

## Women on Top

The decision by the 63<sup>rd</sup> UN General Assembly on 11 September to request and authorize the creation of a UN agency for women could get lost in the other big news stories this week, including the [G20 Summit](#) in Pittsburgh and the [High Level Summit on Climate Change](#) being convened by Ban Ki-moon. But if handled adroitly, it could have a big and profound impact.

The rationale for the creation of a women's agency is in many ways unfortunate. Advocates for the new entity argue that women's rights, needs and concerns are simply not given high enough priority in existing UN structures. High sounding rhetoric, they argue, is not translated into women- and girl-centric planning, interventions, evaluation, and monitoring, or most importantly action whether in the political, development or humanitarian fields. This is shameful.

But even if the track record was stronger, and despite concerns that the last thing the world needs is another "competing" UN agency, there is a strong case for bringing together the various bits of the UN galaxy that deal with women's rights, and for the creation of a high level post for more forceful global advocacy.

Economic growth, achievement of the MDGs, conflict prevention and effective humanitarian intervention are impossible without full engagement of women, and yet they are not given sufficient priority – with tragic and unacceptable consequences. Women and children are the first to pay with their health and their lives for economic contraction, conflict and poverty.

The issue now is whether the UN will be able to rise above the political infighting which already delayed this decision, some would argue for many years, and support a UN women's body that has the political support, capacity, leadership and creativity to get women's rights mainstreamed and prioritized in the corridors of global power, including the G8, G20, UN and Bretton Woods Institutions – as well as, critically, national growth and development plans.

## News Overview

The African Union's AMISOM headquarters was [attacked with twin suicide car bombs in Mogadishu, Somalia](#), killing at least 21 people including the Deputy Force Commander on 17 September. The al-Shabaab rebel group claimed credit for the attack which was in retaliation to the US killing of a Kenyan-wanted terrorist earlier in the week.

In his reaction to the UN Summit on Climate Change attended by 150 countries, the Republic of Congo's President Denis Sassou-Nguesso, who will represent the AU at COP15, sees [positive signs from France, China, Japan and the United States](#) and declares that Africa will contribute to the solutions to climate change.

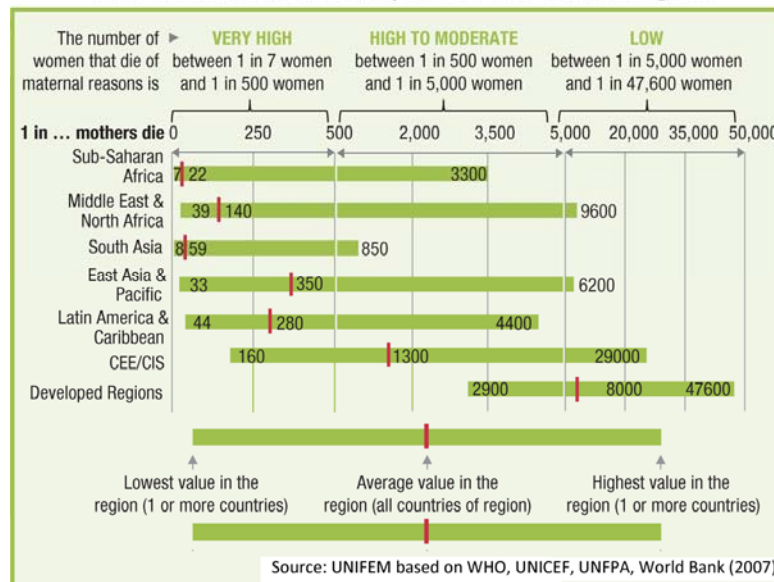
Amnesty International warns of a ["human rights emergency"](#) in **Sierra Leone**, which has one of the highest maternal and child mortality rates in the world, where one in eight women risk dying during child birth.

Militiamen have killed more than 100 people in an attack in **South Sudan** in the latest in a [series of ethnic clashes which have killed over 2,000 people in the last year](#). As opposed to the occasional cattle raiding, these attacks appear to be aimed specifically at undermining the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005.

The opposition parties in **Madagascar** are putting pressure on Rajoelina after the decision to compose a new government outside the Maputo agreement, increasing the [risk for civil war](#). Rajoelina responded by [ordering arrests of Ravalomanana supporters](#).

Since being pushed out of Uganda, the Lord's Resistance Army has [spread terror and chaos in previously peaceful parts of Democratic Republic of Congo](#). Despite being hunted by the Ugandan army, in the past year in DRC alone, the LRA has killed over 1,200 people and kidnapped over 2,000 Congolese.

### Risk of Maternal Mortality Across and Within Regions



## Quote

“ The creation of a single UN agency for women is a landmark moment for gender equality and women's rights across the world. ”

**Gareth Thomas, DFID Minister of State**

## G20 Update

### G20

[Scorecard: How is G20 doing on pledges from earlier summits?](#)

[Although the Tobin Tax, a tax on global currency transactions, could raise up to £30 billion per year for development, it is unlikely that G20 leaders will arrive at a workable agreement on the issue.](#)

### CANADA

[Canada will contribute \\$30 million to the World Food Programme efforts to help those affected by the drought in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Uganda.](#)

### CHINA

[First Chinese UN Peacekeeping Force Commander takes office in Western Sahara \(MINURSO\).](#)

### FRANCE

[AFD launches an innovative mutual fund reconciling financial investment with development aid.](#)

### UK

[Gordon Brown will chair a high-level UN General Assembly meeting which will focus on increasing free healthcare to pregnant women and children across the developing world.](#)

[Gordon Brown will announce an additional \\$1 billion, of which \\$405m will come from the UK, to support vaccines and immunization for children in the developing world and boost healthcare systems.](#)

