

**Report # 106**  
**Region: Southern Africa**

## **BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD**

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**Zahid Aqil**

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## **Summary of Report**

### **Political Developments**

#### ***South Africa: President Jacob Zuma's Statement On the Impact of Events of the Past Week***

South African president, Jacob Zuma, has issued a statement to apologize on the events of past week. In his statement he said, I deeply regret the pain that I have caused to my family, the ANC, the Alliance and South Africans in general.

#### ***South Africa: Zuma Regrets Pain Caused***

President Jacob Zuma has expressed deep regret for the pain he caused to South Africans by having a relationship outside of wedlock.

#### ***South Africa: 'Sorry' Zuma Tries to Calm Storm Ahead of Key Speech***

President Jacob Zuma 's apology to the nation for his latest sexual indiscretion appeared in danger of backfiring yesterday, as analysts and political opponents dismissed it as contrived and lacking substance.

#### ***Zambia: Offer Solutions, Maureen Challenges Opposition***

Opposition political parties should offer alternative solutions to the challenges affecting the nation because politics of merely criticising the Government is long gone, former first lady Maureen Mwanawasa has said.

#### ***Southern Africa: House Passes SADC Defence Pact***

The Parliament yesterday in Dodoma unanimously ratified various international agreements and pacts that are beneficial to the country's financial, natural resources and national defence as the issue of the border between Malawi and Tanzania recurred.

#### ***Zimbabwe's Unity Government Marks Shaky First Year in Power***

Zimbabwe's rickety government of national unity commemorates its first anniversary on Thursday. On the first anniversary of unity government in Zimbabwe, Mr. Tsvangirai told VOA that although the unity government had not moved Zimbabwe to where he would like it to be, some progress has been made.

## ***Zimbabwe's MDC 'may call fresh elections'***

Fresh elections may be needed in Zimbabwe after political leaders failed to end their deadlock, former opposition party the MDC says.

## ***South African President Under Pressure for Personal Misconduct***

Churches and opposition leaders in South Africa are criticizing President Jacob Zuma's leadership after he admitted to fathering a child out of wedlock. The criticism follows Mr. Zuma's state of the nation speech which appeared to be overshadowed by the scandal.

## **Economic Developments**

### ***South Africa: Some Positive Signals on the Horizon***

Figures due this week may send encouraging signals on the state of SA's economic recovery, although jobs data tomorrow may strike a sour note.

### ***Apartheid Case Tests Reach of US Courts***

A case involving U.S.-based multinational companies and South African victims of apartheid is making its way through the U.S. court system, weighing corporate responsibility and testing the reach of the American legal system.

### ***ZIMBABWE: How Do You Solve a Problem Like Arrears?***

According to the prime minister's office, the 5.7 billion dollars owed to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the African Development Bank, and others prevents the country from borrowing more money, urgently needed to revive its economy.

### ***White-Owned Companies May be Forced to Give Up Majority Stakes in Zimbabwe***

Zimbabwe's unity government is plunged into another crisis as new regulations designed by President Robert Mugabe's loyalists demand that 51 percent of all companies be given to blacks.

### ***Malawi dials 4th cell***

Malawi has launched an international tender for a fourth cellphone operator, in a bid to reduce tariff rates that are among the highest in Southern Africa.

## **Social Developments**

### ***South Africa: Climate Deal Intensifies SA, Australia's Efforts***

South Africa and Australia have signed an agreement that will frame future bilateral cooperation on climate change issues.

### ***South Africa: Crime And Poverty 'Not Correlated'***

Violent crime is not necessarily linked to high poverty rates, according to a new report from the South African Institute of Race Relations.

### ***South Africa: Unemployment Rate Remains Virtually Unchanged***

South Africa's unemployment rate in the fourth quarter of 2009 remained virtually unchanged at 24.3 percent, says Statistics South Africa (Stats SA).

### ***Mozambique: Constraints to press freedom - MISA-Mozambique***

All print media in Mozambique operate exclusively in Portuguese and are thus not accessible to the majority of the population. A study done by MISA-Mozambique on behalf of UNESCO on media development in Mozambique has found that Mozambique has a political and legal framework that is generally favorable to freedom of expression, pluralism, and diversity in the media. The Constitution very specifically guarantees the right of journalists not to reveal their sources. However, constraints still persist in the practical application of media-friendly laws and policies.

### ***South Africans Celebrate 20th Anniversary of Nelson Mandela's Prison Release***

South Africans Thursday celebrated the release from prison 20 years ago of former President Nelson Mandela. For many the event signaled the beginning of the end of apartheid.

***CLIMATE CHANGE: Much Work Lies Ahead for Africa***

Africa needs urgent action on global warming. The consensus position adopted by African leaders ahead of the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen failed. African environmental activists are now debating their way forward.

***MALAWI: Free Education At What Price***

Malawi introduced free basic education in 1994, and the number of pupils enrolled in primary schools rose quickly from 1.9 to 3.2 million - and there are still more children out there. Current figures from the ministry of education indicate that up to 20 percent of Malawian children aged between six and 13 do not attend primary school. The Creative Centre for Community Mobilisation (CRECCOM), a Malawian civil society organisation advocating for improved education standards, says there should be a law compelling children to attend school.

## **Detailed Report**

### **Political Developments**

#### ***South Africa: President Jacob Zuma's Statement On the Impact of Events of the Past Week***

(All Africa.com)

7 February 2010

I have over the past week taken time to consider and reflect on the issues relating to a relationship I had outside of wedlock.

The matter, though private, has been a subject of much public discussion and debate. It has put a lot of pressure on my family and my organisation, the African National Congress. I also acknowledge and understand the reaction of many South Africans.

I deeply regret the pain that I have caused to my family, the ANC, the Alliance and South Africans in general.

I reiterate that I took responsibility for my actions towards the family concerned and the child.

I reaffirm my commitment and that of my movement to the importance of the family as an institution. I also reaffirm my commitment and that of my movement to the values of personal responsibility, respect and dignity.

I recognise the responsibility of leaders to uphold and promote these values at all times.  
Issued by the Presidency

#### ***South Africa: Zuma Regrets Pain Caused***

(All Africa.com)

7 February 2010

Pretoria — President Jacob Zuma has expressed deep regret for the pain he caused to South Africans by having a relationship outside of wedlock.

Zuma said that in the past week he had taken time to consider and reflect on the issues relating to his relationship with Sonono Khoza and their child.

"The matter, though private, has been a subject of much public discussion and debate. It has put a lot of pressure on my family and my organisation, the African National Congress. I also acknowledge and understand the reaction of many South Africans.

"I deeply regret the pain that I have caused to my family, the ANC, the Alliance and South Africans in general," said President Zuma in a statement.

He reiterated that he took responsibility for his actions towards the Khoza family as well as the child.

"I reaffirm my commitment and that of my movement to the importance of the family as an institution. I also reaffirm my commitment and that of my movement to the values of personal responsibility, respect and dignity.

"I recognise the responsibility of leaders to uphold and promote these values at all times," he said.

### ***South Africa: 'Sorry' Zuma Tries to Calm Storm Ahead of Key Speech***

(All Africa.com)

8 February 2010

Wilson Johwa — PRESIDENT Jacob Zuma 's apology to the nation for his latest sexual indiscretion appeared in danger of backfiring yesterday, as analysts and political opponents dismissed it as contrived and lacking substance.

