

Green to Go

The greens won, and there's a sense of euphoric, suspended disbelief in Kenya. The vote on the referendum, one of the measures set out in the National Accord brokered by Kofi Annan in 2008, on whether to adopt the new constitution, was peacefully conducted, and the ceremony was a national celebration. The sense of optimism on the streets is now palpable.

The new constitution has created that rare thing: a second chance, the opportunity for a peaceful new start for a country, after a very scary couple of years.

While ambiguities inevitably remain, and provisions remain open to differing interpretations, the new constitution clearly signposts the way forward on a number of critical issues that have hobbled Kenya's political and social development, including the separation of powers, a Bill of Rights and, perhaps the trickiest issue of all, untangling land rights.

The new constitution is being praised as an invitation for more active citizenship, greater involvement of civil society in decision making, more effective and representative local government, and the basis for a renewed chapter in nation building. Hard core optimists even see a basis for fighting the pervasive, demoralising corruption at the heart of political and business life.

How important is it for non Kenyans? For the immediate region, hugely so. Kenya is the regional economic hub, the cornerstone of the East African Community. Failure, and success, in Kenya has immediate knock on effects. The constitution does not guarantee stability but is a huge step in the right direction.

But even beyond East Africa, it is significant – as evidenced by the number of African leaders who turned out for the signing ceremony. The new constitution is different in style and intent from the one inherited from the colonial era, more geared to a rapidly changing, highly diverse, African nation that is still struggling with an inherited political system and contentious land ownership. It is a good example for other African nations to emulate as opposed to changing their country's constitution solely to suit their personal needs.

There is still a long way to go, and things could still go wrong. In the meantime, as one Nairobi paper put it, 'It feels proud to be Kenyan again.'

News Overview

[Recently elected Burundian President reshuffled his government to overcome the political crisis in the country.](#) However, the opposition claims that the changes were too insignificant to make a difference. (Article in French).

The move by [Guinea's interim government to change the electoral code before next month's election](#) in a way that would give the government access to complete ballots is widely considered an attempt by the prime minister to manipulate the vote.

[World opinion is against Kenya after hosting Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir at the celebration of the country's new constitution](#) last Friday. The invitation of the indicted war criminal sends a disturbing signal about the government's commitment to dealing with the issue of transitional justice.

On 9 August **Rwanda** held multiparty elections. Paul Kagame (Rwandan Patriotic Front) won another 7-year term with 93% of the vote in the virtually unchallenged poll. [Amidst international concerns of human rights violations](#), Kagame published a [rebut in his own words](#). A few weeks after President Kagame was invited by UN Secretary-General to co-chair the [MDG Advocacy Group](#), **Rwanda's** Foreign Minister threatened to pull out of international peacekeeping missions due to the [accusations that in DRC Rwandan forces committed what amounted to war crimes, crimes against humanity or even genocide](#).

[In addition to a major food crisis, recent floods in Niger have left the country in a disastrous situation](#): severe malnutrition, displaced populations and more than anything else, a whole generation of children threatened to be lost if aid is not increased urgently (Article in French).

The future of women's political representation in **Malawi** has come into question as [the ruling Democratic People's Party \(DPP\) launched a smear campaign against its own member, the country's female Vice President Joyce Banda](#); whom many had hoped would become the country's first female president in 2014.

[Africans can be far more confident about medication they are taking thanks to a new project called mPedigree](#). This system developed by a Ghanaian entrepreneur lets consumers send in a code via text message, allowing them to check if their drugs are genuine.



G8/G20 Update

BASIC

[The BASIC group issues a joint statement emphasizing the need for rich countries to provide resources for fighting climate change](#)

BRAZIL

[Brazil's agricultural exports to Africa are increasing and are now composing 14.9% of total agricultural exports](#)

[Brazil will give \\$250m for infrastructure improvements in the eastern parts of Ghana](#) (Article in French)

CANADA

[Canada and Mali sign an agreement to partner on maternal and child health](#)

EU

[The EU has cut its aid budget to Uganda due to the country's slow progress on corruption](#)

[The EC will disburse \\$14.9m for food security efforts in Niger](#)

[The EC allocates \\$15m to provide assistance to refugees in the Dadaab camp in Kenya](#)

FRANCE

[France grants €500,000 through the WFP to fight malnutrition in Mauritania bringing French aid to Mauritania to a total of \\$1.5bn for 2010](#)

INDIA

[India to link 12 more African countries to Pan-African network on tele-medicine and tele-education](#)

JAPAN

[The Government of Japan will provide an additional \\$2.52m in assistance for peacekeeping training centers in Africa](#)

UK

[DFID to slash 100 development projects](#)

[The UK Government says it will put the fight against malaria at the forefront of aid efforts in Africa](#)

USA

[President Obama convenes a forum to celebrate the 50th anniversaries of 17 African nations without inviting a single African leader](#)

[President Obama presents his engagement in Africa with a focus on food security, health and climate change](#)

[The US pledges to give \\$1 billion to fight HIV in Mozambique](#)

[The US supports conventional weapon destruction efforts in Guinea-Bissau with \\$1m](#)

Multilateral Organizations

AU

[African Union says it may take on the controversial UNESCO-Obiang science prize](#)

ECOWAS

[ECOWAS and the EU grant €1m to 12 regional non- state actors to help strengthen regional integration](#)

[ECOWAS and the West African Monetary Union \(UEMOA\) sign an agreement to provide Guinea-Bissau with \\$10m for the development of the country's energy sector](#)

EIB

[The EIB, together with the EU, fund water and sanitation project in Malawi that is expected to benefit 1 million of its people](#)

INFRASTRUCTURE CONSORTIUM FOR AFRICA (ICA)

[Gabon signs an agreement on infrastructure projects to the value of \\$4.5 billion with India and Singapore \(Article in French\)](#)

