

Anyone for Gs?

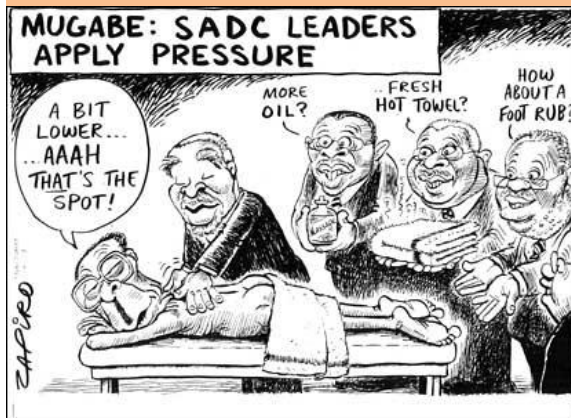
The world enjoys a rich variety of Gs (see chart). There is the G-7, which is almost the G-8. The G-5 (China, India, Mexico, Brazil and Egypt) might be joining the G-8 meeting in July. We have the G-20 – which is really the G-22, if the EU and AU are added. Then there's the G-77, which actually has 130 members. And don't forget the G-15 which, confusingly, has 17 members.

Some argue that all these Gs are irrelevant, and that the only effective grouping is the G-2: the US and China. Others that only the G-192, the UN, has real legitimacy.

The proliferation of Gs is bewildering, but in fact may be a sign of health, as the world struggles to find governance structures which are both effective in terms of economic clout and have the political legitimacy to tackle the multiple crises before us.

For the G-54 (Africa), what matters right now is being heard by the world's most powerful: on rebooting the Doha round, on increasing access to finance, and on keeping aid promises. Everyone will benefit if Africa is part of a coordinated global economic stimulus plan, not treated as an afterthought.

To make the case, Africa needs a strong voice, clear positions and specific proposals. The best Gs for Africa are those which give Africa a meaningful rather than symbolic opportunity to make its case, and which then commit leaders to a time bound course of action.



[The Zimbabwean](#), 23 February 2009

News Overview

The president of [Guinea-Bissau, João Bernardo Viera was assassinated](#) Monday morning, a day after an explosion killed the country's army chief, General Batista Tagme Na Wai, apparently as a result of rivalry between them. Regional leaders are visiting the West African state as ECOWAS is due to hold an emergency summit in the capital, Bissau in an effort to defuse the crisis.

South Africa Foreign Affairs Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma said [regional leaders \(SADC\) will meet before the London G20 Summit on 2 April](#) to consider Zimbabwe's financing proposals and to back the country's efforts to win support from international lenders as well as donors. The [cholera death toll continues to rise unabated](#) and the latest WHO figures show that the outbreak has killed nearly 4,000 lives and infected some 84,000 people.

Ex-Malawian President, Bakili Muluzi was arrested and charged for allegedly siphoning more than \$11m of international donor money into his private account. Muluzi, who denies any wrong-doing, says his arrest is politically motivated.

The International Criminal Court will rule on March 4 whether [Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir is to face charges](#) of war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity committed in the Darfur province. Mr. Bashir, who denies the charges, said any move by the ICC to seek his arrest would be worthless.

More people have been killed in renewed **Madagascar** protests in the country's southern city of Fiarantoa during demonstrations aimed at toppling President Marc Ravalomanana, just a day after the UN said the President and the opposition leader had agreed to more talks.

On Saturday, the new [Somali President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed](#) bowed to demands from Islamist insurgents after the fiercest clashes since he took office, agreeing to a truce and the introduction of sharia law. The deal came after talks between the Somali government and its clan opponents, and mediation by regional religious leaders, which is yet to be passed by Somalia's parliament.

“As the Kikuyu proverb avers, to solve her problems, Africa must accept the absolute necessity of good leadership, for **when the lead sheep limps, the herd does not reach the pastures**. Good leaders take people to the pastures. Bad leaders block people's access to the pastures. Today, Africa is last in the world because her leadership is laziest, greediest and least visionary.”