Zuma's apology came ahead of a crucial week for him, as he prepares for Thursday's state of the nation speech amid accusations that his administration is in a state of torpor as a result of in-fighting in the African National Congress (ANC), and between the party and its allies.

Analysts said yesterday that Zuma had no choice but to apologise for fathering a child out of wedlock with the daughter of soccer boss Irvin Khoza, as there was great danger the scandal would overshadow Thursday's key speech, which has been moved to the evening to allow to allow maximum television viewership.

ANC officials are due this week to commemorate the 20th anniversary of former president Nelson Mandela's release from prison at various ceremonies in the Western Cape, culminating in Zuma's state of the nation speech on the actual day Mandela was freed in 1990.

After vigorously defending himself, Zuma bowed to pressure at the weekend and apologised -- his second apology in recent years for similar acts.

Siphamandla Zondi, a researcher at the Institute for Global Dialogue, said it was "correct and unavoidable" for Zuma to have apologised, not just because it was expected but also to allow the focus to shift to more pressing national and international issues. The concern in the Presidency was that the attention being given to Zuma's sexual indiscretion would detract from his state of the nation speech.

The head of the Centre for Politics and Research, Prince Mashele, said Zuma wanted to have "something to hide behind so that he can say: 'I've apologised and we're moving forward.'"

However, Mashele said South Africans should not accept the apology, which was insincere, coming as it did after his initial defensive and "arrogant" statement. "This is a plastic apology and should not be accepted at all," Mashele said.

Mcebisi Ndletyana of the Human Sciences Research Council said the apology was not a bad thing, but it was disconcerting that it appeared to have come reluctantly. "He did not think he had done anything wrong, and that is more worrisome. Why would anyone not apologise for making a woman pregnant out of wedlock, more so a president who wants to discourage promiscuity?"

Zuma's apology came four days after a defensive statement in which he acknowledged fathering a four-month-old daughter with Sonono Khoza but largely blamed the media for publicity over what he said was a private matter.

Speculation was that the apology followed pressure from ANC leaders who feared Zuma's action would cost them support, amid public anger at his lifestyle.

Zuma had initially chosen not to say sorry, most likely fearing a comparison with the apology he made in 2006 when he was acquitted for rape. At the time, he admitted to having unprotected sex with the HIV-positive daughter of a former struggle comrade.

After two days of unplanned leave last week, Zuma was to meet party members in Paarl yesterday, to attend commemorative events in honour of Mandela. The matter was likely to be on the agenda of the party's national working committee meeting today.

ANC spokesman Jackson Mthembu said the commemorative programme would continue throughout the Western Cape until Thursday. "We will be having a beehive of activities door to door, including cadre forums."

### ***Zambia: Offer Solutions, Maureen Challenges Opposition***

(All Africa.com)

8 February 2010

OPPOSITION political parties should offer alternative solutions to the challenges affecting the nation because politics of merely criticising the Government is long gone, former first lady Maureen Mwanawasa has said.

Featuring on a Joy FM live chat-show "Tikambilane" yesterday, Mrs Mwanawasa said leaders from the opposition and the Government should co-exist and support one another in the management of the country.

She said there was need for opposition leaders, who considered themselves as the government in waiting, to prove to the people that they had alternative ways of tackling issues like the effects of the floods in Lusaka.

Mrs Mwanawasa said politics of merely criticising the Government was long gone and those aspiring for leadership positions should be able to prove to the electorate that they are capable of providing better policies than those of the ruling party.

She said she was still an ordinary MMD member who was on the "bench" and if called upon to "play on any number" she would be able to respond accordingly.

Mrs Mwanawasa insisted she had no grudge against the MMD or the Government saying whenever she spoke strongly, she did not do so out of malice but to advise leaders.

On the adoption of degree requirement by the National Constitutional Conference for people vying for the presidency, Mrs Mwanawasa, who is a lawyer said it was not necessary.

She said what was important was a candidate's performance.

Mrs Mwanawasa said a candidate's past performance should be an important barometer in an election. The degree requirement might disadvantage other people like those in the military who do not have degrees.

On life after president Levy Mwanawasa's death, she said it had not been easy to live as a widow since a lot of friends and some relatives had been shunning her.

Mrs Mwanawasa said during late president Levy Mwanawasa's sickness and after his death, there had been a lot of adverse publicity about her with some people spreading rumours that she had a lot of money in First Alliance Bank and that she owned the multi-national oil marketing company, Petroda.

She said all that was not true as she did not even know much about the two entities and challenged the law enforcement agencies to arrest her if she had stolen anything as first lady.

She said the Mwanawasas were among the first families who had left State House with as little as they had gone in with.

Mrs Mwanawasa challenged other widows to rise and claim whatever was due to them as most of the traditional beliefs were oppressive to them.

She urged society to stop oppressing widows and orphans.

On the Maureen Mwanawasa Community Initiative (MMCI), Mrs Mwanawasa said the organisation was still active although many organisations had stopped supporting it. She appealed for further support so that the organisation could continue with the projects it had initiated and embark on others.

## ***Southern Africa: House Passes SADC Defence Pact***

(All Africa.com)

9 February 2010

Dodoma — The Parliament yesterday in Dodoma unanimously ratified various international agreements and pacts that are beneficial to the country's financial, natural resources and national defence as the issue of the border between Malawi and Tanzania recurred.

The ratified instruments include the Proposed Amendment of the Articles of Agreement of the International Monetary Fund, the Agreement on the Establishment of Zambezi Watercourse Commission (Zamcom), and the SADC Mutual Defence Pact.

When debating the Zamcom and the SADC Defence pact both the parliamentary committee and the opposition repeatedly wanted the government to clarify the border issue between the two countries before ratifying the agreement.

This is because, the committee said, the map of the Zambezi basin that was issued to the committee did not indicate where the border lied in Lake Nyasa.

The opposition said it was high time Tanzania took the initiative to settle the border issue once and for all especially at this time when the Malawian President Bingu wa Mutharika was the AU chairperson.

"If we delay in this issue, it would soon be a source of serious conflicts between the two countries. What will happen if, for example, Malawian fishing vessels operated near the eastern shores of Lake Nyasa where Malawi claims is the border between the two countries,"said Masoud Abdallah Salim (Mtambile).

The Zambezi Watercourse Commission to be established would manage and regulate the use of the water resources in the Zambezi basin that lie in the space of eight countries that include Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Angola.

Tabling the agreement in Parliament the minister for Water and Irrigation Prof Mark Mwandosya said while the basin occupies only 2.1 per cent of Tanzania compared to 42.5 per cent of Zambia and 15.8 per cent of Zimbabwe, it is Tanzania that is the largest contributor of water flowing into the Zambezi basin at 11.3 per cent through five rivers.

Tanzania, Prof Mwandosya further said that also contributes 53 per cent of all water entering Lake Nyasa, an important water body in the Zambezi basin, compared to 43 per cent by Malawi and 4 per cent by Mozambique.

The agreement also seeks to establish a Zambezi basin commission which will be vested with daily operations of the basin authority.

Members of Parliament who debated the agreement chided the government for delaying to present it in Parliament for ratification.

Benson Mpesya (Mbeya urban) said the delay to ratify the agreement has had Tanzania lose a lot of opportunities in terms of implementing various water programmes of sources entering the basin.

The minister said, however, that the Zambezi basin authority refused to interfere with the border problem between the two countries that is why they avoided showing the border in Lake Nyasa between the two countries.

