

At African Union Summit in Kampala...

U.S. Attorney General Announces New Anti-Corruption Initiative

Reaffirming the Obama administration’s commitment to helping the African continent achieve its potential for promoting peace, development, justice and opportunity, Attorney General Eric Holder announced a new initiative to combat official corruption and promote good governance in an address before the African Union Summit in Kam-



Eric Holder

pala, Uganda, on July 25. “Today, when the World Bank estimates that more than one trillion dollars in bribes are paid each year out of a world economy of 30 trillion dollars, this problem cannot be ignored,” Holder said. “And this practice must never be condoned. As many here have learned—often in painful and devastating ways—corruption imperils development, stability, competition, and economic investment. It also undermines the promise of democracy.” Holder said the Kleptocracy Asset Recovery Initiative will mobilize a team of U.S. prosecutors exclusively to com-

bat corruption and recover public funds “for their intended—and proper—use: for the people of our nations.” “We’re assembling a team of prosecutors who will focus exclusively on this work and build upon efforts already underway to deter corruption, hold offenders accountable, and protect public resources,” Holder said. Along with new prosecution efforts, the Obama administration will continue working with African governments to strengthen their judicial sectors and work with African business leaders to “encourage, ensure and enforce sound corporate governance,” Holder said.

ORR Honors Three Leaders During Annual Event

Three members of the refugee resettlement community were recognized “for their invaluable support to refugees resettling in the United States” during ORR’s June 7-8 National Consultation event in Washington, D.C. Edwin Silverman, Illinois State Refugee Coordinator, received a Lifetime Commitment Award in recognition of his 34-year career devoted to serving refugees in his state, mentoring other service providers, shaping refugee resettlement programs, and transferring institutional knowledge in the field.

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Dana Mercz, program director for Catholic Charities’ Community Services Unaccompanied Minors program in Arizona, was recognized for her 20-years of service helping refugee adolescents develop appropriate skills to enter adulthood and become contributing members

of their communities. “These individuals have helped countless numbers of refugees, including young children and adults, overcome their hardships and transition smoothly into our country,” said Carmen R. Nazario, HHS Assistant Secretary for Children and Families. “I congratulate them on their achievements and for giving the gift of a new start.”

He repeated President Obama’s July 2009 statement in Ghana that “Africa’s future is up to Africans,” and reaffirmed the U.S. commitment that the future of the continent will not be compromised, and its progress will not be derailed or delayed. Along with promoting good governance, Holder said the United States wants to strengthen its partnership with Africans in combating terrorism, creating the [Continued on page 2]



Honoree Edwin Silverman is shown following an appearance last year at an event conducted by the Ethiopian Community Association in Chicago. He received a Distinguished Service Award from ECDC at the organization’s annual conference in 2006.

Photo by Jessica Binsch/MEDILL

*In My Opinion...****Africa-America Relations: The Big Picture***

Just over a week after America's senior officials in African affairs attended the African Union summit in Uganda, urging current leaders of the continent's 53 nations to improve governance, curb public corruption, and strengthen democratic institutions, more than 100 of the continent's future leaders were scheduled to arrive in Washington for the President's Forum with Young African Leaders, an event designed to establish lasting partnerships in pursuit of common security and prosperity. Descriptions of both events included frequent references to President Obama's affirmation during his trip to Africa last year that American leaders recognize fully that "the future of Africa is in the hands of Africans," identifying their goal as helping the continent's people achieve their own aspirations. For those of us engaged in refugee affairs, the confluence of the two events offers some insight into

**Tsehaye Teferra, Ph.D.**

President Obama's leadership qualities, and encouragement about the nation's commitment to achieving humanitarian goals. An essential element of effective leadership is the ability to grasp the "big picture" in policy development and implementation. Obama has demonstrated that quality in addressing many of the domestic and foreign policy issues that he inherited, doing so with analysis about how the action will impact the achievement of long-term goals.

In African refugee affairs, he has maintained support for the nation's refugee resettlement program and for UNHCR's protection and assistance efforts on the continent, responses to the immediate needs of those being uprooted by current violent conflicts. Through the high-level representation at the AU summit in Kampala and in sponsoring the Youth Forum in Washington, D.C., he has demonstrated his commitment to helping Africans achieve what must surely be among their highest aspirations, namely removing the causes of the conflicts.

"The political and economic success of Africa depends a great deal on the effectiveness and reliability of its democratic institutions," said Bruce Wharton, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs in the Department of State's African Affairs Bureau. "The President's Forum with Young African Leaders is an opportunity to highlight the positive trends in governance in Africa today, and for Americans in policymaking, business and civil society to learn how to support democratic developments across the continent."

The timing of the Forum was designed to celebrate 50 years of independence for 17 countries across sub-Saharan Africa and to acknowledge the young demographic profile of the region. It was planned to include a "town hall" meeting at the White House with the young leaders from civil society and the private sector discussing their vision for transforming their societies over the next 50 years.

