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Online tool allows citizens in crisis to bear witness, report the news

Restoration of dignity key to women's empowerment in Yemen

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, Sept. 26 — Participants in the roundtable on the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which took place last week, agreed that all the convention committee's recommendations lead to one conclusion that is the necessity to restore Yemeni women's dignity.

"[We need] to protect women's self esteem and eradicate practices based on common culture that put Yemeni women down," said Amal Al-Basha, director of the Sisters Arab Forum for Human Rights (SAF).

After a two-year research process, the SAF produced a civil society-based report on the implementation of the convention and presented it in parallel to the official report prepared by the Women National Committee (WNC) in New York during the CEDAW committee meeting in July this year.

Agreeing with her, Dr. Husnia Kadiri, director of the Gender Research and Studies Center at Sana'a University and representative of the Yemeni Women's Union at the event, said that strategies targeting women should focus on human dignity for women and aim at their empowerment, not just at their education.

The roundtable discussion was organized by the WNC and was supported by the UN as a joint UN event, in order to present the recommendations of the CEDAW committee and to identify key national priorities to be addressed by a national CEDAW action plan.

The CEDAW committee produced, based on its observations and hearing both the national and shadow reports on the country's progress, more than 70 recommendations in order to speed up Yemeni women's development.

"The committee commended our efforts in enhancing the status of

women, especially with regards to ratifying the optional protocol on the rights of children, changing several discriminatory laws against women, signing the memorandum of understanding on refugee rights, and implementing programs that aim to narrow the gender gap, especially on the political front, through lobbying for the quota system," said Hooria Mashhour, deputy chairperson of the WNC and head of the team that presented the official country report in New York.

However, she admitted that there is still much to be done and that the WNC is drafting an action plan to follow-up the committee's recommendations.

"It mostly lies in the hands of the Parliament," said Rashida Al-Hamdani chairperson of the WNC in her key note address at the event.

She referred to the WNC's advocacy for legal amendments of laws that discriminate against women. "These

amendments are essential to implementing the second article of the CEDAW, which calls for the elimination of all discriminatory legislations. Yet we also need a strong implementation mechanism to hold authorities and the various stakeholders accountable to the new laws," she said.

PM Promises

Despite not being present in person to inaugurate the session, Prime Minister and Head of the Supreme Council for Women Dr. Ali Mujawar asserted the Yemeni government's position to support women in his keynote address that was delivered by Minister of Education Dr. Abdulsalam Al-Jawfi.

He mentioned the General People's Congress's (the ruling party) commitment to the quota system, and the likelihood of upgrading the status of the Women National Committee. He also hinted that there will be several openings coming soon for women in deci-

sion-making positions in the government.

In the keynote address, the PM acknowledged fully the CEDAW recommendations which he promised to prioritize, many of them in coordination with the WNC.

Among the participants, were representatives of the Ministry of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Fisheries, Ministry of Endowment and Ministry of Education. They all contributed to the discussion, building on Mujawar's comments and highlighting their respective ministry's priorities with regards to the follow-up of the implementation of CEDAW recommendations.

Dr. Adel Al-Shargabi, a professor of social sciences at Sana'a University, insisted that there should be three priorities in the recommendations and these are education, a minimum age

for marriage and the political participation for women.

"But we need to understand that the change of laws needs to be accompanied by both a change in the society's culture and a change in the state's infrastructure and ruling system," he added.

The recommendations

Over seventy recommendations were forwarded by the CEDAW committee to the Yemeni government. These focused on legislation, cultural practices, security and safety issues, education, employment, health, poverty and political participation.

The issues of early marriage and female genital mutilation were highlighted. Both of these, in addition to pre-marital consultancy, were essential parts of the Safe Motherhood Law proposed by the Ministry of Health to the Parliament for ratification.

Continued on page 2

Deficit of accountability to women stands against realizing women's rights and achieving the MDGs

Progress of the world's women report: Who answers to women?

Stronger accountability needed to move from commitments to results, including achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Women must be included in all oversight processes; gender equality must become standard against which public performance is assessed. Here are some extracts from the report:

SANA'A, Sept 27 — As a halfway point to the 2015 deadline for achieving the MDGs and a week before the High-level Event to examine the world's progress towards meeting the MDGs, the United Nations Development Fund for Women published its 2008/2009 progress of the world's women report under the title: Who answers to women? Gender and accountability.

The report reveals that implementation still has a long way to go in translating commitments to women's rights into changes in women's lives. To date, women are outnumbered 4 to 1 in legislatures around the world; over 60 percent of all unpaid family workers globally are women; women still earn on average 17 per cent less than men, and about one-third of women suffer gender-based violence during their lives. In some parts of the world, 1 in 10 women dies from pregnancy-related causes even though the means for preventing maternal mortality are cost-effective and well known.

Gender gaps on this scale are symptomatic of an accountability crisis.

Governments and multilateral organizations have a responsibility to do a better job of answering to women. Progress 2008/2009 points out that accountability mechanisms work for women when they can ask for explanations and information from decision makers, and, where necessary, initiate investigations or get compensation. Women must be included in oversight processes, and advancing women's rights must be a key standard against which the performance of public officials is assessed and, if necessary, sanctioned.

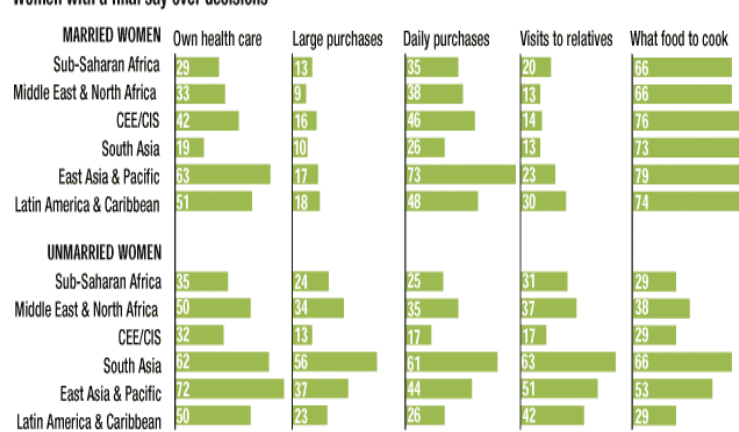
"If any man asks why I support better accountability to women, here's my response: because a government that answers to women will answer to you too," said UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Progress of the World's Women 2008/2009 provides an assessment of each of the Millennium Development Goals from a gender perspective and focuses on five key areas where urgent action is required to strengthen accountability to women: politics and governance, access to public services, economic opportunities, justice, and the distribution of international assistance for development and security.

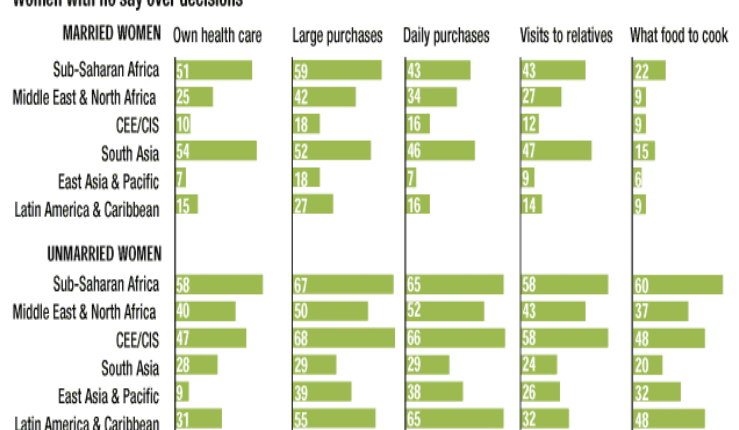
In each of these areas the report details means of building state capacity—or good governance—form a women's rights perspective.

"Good governance needs women, and women need good governance,"

Women with a final say over decisions



Women with no say over decisions



Notes: This figure reflects the percentage of women who have the final say in making specific decisions by type of decision. Regional information for married/unmarried women in HH decision making was based on countries with available information from DHS STATcompiler and organized according to UNIFEM regional groupings.

Source: DHS database.

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Pratibha Mehta, UN Resident Coordinator, to the Yemen Times:

“It is our effort to absolutely ensure that security threats do not compromise our mission in Yemen.”

With a PHD in Psychology and a Mid Professional Certificate in Gender Analysis and Urban Development as well as a Master's Degree in Child Development, Pratibha Mehta has been working in Yemen as the UN Resident Coordinator/ UNDP Resident Representative since the last week of May 2008. Before coming to Yemen, Mehta was the UN Resident Coordinator/ UNDP Resident Representative in Mongolia, where the Mongolian president awarded her a "Polar Star" order -one of the highest honors shown by the state of Mongolia- last May in recognition of her significant contribution toward social and economic development as well as strengthening of democratic governance in the country. Nadia Al-Sakkaf interviewed Mehta on development issues and her work in Yemen.