Hilda Ngoye (special seats), Reynald Mrope (Masasi) and Stella Manyanya (Special Seats) also said the ratification of the agreement was long overdue.

They wanted the government to reposition itself to benefit from the opportunities that will come with ratifying the agreement. Tanzania becomes the 5th country to ratify the agreement.

By ratifying the SADC Mutual Defence Pact Tanzania would be able to cooperate in military actions with other SADC countries against enemies internal or external of any member state.

SADC countries will also, through the pact, exchange military intelligence and other sensitive security information as well as cooperate in research and manufacturing of military weapons. But the Pact also insists on the respect of national and freedom of member states.

But parliamentary defence committee urged the government to ensure it resolves its border issues with Malawi to ensure the Pact becomes much more effective.

The legislators also approved the proposed amendment of the articles of Agreement of the International Monetary Fund which seek to enhance the voice and participation of African countries in the IMF as well as expand the investment authority of the IMF.

### ***Zimbabwe's Unity Government Marks Shaky First Year in Power***

(Voice of America)

10 February 2010

Zimbabwe's rickety government of national unity commemorates its first anniversary Thursday.

On February 11 last year, Morgan Tsvangirai was sworn in as prime minister of Zimbabwe after disputed elections and months of negotiations.

He took the junior post to President Robert Mugabe despite the fact that his Movement for Democratic Change had won a parliamentary majority at the polls.

Mr. Tsvangirai also won the first round of the presidential vote in March 2008 although he did not receive the more than 50 percent majority needed for an outright victory.

Mr. Mugabe won the presidential run-off after Mr. Tsvangirai pulled out citing a campaign of violence in which he says up to 200 of his supporters were killed.

Nevertheless, one year later, the veteran opposition leader still believes that going into partnership with Mr. Mugabe was the only way to save Zimbabwe from political instability and economic collapse.

Mr. Tsvangirai told VOA that although the unity government had not moved Zimbabwe to where he would like it to be, some progress has been made.

"One can note a lot of progress on the economic front given our economic situation at the end of 2008... a frustrating slow pace on the democratization front," he said. "The general endorsement by the people is more on the economic front."

The replacement of the local currency, by the U.S. dollar, South African Rand and other international currencies just before the unity government came into power, ended years of hyper-inflation.

But the unity government has been marked by confrontation and stalemate.

Mr. Tsvangirai says coalition governments are fragile by nature. But despite the challenges the government has proven the skeptics wrong and stayed together.

And he insists that even if the transitional government fails to fully implement the accord, it will still stay together until the next elections can be held.

In addition to stabilizing economy, the unity government has managed to revitalize the public health system which had virtually collapsed. And it has re-opened the schools after endless strikes by teachers.

Ironically teachers, along with other civil servants, went on strike earlier this month. They are demanding a monthly salary of at least \$502, a few dollars above the official poverty line. Most of them are currently paid less than \$200 a month.

Minister of Public Services Eliphas Mukonoweshuro said the government cannot afford to pay even \$300 a month because it is broke.

"It is not unwillingness on the part of government to raise salaries, it is simply lack of fiscal capacity," he said.

Average citizens are running out of patience with the coalition government. Artist Michael Kudakwashe at first welcomed the new government which he hoped would end the political violence and polarization in the country.

"Zimbabweans were no longer divided. I thought this would be a good thing," he said. "They have come together. They [the leaders] are talking and we are all getting along as Zimbabweans rather than ZANU or MDC or whatever."

But he says the failure to fully implement the agreement that brought about the unity government has dampened his optimism.

"They are always having these talks, these perpetual talks that don't seem to end," he said. "What is the problem? They have signed. Let us get along with building this country. But there always seems to be problems. For me it's very worrying."

The MDC accuses Mr. Mugabe of violating the accord by refusing to appoint MDC provincial governors, retaining the central bank governor and attorney general and allowing security forces to continue to intimidate its supporters.

ZANU-PF accuses the MDC of failing to obtain the lifting of international sanctions against its senior leaders and an end to international broadcasts targeting Zimbabwe.

Prime Minister Tsvangirai acknowledges that there is still some way to go to achieve a democratic Zimbabwe. The security chiefs have so far refused to recognize his authority and he notes that there are still pockets of resistance to change among members of the old government.

"We are frustrated by some of the orchestrated incidents of violence, breaking the rule of law," he said. "The recent farm invasions are an example but certainly that's not a policy. It's a few individuals and we are dealing with them."

Zimbabweans still hope that the coalition government can end the violence and impunity of the past and usher in a culture of accountability.

And as they mark the first anniversary of the unity government they are pinning their hopes for real change on the coalition partners and the ongoing negotiations.

### ***Zimbabwe's MDC 'may call fresh elections'***

(BBC News)

12 February 2010

Fresh elections may be needed in Zimbabwe after political leaders failed to end their deadlock, former opposition party the MDC says. But MDC spokesman Nelson Chamisa did not give a timeframe for any new polls.

It says President Robert Mugabe's Zanu-PF failed to keep promises made when the MDC joined a unity government.

Relations remain fraught between the two long-time rivals who started sharing power a year ago to halt their country's economic collapse.

"In our view it's a deadlock. We realise there is disenchantment among the people. MDC (Movement for Democratic Change) spokesman Nelson Chamisa told journalists in Harare.

"If the deadlock persists then our trajectory is to have free and fair elections," he said. A Zanu-PF spokesman however blamed the MDC for the impasse.

The MDC says its activists are still being harassed and wants key officials appointed by Mr Mugabe, such as the attorney general and central bank governor, to be replaced.

It is also angry about the terrorism charges levelled against its treasurer, Roy Bennett, who the party has nominated as deputy agriculture minister.

The party wants regional mediator South Africa to intervene. Last November, Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai called off the MDC's boycott of the unity government after regional mediation. He said he was giving Mr Mugabe 30 days to deal with the issues.

Zanu-PF in return says the MDC has not done enough to attract foreign aid and investment since it joined the government.

The unity government has managed to halt Zimbabwe's economic collapse but donors remain wary of resuming funding.

### ***South African President Under Pressure for Personal Misconduct***

(Voice of America)

12 February 2010

Churches and opposition leaders in South Africa are criticizing President Jacob Zuma's leadership after he admitted to fathering a child out of wedlock. The criticism follows Mr. Zuma's state of the nation speech which appeared to be overshadowed by the scandal.

The Anglican church of South Africa Friday criticized what it called President Jacob Zuma's misconduct. The church said in a statement that his actions highlighted the way in which women in society face exploitation and abuse.

The Southern Africa Catholic Bishops Conference earlier said the president was setting a poor example and was damaging the fight against HIV/AIDS in a country with the one of the highest infection rates in the world.

Mr. Zuma earlier this week issued a statement apologizing for fathering a child out of wedlock with a 39-year-old divorcee.

He asked for respect for his private life saying his actions are part of his traditional culture which allows polygamy (multiple wives).

The 67-year-old Mr. Zuma married his third wife last month and is reported to be engaged to be married to a fourth. South African law allows polygamy.

Many South Africans say they do not object to the president having several wives but that fathering children out of wedlock is not respectful in their culture.

And they say such behavior from a national leader sets a poor example when the government is encouraging citizens to use condoms and avoid multiple sexual partners as part the struggle against HIV.

The scandal overshadowed the president's traditional state-of-the-nation address before parliament Thursday night. It was delivered on the 20th anniversary of the release from prison of former-president and anti-apartheid icon Nelson Mandela, affectionately known as Madiba.

