

Press review: 1st of September, 2010

Commission refuses to support Roma expulsions. Meanwhile, Macedonia's support for EU is decreasing. Elsewhere, Rwanda threatens to withdraw peacekeepers from Darfur, while the AU appeals for boost of Somali mission. In addition, Tanzanian female candidates will receive election training. Furthermore, UNICEF encourages Sudan's move to end use of child soldiers.

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EU Affairs

Commission refuses to support Roma expulsions

A high-level meeting between the European Commission and the French government to discuss the plight of Europe's Roma people ended inconclusively after the Commission refused to validate France's drive to deport Roma, while France refused to countenance any criticism of its actions. A spokesperson said that the European commissioner for justice, Viviane Redding, had told the French that they would have to provide extra information on the deportation programme before the Commission would be prepared to pronounce it legal.

The Commission also refused to satisfy France's wish that it publicly single out Romania and pressure it to spend more of its EU funding allocation on measures to integrate the Roma. The meeting was billed by the Commission as an opportunity to find out more about the French programme, and also to discuss issues of Roma integration in Europe, France made clear that its ambitions focused largely on discussing what Romania, and also Bulgaria, should do to integrate their Roma minorities.

<http://www.europeanvoice.com/article/2010/08/commission-refuses-to-support-france-s-roma-expulsions/68733.aspx>

Enlargement, European Neighbourhood

Macedonian EU support still strong but decreasing

A majority of Macedonians is still supporting the country's bid for EU membership. But the numbers are dwindling and are less than they used to be. Currently, 60% of Macedonian citizens think their country should join the EU, according to Eurobarometer, while last autumn, the figure stood at 66%. That would be an impressive level in a lot of EU member countries. But it is low for the traditionally EU-enthusiastic Macedonians. When the country first started on its path towards accession, polls showed 90% EU support.

For many observers the drop is not worrying itself but rather because it is part of a steady trend. The opposition accuses the government of fomenting euroscepticism among citizens. Vasko Naumovski, the government's vice president for EU integration, said Macedonians were still among the biggest EU-enthusiasts. But he believes that the Greek blocking of Macedonia's accession is also playing a role. According to him, the open questions and problems Macedonia has with some EU members have to be ignored.

<http://waz.euobserver.com/887/30704>

Development

Rwanda threatens to pull peacekeepers from Darfur

Rwanda stepped up its threats to withdraw thousands of peacekeepers from Sudan if the United Nations published a report that accused its forces of massacring civilians and committing genocide in DRC years ago. Rwanda appears to be trying to play hardball with the UN and is using the fact that the country plays a linchpin role in the troubled Darfur region for maximum leverage. Rwanda has 3,300 peacekeepers in Darfur, and a Rwandan general is in charge of the entire United Nations-African Union peacekeeping mission.

The UN report that Rwanda is trying to block, claims that in the mid-1990s invading troops from Rwanda and their rebel allies killed tens of thousands of members of the Hutu ethnic group, including many civilians. Until recently, Rwanda had been celebrated as one of the most promising success stories in Africa, a nation that had rebuilt itself after genocide in 1994, boasting impressive economic growth rates, low crime and innovative ways of fighting poverty. But donor nations have steadily increased their criticism of Rwanda's brand of democracy, especially after the country's president, Paul Kagame, won re-election in August.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/01/world/africa/01rwanda.html?ref=africa>

African Union appeals for Somali mission boost

The African Union has appealed to member states to contribute additional troops to strengthen the AU Mission in Somalia and help to create a local force as part of efforts to create a functioning government. The AU Peace and Security Council called for the strengthening of the Somali national police force to deal with militants who have consistently performed attacks against the government. It also called on African countries to contribute troops to AMISOM to enable the force reach its authorized troop levels of 8,000 troops, and said efforts to train a local police force for Somalia should be prioritized.

The Council said that President Sharif-led Transitional Federal Government (TFG) should continue talks with militants, and urged the TFG and the Ahlu Sunnah Waljamaa to implement an agreement reached in March to work together on battling Islamists seeking full control of Somalia. It hailed the efforts of Burundi and Uganda, the only countries with troops inside Somalia, for their support towards efforts to bring stability in the country. Efforts by the African Union to get additional troops for Somalia have been slowed down by the lack of military equipment, needed to enable the rapid deployment.

<http://www.afriquejet.com/news/africa-news/african-union-appeals-for-somali-mission-boost-2010083155289.html>

Disadvantaged Groups

Tanzania: Female candidates to receive election training

The United Nations is seeking to empower women candidates ahead of Tanzania's general elections in October. The trainings will aim at improving their skills in public speaking, media engagement, campaign planning, advocacy and lobbying. During workshops conducted throughout September by the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), candidates will also learn about Tanzanian current political issues, roles of Parliament, the House of Representatives, local councils, election laws, rules and regulations.