### US

[Obama will meet with African leaders during his UN visit.](#)

### INDIA, BRAZIL AND SOUTH AFRICA (IBSA)

[IBSA - India, Brazil and South Africa - is seen by some as a strong strategic southern alliance of emerging economies, one that is more workable than the BRICs grouping.](#)

[IBSA foreign ministers met in the margins of 64<sup>th</sup> Session of UN General Assembly to discuss the expansion of UN Security Council, which they all support.](#)

## Multilateral Organizations

### AfDB

[AfDB President gives key note address at the Africa Investor Summit and Awards at the New York Stock Exchange.](#)

[AfDB and Rwanda sign US\\$25m grant agreements for rural water supply project.](#)

[AfDB approves US\\$ 175m loan for mining operation in Mauritania.](#)

[The African Development Fund announces a \\$20m grant to finance a sanitation project in Brazzaville and Pointe Noire.](#)

### ECOWAS

[In a meeting in Lome, ECOWAS adopts a common position on climate change.](#)

[ECOWAS and Israel's National International Agency for Development sign an MOU on cooperation.](#)

### EU

[European Commission, DFID and South Africa launch €120m Employment Creation Fund.](#)

[The EU has said it will support Africa's campaign for global assistance for climate change mitigation.](#)

[EU challenges poorer nations to cut emissions for more aid.](#)

### IMF

[Zimbabwe has failed to meet its quarterly loan payment to the International Monetary Fund \(IMF\).](#)

### SADC

[A SADC Standby brigade is equipped for carrying out missions as part of peacekeeping operations in the region.](#)

### UN

[MDG Gap Task Force publishes its 2<sup>nd</sup> report, titled \*Strengthening the Global Partnership for Development in a Time of Crisis\*.](#)

[UNSG convenes a High-Level Summit on Climate Change at UN HQ.](#)

### WB

[Renewable energy & energy efficiency financing by world bank group hits all time high of \\$3.3 billion worldwide.](#)

[WB says Africa must plan for climate change to maintain economic growth in its World Development Report 2010.](#)

## Election Watch

**Guinea:** The African Union has threatened to impose sanctions on Capt. Moussa Dadis Camara should he break his pledge not to run in the elections in January 2010.

**Senegal:** 83 year old President Abdoulaye Wade announced his candidacy for his third term in the next presidential elections posed to take place in over two years.

**Somaliland:** Presidential elections are to take place on September 27

## Opinions

**Les Echos (France):** Kofi Annan, Michel Camdessus and Amartya Sen argue that the G20 Summit in Pittsburgh must not lose sight of the plight of the developing world. While anxiety levels may have come down in the board rooms and stock markets, the daily drama for survival continues in the villages and streets of the developing world.

**The World Today (UK) - Africa and Climate Change "With One Voice":** Michael Keating, APP Director, writes with around a quarter of the world's states and 53 members, the African Union should pack a very real punch. But they have never negotiated together, until now. The Copenhagen climate talks will hear Africa's voice loud and clear.

**AllAfrica (US):** Lee Wengraf argues that aid to Africa has been short-changed in all areas and that none of the many promises the international community has made over the last decade has actually been kept.

**Sudan Tribune (Sudan) - Diversionary tactics on Darfur:** The author claims that diversionary tactics are the order of the day, providing enough confusion to allow the status quo to continue. This happens while people continue to be killed in the Jebel Marra area. She argues that the nightmare on the ground continues, and that the only solution is for the people of Darfur themselves to unity, and not rely on *soft* diplomacy which has not yet worked.

**The Guardian (UK):** Franklin Ackom argues that healthcare must be free for all in order to avoid people dying because they cannot afford treatment. He calls on world leaders to act when they meet in the fringes of the General Assembly to discuss extending free healthcare for the developing world.



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## APP Activities

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of September, **Kofi Anann** attended the film premiere of the movie on climate change, "[The Age of Stupid](#)" in New York. **Bob Geldof** and **Kofi Annan** are involved in the [Tck Tck Tck Campaign](#), which will soon launch its campaign song "[Beds are Burning](#)" sung by global celebrities. **Tony Blair** together with [The Climate Group](#), an international NGO presented a new report to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon as part of the Breaking the Climate Deadlock initiative to set out economic benefits of tackling climate change together. On September 23, **Michel Camdessus** commented on bankers' bonuses, G20 and Obama for the magazine Challenges ([Article and videos in French](#)) **Muhammad Yunus** spoke at the [Clinton Global Initiative](#) session on Investing in Girls and Women.

## On the Blogs

### [World Bank Blogs, Africa Can... - African Successes:](#)

Shanta Devarajan, chief economist of the Africa region at the World Bank highlights a study being conducted that captures successful and inspiring cases where Africans are driving African development. A list of initiatives is included on the blog.

## Calendar

22-27 Sept	2nd Africa-South America (ASA) Summit of Heads of State and Governments, Margarita Island, Venezuela
23 Sept	"Investing in our common future: Healthy women, healthy children", event held at UN headquarters New York
23 - 30 Sept	UN Headquarters, General Debate of the 64th Session of the UN General Assembly.
28 - 29 Sept.	EU Africa Business Forum in Nairobi, Kenya
28 Sept - 2 Oct	7th Ordinary Session of the Labour and Social Affairs Commission (LSAC) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
28 Sept - 9 Oct	UNFCCC AWG-KP/ AWG-LCA meeting held in Bangkok Thailand ( <a href="#">UNFCCC</a> )
29 Sept-1 <sup>st</sup> Oct	Corporate Council on Africa's 2009 US-Africa Business Summit, Washington DC, USA
6 - 7 Oct	2009 Annual Meetings of the Boards of Governors of the World Bank Group and the IMF held in Istanbul, Turkey.

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