"As we celebrate Madiba's release, let us recommit ourselves to building a better future for all South Africans, black and white," said Jacob Zuma. "Let us pursue the ideal for which Madiba has fought his entire life, the ideal of a democratic and free society, in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities."

Mr. Zuma did not mention the scandal in his hour-long speech. But the head of the opposition Inkatha Freedom Party, Mangosuthu Buthelezi noted on national television that the president drew murmurs from the assembly when he mentioned the fight against HIV.

"I was a bit distressed when people actually ridiculed him [Jacob Zuma] when he tried to address the issue of HIV and AIDS," said Mangosuthu Buthelezi. "From our benches as opposition, you could see that there was no credibility, like the recent events have damaged his credibility."

The hour-long address received polite applause but did not meet with the enthusiasm of Mr. Zuma's first state-of-the-nation address following his inauguration last year. In his speech, Mr. Zuma noted that the worldwide economic recession had hurt the South African economy but he predicted a recovery this year.

He pledged to promote more vigor and efficiency in government and said he would crack down on corruption.

Opposition leaders, like Democratic Alliance leader Helen Zille, called the speech uninspiring.

"I thought it was very vague and very disappointing," said Helen Zille. "There were again a lot of assertions, a lot of statements, a lot of commitments but nothing of the how, none of the concrete detail as to how we are going to change this complete delivery failure."

The opposition said the Zuma government had done little to implement its goals in its 10 months in power.

Leaders of Mr. Zuma's African National Congress said the speech was meant to lay out the goals of the government and that specific actions would be forthcoming from the relevant ministries.

## **Economic Developments**

### ***South Africa: Some Positive Signals on the Horizon***

(All Africa.com)

8 February 2010

Johannesburg — FIGURES due this week may send encouraging signals on the state of SA's economic recovery, although jobs data tomorrow may strike a sour note.

Factory output is likely to have risen in December for the first time since September 2008, lifted mainly by demand for exports.

Those figures are due on Thursday. But a labour force survey from Statistics SA tomorrow may carry more weight, with the final estimate of job losses over last year likely to rise above 1-million.

On the other hand, the data may also show that the rapid pace of job shedding in the economy slowed in the fourth quarter of last year.

"The pace of job losses is expected to have slowed relative to the previous three quarters and this is likely to bring the total jobs lost to over a million," says Kgotso Radira, an economist at Investec .

Citigroup economist Jean-Francois Mercier is betting that SA's official jobless rate fell to 23% from 24,5% in the third quarter, mainly due to seasonal factors.

But he still thinks "trend" employment continued to fall, including in the farm and informal sectors of the economy.

SA moved out of its first recession in 17 years during the third quarter of last year but employment tends to lag output growth.

Jobs in the manufacturing and retail sectors, two of the economy's biggest, have been hit hardest by the recession. But a key industry survey suggests that employment in SA's factories rose for the first time since April 2008.

Analysts are betting that factory output rose in December compared with a year earlier - the first annual increase in more than a year.

The forecasts vary, with Bloomberg on Friday putting the consensus estimate at a meagre 0,1%. Many analysts have more optimistic forecasts.

Standard Bank expects a rise of 3,6%, after an annual drop of 4,7% in November.

"Low base effects, particularly in the automotive, petroleum, and iron and steel sectors where some recovery is under way, are supporting this increase," it said.

"Base effects" is a term that refers to the comparison with the year-earlier month.

New vehicle sales began the year with a bang, rising for the first time in 33 months. That suggests consumer demand, the economy's main engine, may be recovering.

There may also be good news from one of SA's main measures of business confidence, compiled by the South African Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The index fell unexpectedly to 83,5 in December from 84,1 in November - mainly because of sharp falls in retail sales and private-sector borrowing. But an increase last month seems likely, given the improved economic data so far.

The climax may come at the end of the week when President Jacob Zuma makes his state of the nation address. Brait economist Colen Garrow says business hopes Zuma will quash talk of nationalising the Reserve Bank and mines.

### ***Apartheid Case Tests Reach of US Courts***

(Voice of America)

09 February 2010

A case involving U.S.-based multinational companies and South African victims of apartheid is making its way through the U.S. court system, weighing corporate responsibility and testing the reach of the American legal system.

Last month, a federal district court judge in New York allowed several claims by the South African Khulumani victims support group against international corporations to go forward. An appeal against that decision as well as the case itself are ongoing.

The claims totaling hundreds of billions of dollars allege the multinationals helped the pre-1994 racist apartheid government perpetuate human rights abuses.

American Michael Hausfeld, the lead counsel for the Khulumani group, representing tens of thousands of victims and survivors, says the overall case is extremely important.

"It represents the first time post World War II where corporate accountability is clearly under scrutiny for not merely moral lapses but for legal obligations," he said.

Among the corporations, U.S. automakers Ford and General Motors have been accused of providing armored military vehicles used to repress protests, as well as assist security forces torturing anti-apartheid leaders.

The U.S. based information technology firm IBM is accused of providing technology that allowed the apartheid government to enhance geographic segregation methods and track down activists.

Officials at Ford declined to be interviewed. Officials at General Motors said it is their policy not to make public comments about matters involving GM which are currently in litigation. IBM did not respond to an interview request.

In South Africa, editorial writers have wondered why the case cannot be tried in South Africa since the companies have offices there, the victims live there, and that is where the alleged abuses took place. The previous South African government was against the lawsuit, but the current government favors it.

Lawyer Paul Stephan, who filed a brief in the case on behalf of the U.S. National Foreign Trade Council, shared his own concerns about the case.

"It, I think, represents an example, if you will, of an entrepreneurial approach to the law, [where] people are bringing lawsuits to push the law in certain directions rather than applying established principles to facts that might be in dispute," said Stephan.

Multinationals say they had nothing to do with the crimes of apartheid.

But the claims have been filed under the Alien Tort statute. This statute which remained almost completely unused for 200 years until the 1980s, has been utilized much more lately. It allows district courts to hear civil actions by foreigners for violations of international laws and U.S. treaties. But it remains unclear which types of case are being allowed to proceed, especially those implicating U.S. companies.

Stephan, who is also the co-chair of the U.S.-based International Law in Domestic Courts Interest Group, feels some American courts are going too far.

"I think a fairly open-ended mandate that some U.S. courts have claimed to do justice across the board, rather than in focused areas that our Congress has specifically addressed, like corruption, I have a problem with that," Stephan said. "I have a problem with judges acting without the support of Congress or the president in international areas," he added.

A former U.S. ambassador to South Africa, Princeton Lyman, recently wrote an opinion article in The New York Times in which he said the apartheid lawsuit interferes with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission which South Africa set up after apartheid, and from which reparation payments have yet to be completely resolved.

Lyman writes he does not believe a U.S. court forcing U.S. companies to pay compensation for victims of apartheid is a correct approach.

Hausfeld, the counsel for the Khulumani group, rejects these arguments.

"That is OK if you want to forget everything that occurred particularly when fundamental human rights are abused. It is not a good concept for general governance or citizenship rights," he said.

Mark Drumbl, the director at the Washington and Lee Transnational Law Institute, says he believes the case having gone this far, after years by the multinationals trying to have it dismissed, sets an important precedent.

"We do not want to encourage foreign investment that in turn leads to either directly or indirectly human rights abuses. I think that is an important conversation," said Drumbl. "Whether a U.S. court is the right place to have that conversation or not is debatable, but what I do not think is debatable is the fact that it is a useful conversation, and the extent to which the Alien Tort Statute litigation contributes to that, I do not think that intrinsically is a troublesome thing," he said.