As UN resident coordinator, what are the challenges of coordinating the various UN agencies work in Yemen?

UN coordination in Yemen can be divided into three components. The first of our focuses is the coordination of development work. There are a lot of issues common to all agencies, such as gender issues and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), so my responsibility is to make sure that there is no duplication in support to the country. Our effort in Yemen is to see how the various UN agencies can work together on issues of common interest to save on operational costs, and redirect savings toward other development work. We have various inter-agency teams who meet very often and work under the umbrella of the UN country team comprised of the heads of agencies. My job is to coordinate the entire UN mechanism.

Our second focus is humanitarian. Because in Yemen we have issues regarding Internally Displaced Persons, we concentrate on handling relief for refugees through immediate humanitarian interventions when they are needed. For that, we have a UN inter-agency team which focuses on the preparedness and implementation of emergency response. Through this team, we develop joint programs and all agencies share information.

The third focus, of course, is the security issue.

Do you mean that security is a field of interest for UN programs in Yemen?

We concentrate in two aspects of security.

One is our own staff security, in terms of protecting the well being of the UN staff. Here security does not only mean the physical safety of UN staff, but also their well being, with attention to such issues stress management.

The other is security in the country which we try to improve through the support of our programs.

Right now, I am the designated offi-

cial for UN staff safety and security [in Yemen]. It is very much internal work, but we -of course- benefit from the support of our host the government of the Republic of Yemen who shares responsibility for our staff's safety.

As for security on a national scale, we can support projects to assist the Yemeni government in their efforts to further strengthen country's security and rule of law. At this stage we are not yet involved and the Yemeni government has not approached us for our help. Currently, our UN development assistance framework and programs, approved by the government of Yemen and our Executives Board in New York for 2007 to 2011, does not include support to security. Our work in Sa'ada is humanitarian-based, through supplying food, tents, nutrition, immunization and medicine.

Do you think the war has stopped in Sa'ada?

I think so. The President has declared the end of the war. UN agencies such as WFP and UNHCR have staff in Sa'ada town, and are now also supplying humanitarian assistance in Malabeth, and are working with the people, and they have not had any security problems in these places.

What are your concerns for Sa'ada at this stage?

Our work there is to assist the people in getting basic needs such as food and shelter. But we also work on long-term issues such as education in coordination with the Sa'ada governorate education department. UNICEF is exploring all possible ways for children in the area to return to school and assume a normal school life, as well as providing them with text books.

Any disruption of normal life -not just war- disrupts people emotionally, and so, although it is not a part of the classical relief package, psycho-social counseling will also be a part of our work in Sa'ada.

We are looking at psycho-social counseling and development. We have just completed rapid assessment of the needs in which the UN agencies can provide help. The next step will include raising awareness and training people working with grass root organizations, people working with Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from the government departments and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). We will also be exploring the possibility of training them to help distressed communities carry out dialogue and talk about their concerns and how they feel. If the victims cannot share for some reason, then we have to create an environment in which people feel safe to speak about what they are going through so problems can be addressed.

Right now we are mostly concerned with humanitarian relief and life-saving needs. Food itself is a very big issue, as people need it daily not just once, but three times.

Regarding the security of the UN staff, do you feel at the moment that, because of the terrorist attacks, the UN staff and premises are at risk?

Anyone can be at risk, as in many of these incidents innocent passer-bys can get hurt. But we hope that we, as UN staff, are not at direct risk because we are here to focus on development issues, to help the government and the people of Yemen in their efforts to improve their quality of life and to help them achieve the MDGs.

Our work is very development-oriented and we are not involved in politics. The political aspects of the UN are concentrated at the Security Council, which is comprised of selected member states with a mandate to discuss political issues. But the UN Funds and Program agencies which are located at the country level are limited to development work.

There are now a number of security measures taken by the government such as the road blocks spread blocks all

around national and international establishments and every now and then, we do issue security notices to our staff to be cautious when there is some security disturbance.

Do these precautions and security notices affect your development work in the field?

So far it hasn't stopped our operations. Sometimes it can have an impact if something happens and for a few days we take extra cautions like anyone else would, but that has not stopped our operations in any way. We are working in a large number of governorates and districts all over the country.

It is our effort to absolutely ensure that security threats do not compromise our mission in Yemen, which is to help the people of Yemen through our development and humanitarian work. UN Agencies mandate in any country is development, to reduce poverty, strengthen governance, improve environment, health and education, and so our primary purpose is to support the people of any country.

Commenting on the terrorist bombing outside the American embassy recently, the United Nations strongly condemned the attack and the Secretary-General called on the Yemeni authorities to spare no effort in bringing those responsible to justice. What more efforts does the UN want from the Yemeni government on this front?

The Secretary-General has congratulated the Yemeni government on its quick action in arresting the suspects involved in the attack. But obviously security is a much larger issue and the root cause also needs to be tackled.

The root of any form of lack of security needs to be addressed. This means people need to be gainfully employed in jobs that give them enough income to take care of their families and live a dignified life.

The basic needs of the people have to be satisfied to ensure security. We are talking about basic food, basic health and basic education. In order for security and stability to be, people have to be satisfied in all their basic needs for survival, and this is what we are trying to do through UN Programs and Funds. We have to look into the whole system of the delivery of social services, so all people, without discrimination, have access to the basic services and opportunities.

As our previous Secretary General Kofi Annan said, there is no peace without development and no development without peace, and there are no human rights without these two.

So peace and development are two sides of the same coin. The Yemeni government needs to look into human development issues in parallel with the security issues.

So the Yemeni government needs to make development a more urgent priority that it does now in order to achieve stability in the country?

The national mid-term plan does identify priorities in terms of enhancing the development of the country. But I think employment -definitely very important- needs to be created, and it does not get created on its own. An employment strategy has to be devised as a conscious effort to generate employment. Work is not just for income; it also gives people dignity.

Yemen is dependant on its oil resources and we know oil is not going to last forever. The country needs to create alternative areas for economic development and expand economic sectors to create more opportunities for work.

I also think that, in any country, all people -both men and women- have to be engaged in national development. To



change the attitude of "what the country can do for me", to "what I can do for the country" people -men and women- have to be empowered. In this sense you cannot ignore 50 percent of the population, women's empowerment and involvement in all sectors is very important. Those who are involved, seem quite empowered, but we also need to reach out in rural areas and empower women there. However, without political it will be difficult to achieve gender justice in the society.

I also feel that people need to have some avenues of recreation. Promotion of culturally appropriate forms of recreation is important, and can help prevent people from spending their time chewing qat.

Youth development is also a priority concern. According to recent statistics, more than 60 percent of the population is 15 years old and younger. This is a huge number of people with unique needs -and conscious, and not ad hoc, efforts are required to prepare this young group for the future.

Finally, another very important issue is population growth. Yemen has one of the highest birth rates in the world and, currently it is categorized as a least developed country and has limited resources, an unchecked increase in population growth will jeopardize development aspirations of the country.

With regards to more empowerment for women, do you think establishing a Ministry for Women's Affairs would do the trick?

To have something separate initially helps in giving the issue due attention, but it can also compromise the mainstream agenda.

I think that women's empowerment issues need additional attention. Although several gender issues can be addressed by the ministries of Health, Education, Social Welfare and Justice as part of their sectoral mandates, but there are also other issues, which are cross cutting, such as political empowerment that require a specific body to take care of them.

Not all gender issues can be handled by the various ministries. There has to be a body that is solely concerned with women's empowerment, and this mech-

anism needs to be given more authority and resources for it to achieve its objectives, especially as there is so much to be done in the area of gender.

A 12 article law on the right to seek asylum in Yemen is currently being drafted at the Human Rights Ministry. To what extent is the UN involved in this process?

The UNHCR is involved in this process and coordinating it with the Yemeni government.

Could Yemen handle more refugees, especially with its deteriorating economy?

There are two aspects to this. One is: Can the economy accommodate the refugees? The other is international obligation.

Yemen, being a signatory to the international convention on refugees' rights, has the obligation to host and welcome refugees, and Yemen is fulfilling its international responsibility in a very welcoming way.

But refugees issue are not a solely Yemen issue; it is regional one for which there is regional dialogue and cooperation.

The issue of development is a much larger issue, but the UNHCR does need more funds to handle the growing number of refugees. There is need to raise resources in order to fulfill the increasing need.

There are many incidents of Ethiopian citizens being deported and not being given the same treatment as that given to others from the Horn of Africa. Are the Ethiopians considered to be refugees?

