by former Kenya UN peacekeepers from the military, police and prison services, wearing their blue berets.

In his message presented by UNON Director-General Sahle-Work Zewde, the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Ban
Ki-moon, noted: “UN peacekeeping is adapting to new global realities, including asymmetric threats in some of the world’s most challenging environments. We have modernized our operations, introduced new technologies, broadened our base of contributors and strengthened our partnerships with regional organizations”.

Among the fallen peacekeepers who lost their lives in 2014 and who were honoured posthumously with the Dag Hammarskjold medal were four from Kenya: Lance Corporal Boniface Jesse MUCHIRI who lost his life while serving with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan; Corporal Elizabeth NJERI and Corporal Geoffrey Chege GITHIUKA who served with the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID); and Mr. Willam ALWIGA who served in a civilian capacity with the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).

Kenya is the twenty-ninth largest contributor of military and police personnel to UN peacekeeping. It currently deploys 947 military and police personnel to the UN operations in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lebanon, Liberia, Mali, Sudan and South Sudan.

Kenya is preparing to host a summit to counter violent extremism in June 2015. A timely and vital initiative by a country reeling from tragic terror attacks.

Our world is home to 1.8 billion young people between the ages of 10 and 24, and Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin, the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) says: “Never before have there been so many young people. Never again is there likely to be such potential for economic and social progress”.

Kenya has one of the most youthful populations in the world with about 60 percent of the population aged below 24 years. A demographic dividend and through this summit, Kenya can change the narrative, by putting the spotlight on youth.

On September 21, 2013, a massacre of 67 innocent civilians took place at the Westgate Mall, in Kenya. And on April 2, 2015, gunmen stormed the Garissa University College, Kenya, killing 149 people and injuring 79 or more. Both the attacks were claimed by the al-Qaeda linked group al-Shabaab.

In the case of the Westgate episode one of the gunmen was a Norwegian citizen of Somali descent. In the Garissa massacre one of the four gunmen was a local and described as a “high-flying, grade-A student” with a promising law career ahead.

Both men were in their early 20s.

In India, the violent Maoist movement is composed of a large number of youth who are wreaking havoc in the country’s development. In Colombia, South Sudan and Sri Lanka, decades of conflict had been sustained by child soldiers. In Pakistan and Afghanistan, easy recruits are found in mosques and religious schools. In Somalia, the feared terror group – al-Shabaab which in Arabic means “youth” – is waging attacks in Kenya. Young people from all over the world are joining the rank and file of the notorious ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) that has taken violence to new heights of brutality and savagery.

Whether they are misled or forced with false promises, threats or exploit grievances, youth are increasingly on the frontlines of violent extremism globally.

Drawing on interviews and surveys with youth in Afghanistan, Colombia and Somalia, Mercy Corps published an insightful study entitled Youth & Consequences: Unemployment, Injustice and Violence. The study found that, “the principal drivers of political violence are rooted not in poverty, but in experiences of injustice: discrimination, corruption and abuse by security forces. For many youth, narratives of grievance are animated by the shortcomings of the state itself, which is weak, venal or violent. Or all three. Young people take up weapons not because they are poor, but because they are angry”.

On the other hand, at a summit hosted by the White House to counter violent extremism in February 2015, President Barack Obama remarked, “But when people -- especially young people -- feel entirely trapped in impoverished communities, where there is no order and no path for advancement, where there are no educational opportunities, where there are no ways to support families, and no escape from injustice and the humiliations of corruption -- that feeds instability and disorder, and makes those communities ripe for extremist recruitment.”

“Countering violent extremism - put youth at the center of the narrative”

By Erik Solheim and Siddharth Chatterjee
Two different, yet highly relevant narratives emerge about violent extremism.

The President of the Republic of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta remarked, “Youth comprise the strength, wealth and drivers of innovation in Kenya. But as we speak, 70% of unemployed people in Kenya are youth. This is an unacceptably high number, given that 30.3% of our population is classified as youth.”

So what needs to be done to counter the specter of violent extremism?

Under the Government’s leadership, all development partners including the private sector should collaborate to ensure a holistic, well integrated, multi-year programmes that create an enabling environment in which young people can develop, advance and achieve their full human potential.