Drumbl says the lawsuit will also allow for a clearer picture of when multinational corporations can be brought to court. Generally, he says U.S. courts are looking very carefully at foreign-borne cases, and setting the bar of proof very high, so he is not worried of an impending deluge of lawsuits.

"I do not buy into the alarmism that the cases are out of control, and that they are seriously undermining foreign relations or they are having a chilling effect on investment," he said. "I think there clearly is a set of victims of human rights abuses out there for whom there is no recourse but the conversational, symbolic and expressive value of filing process in U.S. courts," Drumbl concluded.

The case will also probably get attention during the upcoming World Cup in South Africa. Activists have already started planning protests against some of the multinational companies involved in the case which are also sponsoring national teams competing in the June and July competition.

### ***ZIMBABWE: How Do You Solve a Problem Like Arrears?***

(IPS)

Feb 9, 2010

BULAWAYO, Feb 9, 2010 (IPS) - Faced with nearly six billion dollars of external debt, Zimbabwe's national unity government is considering applying for Highly Indebted Poor Country status.

According to the prime minister's office, the 5.7 billion dollars owed to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the African Development Bank, and others prevents the country from borrowing more money, urgently needed to revive its economy.

The finance minister, Tendai Biti, says that joining the Highly Indebted Poor Countries programme is one way out.

HIPC was initiated in 1996 at least partly as a response to criticism of IMF and World Bank economic policy by civil society. The programme provides debt relief and low-interest loans to cancel or reduce external debt repayments.

To be considered for the initiative, countries must have an unsustainable debt burden. Assistance is on condition that the national governments of these countries meet a range of economic management and performance targets.

"You should know that Zimbabwe is not a poor country. It has vast natural resources, but these resources cannot be turned into capital," says minister of state in the prime minister's office Gordon Moyo.

"Zimbabwe should come up with a poverty reduction strategy paper, which is a blue print of how it is going to use the resources which are going to be availed to it once the debt is cancelled," continues Moyo. "It is the responsibility of Zimbabwe, it's not the imposition of the World Bank, IMF or the Paris Club or any other institutions."

But Dr Qhubani Moyo, a public policy analyst and activist, says Zimbabwe's economic problems don't originate with its debt, but with the economic sanctions intended to weaken Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front party, which ruled from 1980 until 2008 when it was joined by two factions of the rival Movement for Democratic Change in a unity government.

"Unless we address the issue of sanctions we are not going anywhere. We need to ensure that we link the issue of sanctions with HIPC. Let's ensure there is economic growth in this country by engaging in trade - that trade can be done if the sanctions barriers are removed."

Responding to the minister's assertion - citing debt relief and economic growth in Uganda, Mozambique, Zambia and Nigeria - that HIPC has worked well for other African countries, Qhubani Moyo says the comparisons are mistaken.

"If you think that there is one formula for solving problems that hit all African countries, then you will have a serious problem in the long run.

"Countries like Mozambique were coming from a bloody civil war. Zimbabwe is a country whose economy collapsed but there was nothing in terms of destruction of infrastructure and superstructure. Also: if you look at Mozambique and these other countries that have become HIPC countries, the so-called growth is nominal. It's not being felt at the level of individuals."

Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development representative Janet Mudzwiti criticises the HIPC plan from a different angle.

"We are against lender-led relief initiatives, simply because their ideology is not pro-people; they are not people-based policies. To us the HIPC principles still hinge on the neo-liberal policies that you have to open up your markets, introduce user fees for social

essentials such as health and water. We are saying it's not different from the Structural Adjustment Programme which was disastrous."

Regarding the country's debt, she raises two important issues. "There is the issue of odious debt and the issue of illegal debt," Mudzwiti says.

"When you look at the issue of Zimbabwe's debt profile, there is the issue of colonial debt (incurred by a white-only government between 1965 and 1980). And we have the issue of debt (incurred) under the economic structural adjustment programme."

Odious debt is debt entered into by a government on behalf of the people, but which doesn't benefit them. Much of the \$500 million dollars of debt run up by the Rhodesian state was spent on fighting a war against the black majority; there is a strong case for that debt to be deemed odious.

Much later, Structural Adjustment Programmes were imposed by the World Bank and IMF across Africa in the 1980s and 1990s as a condition for loans to cover a previous debt crisis.

The conditions it imposed sharply restricted government spending on things like healthcare and education, called for privatisation of valuable state assets and of services like water and electricity, required the devaluation of local currencies, and stopped governments from protecting local production by means of import tariffs.

Zimbabwe's adoption of structural adjustment proved disastrous for the economy and activists are concerned that the conditions for HIPC may replicate this experience.

Once bitten, twice shy. Qhubani Moyo does not want the country to turn to the Bretton-Woods institutions for answers.

"Zimbabwe has a way of dealing with its problems. We can't have a one fix solution for all. Zimbabwe has to come up with its own model to use its own resources for its own recovery and its own growth."

### ***White-Owned Companies May be Forced to Give Up Majority Stakes in Zimbabwe***

(Voice of America)

10 February 2010

Zimbabwe's unity government is plunged into another crisis as new regulations designed by President Robert Mugabe's loyalists demand that 51 percent of all companies be given to blacks. Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai says the regulations were formed without his approval and are therefore null and void.

Under legislation Parliament passed in 2008, by March 1st every company valued at more than \$500,000 must submit a plan for indigenous ownership within five years.

Prime Minister Tsvangirai has objected to the legislation, which was passed under the Zanu-PF-led government before the 2008 elections. A few days after that, Mr. Tsvangirai's Movement for Democratic Change won the elections, and it later formed a unity government with President Mugabe.

The company law, however, threatens a new crisis for the nation.

Fourteen sectors in the economy have been reserved for indigenous, or black, Zimbabweans only, including transport, agriculture and retail. And failure to comply is a punishable with up to five years in jail.

Regional economists warn the regulations mean that potential foreign investors will now stay away from Zimbabwe.

One of the world's largest mining companies, Rio Tinto, has a small diamond mine in Zimbabwe and has said it hopes to expand operations. Rio Tinto spokesman Nick Cobban in London describes the regulations as "draconian and unworkable".

The Zanu PF Minister in charge of indigenization, Saviour Kasukuwere, says the regulations are the result of widespread consultation and will be flexible.

Mr. Tsvangirai however, says he had not been consulted. He says he is responsible in the government for policy formulation and that the regulations had not been presented to cabinet.

Unlike South Africa's black economic empowerment program, in which blacks buy shares, the new Zimbabwe regulations presume majority shares in companies will be handed over for free.

President Mugabe and other Zanu-PF leaders and supporters have taken control of nearly all of Zimbabwe's white-owned commercial farms since 2000. Most beneficiaries had no commercial farming experience and could not obtain bank loans to fund operations.

About 80 percent of that land is now idle. Before 2000 it produced 40 percent of Zimbabwe's foreign currency.

Economists blame Zimbabwe's collapsed economy on the massive shrinkage of commercial agriculture.

Zimbabwe economist John Robertson says he fears the new regulations will doom many companies if they end up with boards of directors with no knowledge of the businesses. He predicts many will go broke as they will fail to secure funding and that company bosses will become less motivated to perform when stripped of their majority shareholding.

