

Press review: 25th of August, 2010

EU vies for special status at UN. Meanwhile, Ukraine's president claims loyalty to both EU and Russia. Elsewhere, workshop encourages Cameroonian youths to participate in elections. In addition, Somalia opposes new draft constitution, while the UN is criticized for failing to achieve MDGs on women equality.

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EU Affairs

EU vies for special status at UN

The United Nations General Assembly is to vote next month on a resolution granting special status to the European Union. Until now, the EU has only had observer status in the UN, without the right to vote. Changing this is a 'very delicate matter,' observers stress. EU members France and Britain, loathe to lose their influence on the UN Security Council, were initially highly reluctant about the idea.

Ultimately, they have agreed to a compromise under which the head of EU diplomacy, Catherine Ashton, will have the right to speak on the EU's behalf only in the General Assembly but not in the Security Council. Still, the outcome of the September vote remains unknown because other organisations, such as the Arab League or the African Union, could also apply for special status.

<http://www.presseurop.eu/en/content/news-brief/322021-eu-vies-special-status-un>

Enlargement, European Neighbourhood

Ukraine's president pledges allegiance to both EU and Russia

Ukraine's pro-Russian president Viktor Yanukovich gave assurances of his commitment to EU integration, while claiming that his rapprochement with Moscow is not hindering, but contributing to the process. Since coming to power, Mr Yanukovich has received positive signals from EU officials, who applauded the fact that his first visit abroad was to Brussels. But besides the pro-EU rhetoric, the new president has also sought to restore ties with Moscow and signed a controversial deal, allowing the Russian fleet to stay for another 20 years in the Ukrainian port of Sevastopol in return for cheaper gas.

Opposition parties have accused him of selling out Ukraine's interests and of clamping down on media. 'The danger of Mr Yanukovich's pledge of allegiance to both the EU and Russia, is that it overlooks the way Russia's non-democratic models are being exported to Ukraine,' observers are concerned. They also add that it would not be helpful for its EU aspirations if Ukraine imports the Russian style of doing business, where companies are subordinated to the government and there is lack of transparency and human rights.

<http://euobserver.com/9/30667>

Development

Cameroon: Youths urged to participate in elections

A one-day workshop was organised in Yaounde, Cameroon by the World Dynamics of Young People (WDYP). The workshop brought together some 35 youths from different youth associations and organisations in the country. It was part of activities to mark the 2010 edition of the International Youth Day under the slogan: "Youth and the next electoral processes: How can young people better involve themselves in the electoral process."

The participants listened to presentations on topics such as the fundamental steps of an electoral process, the key actors of electoral process in Cameroon, role and importance of elections in democracy and the question on citizen participation in elections. The President of World Dynamics of Young People, said the aim of the workshop was to make young people understand their role as citizens and to make them have profound interest and participate massively in the electoral process in Cameroon, especially in the upcoming presidential elections next year. The workshop is considered a springboard for some and a stimulant for all the participants to have a better mastery of democratic institutions in the country.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201008240769.html>

Somalia: Parliamentary opposition to new draft federal constitution mounts

Opponents to Somalia's new draft constitution argue that the draft contains 'foreign ideas' and it has been prepared outside the country. Observers claim that individual interests have been infiltrated to the draft, making it unacceptable. 'The new constitution is not following the rules of the Transitional Federal Charter of Somali Government, and it looks like something that some people have their own interest in,' a MP said, adding that they will not accept the new constitution.

Other observers claim that the constitution itself is good, but oppose how the government wants to pass it in the current state of affairs. TFG Minister of Constitution and Federal Affairs provided to the members of Somali Transitional Federal Parliament the draft of the new constitution and said Somalis will soon vote for it through the media. It is not yet clear whether or not powerful states in Somalia, such as the northern region of Puntland, will accept the new constitution without being consulted first

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201008240271.html>

Disadvantaged Groups

Gender equality goals miss the mark, women's groups say

A month ahead of the 2010 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) review summit at the United Nations, some women's groups are voicing concern that member states' commitment to women's issues is insufficient and slowing the progress towards gender parity worldwide. A 'draft outcome' document was released and has been circulated among U.N. groups in anticipation of September's summit. It presents the achievement made in regard to the MDG.

Progress towards targets of MDG 3, such as boosting women's political participation and eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2015, has been halting. Several women's advocacy groups are blaming this disparity on the U.N.'s inadequate commitment to women's rights. Polly Truscott, Amnesty International's deputy representative to the U.N. says the approach of the UN towards women's political participation was incorrect. According to him, women's participation is treated improperly as an 'act of charity', as a 'key goal in itself' and not as 'a basic human right'. Truscott has produced an edited version of the document that includes a stronger focus on human rights, categorising women's empowerment as a 'fundamental value' and 'an issue of social justice'. The final document will be presented during the summit in September.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=52589>

Current Calls for proposals:

Dear Member, please find the Current Calls for Proposals below. As no new CfPs have been published today, I am offering you a compiled list of the ones with the closest deadlines.

1. **Egypt 2010**, European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (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&aet=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&aet=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&aet=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&aet=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&aet=36538&ccnt=7573876&debpub=&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&nbPubliList=50&page=1&aoref=130206>