There is a lot of population movement around the world because of globalization and many other factors. There is a difference between migrants and refugees.

When refugees arrive, they must register with the UNHCR and be given the refugee status. There is a protocol and verification process to differentiate between refugees and economic migrants such as some Ethiopian women who come to Yemen to do housework.

Continued from page 1

Restoration of dignity key to women's empowerment in Yemen

However the Parliament did not approve these three points and created amendments on them which we do not find consistent with the spirit of the Safe Motherhood Law. This is why we are withdrawing the proposal from Parliament and resubmitting the original proposal again, hoping that we can lobby to ratify the law as it is this time," said Dr. Jamila Al-Raibi, Deputy Minister of Health.

Pratibha Mehta, UN resident coordinator, commented that from an institutional standpoint, Yemen has made important progress during the past three decades.

According to Mehta, the Yemeni constitution expresses the idea of full rights for all citizens, without discrimination. It contains articles specifically addressed to women, mentioning the social roles they are required to play and giving them protection, and contains nothing that discriminates against women in their political rights.

Additionally, Yemen has ratified a

large number of international agreements, including in particular the CEDAW (1984), the 1953 Convention on the Political Rights of Women, and the 1962 Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages.

However, she said that, in practice, much remains to be done, as the relatively long list of CEDAW's latest recommendations clearly points out. In fact, the list of issues to be addressed is so long, that strategic thinking will be needed in order to identify three or four areas on which to focus efforts.

Obviously, the UN in Yemen will support all concerned parties in the country to devise effective measures to tackle the CEDAW recommendations. However, like for all international and national commitments, the primary responsibility for addressing the recommendations lies with the state.

Progress of the world's women report: Who answers to women?

• Real improvement in women's access to justice needs gender-based changes in law enforcement and informal justice institutions. For example, the presence of an all-female women contingent in Liberia is encouraging women to engage with the police. Similar examples can be found in other post conflict contexts, such as Timor-Leste and Kosovo.

• Women are extremely vulnerable to shifting patterns in global markets in the absence of measures that protect them, such as during the recent food crisis, for they not only assume primary responsibility for feeding their families but also contribute as much as 50-80 percent of agricultural labor in Asia and Africa. Similarly, women's employment and migration are also shaped by global trends. The "brain drain" from South to North of people with tertiary education has recently become feminized, with more professional women migrating than men. This has implications for women's economic leadership in developing.

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Online tool allows citizens in crisis to bear witness, report the news

By: Jessica Weiss, IJNet Editor

When violence broke out in Kenya following the nation's highly disputed December 2007 presidential election, concerned Kenyan blogger and activist Ory Okolloh began blogging exhaustively about the situation on the ground and highlighting the concerns and hopes of her people.

She bemoaned a widespread lack of information, perpetuated by a government-imposed media blackout, and the media, government and police's "gross" underreporting of the number of deaths.

In the first days of January, 2008, Okolloh's frustration led her to blog about her vision of a single site where ordinary Kenyans could access real-time information, including incidents of violence. She called for "techies out there willing to do a mashup of where the violence and destruction is occurring using Google Maps."

Within days of her post, bloggers and other Web savvy volunteers had banded together to form Ushahidi - which means "testimony" or "witness" in Swahili, a site allowing witnesses to send reports of violence via SMS, email or a Web form to one integrated Google Mashup tool.

Through Ushahidi, incidents were shown on a map that identified the precise location where a specific act of violence had occurred. A corresponding description detailed each incident.

For instance, on January 16, "Police fired at peaceful demonstrators and killed two people in Kondele area, Kisumu." On January 17, "Police battled youths who set fire to roadblocks; the police shot indiscriminately; one man was shot in the stomach as he stood in front of his house."

Word spread quickly, with individuals, NGOs, blogs and mainstream media outlets reporting about the site. "Because we had no resources at the time," Okolloh recently told IJNet, "we basically relied on our networks to get

the word around."

By March, Ushahidi had received approximately 150 verified reports, 40,000 unique visits and 160,000 views, Ushahidi co-creator Eric Hersman reported in an interview. The vast majority of incidents were reported via SMS, and many of the computer visits to Ushahidi were through Kenyan computer cafes.

When the violence in Kenya finally subsided - the last incident was reported April 7 - the documented information became an archive, ensuring "what happened [won't] be swept under the rug in the name of 'moving forward,'" Ushahidi's creators said.

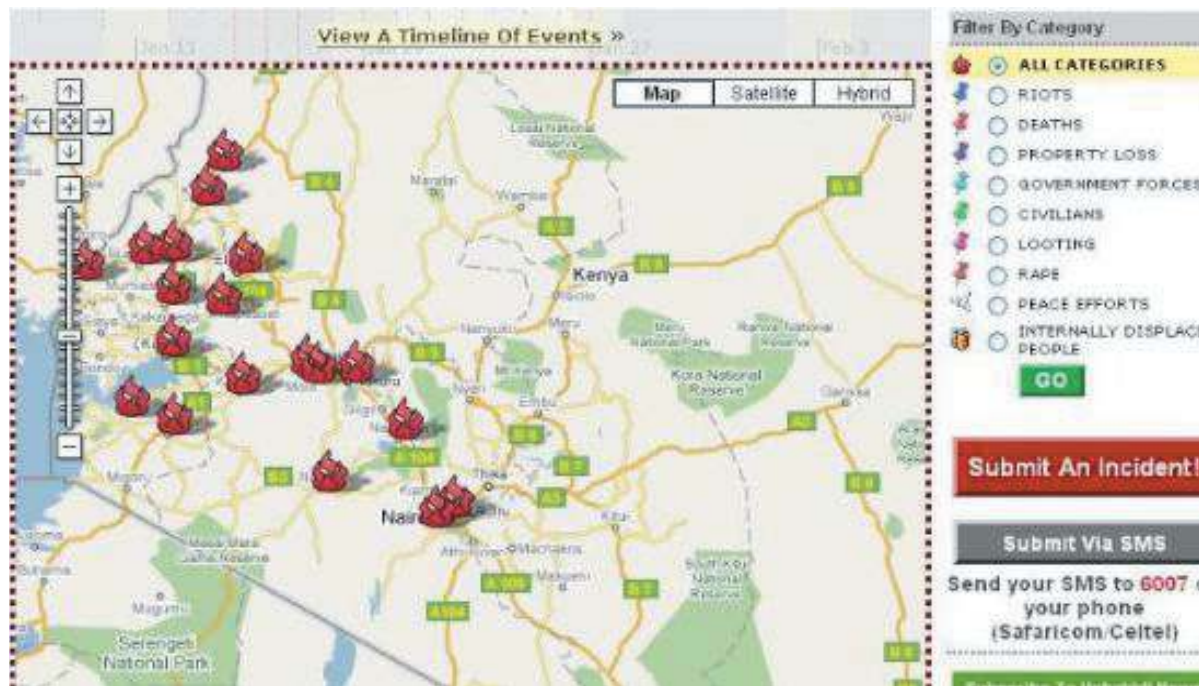
Ushahidi expands globally

On May 12, 2008, when violence broke out in Alexandra, South Africa, Ushahidi's platform was successfully implemented to map the xenophobic attacks perpetrated against non-South Africans throughout the region.

At that point, plans to expand Ushahidi were already underway, with the idea to replace "Version 1" with a free and open source tool for people to use around the world.

Since then, a \$200,000 grant from Humanity United, an organization dedicated to ending modern-day slavery and mass atrocities, has helped Ushahidi realize its vision by enabling the creation of a new Ushahidi Engine. And an additional \$25,000 prize received at the NetSquared Conference in California is also going toward further development of the platform.

"Version 2," as the creators call it, currently in its final stages of development, will make the Ushahidi mapping tool available globally for free, enabling mapping and user generated collaboration - or "crowd-sourcing" -



crisis information on a global level. Version 2 will also introduce a feedback mechanism, so users can receive alerts about what is going on in their areas during crisis times.

"The team hopes to see [Ushahidi] deployed and used in disaster and emergency situations around the world," Okolloh told IJNet.

The new Ushahidi Engine is being developed by a group of volunteer developers and designers that span the African continent and beyond - from Kenya, South Africa, Malawi, Ghana, the Netherlands and the U.S. They are at work on a number of concurrent efforts, including ensuring Ushahidi can integrate with various devices and platforms, such as the iPhone.

Last week, Ushahidi was honored for taking a "pioneering approach to journalism" at the Knight-Batten Awards

for Innovations in Journalism in Washington, D.C. It won a \$2,000 special distinction award.

At the ceremony, Jan Schaffer, director of J-Lab: The Institute for Interactive Journalism, which administers the awards, explained how innovative new media projects, such as Ushahidi, signal journalists are working in a whole "new news environment" - one in which traditional media is often trumped by creative new media projects.