While the young leaders will be pondering their roles in Africa's future, participants in the 9th Annual African Growth and Opportunities Act Forum will be receiving progress reports and examining ways to further maximize economic development and trade. At the same time, a group of women business leaders from the African Women's Entrepreneurship Program will meet with Department of State and USAID officers to explore increased opportunities for women in using the AGOA program as a vehicle for exports and investment in sub-Saharan Africa.

To comprehend how these events relate to refugee flows and Obama's big picture of Africa-America relations, we need only recall this excerpt from his speech in Cairo last year: "Governments that respect the will of their own people, that govern by consent and not coercion, are more prosperous, they are more stable, and more successful than governments that do not."

U.S. Attorney General Launches New Effort To Curb Corruption

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conditions and capacity for economic growth and promoting the well-being and equal rights of African women and girls.

"In each of these areas, the United States intends to serve not as a patron but as a partner," he said.

About the global struggle for women's equality, Holder said the new initiative would strengthen efforts with partner governments across the continent to educate Africans about violence against women and girls; build the capacity of local governments to serve and assist victims; and strengthen the ability of Africa's legal systems and law enforcement communities.

He noted some progress being made through the Women's Justice Empowerment Initiative, a \$55 million program in Africa developed by his department and USAID.

"This work is making a difference," Holder said. "It must be a priority for all on this continent. This work is changing lives, families, and communities. And while I believe it has the power and the possibility to transform entire cultures and countries, I am certain that its ongoing success and impact is directly linked to the engagement and commitment of you: Africa's leaders."

"Your work is of special and emotional importance to me – and not only because I am proud to serve alongside my nation's first African-American President or proud to be its first African-American Attorney General," Holder said. "I also join with you, and with my fellow citizens, in celebrating Africa's success because I recognize that the fate of my own country is intertwined with each of yours."

Also participating in the Summit were Assistant Secretary of State Johnnie Carson and U.S. Ambassador to the African Union Michael Battle.

"Our visit here was an opportunity to underscore the importance that we attach to the work of the African Union," Carson said, applauding the "increasingly more sophisticated and more principled" work of the AU leadership.

USAID Establishes Assistance Link With African Union

As part of President Obama's commitment to partner with and strengthen African institutions, the United States Agency for International Development and the African Union recently signed their first long-term assistance agreement to advance prosperity, peace, and stability in Africa.

The agreement extends through 2013

and covers programs worth approximately \$5.8 million through FY 2011.

The agreement was signed by USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah and AU Commission Deputy Chairperson Erastus Mwencha at the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Forum in Washington, D.C.

"USAID has a long history of work-

ing with African institutions," according to a signing statement issued by the agency. "This agreement will not only reinforce that commitment and increase the effectiveness of USAID's regional programs, but it also represents an investment in the AU's mission to set regional standards and promote development among its member states and African regional institutions."

USAID and the AU are working together in several sectors, including democracy and governance, as well as support for agriculture and food security, through the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program, one of USAID's key partners in the Feed the Future Initiative.

That \$3.5 billion food security program helps 12 African-focus countries in modernizing their farm sectors. Through the AGOA program, U.S. imports and exports totaled \$104.52 billion in 2008, a 28 percent increase from the previous year

USAID is also launching work in additional sectors that reflect both U.S. and African priorities, including adapting to climate change and reducing maternal mortality.

Sarah Costa to Head Women's Refugee Commission

Sarah Costa, currently serving as regional director of the Global Fund for Women, will assume leadership of the Women's Refugee Commission in September, according to a recent announcement by Robin Fray Carey, Co-Chair of the New York-based organization that advocates on behalf of refugees, children and young people. She will succeed Carolyn Makinson who has moved to London to direct the International Rescue Committee UK.

Costa is a former program offi-

cer for the Ford Foundation in Brazil and New York, developing and managing international and national programs on gender, sexuality and reproductive health, women's rights, HIV/AIDS and health policy. She was Professor of Women's Health, Department of Epidemiology and Quantitative Methods in Health, National School of Public Health in Brazil from 1980 to 1994. She holds a D.Phil. degree in Social Medicine from the University of Oxford.

Founded in 1989, the Women's Refugee Commission advocates for laws, policies and programs to improve the lives and protect the rights of refugee and internally displaced women, children and young people, including those seeking asylum.



Sara Costa

British Photojournalist Alixandra Fazzina Honored With 2010 Nansen Award

Alixandra Fazzina, a British photojournalist who has documented the lives of uprooted refugees in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Eastern Europe through powerful and moving photo essays, has been named recipient of UNHCR's 2010 Nansen Refugee Award.

"By unearthing and so vividly portraying the individual stories of uprooted people she has achieved something remarkable, said UNHCR António Guterres. "Her commitment, empathy and devotion to getting to the bottom of every story make her an exemplary chronicler of the world's most vulnerable people."

"I am overwhelmed and absolutely delighted to have been recognized by UNHCR with this distinguished honor," Fazzina said. "I have always sought to bring greater attention to those forced to flee conflict, violence and misery. To lose one's home and have to start a new life is one of the greatest challenges any-

body can face, yet millions every year have no other choice."