Koigi Wa Wamwerep, former Subukia MP and Chair of CCM, at the inauguration of the African Leadership Academy in Johannesburg

On the blogs

[The Guardian: I don't buy economists' case for fighting climate change – Paul Collier](#)

Paul Collier argues there an “ethical basis for being concerned about global warming that depends upon a rights-based notion of ethics rather than on utilitarianism.

[Reuters Africa Blog: Time to stop aid for Africa? An argument against, 23 February 2009](#)

Savio Carvalho, OXFAM GB Uganda country director says that aid can help the continent escape poverty- if done in the right way.

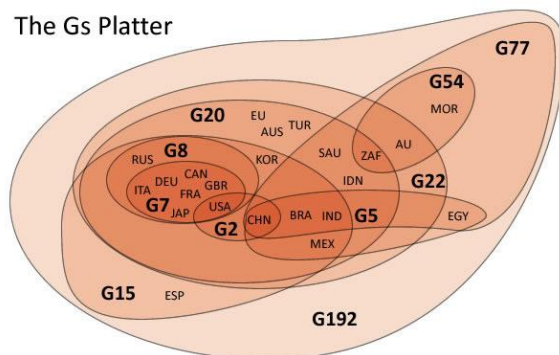
[Shanta Devarajan's Blog, World Bank: Will the economic crisis affect governance and conflicts in Africa? 23 February 2009](#)

World Bank Senior Economist Jorge Arbrache, writes that “Many economists are now expecting the crisis to hit Africa harder and longer than was previously projected. Not only will the crisis impact human development and economic indicators, but Africa's governance and conflicts may be affected as well.”

APP Activities

On Friday 20 February, **Kofi Annan, Bob Geldof, Bob Rubin, Michel Camdessus & Peter Eigen** met with President Napolitano, Prime Minister Berlusconi, Minister Tremonti and Foreign Minister Frattini as well as other senior Italian government officials in Rome, where they [urged Italy to give Africa prominence in the preparation of the G8 despite the global economic crisis](#) ◊ Speaking at the annual seminar at the Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights on 24 February, **Kofi Annan** called for an urgent return to a value-based system of governance to guide the international community in tackling the economic, climate, food and poverty crises ◊ At the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) meeting in Lusaka on 23 February, lead panelist for Zambia, **Graca Machel** was impressed with the [progress that the country has made in the APRM process](#) ◊ On Monday, 23 Feb. **Robert Rubin** delivered a keynote speech at the Global Korea Forum 2009 in Seoul, where he stressed the importance of global cooperation to tide over the ongoing crisis ◊ On 17 February, **Bob Geldof**, together with some of the world's finest artists launched a short film, [ONE Voice](#) in which they urge the public to join ONE and fight extreme poverty and disease ◊ On February 26, **Muhammad Yunus** delivered the inaugural Lecture at the Ashden Awards which honor innovative solutions to climate change ◊

The Gs Platter



Source: APP

G20 Update

CANADA- [The Canadian government has pledged \\$20 to help countries of the Nile Basin in addressing regional food security and development of a basin river initiative](#)

INDIA- [Pranab Mukherjee, External Affairs Minister, inaugurated India's Pan African E-network project for 11 African countries aimed at promoting effective communication and connectivity \(via satellite\) in the continent](#)

ITALY - [Enacts legislation to make it easier for the private sector to invest more in African development](#)

JAPAN- [Mr Keiichi Katakami, Ambassador of Japan, signed agreements with Ghana in fulfillment of a pledge made last year for rapid development in Africa](#)

MEXICO- [Foreign Affairs Minister, Patricia Espinosa, and her South African counterpart, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, on Thursday signed a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen cooperation between the two countries](#)

TURKEY- [Plans to deepen its trade relations with Africa by opening 15 embassies on the continent in the next two years](#)

UK- [British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown has invited representatives from Africa and poorer Asia nations to the G20 financial crisis Summit in London on April 2](#)

USA- [Jun Bando, the maritime security coordinator and U.S. Africa Command liaison for the State Department of African Affairs pointed out that the United States is helping African governments confront piracy and improve maritime security on two coasts of Africa](#)

Opinions

[Daily Independent \(Nigeria\): Good Governance Panacea for Continent's Stability, 26 February 2009](#)

In an interview, former Tanzanian Prime Minister and one time Secretary- General of OAU (now African Union), Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, spoke on how Africa's contribution to world peace and development lies in nurturing its inherent strength and immense potential.