In order to do that, it will be useful to:

1. Understand the relationship between youth and violent extremism within a broader context of their relationship to peace and security;
2. Build an evidence base for action on youth engagement in violent extremism and challenge misinformation/myths;
3. Focus on countering/preventing youth engagement in violent extremism without ignoring/neglecting the role of “non-youth”;
4. Develop strategies after thorough and insightful analysis of the political, religious, cultural, social and economic factors that drive youth to violent extremism.

Let’s put youth at the center of the narrative. Kenya can serve as a model for transmuting its youth into a demographic dividend which other nations can emulate.

Erik Solheim is the Chair of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development-Development Assistance Committee in Paris, France, and Siddharth Chatterjee is the UNFPA Representative to Kenya. They have seen firsthand young people at the frontlines of conflicts around the world.

---

**UNESCO holds media stakeholders meeting to analyse impunity and state of journalists’ safety in Kenya**

UNESCO, in partnership with the African Media Initiative (AMI), organised a one-day media stakeholders meeting on 22 May 2015, at the United Nations Office in Nairobi, to shed light on the issues surrounding safety and protection of journalists in Kenya.

The meeting was aimed at discussing the national state of journalists’ safety in the country and also deliberate on the issue of impunity on the basis of UNESCO’s Journalists’ Safety Indicators as endorsed by the UN Plan of Action on Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity.

It further discussed modalities for the implementation of UNESCO’s ongoing study conducted by AMI to analyse the national state of journalists’ safety and impunity in Kenya.

The meeting attracted 25 participants drawn from the following: Article 19 Kenya; Association of Media Women in Kenya; Ford Foundation; Independent Policing Oversight Authority; Media Council of Kenya; Ministry of Information and Communication; Kenya Union of Journalists; Kenya Editors Guild; Media Owners Association of Kenya; Kenya Correspondents Association; Kenya Media Programme; Media Policy and Research Centre; Kenya National Human Rights Commission; Kenya Police Spokespersons; and Kenya National Commission for UNESCO.

During the meeting, Ms. Reeta Pöyhtäri, UNESCO’s Expert for Journalists’ Safety Indicators, gave a presentation on the UN Plan of Action and reiterated the need to assess the safety and protection of journalists, create awareness on safety and protection issues, and provide a knowledge based platform for future interventions and initiatives to address the threats. Ms. Pöyhtäri emphasized that Freedom of Expression was a fundamental element of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and that journalists play a crucial role in the democratic process.
Rights, and therefore underpins other democratic freedoms such as the right to form political parties and share political ideas, as well as scrutinise the actions of public officials.

Dr. George Nyabuga, the lead researcher, briefed participants on the study’s proposed methodology based on UNESCO’s Journalists’ Safety Indicators. He presented a framework to be used to identify the context of safety and the responsibility of diverse actors in Kenya. The framework comprises a working tool that will focus explicitly on journalists’ safety and allows for the assessment of the problem, the systems in place and the actions of various actors and institutions concerned in addressing issues of journalists’ safety in the country.

Mr. Wangethi Mwangi, Senior Advisor for AMI, stated: “Today’s meeting provided a better understanding of UNESCO’s Journalists’ Safety Indicators, and helped clarify the scope of the proposed research, its limitations and also opportunities for in-depth investigations in some areas”.

Mr. Patrick Mutahi, Senior Programme Officer, Article 19 Eastern Africa, noted: “This was an extremely important exercise considering the deteriorating situation of journalists’ safety in Kenya. The data and information that will be collected during the period of this research will help in creating sound interventions”.

Ms. Hellen Mudora Obanda, Executive Director of the Association of Media Women in Kenya, reiterated: “In assessing journalists’ safety in Kenya, the gendered dimensions of the intimidations, threats and violence against women journalists must be interrogated in this research. The security of women journalists remains paramount”.

The media is considered to require special protection to enable it operate freely. Journalists therefore need to be free and safe to provide the content that is carried on media platforms. This activity falls within the efforts of UNESCO to “promote an enabling environment for freedom of expression, press freedom and journalistic safety in Kenya”. The study is funded by UNESCO’s Intergovernmental Programme on Development of Communication (IPDC) which is a multilateral forum in the UN system that not only provides support for media projects, but also seeks an accord to secure a healthy environment for the growth of free and pluralistic media in developing countries.

---

**Women, youth and persons living with disabilities to be included in public procurement in Kenya**

The 8th National Stakeholders Forum for the Public Procurement Oversight Authority (PPOA) was held in Nairobi on 29 May, with technical and financial support from UN Women, Kenya. The main objective of the forum was to review the gains, identify the challenges experienced, as well as make some recommendations for the way forward. The forum attracted 370 participants from the private sector, civil society organizations, academia and Government agencies.

