

Kenya Domestic Media, March 21st 2011 (Covering Mar 15th – Mar 21st)

By Fatima Arkin, MIGS Reporter for Kenya

State Owned Media

KBC Radio, Nairobi, in English 1000 gmt 21 Mar 2011

“Kenyan public transport operators protest return of criminal gang”

Public service vehicle operators in parts of the Eastland withdrew their vehicles from the road following the return of the outlawed gang Mungiki on the matatu termini. Commuters were forced to walk long distances to catch matatus. Embakasi MP Ferdinand Waititu has since denied ordering Mungiki to return to the termini.

Private Media

KTN TV, Nairobi, in English 1000 gmt 21 Mar 2011

“Kenyan Mau Mau fighters demand 1.6 trillion dollars from Britain”

Members of the Mau Mau Original Trust fund are camping at the Freedom Corner in Uhuru Park demanding over 1.6 trillion dollars from the British government as compensation for atrocities committed against them by the colonial government. The members, who marched to the British Embassy this morning, are calling on the British government to honour a promise made by the former British ambassador to Kenya, Edward Clay.

Daily Nation website, Nairobi, in English 21 Mar 2011

“How weapons are sneaked into Kenya” by Alphonse Shiundu

The best method, the smugglers say, is to wrap the cargo in plastic sheeting heavily smeared with engine oil to disguise it as boat spare parts. The weapons can also be hidden in dried fish and mixed with a fresh fish catch. In other instances, it is concealed in sugar or flour smuggled from war-torn Somalia.

“Police seize videos used to promote terror” by Alphonse Shiundu

The "war against terror" in Kenya is now focusing on audio and video recordings often disguised as "mawaidha" (general teachings) that call people to join the Jihad. The Anti-Terror Police Unit [APTU], the National Security Intelligence Service and the Criminal Investigation Department have been collecting these recordings in their attempt to understand the fluid terrorist underworld. The recordings helped investigators piece together crucial roles played by some Muslim preachers in the recruitment of Kenyan youth to Al-Shabab. According to official sources some of the preachers have been instrumental in executing attacks in the region, but hide all traces linking them to the crimes.

“Hand grenades for sale at Sh4,000”

Hand grenades are smuggled from Somalia and sold to criminals and extremists for as low as 4 000 shillings. The bombs are exported by Al-Shabab for profit and to ferment a Holy War in the region. Arms dealers in the Somali coast use middlemen and smugglers to supply weapons to Kenya and surrounding areas.

The Standard website, Nairobi, in English 21 Mar 2011

“Abandoned mine kills seven year old in Mandera” by Cyrus Ombati and David Ochami

An abandoned motor bomb exploded in Mandera town leaving one child dead and three others injured. Meanwhile, more Kenyan troops were mobilized to the Liboi border to control the influx of refugees as fighting continues between the TFG (Somalia's Transitional Federal Government) and Al-Shabab. Police and military officials said the TFG was pushing the Al-Shabab from their stronghold hence displacing many residents.

Sunday Standard, Nairobi, in English 20 Mar 2011

“Wetang'ula takes Ford-K mantle as rivals keep off” by Isaiah Lucheli and Faith Kirui

Ford-Kenya conducted elections that saw former Foreign Affairs Minister Moses Wetang'ula elected party leader unopposed. In his acceptance speech, Wetang'ula vowed to revitalize and strengthen the party by organizing a nationwide recruitment drive. He challenged those fighting the party from within to resign instead of issuing threats. However, Wetang'ula extended an olive branch to Eugene Wamalwa and Kombo to rejoin the party saying they're destined for leadership. Cabinet Minister John Munyes clinched the chairmanship position while Kimilili MP Simiyu Eseli was elected the secretary general in an exercise where all the party officials secured their positions without any ballot being cast.

“Uhuru, Ruto and Wamalwa to forge alliance” by Allan Kisia and Roselyne Obala

The trio vowed to bring together the three regions they represent in the quest for the top seat. However, they maintained support was needed of other regions as no single community can push its own to the presidency. After receiving invitations from the Labour Party of Kenya, New Ford-Kenya, and Peoples Democratic Party Wamalwa promised to notify his supporters soon as to which party he will choose. Housing Minister Soita Shitanda promised to support Wamalwa for president.

KTN TV, Nairobi, in English 1800 gmt 19 Mar 2011

“Kenyan journalist records statement following threats to his life”

The Standard senior political writer Juma Kwayera recorded a statement after a caller who identified himself only as John told him to stop what he has been doing or risk being shot. The caller claimed to have been hired to kill Kwayera and that the police will not be of any help.

Daily Nation website, Nairobi, in English 19 Mar 2011

“ICC sets new date for Uhuru, Muthaura” by Oliver Mathenge

Having recently received additional information, ICC Pre-Trial Chamber II changed the appearance date for Deputy PM Kenyatta, Postmaster General Ali and Head of Civil Service Muthaura to April 8. Meanwhile, a battle for information filed by victims of Kenya's election violence intensified at The Hague with the Office of Public Counsel for the Defence also seeking access. The Office for the Defence asked Pre-Trial Chamber II to evaluate the information and decide what can be disclosed to other participants. Ocampo filed an application for access to the report with Judge Kaul seemingly implying that Ocampo hadn't conducted independent investigations and relied on the same human rights reports presented to support his case.