Fazzina began her career as a photojournalist embedded with the British army in Bosnia in 2005. She has since focused on chronicling the human suffering caused by war.

The Nansen award committee praised in particular her coverage of land mine victims in Kosovo, civilians stranded behind enemy lines in Angola, rape as a weapon of war in Sierra Leone, the



Alixandra Fazzina

abuse of children by militias in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda, and refugee situations in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Between 2006 and 2008,

Fazzina chronicled the exodus of migrants and refugees from Somalia as they sought to cross the Gulf of Aden to Yemen and the Arabian Peninsula. Spending extended periods of time with those looking to make the hazardous journey aboard smugglers' boats, she captured first-hand the despair and suffering of people seeking safety and a better life. The result was the book, *A Million Shillings – Escape from Somalia* to be published in September.

Given annually to an individual or organization for outstanding work on behalf of refugees, the award includes a \$100,000 prize that the winner can donate to a cause of his or her choice. It was created in 1954 in honor of Fridtjof Nansen, a Norwegian explorer, scientist, and the first U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees.

The Award Ceremony will take place on October 5 in Geneva.

NEWS BRIEFS

Envoy Welcomes AU Boost in Somalia Peacekeepers

The United Nations envoy to Somalia welcomed a decision by the African Union to send an additional 2,000 peacekeepers to the troubled state, saying there was heightened concern across the continent over the consequences of continuing violence in the Horn of Africa country.

The decision to boost the African Mission in Somalia was made as the African Union summit ended in the Ugandan capital of Kampala in late July.

The summit was held in the wake of twin bomb attacks in Kampala that killed about 70 people. Al Shabaab, a Somali-based militant group that is waging war against the country's Transitional Federal Government, claimed responsibility for the blasts, saying they were intended to avenge the alleged killing of Somalis by Ugandan troops serving in Somalia.

World Leaders Observe Nelson Mandela Day

Joining diplomatic and human rights leaders around the world, President Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton observed the first annual Nelson Mandela International Day on July 18 with statements praising the former South African president's "generosity of spirit and unfailing courage in the face of overwhelming obstacles."

Extending birthday greetings to the 92-year-old leader, President Obama said the world "continues to be blessed with his extraordinary vision, leadership and spirit," urging people to honor Mandela's years of sacrifice through acts of service to others.

"After 26 years locked in an apartheid prison," Secretary Clinton's statement said, "he emerged to lead South Africa's transition from the division of apartheid to an integrated, multi-racial democracy. He embraced his jailers without bitterness or hatred and provided an example to his own people and people everywhere. I am honored and humbled to call President Mandela my friend."

Somalis in Uganda Face Xenophobic Attacks

In the wake of recent terrorist attacks by a Somali rebel group in Uganda, UNHCR expressed alarm in late July over xenophobic incidents, round-ups, and deportations of displaced Somalis both within and outside their country's borders.

"This increasingly negative perception of uprooted Somalis gives us cause for concern over the wider refugee protection environment in the region and the rest of Africa," said UNHCR spokesperson Melissa Fleming.

In several countries, displaced Soma-

lis have been approaching UNHCR offices to request registration or renewal of their refugee identity documents. The agency is particularly concerned over moves by local authorities in the semi-autonomous region of Puntland in northern Somalia, where more than 900 internally displaced persons have recently been sent back to conflict-stricken central Somalia.

Security Council Renews Darfur Peace Mandate

Demanding that the parties to the conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan immediately end the fighting as well as attacks on civilians, peacekeepers and humanitarian personnel in late July, the U.N. Security Council renewed the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur for 12 months

The Council urged all parties to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law, taking all possible measures to protect civilians from sexual violence and create conditions conducive to the voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons. It reaffirmed the importance of promoting the political process for Darfur, underlining the need for systematic and sustained engagement by all Darfur stakeholders in creating an environment conducive to peace and security "through constructive and open dialogue"

FY 2010 African Refugee Admissions

As of July 31, 2010 • Ceiling for FY 2010 is 15,500

| Country of Origin | Refugees | Country of Origin | Refugees |
|--------------------------|----------|-------------------|--------------|
| Burundi | 432 | Ivory Coast | 4 |
| Cameroon | 6 | Liberia | 226 |
| Central African Republic | 19 | Mauritania | 57 |
| Chad | 20 | Rwanda | 175 |
| Congo | 154 | Senegal | 2 |
| Dem. Rep. Congo | 2,565 | Sierra Leone | 35 |
| Equatorial Guinea | 9 | Somalia | 3,507 |
| Eritrea | 1,777 | Sudan | 373 |
| Ethiopia | 362 | Togo | 2 |
| Gabon | 1 | Uganda | 22 |
| Gambia | 7 | Zimbabwe | 7 |
| Guinea | 3 | TOTAL | 9,766 |

Source: U.S. Department of State, PRM

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