This year’s theme was “Preferences and Reservations Scheme: Assessing the Gains”. The Cabinet Secretary for National Treasury is the chairman of the forum and was represented by Mr. Mutua Kilaka, the Financial Secretary. Mr. Kilaka presented the Cabinet Secretary’s speech in which he stressed on the importance of public procurement as a vital component of Public Finance Management. He stated that Kenya, in its strive to achieve the development goals outlined in Vision 2030, needs an efficient and effective procurement system. For that reason, the ongoing reform in the public procurement system is crucial, he said. A major current reform agenda is the policy on inclusion of women, youth and persons living with disabilities in Public Procurement by setting aside at least 30% of public procurement for them.

The forum was interactive and provided a platform for disadvantaged groups such as women, youth and persons with disabilities to access the gains of the scheme since its inception. The key challenges shared included delayed payments by some public entities causing financial distress to suppliers, particularly for beginners in tendering for Government contracts, and limited access to trade finance (LPO/LSO). Another important concern was the challenge with the Integrated Financial Management System (IFMIS) which has affected the smooth implementation of the Preference and Reservations Scheme.

One success story was from Ms. Joyce Wamba: “Since I trained on how to apply for tenders, I have won several of them and I can now manage business worth Ksh 60 million”. Joyce supplies protective apparel (gloves, uniforms) to the Government.

“Our support has been mainly in the area...” (CONTINUED ON PAGE 11)
of policy advocacy, capacity building for the two parties that are key in this process, namely the suppliers and the buyers. We have also engaged with financial institutions so as to encourage them to come up with innovative products to meet the needs of entrepreneurs who are engaged in tendering for public contracts,” said Karin Fueg, UN Women Kenya Deputy Director.

UN Women Kenya has partnered with PPOA since 2012. One potential area for programmatic action noted was working with PPOA in the Preference and Reservation Scheme, by monitoring its implementation. According to the regulations of 2013, all public entities are required to submit quarterly reports on the implementation of the 30% set aside for PPOA, a process done manually, but if automated, will improve the overall monitoring, data collection and analysis for informed policy decisions.

Another area is on awareness creation on the scheme among the disadvantaged groups, particularly women business owners operating at the county level, by engaging women MCAs and women’s representatives as ambassadors of the scheme, in partnership with the Council of Governors.

The Public Procurement and Disposal Regulations 2011 Scheme (Preference and Reservations) was issued on 8 June 2011, opening a window of opportunity for target groups, including small and micro-enterprises, disadvantaged groups (persons living with disabilities, youth and women), citizen and local contractors. The regulations were reviewed in June 2013 based on experiences, lessons learnt and proposals from stakeholders and with a view of removing bottlenecks identified which prevented the smooth implementation of the scheme. Under the new regulations, the Government resolved to set aside at least 30% of all its procurement spent for the disadvantaged groups. Despite the elaborate legal and regulatory framework, the uptake of these opportunities remains below expectation. This calls for more effort to improve the success of this noble Government policy.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

Jazz means courage and standing up for freedom in the spirit of solidarity: International Jazz Day in Nairobi

Jazz, with its complex expressions in melody, rhythm and harmony, is one of the highest achievements of black culture that originated in America. Since then, jazz has been a great cultural form of expression and exchange, often fused into hi-life and Afrobeat in Africa.

In Kenya, jazz festivals became prominent from 2006 onwards. With the understanding that culture can be a catalyst for building peace and development, and that music is a tool that works towards national cohesion, UNESCO, in partnership with the National Commission for UNESCO and All that Jazz, organized the 2015 International Jazz Day on 1 May in Nairobi. The day culminated in an all-star
concert, featuring some of Kenya’s prominent jazz musicians, namely: Eric Wainaina, Arron Rimbui, Ricky na Marafiki, and young selected talents from Maisha Superstars representing Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

Eric Wainaina, a popular singer-song-writer, who has performed in numerous international music festivals as well as at the UN Headquarters in New York, described jazz as a medium that allows him to communicate and investigate people’s feelings on day-to-day issues. He also noted: “Artists are often the mirrors of society and they need to ask the right questions that people may not have the answers to”. Reflecting on Kenya’s recently increased security tensions, Eric added: “I was angry with the attacks, then I realized that anger was not the right emotion since everyone was feeling the same, including the terrorists themselves. They are doing what they do because they are angry and what we need to do is to spread love and think more critically of creating a peaceful and just society. I think jazz presents us with an opportunity through which we can do that”.

