

Kenya Domestic Media Monitor Report
October 11-17, 2011
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*Unless otherwise stated,
all articles were written in English*

1. Aid Workers Abducted; Kenya Declares War on Al-Shabaab

“Aid workers abducted from Kenyan camp”
KBC, state-owned broadcasting company
Thursday, October 13, 2011

State-owned radio company KBC announced that two Spanish women working with Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) were abducted from the Dadaab refugee camp in on

Thursday. The aid workers were abducted by militants suspected to be from the Somali Islamist group Al-Shabaab, and taken across the border into Somalia. This incident comes after a series of abductions and killings in the border region. According to the article, Internal Security minister Orwa Ojode and his defence counterpart Yusuf Haji said that measures have been taken to improve security in the region.

“Kenya declares war on Al Shabaab”
KBC, state-owned broadcasting company
Sunday, October 16, 2011

Government-owned broadcasting company KBC reports that the Kenyan military has crossed over into Somalia in pursuit of the two Spanish aid workers who were abducted from the Dadaab refugee camp and taken into Somalia by suspected Al-Shabaab militants. The government justified the invasion by invoking article 51 of the UN Charter that gives countries the right to defend themselves against territorial aggression. Internal Security Minister George Saitoti said that Kenya has launched a spirited offensive on the Al Shabaab and will not relent until the country's territorial boundary is secure.

“Al Shabaab warns Kenyan soldiers”
Daily Nation, privately-owned daily newspaper
Sunday, October 16, 2011

Somali Islamist group Al-Shabaab sent out a warning to Kenyan soldiers that they would feel the "pain of bullets" for entering into Somalia. Sheikh Hassan Turki, a senior Al-Shabaab leader called on all Somalis to “stand united against this blood-thirsty enemy that has crossed into our territories and the apostate Somali militants helping them”. Al-Shabaab also threatened Kenya with terrorist attacks on the capital like the one that took place in Kampala, Uganda during the 2011 World Cup. Kenya’s invasion of Somalia comes after Interior Minister George Saitoti pronounced the Al-Qaeda linked group as "the enemy" and vowed to attack them "wherever they will be".

“Army Hit Somali Terror Base”
The Star, privately-owned daily newspaper
Monday, October 17, 2011

The Star reports that the Kenyan army took over an Al-Shabaab stronghold in Qoqani, 100 km from the border only hours after Internal Security Minister George Saitoti announced that Kenyan troops were crossing into Somalia to pursue Al-Shabaab.

According to the Somali government, it is the Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG) forces who are on the frontlines battling Al-Shabaab, and Kenya is providing material support. A Kenyan military official confirmed that they were supporting Somali troops: "We have to provide them with everything from uniform to boots to ammunition. Even the food they eat is ours. If we don't do that, they will collapse within a day". The article claimed that the offensive is expected to continue until a peaceful buffer zone is established between Kenya and its northern neighbour.



Kenyan security forces talk with residents at a village near near Liboi, Kenya's border town with Somalia on October 15, 2011. Photo credit: AFP PHOTO/Tony KARUMBA

2. Bandit Attack in Isiolo

“Nine killed in bandit attack”

The Standard, privately-owned daily newspaper

Friday, October 14, 2011

Nine people died in two separate attacks on Thursday between the Borana and Turkana herdsmen in Isiolo, central Kenya. In the first incident, armed bandits attacked migrating herders from Garba Tula, 120 km east of Isiolo, gunning down two in an attempt to steal their animals. The following day, in what was termed by police as a

revenge mission, gunmen attacked a trading centre in Isiolo and shot dead seven people as they slept in their huts.

“Ten schools closed in northern Kenya as pastoralists fight”

The Standard, privately-owned daily newspaper

Monday, October 17, 2011

The Standard reported that more than 10 schools have closed in response to a standoff by rival pastoralist communities in Isiolo. These include six primary schools in Ngaremara Location where seven people were killed on Thursday. Ethnic tension continues as teachers from the Borana and Somali communities teaching in schools dominated by rival clans have sought transfers to other schools, claiming they had been threatened. One teacher said "I will not go back to school to teach when parents of pupils I teach are the same ones who threatened to kill me. I will ask for transfer and if declined, I will resign from teaching".

“Bandits kill man as Isiolo conflict heightens”

The Standard, privately-owned daily newspaper

Monday, October 17, 2011

Another man was killed in an ambush on Monday as the conflict between rival groups in Isiolo rages on. Diba Godana, a 24-year old driver was shot dead when bandits ambushed his car at around 7pm. Residents also remain trapped as armed youths have barricaded the main highway leading out of the town. Police in Isiolo said that the armed bandits who attacked the car were suspected to be planning to stealing livestock.