## ***Malawi dials 4th cell***

(TIMES LIVE)

Feb 13, 2010

Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority spokesman Zamuziko Makambo said on Friday that the government wanted a fourth operator to boost competition and improve services.

"We have three operators, namely Zain, TNM and Gmobile, but we want another operator to help reduce the cost of doing business and improve the quality of telecommunication services," Makambo said.

Kuwait-owned Zain is the leading operator, followed by Telekoms Networks Malawi, a wholly Malawian-owned company.

Gmobile is owned by a consortium of Malawian businessmen in partnership with Berry Telecoms of South Africa. It has yet to roll out services since being granted a licence last year.

Malawi's President Bingu wa Mutharika has accused the operators of charging high tariffs and providing a sub-standard service.

## **Social Developments**

### ***South Africa: Climate Deal Intensifies SA, Australia's Efforts***

(All Africa.com)

7 February 2010

Pretoria — South Africa and Australia have signed an agreement that will frame future bilateral cooperation on climate change issues.

The letter of intent was signed on Friday by Australian Trade Minister Simon Crean and Minister for Water and Environmental Affairs Buyelwa Sonjica.

The two nations have been cooperating on climate change matters under a Climate Change Partnership since 2006.

The department said the signing of the letter formalises continued cooperation under this partnership.

Both countries agreed to identify as well develop and implement a further program of joint activities such as addressing climate change and biodiversity; greenhouse gas emissions reporting and monitoring at national and entity levels.

## ***South Africa: Crime And Poverty 'Not Correlated'***

(All Africa.com)

9 February 2010

Johannesburg — VIOLENT crime is not necessarily linked to high poverty rates, according to a new report from the South African Institute of Race Relations.

SA has one of the world's highest rates of violent crime and the issue is regularly seen as one of the most pressing for the government.

The report, published in Fast Facts, the institute's newsletter, surveyed 80 indicators for municipalities across the country. Eastern Cape municipalities - with a poverty rate of 62% - had the highest murder rate, at 54 murders per 100 000 people. But Limpopo municipalities, which also recorded a poverty rate of 62%, had the lowest murder rate, at 13,7 per 100 000 residents.

Western Cape municipalities also had a high murder rate, at 51 per 100 000 people, but a low poverty rate, at 26,5%.

Lisa Vetten, senior researcher and policy analyst for the Tshwaranang Legal Advocacy Centre, said it was too simplistic to blame poverty for high rates of violent crime. Research from Brazil showed that it was not necessarily the poorest who committed crime. "Rather, it's those with just enough education and just enough money to have aspirations and to have their aspirations thwarted," she said.

Vetten said violence was primarily a young male phenomenon, while the poorest members of society were the elderly, children, and women. "All forms of violence are not the same, and do not have the same causes and the same forms." Different degrees of social cohesion and techniques of conflict resolution in communities could also explain differing degrees of violence.

According to the institute's report, the country's worst-performing municipality is the Alfred Nzo district municipality in the Eastern Cape. It recorded a poverty rate of 76%, the highest in the country. More than half the households in this municipality do not have access to basic services such as clean water, electricity, adequate sanitation and refuse disposal.

Less than 20% of households in Alfred Nzo have access to a fridge, a television set and a radio. And only 40% of students from this municipality passed matric in 2008.

The best municipality, according to the report, was the West Coast district municipality, in the Western Cape. It recorded the lowest poverty rate, at 23%. Less than 10% of households in this municipality do not have access to basic services.

Nthamaga Kgafela, the author of the report, said the findings suggested that the problems of local government could not be solved through central planning. Intervention from central government tended to benefit wealthier rather than poorer municipalities.

### ***South Africa: Unemployment Rate Remains Virtually Unchanged***

(All Africa.com)

9 February 2010

Pretoria — South Africa's unemployment rate in the fourth quarter of 2009 remained virtually unchanged at 24.3 percent, says Statistics South Africa (Stats SA).

Stats SA's Quarterly Labour Force survey showed that in the third quarter of 2009, 24.5 percent people were jobless.

The number of people employed in the labour force increased by 61 000 between quarter three and four.

The survey showed that though there was a slight improvement in job creation from the two quarters this did not necessarily translate to a big decrease in the number of unemployed people at 27 000. It said that rather there was a slight increase in the number of discouraged work seekers at 54 000.

"This resulted in the unemployment rate remaining virtually unchanged between quarter three and four," said the statistical body.

On a year-on-year basis there was an annual decrease of 6.3 percent in employment and an increase of 292 000 in the number of unemployed people.

There was also an increase of 947 000 in the number of persons who were not economically active of which 518 000 were discouraged work-seekers.

Between the third and fourth quarter, 89 000 jobs were created across all industries with most of the job gains in the finance industry which accounted for 77 000 jobs. This was followed by the construction and trade industries.

When coming to industries that lost the most jobs year-on-year trade accounting, manufacturing, private households and agriculture. "There was an overall decline of 870

000 in employment between quarter four 2008 and quarter four 2009," said Stats SA, adding that job losses were experienced in all industries.

In comparison to 2008 the number of unemployed persons increased by 292 000 in quarter four of which 227 000 were job losers.

### ***Mozambique: Constraints to press freedom - MISA-Mozambique***

(Africa Files)

10 February 2010

One of the findings on a study done by MISA-Mozambique on behalf of UNESCO on the landscape of media development in Mozambique is that Mozambique has a political and legal framework that is generally favorable to freedom of expression, and to pluralism and diversity in the media, although constraints still persist in the practical application of media-friendly laws and policies. The findings were launched at a conference on 10 February 2010 in Maputo.

The study is based on the Media Development Indicators adopted in 2008 by UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of communication (IPDC). The MISA research points out that, despite the press freedom guarantees in the Mozambican Constitution and in the 1991 Press Law, there remains other legislations on the statute book which can be used against the media. This includes a clause in the law on crimes against state security which treats libel against the President, the Prime Minister and other senior political and judicial figures as a security offence.

This clause has only ever been used once, against the gutter paper "Zambeze", which carried an absurd claim in 2009 that the then Prime Minister, Luisa Diogo, was not really a Mozambican citizen at all. Instead of treating this claim with the derision and contempt it deserved, prosecutors took the senior figures on the paper to court, thus transforming them into criminals. They were found guilty but appealed, and so the case is dragging on. The MISA study suggested that this clause in the security law, and anti-media clauses in the law on state secrets should be repealed. A UNESCO representative at the conference on 10 February 2010 denounced the whole concept of criminal libel, and argued that all forms of defamation should be regarded as civil and not criminal offences.

The right to information is enshrined in the Mozambican constitution, but has never been regulated; so, public institutions continue to shroud themselves in secrecy, turning down even the simplest requests for information. MISA last year approached five state institutions, including three ministries, with requests for information on budgets,

expenditure, procurement, hiring procedures and contact details for officials who should liaise with the public. Of the five institutions, only IGEPE (Institute for the Management of State Shareholdings) provided the information requested within a reasonable time.

Similar research was carried out in 11 other SADC (Southern African Development Community) countries, and Mozambique was ranked bottom (However, the survey did not cover the worst offender against press freedom in the region, Zimbabwe).

From 2003 to 2005, MISA-Mozambique led a public debate on freedom of information which led to a draft bill on the subject which MISA-Mozambique submitted to the country's parliament, the Assembly of the Republic, in November 2005. But in the ensuing four years, no deputies were sufficiently interested to put the matter on the parliamentary agenda. (This apathy may be about to change – Alfredo Gamito, who chairs the Assembly commission dealing with media matters, has publicly stated that freedom of information will be a priority for this legislature).

