

**EACSOE E-NEWSLETTER**  
**JULY 2008 (First edition)**

**Dear Members,**

Greetings and welcome to the first edition of the East African Civil Society Organization Forum's (EACSOE) E-Newsletter- a tool meant to share information with the civil society fraternity and interested stakeholders. EACSOE is a nascent institution initiated and coordinated by the East Africa Law Society since 2005. Preceding the 2<sup>nd</sup> EACSO Forum at Ngurdoto in 2007, the Forum has been fully engaged in sharing information with member organisations on regional and continental issues. Among these were; on the EAC Common Market Protocol negotiation and other related EAC activities, the Kenya Post Election Violence and the subsequent Peace Accord, and the Torture around the Mount Elgon as well as the Zimbabwe Crisis.

In line with our EALS thematic focus on EAC Support; EACSOE shall in July 2008, attend two important regional meetings as you will read elsewhere in the newsletter.

These are the, the regional Civil Society Conference on Election organized by the Electoral Institute of South Africa (EISA) themed “ *The Role and challenges of Civil Society Engagement in the Post Election dispute Resolution*” in Dar-es-salaam. The second conference which EACSOE will take part in is the Non-State Actors Forum on Regional Integration organized by the Inter Regional Coordinating Committee (IRCC) themed “*Taking Integration in the Eastern and Southern Africa-IO Region Forward*”, in Dar-es-Salaam on the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2008.

This e-news edition is meant to inform, educate and empower the civil society organisations in the region by highlighting important regional activities particularly in the context of the East African Community as well as the African Union. We encourage the civil society organisations in the region to regularly share with us information and networking experiences by way of article contribution on civil society activities in the region.

We wish you all a pleasant reading.

**Prof.Othman Haroub (Chairperson Steering Committee)**

**HEADLINES.**

**EAC Summit in Kigali June 26 2008.**

The 9<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Summit of the East African Community Heads of State took place at the Kigali Serena Hotel, Rwanda on the 26<sup>th</sup> June 2008. The Summit was attended by all Heads of State of the EAC, as well as high ranking EAC officials including the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister of Rwanda, Bernard Makuza, the chairperson of the EAC Council of Ministers, Rt. Hon. Eriya Kategaya, the Secretary General of the East African Community, Amb. Juma V. Mwapachu and the Counsel to the Community, Hon. Wilbert T.K Kaahwa.

The Summit discussed many important issues affecting the EAC and the continent. Key to these were on; the appointment of Judges of the East African Court of Justice, chairmanship of the EAC Summit, Tripartite Summit and the Zimbabwe.

The Summit appointed five Judges of the Appellate Division namely,

1. Hon. Justice Joseph N. Mulenga (Uganda)

2. Hon. Justice Harold R. Nsekela (Tanzania)
3. Hon. Justice Philip K. Tunoi (Kenya)
4. Hon. Justice Laurent Nzosaba (Burundi)
5. Hon. Lady Justice Emilie R. Kayitesi Rusera (Rwanda)

and five Judges for the First Instance Division,

1. Hon. Justice John Mkwawa (Tanzania)
2. Hon. Justice Jean Bosco Butasi (Burundi)
3. Hon. Justice Johnston Busingye (Rwanda)
4. Hon. Justice Kassanga Mulwa (Kenya)
5. Hon. Lady Justice Mary Stella Arach-Amoko (Uganda)

The Summit designated Justice Joseph N. Mulenga and Justice Harold R. Nsekela, President and Vice President of the Court respectively. The Summit also designated Justice Kassanga Mulwa and Justice Johnston Busingye, Principal Judge and Deputy Principal Judge respectively.

Regarding the chairmanship of the EAC Summit, the Summit unanimously elected H.E Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda and his tenure began immediately at the Summit meeting. The United Republic of Tanzania was elected Rapporteur.

The Summit was also briefed on the proposal to hold a Tripartite Summit of the EAC-COMESA-SADC in October 2008 and this idea was endorsed. H.E. President Yoweri Museveni was applauded for offering to host the upcoming Tripartite Summit in Kampala in October.

On the issue of Zimbabwe, the Summit expressed serious concern about the present political situation in Zimbabwe

and was of the view that the election in Zimbabwe cannot be a solution under the prevailing circumstances. The Summit urged the ZANU/PF and the MDC leaders to come together and work out an amicable solution through dialogue in the interest of all Zimbabweans.

For more information the above visit [www.eachq.int](http://www.eachq.int)

### **Non-state Actors forum on Regional Integration at Kempinski Hotel Dar-es-saam. 18<sup>th</sup> July 2008**

The Inter Regional committee (IRCC) under the chairmanship of the East African Community is organizing a one day Non-state Actors Forum themed

#### ***“Taking Integration in the Eastern and Southern Africa-IO Region Forward”.***

The conference will take place on the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2008 at the Kempinski Hotel in Dar-es-salaam.

The Forum is to provide Non-state Actors with excellent opportunity to engage with regional integration Organizations (RIOs) and exchange views on the main opportunities and challenges of the regional integration agenda.

The Conference will also be used to disseminate the draft Regional Strategy Paper/Regional Indicative Programmed for the 10<sup>th</sup> European Development fund (EDF) for the period 2005-2013.