“Kenyans evacuated in Japan nuclear scare” by Mike Mwaniki and agencies

The Kenyan embassy in Japan is temporarily closed due to a nuclear crisis. The first group of 15 Kenyans evacuated is expected to arrive in Nairobi on Saturday morning. The government said that since the tsunami, contact has been maintained with the 231 Kenyans living in Japan and their safety has been confirmed. Kenyan athlete Dorcas Obare was found after fears that he disappeared in the tsunami.

The Standard website, Nairobi, in English 19 Mar 2011

“Kalonzo praises China for backing deferral bid” by Mutinda Mwanzia

VP Musyoka said the move was a demonstration that China understands the challenges facing Kenya in prosecuting perpetrators of post-election violence. He said Kenya was still seeking support from all members of the UN Security Council including those who have declared their opposition to the move.

“Defecting Somali soldiers arrested” by Boniface Ogeri

Kenyan police arrested three Somali army deserters. North Eastern police boss Leo Nyongesa declined to comment on the matter, but sources say attempts by the officers to defect was an embarrassment to the Kenyan government. The defect lays credence to claims that some of the TFG trained forces were members of the Al-Shabab militia. It's believed that the last batch of Somali soldiers training in Isiolo and Manyani have been sent to the war torn country. Security was beefed up in North Eastern and Coast following reports some Al-Shabab militia may have sneaked into the country. The main border is officially closed and troops operating there are not allowing visitors.

Daily Nation website, Nairobi, in English 18 Mar 2011

“Kenya oil firms push for higher fuel prices” by Nation Team

Kenya oil firms push for higher fuel prices after the National Oil Corporation (Nock) procured 55 000 tonnes of expensive fuel. Oil companies are refusing to buy it unless they're allowed to offset costs to the consumer. Oil companies say the consignment is way above the price Nock awarded the Oil Industry Tender System (OTS) in February. After a meeting convened by Energy Permanent Secretary Patrick Nyoike, it was agreed that a smaller committee be appointed to look into the matter and make recommendations. News filtering in showed that the recommendations of the smaller committee had been rejected by the ministry, deepening the stalemate. If Nock doesn't off-load fuel to the market soon, there will be a gridlock in the fuels stores and pipeline creating major supply disruptions.

"Ship with Kenya arms sets sail" by Nation Correspondent

The ship carrying four containers of arms belonging to the Kenyan military was released after being detained in Angola for two weeks. Angolan authorities indicated that they were waiting to communicate with the Kenyan Government regarding the vessel's release. Military spokesman Bogita Ongeru said they couldn't involve themselves in the matter until the ship arrived in Mombasa where ownership of the weapons would be verified. A meeting between the US State Department and Angolan government officials "was a positive step towards allowing the vessel to complete the voyage" commented Celion Gordon, an official of shipping line Maersk Constellation.

“Uganda terror case referred to regional court” by Nation Reporter

The East African Court of Justice (EACJ) will determine the legality to extradite Kenyan suspects to Uganda in light of charges faced by Kenyans over the Kampala bombings. The case set before Justice Nicholas Ombija will remain on hold, awaiting the verdict of the EACJ.

The Standard website, Nairobi, in English 18 Mar 2011

“Doubts over when Kibaki term ends” by Martin Mutua and Lucianne Limo

Confusion arises from the fact that the constitution, decrees: "A General Election of Members of Parliament shall be held on the second Tuesday in August in every fifth year." However, according to Transitional Clause Number 10, "The National Assembly existing immediately before the effective date shall continue as the National Assembly for the purposes of this Constitution for its unexpired term." MPs don't want Kibaki to vacate office in August because they too would have to seek a fresh mandate. It is also believed Kibaki would want to stay in office for the complete five years of his last term. A meeting yesterday meant to find common ground between the Interim Independent Elections Commissions (IIEC), the Commission for Implementation of the Constitution (CIC), Kenya Law Reform Commission (KLRC), and the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs ended in a standoff. A landmark commission insisted the yet-to-be constituted Supreme Court will have to resolve the potential impasse.

“Hotspots yet to heal from poll chaos” by David Ochami and Faith Jebiwott

National Cohesion and Integration Commission chairman Mzalendo Kibunjia said that ethnic tension persists in Western, Nyanza, Rift Valley and Central provinces, three years after post-poll chaos. Dr. Kibunjia said the ICC trials could lead to justice, but not reconciliation. Politicians commenting on the ICC propagate what he described as an "unhealthy mix of politics with judicial processes".

“Iteere: Probe not linked to deferral push” by Isaiah Lucheli

Police Commissioner Mathew Iteere said the probe wasn't linked to the ICC deferral, but confirmed that the police were investigating post-election violence to arrest and charge those involved. He said investigations are an effort to ensure that victims get justice.