The contest's judges, Schaffer said, considered Ushahidi "a perfect example of how far-reaching and important citizen reports can be" in this new environment.

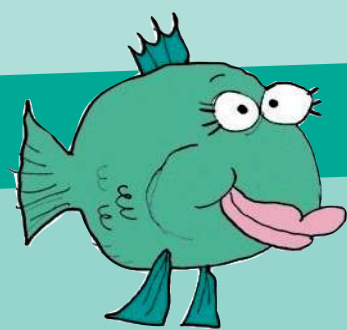
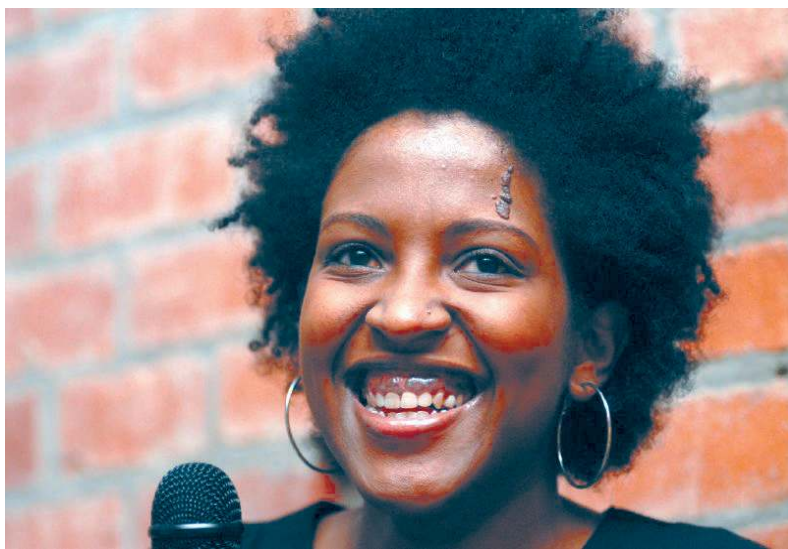
Okolloh agrees it is time for journalists working within censored media environments to shed their reliance on traditional and print media and seek

new and innovative outlets to spread news, such as through citizen journalism and participatory reporting.

Such "alternative" reporting, she said, can be used in cases where, for example, "the media has been shut down by government; there is self-censorship by mainstream media; there is under-reporting about a situation; there is a need for more local and detailed information; [and] there are people on the ground witnessing events but no official news reporters ... to capture the reporting."

"I think the primary responsibility of a journalist is to inform," she said, "and to the extent that is being hampered, especially in a crisis situation - alternatives should be sought."

To learn more, go to <http://www.ushahidi.com>.



FRANNIE LEARNS A LESSON

Last Chapter: Frannie hung out with her friends instead of studying. Now it is time to take the test.

Chapter Eight: "School is Cool"

Frannie stared at her test paper for a few more minutes before she began. She skimmed over the fifteen questions. She didn't know one single answer. The test was multiple choice, so she figured that even if she guessed the answers, she still had a one in four chance of getting it right. Frannie tried to remember what she had heard in class, and what she'd looked over. She could only remember a couple of things. She knew what a flower was, she knew what a person was, but she had no idea about the other Land words like walk, airplane, and grasshopper. She was the last one to finish the test.

The rest of the afternoon, Frannie was quieter than normal. She didn't even want to play catch like she and her friends normally did at recess.

"Is there something wrong?" Suzy asked.

"Yeah, Frannie-Fran, you look down. You got sore gills or something?" Carter asked.

"No, nothing like that," Frannie said. She paused for a minute. "What did you guys think of the test?"

"I thought it was easy," said Tommy. "I studied really hard."

"It wasn't easy, Tommy," said Suzy. "I studied hard too, but I know I got some of the answers wrong."

"Eh, I did okay," said Carter. "We'll see this afternoon, I guess. How did you do, Frannie?"

Frannie thought for a moment. What should she say? Should she tell the truth?

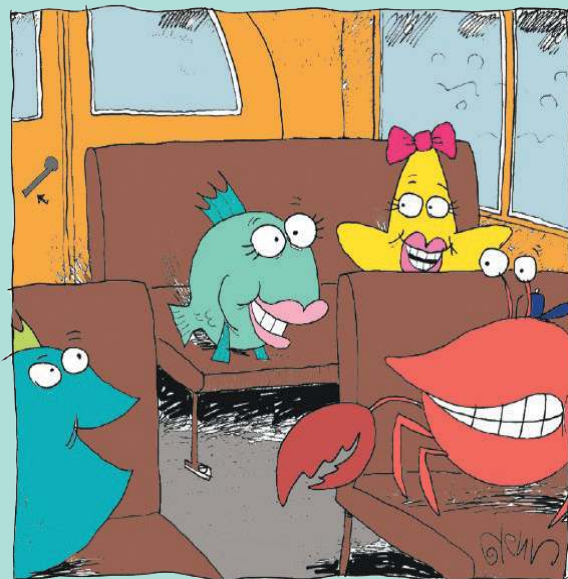
"Guys, I failed that test," Frannie said. "I didn't study at all. I went to the game instead."

"Frannie!" they all said.

"Why did you do that?" asked Suzy.

"I don't know, I didn't make a good choice, did I?"

As soon as Frannie said that, Mrs. S came outside. "Frannie, I need to see you after school."



"Okay," called Frannie. "Oh, no! She knows that I didn't study," Frannie whispered to her friends.

"Just make something up," said Tommy. "Tell her a dog ate your study questions."

"What's a dog?" asked Frannie.

"It was on the test!" Suzy said. "I think you should tell Mrs. S the truth, lying will only make it worse."

"I don't think it could get any worse," Frannie said softly.

As soon as Frannie said this, the bell signaled the end of school. Their teacher came outside and told everyone to finish their games and clean up. She reminded Frannie to come inside so they could talk. Frannie sat nervously in her desk.

Mrs. S sat across from her and said, "Frannie, I'm concerned about your test score. Did you not understand the material?"

Frannie struggled for a minute. She was trying to think of a good lie. She didn't want her teacher to know that she had made a bad choice. "She'll think I'm stupid!" Frannie thought.

"But, what would she think if she found out that I lied?"

Frannie decided that telling the truth would make her look better than being caught in a lie. "I understood the material, ma'am. The problem was that I didn't allow myself enough time to study. I went out with my friends instead. I'm sorry. I know I should have been studying. I learned my lesson."

"Frannie, I'm very happy at how honest you've been," said Mrs. S. "I've decided to let the entire class earn up to half the points they missed if they correct their tests. We'll talk about it all together on Monday."

"Thanks, Mrs. S!" Frannie said.

"You're very welcome. Now, go catch your bus."

"Thanks again Mrs. S! See you Monday!" Frannie felt so much better.

Frannie swam excitedly to her bus and sat down by Suzy, Tommy, Carter and Bonnie. "You guys will not believe what Mrs. S said!" Frannie started telling her friends. "She's going to let the whole class make up half the points we missed, if we correct our tests on Monday!"

"Awesome!" Tommy said.

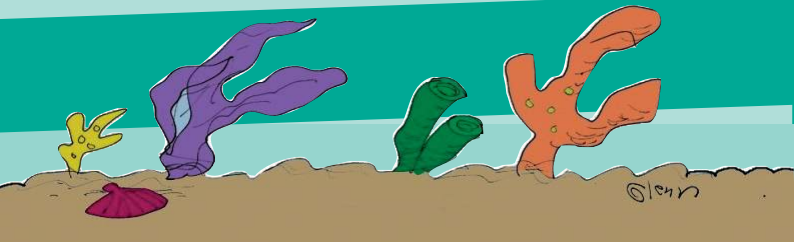
"Did you tell the truth?" Suzy asked.

To do and think about ...

1. Create a time line that shows the major events of Frannie's first week of school. Under the time-line make a list of at least five different lessons that Frannie learned.
2. Act out a scene from the story with your friends. Don't forget to dress for the part!
3. Frannie told her teacher the truth about why she did so poorly on the test. In the form of a poem, write about how being honest was the best thing for Frannie to do.

Using the newspaper

1. Write a letter to the newspaper or businesses that sponsored the Frannie story. Let them know what lessons you learned from the adventures of Frannie and her friends. Remember to include drawings.
2. Cut and paste a news story or image of a person who made a bad choice, just like Frannie did when she did not



In celebration of this year's World Literacy Day, the Yemen Times will be publishing, in collaboration with the World Association of Newspapers (WAN), an eight-part story entitled 'Frannie Learns a Lesson' in the next issues. The story is a short adventure for parents and children to read together, or individuals to read on their own, as a gesture of continued appreciation for the value of the written word in our world today. We hope you enjoy it!!