The presentation in this conference will feature topics such as Opportunities and Challenges facing the Eastern and Southern Africa-Indian Ocean (ESA\_IO) Non-State Actors in the regional integration process and Deepening ESA/IO regional integration through cooperation with the European Commission-The Contribution of Non State Actors. The two will topics will

cover several thematic foci on issues related to Non-state Actors in accelerating Regional Integration in Eastern and Southern Africa.

Form more information about the conference report, contact IRCC Secretariat: [ircc@comesa.int](mailto:ircc@comesa.int) or by fax: +260-211-225693/23211.

### **The Rejuvenation of the Eastern Access to Justice Network**

The East African Law Society, (EALS) has expanded its programmatic areas this year by introducing Access to Justice Network as one of its programmatic area. This programmatic focus was introduced subsequent to the May 2006 workshop on Access to Justice Network that took place in Zanzibar. Legal fraternity providing Legal Aid Services across the East African region including Ethiopia recommitted themselves to the membership of the Network in June 2008. The Network just like EACSO will be coordinated by the East African Law Society until it becomes an autonomous organization.

The Specific Programme Objective of the Network is to promote and sustain respect for human and people's rights in the East African region

The Outcome of the Network is improved state of the rule of law and human and people's rights in the region

And the Output of the Network is a vibrant and sustainable access to justice network within the Eastern Africa region

The Access to Justice Network will have three main areas of focus namely, provision of legal aid, provision of

probono legal services and public interest litigation.

For more information about the Access to Justice Network, Please contact Njeri Kagucia at [njeri@ealawsociety.org](mailto:njeri@ealawsociety.org)

### **African civil society calls for AU investigation into Zimbabwe human rights abuses**

About 63 African Civil Society organizations met in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt on the 27<sup>th</sup> June 2008.

The African civil society groups meeting ahead of the African Union Summit in Egypt have recommended a number of key issues to be presented to the 11<sup>th</sup> African Union Summit Agenda. During the press conference, the CSOs representative launched a declaration with forty-three recommendations covering all pressing issues of Africa. Some of the key issues were on Zimbabwe, Audit Recommendations, Food Crisis in Africa and the Merging of the African Court of Justice.

On Zimbabwe civil society organisations called on African leaders to publicly condemn the human rights violations and abuses taking place in Zimbabwe. They commented that the election situation in Zimbabwe is unacceptable and that there is no point having elections in African if it elections always end up by power sharing system like the Kenya model.

While on the Audit Recommendation, the CSOs representative called upon the African Union for an immediate prioritisation and action on the audit recommendations. They urged the African leaders to speed up the process of free movement for African citizens, which they claim, is a fundamental

prerequisite to making the union government a reality.

On the issue of food crisis in Africa, CSOs urged the African member states to put in place strong short-measures to mitigate the impact of rising food prices and the global crisis ensuing from it.

Finally, on the recommendation regarding the merging the African court of justice and Human rights, they lamented, "It is not acceptable that the new merged court isn't open to the actual victims of human right abuse. They urged leaders to open up access to the court to citizens and CSOs.

For more information go to [AUCitizens@yahoo.com](mailto:AUCitizens@yahoo.com)

### **EASUN Civil Society Networking Meeting**

The OD-ID Networking meeting was organised by the East Africa Support Unit for NGOs (EASUN), which saw the participation of about 25 different NGOS in East Africa with the exception of Burundi and Rwanda. The meeting whose theme was "**Managing Change Through Participation**", was very crucial in re-shaping and rethinking the organisational culture, enhancing participation and providing a mirror, through which CSOs could look at their organisation to encourage participation, embrace and develop resilience to work with and manage change.

It was a learning opportunity, and not training as such. It made participants to understand what it meant to manage change, understand and use of the different approaches in change process, described international and regional framework on participation, different challenges that hamper effective participation in an organisation and

processes to manage change and it motivated participants to use their experiences as reflective practices in the workshop.

For more information about the next Civil Society Training by the East African Support Unit For NGOs (EASUN), please contact Lydia Bwenda, Programmes Assistant at [lydia.bwenda@easun-tz.org](mailto:lydia.bwenda@easun-tz.org)

### **Regional Civil Society Conference on Election themed "*The Role and Challenges of Civil Society Engagement in Post-Election Dispute Resolution*"**

Electoral Institute of South Africa (EISA) is planning a two day conference from 21<sup>st</sup> –22<sup>nd</sup> June 2008 in Dar-es Salam, Tanzania .The regional civil society conference whose theme is "***The Role and Challenges of Civil Society Engagement in Post-Election Dispute Resolution***" seeks to bring to the fore and attention of participants on the emerging trend of elections conducted in relatively peaceful and credible manner yet ending up in disputes, stalemates and, in some instances, violence and destruction of lives and property. By so doing, participants will be in a position to better discuss the role and opportunities available to local, regional and international civil society platforms in effectively engaging in post-election dispute resolution, thereby contributing to a credible election process and outcome.

The conference shall explore topics such as, the role of civil society in the immediate post-election period; opportunities for civil society engagement in post-election disputes resolution; challenges militating against effective civil society

engagement in post-election disputes resolution; effective methodology for overcoming the challenges of effective civil society engagement in the resolution of post-election conflict, and effective lobbying and advocacy skills and engaging with inter-governmental bodies, Bilateral and Multilateral Institutions for post-elections conflict resolution.

For more information About the Conference, contact [yvette@eisa.org.za](mailto:yvette@eisa.org.za) or by fax: +27866046529