[Public Agenda \(Ghana\): IMF, World Bank Impoverishing Continent, 20 February 2009](#)

Former president of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, said that it was pointless for developed nations and international financial institutions to demand eradication of poverty and promotion of social justice if they failed to address the issue of external debt, and protectionism in the north, which is marginalizing the world's poor.

[All Africa \(USA\): Sustaining Growth Will Challenge Govts, 20 February 2009](#)

Writing in the Guest Column, Witney Schneidman, an adviser on Africa to the Obama Campaign and Paul Collier, professor of economics at Oxford University, state that "the immediate challenge for Africa's leaders and its partners, in light of the global economic recession, is to sustain- let alone accelerate- vital trends of economic growth, improved governance and poverty reduction.

[Business Daily \(Kenya\): What global crisis means for Africa, 18 February 2009](#)

In highlighting the likely effect of the global crisis on Africa, Antoinette Sayeh, Director, African Department, IMF, explains how the IMF is working with its member countries in Africa to help ensure that the global crisis does not wipe out the hard-won gains of recent years. An example of this is a conference organized with the Government of Tanzania on March 10-11 in Dar es Salaam where African countries can learn from each other successes, talk about the best ways to respond to the effects of the global crisis, and advise the IMF on how best they can help in meeting their goals for their people.

[Daily Nation \(Kenya\): Africa a Third World because of its lazy and greedy leaders, 18 February, 2009](#)

Mr. Koigi Wa Wamwere, former Subukia MP writes "good leaders take people to the pastures. Bad leaders block people's access to the pastures. Today Africa is last in the world because her leadership is laziest, greediest and least visionary." He further explained that if Africa is to fix her problems, she must admit that bad leadership is at the centre of her current malaise.

[American Chronicle \(USA\): Africa and the Post Crisis World, 26 February 2009](#)

Commenting on the highlights of the World Economic Forum that took place in Davos, Efe Paul Azino, a writer, speaker and author of the much anticipated audio compilation, "When the Revolution Spoke," expressed his main concern of how Africa featured in the talks and if it had a role to play in shaping the post-crisis world. How will it feature in the forthcoming annual regional Summit of the WEF in Cape Town South Africa from the 10th- 12th of June?

Multilateral Organizations

AfDB

[AfDB reiterates commitment to help improve Extractive Industries Governance in the institution's African member countries](#)

World Bank

[World Bank approves first Fast Track Assistance Programs: \\$100 million for the Democratic Republic of Congo to cope with the global financial crisis](#)

IMF

[IMF Survey Online: sound policies, support can help Africa ride crisis](#)

OECD

[Joint report by the UNECA & OECD: The Mutual Review of Development Effectiveness in Africa Report 2009: Promise & Performance](#)

UN

[Food, climate and financial crises threaten sustainable development goals, UN official says](#)

[Lecture on Dealing with a Changing World - African Solutions to Africa's Challenges by the UN Secretary General in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania](#)

[The Deputy Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa, Ms Lalla Ben Barka, says Africa is not immune to current global financial slowdown](#)

[A new report was launched during the 25th session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum from 16-20 February titled: "The Environment's Role in Averting Future Food Crises." It outlines a seven-point plan to reduce the risk of hunger and rising food insecurity in the 21st century](#)

Calendar

2-5 Mar	1 st Congress of African Economist. Nairobi, Kenya
8 Mar	International Women's Day
10-11 Mar	5 th Annual Meeting of the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa (ICA). Rome, Italy
10-11 Mar	High Level conference (co-hosted by the IMF and Government of Tanzania) "Changes: Successful Partnerships for Africa's Growth Challenge." Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
10-12 Mar	The West African Investment Forum 2009. Abuja, Nigeria
16-22 Mar	5 th World Water Forum: "Bridging Divides for Water." Istanbul, Turkey

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