3. Politicians Accused of Inciting Ethnic Violence

“Political leaders accused of inciting ethnic warfare”

Daily Nation, privately-owned daily newspaper

Thursday, October 13, 2011

The Daily Nation reports that political leaders are to blame for the ongoing ethnic violence in Marsabit, northern Kenya. In July 2005, 70 people were killed in the so-called Turbi massacre, which pitted Boranas and Gabras tribes against each other in a fight for resources. Today, ethnic violence continues between many of the ethnic groups who reside in the area. Rev Jeremiah Omar, a former Marsabit Peace Committee chairman said that “these killings are mainly instigated by political leaders, they don’t

just happen, and sometimes the intention is to displace some communities from certain areas”. Another commentator said that unless a relevant security system that suits the environment of the area is put in place, violence in Marsabit is unlikely to end soon.

“Politicians fanning tribalism, says Karua”
Daily Nation, privately-owned daily newspaper
Sunday, October 16, 2011

The Daily Nation reports that Martha Karua, presidential nominee for the Narc-Kenya party, has accused politicians of entrenching tribalism among Kenyans for satisfying their own interests. Ms. Karua said that most leaders use tribal politics to get into power and then to divide people for their own benefit. Urging Kenyans to gauge sentiments politicians make at public forums before taking action, she argued that Kenyans should stay away from corrupt and tribal leaders come next year’s general elections. She also accused Kenyan Prime Minister Raila Odinga and President Mwai Kibaki of subsidizing food for their kin while others in the country face starvation.

4. ICC Trials Close, Questions Remain

“State ‘lacks will to try small fish”
Daily Nation, privately-owned daily newspaper
Wednesday, October 12, 2011

The Daily Nation reports that the government does not have the capacity and will to bring lower and middle-level perpetrators of the 2007 post-election violence to justice. According to a report by the Kofi Annan-led Panel of Eminent African Personalities, 58% of Kenyans believe that the government does not have the will to investigate or prosecute suspected perpetrators of the violence. The report also said that the lack of confidence in the government to deal with the post-election violence suggests that “impunity, as an underlying cause of the post-election violence, has not been addressed”.

“Ocampo links Raila to poll violence”
Daily Nation, privately-owned daily newspaper
Friday, October 14, 2011

Kenya Prime Minister Raila Odinga has been accused of complicity in the 2007 post-election violence by a witness at the International Criminal Court. The witness claimed

that Odinga was informed of the planning and gave money to William Ruto and Henry Kosgey, two MPs sitting in a pre-trial hearing at the ICC. This is the first time that the prosecution has made reference to Odinga's involvement in the crimes.



Photo/FILE ICC chief prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo after a past meeting with President Kibaki and Prime Minister Raila Odinga in Nairobi. Daily Nation website, October 14, 2011

**“Tough call for election chaos suspects after ICC gag order”
The Standard, privately-owned daily newspaper
Sunday, October 16, 2011**

The Standard reports that Kenyan politics will be altered significantly over the next three months after the International Criminal Court issued an indirect gag-order on the accused politicians following the conclusion of the pre-trial hearings. Judge Ekaterina Trandifilov cautioned the suspects in her closing on the risks they face if they make inflammatory remarks. From now until January 2012, when the judges are expected to announce their decision on whether to go to trial, the focus will shift to the political arena as the suspects will look to start their presidential campaigns without going against the ICC. The article claims that the indictments have already altered local politics, Deputy Prime Minister Uhuru Kenyatta and Eldoret North MP William Ruto have teamed up to take support away from Prime Minister Raila Odinga.

5. Economy



“Instability to last up to six months”**Daily Nation, privately-owned daily newspaper****Tuesday, October 11, 2011**

The Daily Nation reports that the economic turbulence in Kenya will continue for another six months, meaning a depreciating shilling, high interest rates and runaway inflation. This figure was reportedly given by Central Bank of Kenya governor Njuguna Ndung'u on Tuesday. The governor said that the Central Bank thought the problem facing the shilling required less immediate attention and that it did not know it would be affected by global problems.