The Constitution very specifically guarantees the right of journalists not to reveal their sources. But the MISA-Mozambique study notes that some judges seem unaware of this, for they continue to make illegal demands on journalists to say how they obtained certain information. Salomao Moyana, director of the weekly “Magazine Independente”, says he has received such demands from judges twice, but has refused to obey, citing the constitution in his defense.

The study suggested that the current restrictions on foreign ownership of media should be reviewed. The press law states that no more than 20 per cent of the shares in any Mozambican media company may be held by foreign capital. But in practice it is easy to disguise foreign ownership – the name of a Mozambican citizen is used as a front, but the power and the money lies with foreigners. But rather than abandon a clause that cannot be effectively enforced, participants at the conference not only insisted on the 20 per cent barrier, but demanded that the state should police it properly.

Questions were also raised about the distribution of state advertisements. Currently the bulk of print media advertisements goes to the Maputo daily “Noticias”, using the argument that this is the paper with the largest circulation. For some state adverts there is a legal requirement that they be published in the largest circulation daily – but there is nothing in any law that bans them from being published anywhere else. Attitudes of state managers are a hangover from the days when the only daily published in Maputo was “Noticias” – but nowadays it faces stiff competition from the independent daily “O Pais”, not to mention an ever growing number of weeklies. Since there is no independent body that verifies circulation, it is far from clear whether “Noticias” is still the largest circulation paper in the country.

The MISA-Mozambique study urges that the country's advertising code should establish the principle of “non-discrimination” in the placing of advertisements by state bodies and

local authorities. The conference also queried the peculiar status of the company “Noticias SARL”, which owns “Noticias” and the Sunday paper “Domingo”. In theory, this is a private company – but the majority shareholder, with 42 per cent, is the Bank of Mozambique (historically, this is because in the colonial period a Portuguese bank, the BNU, was the main shareholder, and after independence it became part of the new central bank). Two other state concerns, the insurance company EMOSE, and the fuel company PETROMOC, also hold shares in Noticias SARL. A strong feeling at the conference was that the Bank of Mozambique ought to sell off its shares in Noticias, and that the ownership of all media should be entirely transparent.

The study noted that all the print media operate exclusively in Portuguese, and are thus not accessible to the majority of the population who understand little or no Portuguese. Radio Mozambique, on the other hand, has an excellent record of working in Mozambican languages. Currently it transmits every day in 21 languages (including Portuguese and English) on 14 channels. Mozambican Television (TVM) was criticized for its limited use of African languages – 15 minute news slots in the Sena and Ndau languages in the TVM Beira station, and in Makua in Nampula. The study also noted the absence of national languages in the TVM national channel is one of the great weaknesses of Mozambican public service television, given the potential for inclusion and participation that national languages represent.

### *South Africans Celebrate 20th Anniversary of Nelson Mandela's Prison Release*

(Voice of America)

11 February 2010

South Africans Thursday celebrated the release from prison 20 years ago of former President Nelson Mandela. For many the event signaled the beginning of the end of apartheid.

Thousands of South Africans Thursday gathered outside the Groot Drakenstein prison near Cape Town to mark the first steps of freedom 20 years ago of anti-apartheid icon Nelson Mandela following 27 years in prison.

Mr. Mandela that day walked out with then-wife Winnie Madikizela-Mandela waving his fist in the air as organizers, who had been given a mere 24-hours notice of his release, struggled to contain the crowd.

A few hours later, Mr. Mandela delivered his first public speech in nearly three decades from a balcony at Cape Town's city hall to a massive crowd. "Your [South Africans']

tireless and heroic sacrifices have made it possible for me to be here today. I therefore place the remaining years of my life in your hands," he said.

His release had been announced nine days earlier by then-President F. W. De Klerk. Four years later Mr. Mandela would become South Africa's first democratically elected president.

The 91-year-old Mr. Mandela, who now moves about by wheelchair, did not appear at the ceremonies outside the prison. But many of his colleagues were there and spoke emotionally of its significance.

Cyril Ramaphosa, an activist and successful businessman, told the crowd that when Mr. Mandela was freed South Africans also knew that their freedom had arrived.

"But what should be clear is that you, the people of our country, freed Nelson Mandela. Mandela was not freed by De Klerk. He was freed by your struggle," he said.

Another veteran activist, Minister in the Presidency Trevor Manuel, said Mr. Mandela's release was symbolic of something much larger.

"We remind ourselves of where we come from in the struggle to establish a deep and durable democracy in this country that touches the lives of all of our people. We remind ourselves of where we come from but we remind ourselves also of where we need to go to," he said.

South African leaders note that in the 16 years since the end of apartheid, the government has created two million jobs, built more than one million low-cost homes and pursued pro-business policies that have created an emerging black middle class.

But they also note that the unemployment rate is 24 percent, millions of people still live in informal settlements without basic services and the country has one of largest gaps between rich and poor in the world.

And they lament most what they see as rising corruption and cronyism in government.

As a result, some South Africans have called for their leaders to recapture the spirit of sacrifice and public-interest that flourished following Mr. Mandela's release.

## *CLIMATE CHANGE: Much Work Lies Ahead for Africa*

(IPS)

Feb 11, 2010

CAPE TOWN, Feb 11, 2010 (IPS) - Africa needs urgent action on global warming. The consensus position adopted by African leaders ahead of the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen failed. African environmental activists are now debating their way forward.

Samantha Bailey, Africa coordinator for the 350 Campaign, said activist organising had been a success.

In the framework of the international "TckTckTck" campaign, 350 held an international day of action on Oct. 24, 2009, which it says was "the biggest single day of political action ever to happen". It involved 5,200 actions in 181 countries demanding a fair, ambitious and binding deal.

The 350 Campaign, founded in the United States by author Bill McKibben, was established to pressure governments to agree that 350 parts per million is the safe upper limit for carbon dioxide in the atmosphere if catastrophic climate change is to be avoided.

For the day of action in October, 40 activists from across Africa attended a climate change training camp in South Africa's economic hub Johannesburg, and photographs of the worldwide protests were delivered to South African leaders, including president Jacob Zuma and Water Affairs Minister Buyelwa Sonjica.

Bailey conceded that in Africa it was "much more difficult to get the message out". She ascribed this to Africa not having an established climate change movement, as India and Australia do.

"In Africa it was a struggle because of the AIDS money dynamic. A lot of people have got lazy and were waiting to be paid money instead of doing things for themselves," she said.

But in an indication of a divide between civil society movements from North and South, Bailey's statements provoked a fierce debate.

"I don't know whether it's because 350 is American, but 'tck tck' is not easy to understand. People couldn't relate to the messages," said Thabang Ngcozela. "Messages that people have derived themselves would have been much more easier for them to relate to."

Ngcozela heads several civil society projects for the group which hosted a January meeting of climate change activists in Cape Town, the Environmental Monitoring Group. He said EMG's most successful climate change activities have taken place in poor communities like Cape Town's Khayelitsha, and not in seminar rooms in the suburbs.

Organising using online petitions and flash mobs - groups gathered quickly to collective action via cellphone - could exclude many local communities in South Africa and elsewhere because the mobilisation is organised via a medium most people don't access, said another participant.