"Yeah," Frannie said, smiling. "And I'm glad I did. She would have known I was lying."

"You're probably right," Tommy said. "Telling the truth was a good idea."

For the rest of the bus ride, the friends talked about their first week of school. They laughed about their teacher being a monster, how hard their first test was, how scared Frannie was to ride the bus and how happy they were that they had stayed friends through it all.

Frannie smiled as she listened to her friends, both old and new, laugh and tell stories. Frannie had the best time this week at school. She had learned more about herself and her friends than ever before. She didn't want it to be over. When the bus came to her stop, she swam into the house. She couldn't wait until Monday, when she could go back to school.

This is the Final Chapter of "Frannie Learns a Lesson". Let us know what you learned from Frannie! We'd love to hear from you.

prepare for her test. Who is this person? What choice did they make that was wrong? What should they have done differently?

REAL LIFE & VALUES: Honesty

In your own words, define the word honesty. Describe the situation where Frannie displayed honesty.

— Do you think this would have required a lot of courage on her behalf? Why or why not?

— Do you think Mrs. S's response was a fair one? Why or why not? What would you have done had you been in Mrs. S's shoes?

A SPECIAL LAST ACTIVITY: BECOME AN AUTHOR

Write a NEW CHAPTER in which Frannie and her friends start a school newspaper

World Association of Newspapers

Reprinted in cooperation with the World Association of Newspapers and by permission of Cathy Sewell and Jennifer Hermes (authors) and Glenn McCoy (artist - original illustrations). Additional art by Arosemena.

Political terrorism

By: Abdulaziz Al-Hayajim

Most probably, the world understands the concept of terrorism from a single dimension and in light of the September 11 Terrorist Attacks against the U.S., plus any preceding and following vandalistic acts that have been greatly related with the Al-Qaeda Organization and any approaches undertaken by extremist religious groups.

In Yemen, we suffered and still are suffering this kind of terrorism, based on violence, blasts and killing of innocent people under the guise of religious ideologies. Likewise, we suffered emergence of another form of terrorism based on ethnical, sectarian and racial visions.

However, what is eye-catching, new and not known by really democratic states is that of "political terrorism", which irresponsible individuals practice under the cover of democracy, freedom of self-expression and human rights.

Risk of this kind of terrorism emerges from its not being in the form of groups, which are impossible for authorities to confront with force and violence. This terrorism targets security and stability of communities, lives of innocent people, interests and economy of the nation, as well as its reputation at the regional level and internationally.

"Political terrorism" is the kind of tendency to deal with realities of the political and democratic life in a way contradicting the simplest democratic values. It is a tendency aimed at deviating course of the democratic experience and transferring it from a means to reach a sublime end (represented by building the nation and enhancing its development) into a tool to fabricate crises and troublesome events that hinder development programs.

Extremist wills to create standoffs

These (troublesome events) transfer state's agencies and institutions from development and reconstruction programs into irrelevant and meaningless

battles having trivial disagreements and disputes over trivial issues as their usually repeated titles. Such disagreements most often reach deadlocks, thanks to extremist wills to create crises and standoffs.

In many articles published in this paper, various Arab political party leaders denounced position of Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) that rejects any calls for serious dialogues to discuss any pressing issues in the nation with the purpose of suggesting workable solutions to them.

Many of these leaders said to JMP, "Thank God because you have an authority, and a president who invites you in person to dialogue. We always ask for dialogue, but no body responds to our request."

At this point, we get surprised to see how events are taking place in many countries of the region and third world states where opposition parties usually suffer political terrorism practiced against them by authorities and ruling parties in their nations. In total contrast, opposition parties in our country are practicing their own political terrorism in order to abort any efforts for dialogue, compromise solutions and peaceful coexistence.

Such a notable difference between what happens in Yemen and what happens in other states may not be seen as a puzzle, except by those who don't know about intuition of the veteran President of Yemen, who favors dialogue to resolve any pressing issues in the nation, and promotes solidarity and peaceful coexistence for all the various social groups.

Regretfully, some people believe that repeated presidential invitations for dialogue and compromise are symptomatic of fears that other states and international organizations, concerned with democracy, may be dissatisfied with what is taking place in Yemen.

They don't know that there is nothing to prevent the government to adopt reasonable democracy like the rest of third world states where governments deal with the political life according to their own desires and wills.

Source: Al-Thawra State-run Daily

Democratic education as a key factor for democratic development

By: Ahmad Mohammed Abdulghani

Democratic education is indispensable for democratic development. It is impossible for democracy to develop or become deep-rooted without real democratic awareness. This kind of education is the essential frame that governs political culture, which is an integral part of the common culture of any society.

Democratic education is what individuals believe and establish regarding their relation with the political system of governance that administer their affairs. It also includes their relation with the legislative, legal and institutional systems, which should work on understanding political interactions and modify people's behavior within positive contexts, aimed at building society and achieving its aspirations for development, stability and progress.

Political culture covers democratic education at the public and official levels, as well as among ruling elites.

Yemen experiences slow spread of concepts and practices that help gather integrated democratic awareness because governments dominate public outreach means and control their outputs as a practical application of "Doorkeeper Theory", which mass media students are taught.

The notable tragedy at the official level is that the ruling elites deal with democracy through stained culture and try to direct or manipulate democracy according to their desires.

The official address, given during the period of gubernatorial election in Yemen, was strong evidence of how the authority commits legal violations under the guise of democracy. Additionally, the government-owned media outlets adopted a false strategy to mislead people and draw their attention away from real facts on the ground.

The faked competition under the

cover of governor election was meant to convince Yemeni people that their ruler is generous toward them, as he gave them a present (gubernatorial election), which was never offered by anyone before. Judicious citizens see this as nothing more than hypocrisy that glorifies oppression and prays for it under the cover of generosity.

Anyone, who observed the excessive flow of articles and analyses in this regard, will be shocked at how those, who produced them, dared to do so. Such analyses and descriptions confirm that Yemen has unique democratic achievements, which other countries worldwide, couldn't reach.

Exaggeration doesn't help

Exaggeration in producing such analyses made all those concerned with terminology and lexicology feel that they are in an urgent need to prepare a new

lexicon in order to contain such terms and statements, which political organizations and experts felt unable to know about their components. Consequently, they will not benefit from them in construing international pacts, conventions and declarations regarding democracy and human rights.

Undoubtedly, all these exaggerated analyses progress in the context of deliberate confusion of correct concepts and meanings that are supposed to change into practical behavior, via which people can assess what happens before their eyes without any guardianship imposed on them from here or there.

The democratic culture is not slogans or sayings to be chanted by tongues. They are basically theoretical and practical rules and regulations, based on ethical themes within an integrated system, which is aimed at protecting human dignity.

Testing human dignity.

Taking into consideration that freedom is bestowed on people by God, it constitutes the first theme, as well as the main gate for the sequence of other steps toward building strong democracy and driving forward the wheels of social development.

Concepts of public freedoms are bindingly related with basic human rights, plus the right to practice the various economic and political activities, and have access to psychological and social safety.

It is not possible to talk about the democratic education without confirming the principle of equality as a basic element for achieving real justice among members of society. Social justice, on the other hand, is indispensable for establishing equal citizenship, equal opportunities and abundance by law and order.







































Africa's Hard Black Gold

By: Richard Uku

Few infrastructure services in the developed world may be as taken for granted as electric power. To consumers in industrialized countries, uninterrupted power supply is a given. Not so in much of Africa, which experiences some of the world's greatest power deficits, and where only two in ten people have access to electricity.

According to the International Monetary Fund's most recent Regional Economic Outlook for Sub-Saharan Africa , in 2007 alone, nearly two-thirds of the countries in the region experienced an acute energy crisis marked by frequent and extended electricity outages.

There is no shortage of hydropower plants for electricity generation in Africa. However, many of these plants are unable to keep up with rapid population growth and attendant increases in demand. Furthermore, they are prone to frequent drought, which reduces their output significantly, leaving many as little more than decorative infrastructure landmarks. Increasingly burgeoning populations in countries like Nigeria and Ghana imply a greater extraction of water resources for power generation. Rapid expansion of agricultural activity is requiring more and more water all across the continent.

Other resources like fuel oil, diesel, light crude, solar, and gas are also available as means of electricity generation, but their costs are all quite prohibitive.

These factors make a good argument for coal as a cheap alternative source of Africa's power. Coal has historically played a crucial role as a source of energy worldwide, and has several important advantages over other fossil fuels. First is its relative abundance. The current level of proven coal reserves worldwide stands at roughly 850 billion tons. Africa has about 50 billion tons. Coal is also much more widely distributed geographically than any other fossil fuel.