UN

[UNICEF releases a report on the impact of climate change on Kenyan children](#)

[The UN appeals for more than \\$400m in aid to help Zimbabwe fight hunger and improve the health, water and sanitation situation in the country](#)

[Thousands of young Ivoirians to receive job training under new UN project](#)

[The AU and the UN sign a pact to improve their humanitarian response and coordination in Africa](#)

[UN agencies respond to a cholera outbreak in Cameroon, Nigeria and Niger that has infected almost 4000 people and killed more than 260](#)

WORLD BANK

[The World Bank and Liberia sign a \\$16 m grant agreement for a Youth and Employment Skills Project in Liberia](#)

[The World Bank has approved \\$150m to support an electricity transmission project in Tanzania](#)

[Lesotho has been awarded \\$20m for 'its significant strides in the employment sector' from the Education for All Fast Track Initiative \(FTI\)](#)

WTO

[Finalizing the Doha Rounds and strengthening the Aid for Trade programme are WTO's contributions to achieving the MDGs, says, WTO Director-General](#)

“ No one could have thought that out of the bitter harvest of the disputed election..., we would be witnessing today the birth of a national unity that has eluded us for more than 40 years. Kenyan PM Odinga commenting on the constitution ”

Opinions

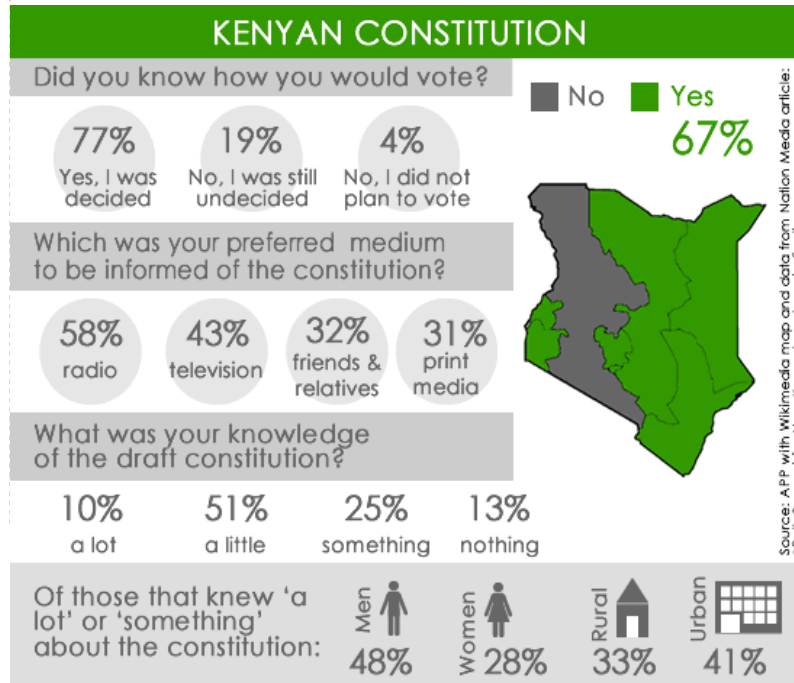
[Financial Times \(UK\): How Africa can become the next Bric, 26 Aug. 2010](#)
Chief Economist at Goldman Sachs argues that South Africa is well placed to be the first African member of the BRIC group as long as they maintain a focus on transparency and strive to foster a healthy business environment. Egypt and Nigeria could easily be candidates provided their social, economic, political landscapes improve.

[Afrigue Actu.Net: Génocide en RDC : L'Onu accuse le Rwanda, 26 Aug. 2010](#)

The author wonders why the leaked UN report arguing that Rwanda is responsible for the massacres of Hutu refugees in DRC is being published now at a time when Kinshasa and Kigali are trying to settle peace in the Great Lakes region. He also deploras the heavy focus of the report on the Hutu victims on DRC soil: there were more than 4 million Congolese victims during the war. (Article in French).

[CNN International: Investing in Africa is not for the faint-hearted, 26 Aug. 2010](#)

In an interview with CNN, an expert of West Africa's emerging markets argues that proximity and not "briefcase investing" is the key to success for investors looking to tap into Africa's up and-coming economies.



In the blogs...

[Reuters Africa Blog: Hopes of a nation hinge on a document, 27 August 2010](#)

As the new constitution sets Kenya on a path toward reducing tribal differences and violence, the main challenge ahead lies with its implementation and the capability of parliament to enact the requisite laws.

[Mail and Guardian Thought Leader: The worst is not behind us, 30 August 2010](#)

Following the successful organization of the World Cup, South Africa is being faced with various policy issues-one of which is the current strike by civil servants threatening to tear apart the tripartite alliance. The author warns that there is more to come considering the unresolved nature of the issue.

Calendar

- 2-3 September** [Informal Ministerial Meeting on Climate Finance "Geneva Dialogue:"](#) Geneva, Switzerland
- 2-4 September** African Green Revolution Forum: Accra, Ghana
- 5-11 September** World Water Week: Stockholm, Sweden
- 6 September** 3rd IASTED African Conference on Water Resource Management 2010: Gaborone, Botswana
- 6-8 September** African Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- 6-9 September** [UNCTAD'S 2nd World Investment Forum:](#) Xiamen, China
- 13-15 September** International Seminar on the Role of Agro biodiversity in addressing Hunger and Climate Change: Cordoba, Spain
- 14-15 September** [First High-Level Meeting of the Africa-EU Energy Partnership:](#) Vienna, Austria
- 15-17 September** [WTO Public Forum](#) on "The Forces Shaping World Trade:" Geneva, Switzerland

For more information, contact:

Temitayo Omotola
Africa Progress Panel
9-11 rue de Varembe, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland
Tel + 41 22 919 7520;