"Climate change is bigger than the problem of HIV. It is not going to affect (just) a selected few those who have been exposed - it is a threat to humanity and there is nothing complex about that. We need robust political intervention in communities... not a strategy targeted at the selected few" said Nkwame Cedile from the Alternative Information and Development Centre.

He said global campaigns should avoid mobilisation "just for awareness raising, because government also does that"; he urged people not to see climate change as a scientific issue too complex to explain to the poor.

Ngcozela said the way forward after Copenhagen must be to "build democratic movements on the ground" rather than arrange isolated events.

"There is no way we can hold our government accountable in (forums like) Copenhagen if we can't hold it accountable at home" he said.

But Tony Brutus, who works for the South African government's Department of Water Affairs, disagreed. He told the seminar that even non-binding statements against climate change by governments are significant and can put into motion "certain processes".

South Africa broke ranks with the rest of the continent and the Group of 77 countries pushing hard for binding emissions reduction targets and significant funding to poor countries to mitigate the already unavoidable effects of global warming, and joined 25 countries which hammered out a non-binding "Copenhagen Accord" at the end of the summit.

The accord committed South Africa to "adopt and report on national mitigation actions to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases". Developed nations agreed to try to raise 100 billion dollars a year by 2020 to help developing countries cope with climatic changes.

"South Africa was part of a small group who wanted change. President Jacob Zuma went ahead and made those statements and that got him into trouble with some of our neighbouring countries. I assume that action plans will follow," Brutus said.

Brutus did not elaborate on what action plans the government might be working on.

But 1500 kilometres away from Cape Town, Desmond D'Sa says non-binding agreements have not worked for the people of South Durban.

D'Sa is the co-ordinator of the South Durban Community Environmental Alliance (SDCEA) and has long demanded that government enact tough laws against polluting industries.

For him, the allegedly cancer-causing pollution from three oil refineries and dozens of chemical factories in the area goes hand in hand with the deadly phenomenon of climate change.

D'Sa said industry will not clean up its act unless it is paid by government to do so. "Industry is asking for more handouts, more incentives from governments. They want more of the taxpayers' money before they will do anything.

"We have industries which have been operating for 100 years still wanting sympathy from the people of this country, and yet masses of people are affected by their toxic emissions and continue to suffer."

He hit out at government for allowing the industries to expand, instead of introducing new laws to restrict them, and force them to reduce their polluting emissions.

"South Durban bears the mark of apartheid, but even under the democratic government, industries are allowed to expand and their emissions are increasing rapidly," said D'Sa.

Government's reluctance to regulate polluting but profitable industry showed itself in South Africa's alignment with the Copenhagen Accord's voluntary commitments to reduce emissions. In addition to its work with people affected by the petrochemical industries, SDCEA is now mobilising communities outside the South Durban basin who are suffering the effects of climate change.

One of these is the Clairwood Ratepayers Association. Richard Singh, who represents subsistence farmers growing spinach and cabbages near the Durban airport, told IPS that climate change had led to scorching heat and frequent floods which destroy his crops.

He says in 1976, he was able to plant crops according to the four seasons. "Today I can't do the same because you find different weather even on the same day, and more insects than ever. My money and plants go down the drain," says Singh.

Claribel Mthembu of KwaMakhutha, near the large Durban township of Umlazi, says climate change affects her community because "there are four seasons in one week".

Mthembu points to a killer storm that hit Molweni, near Durban in 2008. The freak storm killed five people and destroyed 400 houses.

"Residents depend on their crops for food, but all the crops were destroyed and they never got help rebuilding their houses," she said.

Ngcozela warns that for a global anti-climate change campaign to succeed, it must veer away from seminars and internet activities that preach to the already converted, and focus on working with people like D'Sa, Mthembu and Singh.

Echoing Mthembu, he said "South Africans in the rural areas are already aware of how the increasing sun is impacting on their mielie (maize) fields. They are aware that when there is a drought their cattle and pigs die."

"What we need now is for grassroots activists to be trained and sent out, with the necessary support, to campaign against climate change" Ngcozela said.

### ***MALAWI: Free Education At What Price***

(IPS)

Feb 13, 2010

LILONGWE, Feb 13, 2010 (IPS) - He fishes by night and sells his catch by day. He's the breadwinner for his family of six. Maliko Malombe is nine years old.

"He is the man of this house and has to provide for us," says his mother, Tadala. "What are we going to eat if he attends school?"

Maliko, from Malawi's lake district of Mangochi, has never seen the inside of a classroom. He is the youngest child in his household, the only boy among four sisters.

His widowed mother believes it is her son's duty to provide for the family. None of his sisters, aged between 10 to 17, go to school either - the two youngest help their mother with household chores while the older ones work a plot of land for food to eat.

"We are living comfortably and have three meals a day because all my children help to provide for our daily needs," says Tadala Malombe.

Malawi introduced free basic education in 1994, and the number of pupils enrolled in primary schools rose quickly from 1.9 to 3.2 million - and there are still more children out there.

Current figures from the ministry of education indicate that up to 20 percent of Malawian children aged between six and 13 do not attend primary school. The Creative Centre for Community Mobilisation (CRECCOM), a Malawian civil society organisation

advocating for improved education standards, says there should be a law compelling children to attend school.

"The major problem we have is that universal primary education is not compulsory although it is free. Some communities do not really feel compelled to send their children because there's no law that forces them to do that," George Jobe, executive director of CRECCOM told IPS.

### **Solution a problem?**

There are no plans to make education compulsory, but If such a law were passed tomorrow, what would it mean for Maliko?

To begin with, an eleven kilometre trek to the nearest school. There he would find three blocks of classes, not nearly enough to hold all the students. Most classes, says teacher Godfrey Nkhoma, are held under trees or thatched shelters.

"There are no classes when it rains and this means that we do not teach them enough," says Nkhoma.

Nkhoma says the school is also short of staff. "It is common to have up to 100 pupils being taught by one teacher. It is very difficult for one teacher to teach so many pupils at one go. The standards of education are very low. The teaching and learning materials are never enough."

Unfortunately, the state of affairs in this corner of the lake district is not unique. The Civil Society Coalition for Quality Basic Education (CSCQBE), which groups NGOs, the teachers' union and religious organisations to monitor and influence government policy on education, says Malawi needs 12,000 more teachers.

The coalition reports that drop-out and repetition rates are very high in primary schools. In 2009, a CSCQBE report found 20 percent of pupils in Standard One repeated the grade at least once; 24 percent dropped out of school entirely, overwhelmed by the obstacles to learning.

"The school is really far from some villages and this deters many children from attending school regularly," Nkhoma, told IPS.

### **Government acting on problems**

The education minister, George Chabonda, told Parliament on Feb. 9, 2009, that government will ensure that education standards improve, beginning with reducing the teacher to pupil ratio. Currently there is just one teacher for every 90 students; the government aims to reduce this to 1:60 by 2013, and to 1:40 by 2017.

"We will make sure that students are all getting quality education because education is the key to everything," said Chaponda.

Education was allocated 167 million dollars, 12 percent of the 2009-2010 budget. Only agriculture received more. The budget statement directs the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to improve provision of teaching, learning materials, and teacher training.

There are plans to open a new teacher training college and introduce "double shifting", a system in which overcrowding in selected primary and secondary schools will be relieved by pupils starting lessons at different times.

CRECCOM's Jobe says Malawi has a long way to go, but is encouraged by the steps being taken.

"There's some light at the end of the tunnel. We can make it. We need to ensure that all plans are implemented," says Jobe.