Worldwide energy demand has increased by more than 50% since 1980, and is expected to grow annually

by 1.6% between now and 2030. More than 70% of this new demand will come from developing countries, with fossil fuels projected to account for about 80% of total energy demand by the end of this period. Coal is the world's fastest growing fossil fuel, with annual production increasing by 6.4% since 2004. It is already the dominant source of power generation in some very important energy-consuming nations.

Much of the future increases in coal-fired electricity generation will come from strategically important developing countries like China and India. In 2006 alone, China added about 93,000 megawatts of coal-fired electricity generating capacity, and this trend is expected to continue as the country tries to meet its huge energy needs.

Even in many developed countries, coal still accounts for a large share of power generation. Coal plants currently provide more than half of America's electricity supply. Denmark, which houses some of the most efficient coal-fired power plants in the world, equally relies on coal for half of its electricity production. The same is true for Germany, which is home to some of the most efficient pulverized coal combustion units in Europe. Poland uses coal for 98% of its electricity production, and South Africa uses coal for about 50% of its electricity production.

Against this picture then, it is hard not to expect developing countries to exploit their abundant coal resources to generate power for their own development, especially given that modern technology can help produce coal cleanly.

Some argue that gas might be a better alternative to hydro or coal, but for countries that must import much of their gas the benefits of a stable and reliable source of cheap fuel in the form of coal present a very strong counter-argument to the capital costs of a gas plant. Unlike prices for coal, which is abundant and dispersed geographically, gas prices are subject to significant volatility, and the long-term trend in the face of fossil fuel depletion is uncertain. In contrast, coal prices are more stable, and may remain that way

for a long time.

Apart from electric-power generation, coal also has wide application in a number of industries. It is pivotal in both steel and cement production. Moreover, the use of wood by Africa's growing population is causing increasingly rapid deforestation in many countries. There is significant potential domestic demand for coal briquettes to replace wood for cooking and domestic and industrial heating. The demand outlook thus appears favorable for the coal industry, creating significant investment opportunities.

Clearly, there are environmental drawbacks from the use of coal as an energy resource, and these concerns are far too important to overlook. The massive reserves notwithstanding, coal is still a finite resource. It must be mined with greater efficiency and with a view to mitigating the environmental impact.

Fortunately, much greater attention is paid today to mine safety and the management of the by-products of coal use. With acid rain and other public-health hazards linked to coal combustion, more technologies are emerging for reducing harmful emissions from power plants. Fueled by research, the past few years have witnessed the development of increasingly cleaner and more energy-efficient coal-fired generation plants and the retirement of older technologies, especially in the developed world. Developing countries have lagged behind in this process, but, with the common threat of global warming, there is now growing pressure to adopt conservation policies.

Africa's mineral-rich countries must exploit their abundant natural resources. They must use coal to advance their economic development. Failure to do so would be a missed opportunity at a time when African countries must avail themselves of all available resources for poverty reduction.

Richard Uku is a senior executive of the Africa Finance Corporation. Source: Project Syndicate, 2008. www.project-syndicate.org

Is Export Led Growth Passé?

By: Dani Rodrik

For five decades, developing countries that managed to develop competitive export industries have been rewarded with astonishing growth rates: Taiwan and South Korea in the 1960's, Southeast Asian countries like Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore in the 1970's, China in the 1980's, and eventually India in the 1990's.

In all these cases, and a few others – also mostly in Asia – domestic reforms would surely have produced growth regardless of international trade. But it is difficult to see how the resulting growth could have been as high – reaching an unprecedented 10% or more annually in per-capita terms – without a global economy able to absorb these countries' exports.

Many countries are trying to emulate this growth model, but rarely as successfully because the domestic preconditions often remain unfulfilled. Turn to world markets without pro-active policies to ensure competence in some modern manufacturing or service industry, and you are likely to remain an impoverished exporter of natural resources and labor-intensive products such as garments.

Nevertheless, developing countries have been falling over each other to establish export zones and subsidize assembly operations of multinational enterprises. The lesson is clear: export-led growth is the way to go.

But for how long? While reading the economic tea leaves is always risky, there are signs that we are at the cusp of a transition to a new regime in which the rules of the game will not be nearly as accommodating for export-led strategies.

The most immediate threat is the slowdown in the advanced economies. Europe and the United States are both entering recession, and fears are mounting that the financial meltdown accompanying the sub-prime mortgage debacle has not worked itself out. All this is happening at a time when inflationary pressures hamper the usual monetary and fiscal remedies. The European Central Bank, tightly focused on price stability, has been raising interest rates,

and the US Federal Reserve may soon follow suit. So the advanced economies will suffer for a while, with obvious implications for the demand for exports from emerging markets.

On top of this is the almost certain unwinding of global current-account imbalances. Emerging markets and developing countries ran a surplus of \$631 billion in 2007, split roughly equally between Asian countries and the oil-exporting states. This amounts to 4.2% of their collective GDP. The US alone ran a current-account deficit of \$739 billion (5.3% of its GDP). Neither the economics nor the politics of this pattern of current-account balances is sustainable, especially in a recessionary environment.

The politics is clear to see. Nothing works as potently to inflame protectionist sentiment as large trade deficits. According to a December 2007 NBC/Wall Street Journal poll, almost 60% of Americans think globalization is bad because it has subjected US firms and workers to unfair competition.

If globalization has acquired a lousy reputation in the US, the external deficit deserves much of the blame. US trade policy has been remarkably resistant to protectionist pressure in recent years. But, regardless of who wins America's presidency, the world should expect closer scrutiny of imports from China and other low-cost countries as well as of outsourcing of services to places like India.

As the US and other advanced economies become less hospitable to developing-country exports, rapidly growing emerging markets, help as they may, are unlikely to take up the slack and thus provide ample fuel for export-led growth. Import tariffs tend to be higher in developing countries, making it more difficult to gain access to them. Moreover, developing countries compete in similar products – consumer goods of varying levels of sophistication – so that the politics of expanded South-South trade looks even worse than the politics of North-South trade. Anti-dumping action against imports from China, Vietnam, and other Asian exporters is already commonplace in developing countries.

So exporting will become an even

tougher business. Countries like China that have large surpluses will have to rely much more on domestic demand to fuel their economies. This is not all bad, because China can certainly use more public investment in social sectors such as health and education.

But the impact will extend beyond the surplus countries. If exporters from Brazil, Turkey, South Africa, and Mexico – all deficit economies – were already struggling to compete with China in third markets when those markets were wide open and expanding rapidly, imagine how they will fare under less hospitable conditions.

The impact on growth will almost certainly be negative, even if domestic demand compensates fully for the decline in external demand. The reason is microeconomic, not macroeconomic: you can sell only so much steel or auto parts at home, and labor productivity in service industries does not match that of export-oriented activities. So shrinking export markets will slow down growth-promoting structural change at home.

None of this implies a disaster for developing countries. Long-term success still depends on what happens at home rather than abroad. What is moderately bad news at the moment will become terrible news only if economic distress in the advanced countries – especially the US – is allowed to morph into xenophobia and all-out protectionism; if large emerging markets such as China, India, and Brazil fail to realize that they have become too important to free ride on global economic governance; and if, as a consequence, others overreact by turning their back on the world economy and pursue autarkic policies. Absent these missteps, expect a tougher ride on the global economy, but not a calamity.

Dani Rodrik, Professor of Political Economy at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, is the first recipient of the Social Science Research Council's Albert O. Hirschman Prize. His latest book is One Economics, Many Recipes: Globalization, Institutions, and Economic Growth. Source: Project Syndicate, 2008.

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هل أنت...؟!!

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 ربة بيت.. وتبحثين عن سعادة أسرتك؟
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The risks of globalization

By: **Anter Mohammed**
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The liberal policies through which the term “globalization” works paint the future return of the distant past of capitalism, uprooting all of the achieved earnings of the working and middle classes.

However, it appears that this bleaker picture of the future will be retained by the brutal past of capitalism at the dawn of youth. If such a brutal effect continues regarding the same situation, life is going to go from worse to the worst.

Thus, we must contemplate current authors' assertions that within the next century, only 20 percent of the world's population will be able to work, make an income and live in peace and plenty.

The remaining 80 percent represents the proportion of the world population that will be without surplus in their daily requirements; consequently, they can't live on only charity donations and philanthropy. Of course, this is to the extent that society has become a burden, thus, no consideration will be given them.

The allegation that some type of inequality is inevitable is one of the most prominent policies upon which the concept of globalization depends.

On the exploitative level, the term “capital internationalism” is used, meaning that the holders of capital threaten to flee their capital unless governments respond to their demands, such as granting tax concessions to

provide them infrastructure projects free of charge, canceling legislation allowing some gains for workers and the middle class, privatizing public enterprises and transferring public services previously operated by the government to the private sector, thereby giving them recourse.