Aaron Rimbui, one of East Africa’s finest pianist, who has been organizing a series of musical workshops to teach and expose children from slums in Nairobi to jazz, also highlighted his experience working with children: “Although most of them hear jazz for the first time, they are very receptive to the power of music. I wish to encourage and inspire them through jazz. The ability to get on stage and have solo performances takes courage, but it is a lot of fun when everything comes together, and I think kids really understand that. I want to continue my work in looking at music as a potential in providing avenues for communication that can help the kids express themselves”.

Paul Munene, a music photographer and great fan of jazz, commented: “When you actually appreciate what a guitar can do, it opens up to the finer part of music, not just to the tunes that you can dance to, but in appreciating the technicality of music. Being exposed to jazz leads to the appreciation of music as good art”.

Representing UNESCO at the event, Ms. Mulekeni Ngulube, Programme Specialist for Culture, said: “In future, we must use the International Jazz Day celebrations as a platform for communicating across cultural, social-economic and generational boundaries. In particular, we must plan to work with young people from marginalized communities around us”.

At UNECO headquarters, the event was woven into the celebration of UNESCO’s 70th anniversary, with the support of the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz and jazz giant, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Herbie Hancock. “Jazz means dialogue, reaching out to others, bringing everyone on board. Jazz means respecting the human rights and dignity of every woman and man, no matter their background. Jazz means understanding others, letting them speak, listening with respect. Jazz means courage – it means standing up for freedom, in the spirit of solidarity,” says Ms. Irina Bokova, UNESCO Director-General.

Culture and development in the post-2015 Development Agenda

A Roundtable calling for further dialogue on culture and development was held at the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON), to commemorate the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development. The discussions also called for the mainstreaming of culture in national policy frameworks within the post-2015 Development Agenda.

The event was organized by UNESCO, in collaboration with the Kenya National Commission for UNESCO and the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC). More than 100 people from the heritage and cultural industry across Kenya, government officials from both central and county governments, cultural experts, academia, artists, creators/ producers/practitioners, media and civil society organizations, participated in the Roundtable.

Emphasizing the relevance of UNESCO’s Constitution in light of
conflicts, violent extremism and hatred in many parts of the world today, Ms. Irina Bokova, the UNESCO Director-General, in her message for the Day said: “the words of UNESCO’s Constitution, drafted 70 years ago, have not aged a day; dialogue can vanquish all misunderstanding and open up an infinite horizon of possibilities for peace and development”. She emphasized the importance of the World Day for Cultural Diversity as an opportunity for using creativity to deepen intercultural dialogue, bring about mutual understanding and build peace.

In her opening remarks at the Roundtable in Nairobi, the UNON Director-General, Ms. Sahle-Work Zewde recognized the timeliness of the theme for the discussions, considering the current international debate on the elaboration of the Sustainable Development Goals. She chronicled the various international efforts that have taken place to mobilize support for the inclusion of culture and cultural diversity in the post-2015 development agenda. Encouraging the cultural stakeholders gathered for the Roundtable, Ms. Zewde recognized the timeliness of the theme for the discussions, considering the current international debate on the elaboration of the Sustainable Development Goals. She chronicled the various international efforts that have taken place to mobilize support for the inclusion of culture and cultural diversity in the post-2015 development agenda. Encouraging the cultural stakeholders gathered for the Roundtable, Ms. Zewde recognized the timeliness of the theme for the discussions, considering the current international debate on the elaboration of the Sustainable Development Goals. She chronicled the various international efforts that have taken place to mobilize support for the inclusion of culture and cultural diversity in the post-2015 development agenda. Encouraging the cultural stakeholders gathered for the Roundtable, Ms. Zewde recognized the timeliness of the theme for the discussions, considering the current international debate on the elaboration of the Sustainable Development Goals. She chronicled the various international efforts that have taken place to mobilize support for the inclusion of culture and cultural diversity in the post-2015 development agenda. Encouraging the cultural stakeholders gathered for the Roundtable, Ms. Zewde said: “although culture and its role in development is not a stand-alone goal among the 17 that are proposed for adoption in September, there is now widespread acceptance that culture plays a crucial role in sustainable development and peace”. She underlined that the Roundtable be used as a platform to “create further awareness about the values of cultural diversity and help mobilize action to use culture as a resource for attaining development goals”.