“Kenya's ICC deferral bid in UN stalls” by Alex Ndegwa

A meeting to discuss the deferral of two ICC cases never took off amid conflicting reports as to what may have forced its cancellation and whether it was even scheduled in the first place. Applications are being received for the position of Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) with Justice Minister Kilonzo expecting an appointment to be made by mid next month. The applications for the posts of Chief Justice and Deputy Chief Justice will close next Friday. The weakness of Kenya's two-pronged strategy to challenge the admissibility of the two ICC cases and the jurisdiction of the ICC has been magnified by the total absence of credible, tangible efforts to prosecute post poll suspects.

Daily Nation website, Nairobi, in English 17 Mar 2011

“CIC: Kenya general election due in August 2012” by Lucas Barasa

The Commission on the Implementation of the Constitution (CIC) said the next elections are due in August 2012. However, a debate rages on as some MPs place the date of the next elections as December 2012 while others advocate January 2013. Chairman of the commission Charles Nyachae maintained that the implementation of the constitution is on schedule despite public anxiety of delays due to political bickering. He said the Interim Independent Electoral Commission's (IIEC) concerns over time available to prepare for the first general elections are legitimate. Nyachae said the CIC has written to IIEC "with a view to meeting them and assisting in achieving this goal".

The Standard website, Nairobi, in English 17 Mar 2011

“Kenya's next election set for December 2012” by Martin Mutua

The next general election will officially be held in December 2012 not August as had been envisaged by the new constitution. Kenya is already behind schedule on enacting a bill that will create the Independent Electoral Boundaries Commission (IEBC). However, when contacted, Justice and Constitutional Affairs Minister Mutula Kilonzo claimed to have already forwarded a

draft IEBC Bill to Attorney-General Amos Wako who will forward it to the CIC. Registration of voters in the diaspora is expected to take the longest period. Kilonzo said the next elections will be unique in the sense that Kenyans will be voting for eight different candidates at the same time.

“Police launch fresh probe to strengthen deferral case”

Kenyan police are collecting evidence on the post election violence as President Kibaki tries to prove to the UN Security Council (UNSC) that his government is laying the groundwork for local trials. News of the mission unravelled as Britain, Germany and the US refused to back a deferral. The mission also coincides with an appeal by Ocampo against a decision rejecting charges against the police for shootings in Kisumu and Kibera.

“Cost of The Hague trip worries Sang” by Cyrus Ombati

Radio presenter Joshua arap Sang will request the ICC to pay for a plane ticket and accommodations because he can't afford his stay in the Netherlands. Sang hopes to go before the court and then return to Kenya to finish his college exams.

“China faults ICC involvement in post-election violence cases” by David Ochami

The Chinese embassy in Nairobi claimed the ICC's involvement in Kenyan affairs amounts to interference with internal affairs and is a threat to peace. Chinese Vice Premier Wang Qishan is expected to meet with President Kibaki, Prime Minister Odinga and Vice President Musyoka.

The Standard website, Nairobi, in English 16 Mar 2011

“Al-Shabaab launch fresh bomb attack in Mandera” by Cyrus Ombati

Suspected Somali rebels launched a bomb attack in Mandera town injuring five residents. The motor bomb was followed by sporadic gunfire that lasted almost ten minutes from neighbouring Bulawayo town on the border of Kenya and Somalia.

Daily Nation website, Nairobi, in English 16 Mar 2011

“Raila orders probe into executions” by Walter Menya

PM Odinga ordered investigations into the recent spate of disappearances and extra-judicial killings of youth. Odinga also asked the police to open fresh investigations into the killings of human rights activists Oscar King'ara and Paul Oulu of Oscar Foundation. The two were murdered in 2009 by people believed to be security operatives. The directive comes in the wake of the abduction and killing of primary school teacher Kenneth Irungu. Irungu's family is asking for protection due to death threats made.

“Last chance for Ocampo Six at the UN” by Bernard Namunane

Kenya and the AU will attend a UN sanctioned informal session regarding Kenya's request to defer the ICC trials. Spokeswoman Anne Siddall said the gathering will take the form of an "interactive dialogue" whose purpose may be to determine whether Kenya's request should be

formally taken up by the Security Council. The meeting will be convened by Chinese UN Ambassador Li Baodong and will be closed to the press and public.

Kiss FM, Nairobi, in English 0600 gmt 15 Mar 2011

“Germany will not support Kenya's bid to defer ICC cases – official”

Director General for African Affairs at the German Federal Foreign Office Walter Lindner said that Germany views Kenya’s request for a deferral as an attempt to circumvent the ICC process.

The Standard website, Nairobi, in English 15 Mar 2011

“125 senior police officers moved” by Cyrus Ombati

Nairobi Divisional criminal investigation officers are among 125 senior police officers moved in changes announced by police boss Mathew Iteere. The reshuffle is aimed at reorganizing the force ahead of the 2012 General Election.