The workshops will be conducted by 30 facilitators from across the country who have received training from UNIFEM (part of the new gender entity 'UN Women'). UNIFEM is also collaborating with UNESCO to coach community radio coordinators how to spread awareness on voter information to women in remote areas. Journalists will be coached to provide fair and equal coverage of female candidates ahead of the 31 October polls. The project, which began last year, is aimed at helping the National Electoral Commission and the Zanzibar Electoral Commission plan and incorporate elements of the electoral process such as voter registration, voter education, coordinating election observers, and communications.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201009010032.html>

UNICEF hails Sudan's moves to end use of child soldiers

UNICEF welcomed measures by the Sudanese government to end the use of child soldiers by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). UNICEF said in a statement that the formation of the child protection unit followed an action plan, signed by SPLA, to release all children in its ranks by November 2010 and to end the exploitation of children as soldiers across southern Sudan.

It described the development as a 'milestone for the rights of children' in the country. The programme is testimony to the commitment of the government of Southern Sudan and the SPLA to accelerate the establishment of an environment where the rights of all the children are respected. UNICEF, on its part, would provide both financial and technical support to carry out sensitisation campaigns and raise awareness with the SPLA officers regarding the legal framework on child rights. The UN agency would also enlighten the officials about international and national laws that prohibit recruitment and use of children by armed forces and armed groups.

<http://www.afriquejet.com/news/africa-news/unicef-hails-sudan%27s-moves-to-end-use-of-child-soldiers-2010090155322.html>

Current Calls for proposals:

1. **Egypt 2010**, EIDHR, Strengthening the Role of Civil Society in Promoting Human Rights and Democratic Reform. Country-Based Support Scheme (CBSS) – deadline for submission of proposals: **1 September 2010**

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?ADSSChck=1282039965711&do=publi.detPUB&searchtype=AS&aoet=36538&ccnt=7573876&debpub=&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&nbPubliList=50&page=1&aoref=130174>

2. **Kenya**, Non State Actors in Development Action in partner countries – deadline for submission of **concept notes**: **13 September 2010**

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?ADSSChck=1282039800422&do=publi.detPUB&searchtype=AS&aoet=36538&ccnt=7573876&debpub=&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&nbPubliList=50&page=1&aoref=130380>

3. **Croatia**, IPA Info 2009 Civil Society EU Info – deadline for submission of proposals: **15 September 2010**.

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?ADSSChck=1282038450582&do=publi.detPUB&searchtype=AS&aoet=36538&ccnt=7573876&debpub=&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&nbPubliList=50&page=1&aoref=130345>

4. **Croatia**, Building Capacities of CSOs for implementing Innovative Social Service Delivery Programmes in the Areas of Special State Concern – deadline for submission of proposals: **21 September 2010**

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?ADSSChck=1282214268224&do=publi.detPUB&searchtype=AS&aoet=36538&ccnt=7573876&debpub=&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&nbPubliList=50&page=2&aoref=130189>

5. **Indonesia**, Aid to Uprooted People – deadline for submission of proposals: **29 September 2010**

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?ADSSChck=1282039675373&do=publi.detPUB&searchtype=AS&aoet=36538&ccnt=7573876&debpub=&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&nbPubliList=50&page=1&aoref=130206>

6. Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development Actions in partner countries, Egypt – deadline for submission of **concept notes**: **30 September 2010**

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?ADSSChck=1282041406724&do=publi.detPUB&searchtype=AS&aoet=36538&ccnt=7573876&debpub=&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&nbPubliList=50&page=1&aoref=130352>

7. European Instrument for Democracy & Human Rights (EIDHR): Country-Based Support Schemes (CBSS) Namibia – deadline for submission of **concept notes**:
18th October 2010

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?ADSSChck=1282040746158&do=publi.detPUB&searchtype=AS&aoet=36538&ccnt=7573876&debpub=&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&nbPubliList=50&page=1&aoref=130432>

8. 1st Call for project proposals: “Greece - the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia IPA Cross-Border Programme” 2007-2013; deadline for submission of proposals: **18 October 2010**

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?ADSSChck=1282038889714&do=publi.detPUB&searchtype=AS&aoet=36538&ccnt=7573876&debpub=&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&nbPubliList=50&page=1&aoref=130366>

9. Non-state actors and local authorities in development. Non-state actors – In-country interventions, Republic of Moldova – deadline for submission of proposals:
3 November 2010

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?ADSSChck=1282040119118&do=publi.detPUB&searchtype=AS&aoet=36538&ccnt=7573876&debpub=&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&nbPubliList=50&page=1&aoref=130382>