In his welcoming remarks, the UNIC Director, Mr. Nasser Ega-Musa, expressed his deep appreciation for the diversity and richness of the Kenyan culture. He recognized “the ability of Kenyans to reach across culturally diverse realities and encouraged further mutual respect and recognition as the support base to propel the whole society and the Government, to move forward in a progressive and inclusive manner.”

Explaining the agenda for the day, Ms. Mulekeni Ngulube, Programme Specialist for culture reminded the participants about the need to localize the international debate on culture and development and its context within the Post-2015 Development Agenda. She reminded the participants to use opportunities provided by Kenya’s ratification of the various UNESCO cultural conventions to advocate for the prioritization and inclusion of culture in the national development agenda.

Mr. Jaco du Toit, speaking on behalf of the UNESCO Regional Director for Eastern Africa, noted: “people should be made more aware of the richness of Kenya’s diverse cultures as it provides them with ensuing opportunities for the leverage of the socio-economic development of the country”.

In response, the Director-General of the National Museums of Kenya, Dr. Mzalendo Kibunjia, urged the cultural industry sector in Kenya to “create cultural development goals and indicators in order to effectively advocate for the recognition and inclusion of the sector in the national policy agenda and ensure its budget allocation”.

On the other hand, Professor Karega Munene of the United States International University (USIU) in Nairobi, focused on a thematic approach to the challenges and opportunities that come with cultural diversity.

According to Dr. Joseph Wamocha Nasongo of the National Cohesion and Integration Commission: “intercultural celebration is a means of building bridges between different cultural and ethnic groups, and creating a platform to raise awareness on, for example, the plausible threat of social media when used for the spread of hatred through rumors”.

Mr. Silverse Lisamula Anami, UNESCO expert and Member of Parliament, drew attention to the fact that “inclusive policy fosters peace and tolerance as well as the opportunity to learn about and exchange traditional knowledge and technology”.

The Kenya Boys and Girls choir entertain participants (photo by Masakazu Shibata/UNESCO)
Ms. Joyce Nyairo, UNESCO Expert for the 2005 Convention and Managing Director of Santuri Media Limited, highlighted: “the need for the sector to decide on how to popularize Kenyan culture and focus on product placement. In this light, incubation between the Ministry of Culture and the industry is an asset to create more exposure and profitable opportunities”.

Contributing to the discussion, Dr. Fatuma Ali of USIU, noted: “culture is a way of empowerment and therefore requires the reconsideration and transition of indigenous cultural expressions, with regards to food, clothing and arts among others, into an entrepreneurial industry that fosters socio-economic progress”.

****
Have you taken a tour yet?

Book one now!

Educational  •  Informative  •  Fun

Contact the Visitors’ Service:
Telephone: 020 762 2034
Email: un.tours@unon.org
United Nations Visitors’ Service, Nairobi
@unvisitorsnbi

Mondays to Thursdays
8:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Fridays
8:00 AM to 12:00 PM
EVERY DAY

the United Nations works to tackle global challenges and:

1. Provides food to 90 million people in 73 countries
2. Vaccinates 58 per cent of the world's children, saving 2.5 million lives a year
3. Assists over 36 million refugees and people fleeing war, famine or persecution
4. Combats climate change; heads a campaign to end leaded fuel use in over 100 nations
5. Keeps peace with 120,000 peacekeepers in 16 operations on 4 continents
6. Fights poverty, helping 370 million rural poor achieve better lives in the last 30 years
7. Protects and promotes human rights on site and through some 80 treaties/declarations
8. Mobilizes US$12.4 billion in humanitarian aid to help people affected by emergencies
9. Advances democracy, assisting some 30 countries a year with their elections
10. Promotes maternal health, saving the lives of 30 million women a year

For more information please visit: www.un.org

This Newsletter is compiled by the UN Communications Group in Kenya (UNCG) designed and edited by the United Nations Information Centre, Nairobi.
For more information contact: UNCG Chair, P. O. Box 67578-00100 Nairobi, Kenya.
Tel: 020-76221102, E-mail: nairobi.unic@unon.org

United Nations Information Centre Nairobi @unicnairobi