Such internationalism no longer cares about society but about profits.

Some further maintain that globalization has led to the fusion of different economic types – rural, national and regional – to become the new term, “unified market.” A far cry from the sightseeing reality, we note that the bulk of the world has become separate islands comprising a world of misery and destitution.

Even the development aid given to developing nations has become a thing of the past, particularly after the end of the Cold War, the death of North-South dialogue and developing nations' entry into the blocked channel of foreign indebtedness.

As a result, the terminology that previously filled the arenas of thought and work, such as the Third World, emancipation, development and North-South dialogue, etc., is meaningless in the globalizing world.

Nearly all sectors have become lost in competition and struggle in order to reduce production costs, additionally being so severe upon the working element to decrease wages to the lowest possible level.

Even the blue-collar class is confined to the same as the above stated class, which helped their actions once machines replaced them. Above all, operations done by re-engineering

basic tasks and expanded computer use could bring about dispensing tens of thousands of jobs and professions that have been performed by those in this sector.

As a part and extension of such policy, major computer programming corporations such as Motorola, Hewlett Packard, IBM, etc., began bringing in and replacing U.S. scientists with cheaper labor Indians. The best way for these companies to reduce their production costs was to transfer part of their activities to places like New Delhi.

Due to measures not taken to protect the transfer of goods and funding, this movement has blasted employment by throwing away work amid unemployment. Thus, globalization hasn't served the human aspect, but led to the existence of both social and physical differences.

Applying such policies has led to mounting social tensions against the owners of these exploitative companies. It also has increased social aberrations, the growth of crime and violence, the spread of drugs, demonstrations and sit-ins, boycotting elections, etc.

The solution to such tension and misery should lie with the state, which should redistribute income and adequately distribute the gains from increased national income so as to ensure the involvement of the majority of citizens and foster societal solidarity, which is the surest guarantee of continued support for pushing more market systems in industrial nations, thereby providing the best and most useful globalization.

"When Thinking about Creating Titles Becomes a Distress"

Titles of the books and publishes play nearly but not exactly the same role of names for the human newborn babies. As any newborn baby needs to a name, to be known by it and becomes an integral part of his identity during his life. Books also need to specific titles that already gain the power of science name, status and regularity. Giving names for the books and written works is more difficult than looking for names for human beings. In the case of human, names should not necessarily carry the features of personality of human and they are not images for his core and the reason of his identity. Names, for human being, are not more than a symbolic signal to distinguish people from each other.

Unsimilarly, titles of books are not only signal names but also concise guidelines, access and description for the content of the book. Furthermore, finding a title for a poem or any literary work is more difficult than finding titles for scientific books and researches. It is a simple matter to put a specific title for a book of history, geography,

philosophy or physics according to the topic of the book and its specializing, whereas it is rather difficult to find a specific title summarizing a musical note, a portrait or a group of poems.

Simply, in old Arabic literature, the distress of selecting titles was solved by relating the poem into the poet such as "Deewan Al-Mutanabi" or relating the theme of the poem to the poet like "Hamasat Abi Tammam" (The Enthusiasm of Abi Tammam). The style of the poems was also related to the poet as in "Luzomeyyat Abi Al-Alaa Al-Ma'arri. This was simple, because all poems are very similar in themes, ideas, or style.

But such a way of giving titles have become impossible as the poets started to publish their poems in anthologies in which the poems do not often carry a single idea or specific topic. If it is easier to find an appropriate title for a single poem, which focuses on a single idea, the poet will find a difficulty in finding one title that gathers a group of poems that are different in their themes and sense. They cannot be absorbed

into a single phrase.

In English literature, we can see some literary works that their titles have been changed even after the death of the writer. The real example for this point is Jane Austen's masterpiece "Pride and Prejudice" which had been previously titled "First Impression".

Thus, the saying which states, "A book is known by its cover (title)" is not correct all the time. Some literary writers could not find titles that reflex the wonder and beauty of their works, whereas some other books that can be considered as less valued can get interesting and beautiful titles. These titles, which likely come by chance, can smooth the way of fame for these books.

To sum up, the writers should not get distressed from the titles that they select for their works, because readers are going to be familiar with titles as they had been previously familiarized by the names of the authors.

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A woman of smokes

By: **Adnan Alhalmi**
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*Neither a call nor a ring
unpermittedly,
Invaded my heart and settled,
When night comes my heart's rooms,
Hides me in foggy mirrors,
And go to where no end,
For love and night either.
In a time of madness, honey and of
hypocrisy.
Upon my heart she dances and sings,
At the spring of blood she sleeps,
Like streams inside my veins she
walks,
O' a stray woman!*

*In the port of love outlooks
From away,
To touch what my soul stole from
hers; and sleep.
Alas, she is in the dark jail of love.
O' a woman of smokes in the
windows of my mind; prays,
And outlooks my migration
How long do I search for her,
How far to ask about her the stars,
How many times do I die to meet
her?
And how long do I live?
If she comes from within my soul,
If she comes out of winds or storms,
If my heart lets its curtain open; she
may gets down from behind,*

*Ah, how terribly addicted of her I'll
be,
How generously I'll grant her of my
strayness and loss,
How innumerable I'll pray for her
heart's pulsings and her,
How much I'll kiss her distances,
And how long I'll hug her breaths as
it hugs mine,
O' distance distributed her between
and within me.
I miss you as much as deserts miss
rains,
Ye' my Darling my heart has a
prayer,
Miss a time may come, so who don't
come may come.*

Moral pollution (Part 2)

By: **Adnan Al-Halmi**
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In my previous article, I discussed several aspects of moral pollution that are occurring within Yemeni society. In this piece, I'll shed some light on two more issues of moral pollution that are spread substantially throughout the Arab world: language and identity, and media content.

First, the Arabic language appears to be on the verge of collapse and possible extinction, while other languages are being promoted and are prospering globally; for example, English, which is used worldwide. However, what's more astonishing is that Hebrew, which hasn't been used for many years, now is reemerging on the horizon and taking hold among its people.

Unfortunately, our people are neglecting our Arabic language, even though it has a greater heritage than practically any other language. The reason for this is due to learning a new language before comprehending the culture of one's own mother tongue; thus, those institutions concerned must pay attention to such significant matters.

In today's world, it's required to learn other languages so that one will

be able to know about other cultures because culture is embedded within language. However, it's more important to learn and comprehend one's mother tongue before learning another language because it includes one's heritage, legacy, honor, pride and identity.

So what draws my attention is the enormous increase in learning a foreign language at the expense of one's mother tongue. This involves learning a foreign language during the primary stages of education, when an individual has an insufficient knowledge of his mother tongue's culture, which may create problems such as despising the mother tongue. This is attributable to the fact that he or she doesn't have a sufficient knowledge of their own language.

What's more regrettable is that when we learn a new language, we try our utmost to imitate that language's culture, norms and habits. As a result, this may lead to eradicating our culture and identity, as has happened in some countries.

I'm not opposed to learning a new language in addition to one's mother tongue, but I recommend that one first be fortified in his or her own language and culture and then he or she will be culturally authorized to learn a language due to the culture embedded within language.

With the advance of globalization,

everything has become possible and easy to attain, particularly in the field of media. At the same time, unlike in the past, it has become more difficult to face and tackle the media invasion that's roaring upon the horizon of Arab lands simply through prevention.

In this position, one is publicly naked and may be affected by such media invasion unless he or she is well-schooled in his or her own culture, values and principles. Thus, holding onto one's culture and language protects him or her from moral pollution because this type of pollution, if you should happen to be diagnosed with it, is difficult to be cured of for many years.

Another dangerous issue likely to directly spoil our values and destroy our cultural ethics is the media content that is digitally transferred via digital instruments. In my opinion, such content is overloaded with Western values, which I fear will distort and mix up our conservative society's morals.

Indeed, those responsible should remain alert to these matters to protect our future generations from cultural collapse and loss of identity in order to avoid this type of moral pollution.

I hope that I've discussed this topic in a logical way without prejudice. Further, I hope readers will understand this subject, as their opinions are greatly appreciated.

To choose or not to choose an educated woman

By: **Omar Hassan Al-Ja'ashani**
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I would like to express my deep appreciation to all the Yemen Times staff for their constant efforts in dedicating a large space in the paper to reflect readers' thoughts, opinions and emotions in response to stimulating topics.

I was pleased to read Al-Adlany's article entitled “Educated woman: between misunderstanding and misbehavior” (YT Issue 1183, 21 Aug. 2008).