“How sick Kenya Shilling is destroying lives”**The Standard, privately-owned daily newspaper****Thursday, October 13, 2011**

The Standard reports on the disastrous effects of the depreciation of the shilling, saying that millions of Kenyans are hurting, unable to buy even the barest of necessities. Massive urbanization since the drought begun has increased the masses of people living on less than \$1 a day. The article says that the poorest of the poor suffer most from inflation, and that “grinding unemployment that has made a laughing stock of the Government’s “500,000 jobs a year” mantra is an ever-present reality. With the prices such essentials as fuel, maize flour, kerosene, sugar and cooking oil constantly increasing, the poorest of the poor have also adopted pitiful austerity measures of their own. One woman interviewed had to give up taking her baby to the hospital in order to buy food and pay rent.

“Treasury steps in to save ailing shilling”**The Star, privately-owned daily newspaper****Friday, October 14, 2011**

The Nairobi Star reports that the Treasury has put in place mechanisms to shore up the depreciating shilling and tame inflation. In order to prevent banks from hoarding foreign currency, it has halved the amount of foreign currency that commercial banks are allowed to hold, and also announced a further review of government spending. Finance Minister Uhuru Kenyatta vowed to “consistently and decisively” deal with the shilling’s instability in a press briefing at his Treasury offices. He hinted at broadening the powers of the Central Bank of Kenya to better regulate the market. Despite interventions from the Central Bank, the Kenyan shilling continues to slide, hitting an all-time low of Sh107 to the US dollar, down from Sh80 in 2010. He said CBK will

continue to reduce the amount of cash circulating in the economy by raising interest rates and mopping up cash from the banking system.

6. 2012 Elections

“Supreme Court to rule on Kenya poll date”

Daily Nation, privately-owned daily newspaper

Thursday, October 13, 2011

The Daily Nation reports that the controversy over the date of the 2012 elections will ultimately be decided by the Supreme Court. On Thursday, the court suspended all cases in other courts dealing with the determination of the election date until it decides for itself. A lawyer in one of the suspended cases said that the Supreme Court should stop Parliament from publishing the Bill seeking to alter the election. The Parliament has come into conflict with the Supreme Court in its desire to change the constitution, which some argue can only be done in a referendum.

“Kenyans want elections held in August”

KBC, state-owned broadcasting company

Friday, October 14, 2011

Government-owned KBC reported that half of all Kenyans would like the elections to take place in August of 2012, whereas 37% prefer December and 13% didn't know. This is according to a new poll released Friday by Infotrak Harris. The poll showed that most supporters of the August date were youth and urbanites who are keen to see change happen quick and want the constitution respected, and supporters of the December date were the aged who wished to maintain the status quo. Another poll finding was that nearly 9 out of every 10 Kenyans (86%) expressed interest and intention to participate in the 2012 elections. Another 4% are still unsure whilst 7% indicated that they will not participate.

7. Media

"Transform KBC into media serving the public, report urges"

The Star, privately-owned daily newspaper

Wednesday, October 12, 2011



The Africa Governance and Monitoring and Advocacy Project and Open Society Initiative for Eastern Africa have released a report calling for the state-owned national broadcaster KBC (Kenya Broadcasting Corporation) to be transformed into an independent public service broadcaster. The report states that the present governance model, the involvement of the minister of information in appointing managing director and entitlement to make decisions on how to run the corporation, have made the broadcaster lose its editorial independence in contravention of the country's constitution. The current managing director of KBC admitted that some of the findings are true, but argued that "We have come from a far in [former President Daniel arap] Moi eras where it used to be a mouthpiece of the cabinet and used to sack people at 1 o'clock news".

8. Analysis

The biggest news story this week was the declaration of war on Al-Shabaab and the invasion by Kenyan troops into Somalia to fight the Islamist rebels. Although the army was sent in response to the kidnapping of two Spanish aid workers from the Dadaab refugee camp in northern Kenya, it is likely that an invasion was in the works before as Kenyan troops had been amassing at the border. The government of Kenya has in the past made clear its desire of having a "buffer state" separating Kenya from Al-Shabaab controlled territories, and this is likely its primary objective. However, the capacity of the Kenyan military has been called into question, and it is uncertain how much territory it will be able to hold and how long it will be able to engage in combat.

In response to the series of recent kidnappings, humanitarian organizations are reconsidering their presence in the region, and their withdrawal will be felt by the biggest refugee population in the world. The drought continues to affect the rural population, and the continuing decline of the Kenyan shilling is beginning to make buying the most basic necessities unattainable for many all over the country.

Ethnic violence continues in certain parts of the country, in some cases incited by opportunistic politicians, and the three month wait until the ICC decides on a verdict for the "Ocampo Six" will only increase tension. The decision could have a destabilizing effect on Kenyan society, the 2012 election, and the culture of impunity that is seen to plague the country.