However I disagree with him on this subject. I can't assume that an educated woman is better than an uneducated one with regards to her morality, personality, cultural upbringing and practice of religion. It is possible to come across a highly educated woman who owns certificates in all fields of knowledge, but who is described as arrogant and shows little respect to her husband. A prime example of this kind of woman is the well-educated Western woman.

On the other hand, it happens to meet uneducated women who haven't been to school or university, but who are talented in managing their home duties and respectful to their husbands, such as the

companions of the Prophet PBUH, particularly the mothers of the believers.

I believe that a man should marry a religious, morally upright and beautiful woman because our Prophet said,

"A woman is married for four things: her wealth, her family status, her beauty and her religion. So you should marry the religious woman (otherwise) you will be a loser." Volume 7, Book 62, Number 27: Narrated Abu Huraira

It is worth taking into consideration that, due to our deeply-seated traditions and customs, a woman should also be of the same social status as her husband.

The Queen of the Time

By: **Fuad Noman**
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*Far above the ground
A marvelous landscape
Revealing an attractive face of faith
On the breathing space,
Only the Sisyphus's Queen
So high, so proud
Awash with the light's grace
Albeit the power of her dream is
unseen
The Queen of Time owns
A silver mirror of the sun
Crowning with a stunning glory
diadem
Reflecting a sign of justice and
freedom
Self-controlled in her shiny surface
Shoving her pace in a safe place
Paralleling to the dove's wings
soaring up
To unite the sunlight with the peace
sup
In her every day's flight
To the furthest extent
When she repeats her fabulous
harmony
She paints the captivating reverie
To celebrate with the dawn's rays
Dancing with the oceans and seas'
waves
What a marvelous ballet of love
light!*

*Bringing together the sunny fun
To the wonderland
In a gloomy weather
Over and over again
The deep ocean becomes a renegade
Aligned with the treacherous seas
Whilst he increases his spirits of
rage!
She mails an awesome passion
garland
To seize his furious rouse
Dropping the charms of rain
To dye his davenport
With the silky rose
At the last moments of the sunset
She wears a nuptial golden dress
She always looks so shy
She never owns a doubled face
Behind the quiet twilight
The Queen conceals
Her inflammable whine
To forget her time's sighs
Relaxing on the cushion of skies
Sipping the divine wine
At the back of the heaven's veil
The moon is wondering:
On the globe's theater
A violent conspiracy
The travesty of humanity
Oh Man "Why do you make and tell
lies?
Lie has an ill-intentioned delight
It has a tasteless appetite
How can a fox ride a horse?*

*It is a dirty game of hoax
Bear in mind, the fox is sly
Pulling down the pillar of faith
Depriving Love to thrive
Alas! It is a shocking shame
Lie is the seed of vice
Living in an atrocious shark
Its look has an ugly mark
My Sun-Lady,
Take a look at my pulsating heart
He weighs good faith
Beyond qualm and doubt
Faith is coming first by a genuine
act
In a strong tone,
Feel your honest start wish I could!
My heart's brook is still so crude
He hurtles faster than the Victoria's
lake
As much as a great cascade
His will-power can't balk
The strength of hope is not to easily
break
In this world, nothing I wish
Only my heart's waves to well sail
And my soul's vibes to be wholly
hale
Honesty is love,
Never be an absurdity game
If there is no love,
The tree of virtue dries
In the beautiful bride's bouquet
On top, the candlelight rose dies*

1 October 2008

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 المعهد البريطاني للغات والكمبيوتر ت: ٢٦٦٣٣٣
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 عدن ت: ٣٤٤٢٨٠
 تهر ت: ٢٥٨٨١١
 شركة اليمن للتأمين صنعا ت: ٢٧٢٨٠-٢/٢٧٢٩٦٢/٤٢
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مدارس
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سفريات
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مطاعم
 مطعم ومخبازة الشيباني (باسم محمد عبده الشيباني)
 تلفون: ٢٦٦٣٧٥ - ٥٠٥٢٩٠ فاكس: ٢٦٧٦١٩

البوك
 بنك اليمن والخليج فاكس: ٢٦٠٨٢٤ ت: ٢٦٠٨٢٣-١-٩٦٧
 فرع عدن ت: ٢٣٧٨٢٩ - ٢. فاكس/ ٢٣٧٨٢٤
 بنك التضامن الإسلامي ت: ١/٦٦٦٦٦٦
 البنك التجاري ت: ٢٧٣٢٤ فاكس: ٢٧٧٩١١
 مصرف اليمن البحرين الشامل ت: ٢٦٧٧٥٠٠، ٢٦٧٧٥٠٠
 فاكس: ٢٦٧٧٥٠٠، ٢٦٧٧٥٠٠
 بنك اليمن الدولي ت: ٠١- ٤٧٠٣٠٠
 البنك العربي ت: ٠١- ٢٧٦٥٨٥/٢
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 البنك المركزي:

تأجير سيارات
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• مدير تجاري سوداني - خبرة
 سبعة عشر سنة في إدارة
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 في أي منشأة تجارية.
 للتواصل: ٧٣٣٦٣٨٤٢٥

Thula: A historical place beyond compare

By: Saddam Al-Ashmori
For the Yemen Times

Thula is a historical town located 45 kilometers to the northwest of Sana'a. The city is famous for its archeology and Al-Ghurab Mountain which is 2350 meters above sea level. In a precaution against invasion, the city was surrounded by a wall extending for two thousand meters. Entry to the city in through seven gates: Bab Al-Mishraq, Bab Al-Salam, Bab Al-Hadi, Bab Al-Faradhah, Bab Al-Mahamid, Bab Al-Meniah and Bab Al-Hisn. There are four barracks separating every gate from the other. The city contains over 25 mosques, which indicates that education has been an outstanding feature throughout the history of the city, especially given

that there were famous religious scholars in the city. There are also several popular markets in Thula including the blacksmith's market, carpenter's market, crops' market and meat market.

The legend city enralls the observer in its architecture. Its houses are 5 to 7 storeys high. The nomination of the city came after Thula Bin Lubakha Al-Hemari who lived in the city over two thousands year ago. The city was first built during the Sabaen age and, at that time, it was known as the village of Al-Talh village.

Inside the city, the streets are paved and intertwined. When walking around the city, every street leads the pedestrian to another as if by enchantment. Furthermore, there are passages under houses linking the streets and neighborhoods of the city. These passages are called *rishah* [a curved feather] and every *rishah* is 4 meters long and 2.5 meters high. They are used as passages for livestock. Other surface passages called *Al-Arishah* connect houses that are close to each other.

Architecture of Thula

The greatness of those who once lived the city is reflected in the construction of the city's houses, an impressive feat of past engineering. The ancient buildings are decorated with engravings in the rock of their external facades.

The *qamareya* above the buildings' windows are decorated with colored glass. The first floor of each building is used as stable for animals, the second for storing crops and the third as a sitting room for members of the family. The fourth floor is used for bedrooms, the penultimate floor as a sitting



room for receiving guests, and the last as a kitchen.

Inside the buildings, the walls are decorated and carved under a cover of whitewash. The stepladders from one floor to another are usually paved and wide so that crops can be carried by animals up them. On the ground floor of the houses, there is a place used to put water in order to make it cold. This place is called *bait al-shurbah*.

The old market

The city's old market has been recently renovated. Situated in the center of the city, it consists of 30 shops that sell handicrafts such as the silver *jambiya* [traditional dagger], traditional clothes and miniatures of the city's historical buildings. Jars filled with water are spread throughout the market so that passersby can stop for a drink.

The Grand Mosque

Thula Grand Mosque was first built in the sixth century Hijra by Imam Abdullah Bin Hamzah. Its ceiling was built from wood. It includes a library to keep manuscripts and books of the Holy Quran. The mosques of the city are decorated both outside and inside some of them are topped by domes.

The pillars of these mosques were built from stones in an engineering design beyond compare.

The city wall

The city is surrounded by a wall which is two kilometers long, five to seven meters high with a base three meters wide. Surprising, some of the stones in the wall weigh up to 900 kilograms. The wall is dotted with 26 towers, some of which are ten meters high are considered as castles to the city. It is said that the wall was first built during the Hemiarite rule.

To the west side of the city, one can see the stronghold of Thula, formerly called Al-Ghurab stronghold in the past. It contains an ancient castle with carvings dating back to the Hemiarite and Sabaen periods. The stronghold also contains two water pools carved in rock in addition to crop stores. There are two entrances to the stronghold without which access to the roof of the castle is impossible. A lot of stories have been narrated over the years about the castle and the battles that occurred in it, including the story of the famous battle between Imam Al-Mutahhar Bin Sharaf Al-Din and Turkish occupiers.

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Lawyer Shatha Nasir has been chosen as the CNN hero for year 2008 for work on defending the rights of children especially victims of early marriage.

Congratulations Shatha

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