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SECTION 1 OF 7

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WARNING: TOPIC: DOMESTIC POLITICAL, FOUO, INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL

SERIAL: AFP20090416636006

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BODY

APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE: 31-Aug-2009

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COUNTRY: KENYA

SUBJ: KENYA: NAIROBI US EMBASSY POLITICAL SECTION MEDIA SUMMARY
15 APRIL 09 (U//FOUO)SOURCE: NAIROBI US EMBASSY POLITICAL SECTION IN ENGLISH 15 APR 09
(U//FOUO)

TEXT:

This daily media review is compiled by the Political Section of the American Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya. Inclusion of media reports in this summary in no way constitutes an endorsement by the US Government. Political Section/Nairobi cannot vouch for the veracity or accuracy of items contained in this report (U//FOUO)

Publications

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Somali pirates hijack Greek ship : **Somali pirates** seized a Greek merchant ship Tuesday, showing no sign of halting their attacks despite losing five of their men in robust rescue operations by the French and US navies. Pirates snatched the MV Irene, a Greek-operated merchant vessel flagged in Saint-Vincent and the Grenadines, in at least the ninth hijacking in the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean since the start of the month. On Monday, the head of the group that seized the US ship Maersk Alabama vowed to retaliate for the deaths of three pirates in the military operation which rescued an American captain. "We will intensify our attacks even reaching very far away from Somalia waters, and next time we get American citizens... they (should) expect no mercy from us." -- CAPITAL FM, April 14 2009

Share the danger of trying pirates: The killing of three **Somali pirates** by American soldiers perhaps shows the tough action need to make the Horn of Africa seas safe from the marauding modern-day buccaneers. It actually has been baffling that despite the huge deployment of naval forces from the US and many other powerful countries including France, Russia, China, Britain, India, Germany and Malaysia, pirates in comparatively ramshackle craft and puny arsenals have continued capturing merchant vessels in the Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden waters off Somalia...It would make more sense if the burden of trying the terrorists was shared by all the countries in the greater Horn of Africa region.
--Nation Editorial, April 15 2009 -

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Don't meddle, US envoy tells uninvited MPs: The US ambassador on Wednesday told uninvited politicians to stay away from peace-building meetings by civil society groups meant to unite Rift Valley Province residents following post-election chaos. Mr Michael Ranneberger was annoyed by what he termed the MPs' penchant for gate-crashing into meetings and spewing political venom that only divides Kenyans.--Nation, April 15 2009

Police arrest Mungiki suspects in Eldoret :Police in Eldoret have arrested 120 suspected members of the Mungiki sect in connection with the harassment of motorists and passengers at Huruma stage in Eldoret town. Area OCPD Kioko Muinde said the suspects were arrested on Monday after they allegedly attacking and injuring three traffic police officers who had gone to restore order at the stage following complaints from members of the public of constant harassments. He said the rowdy gang almost overpowered the police officers but quick reinforcement helped to contain the situation leading to the arrests.--Kenya Broadcasting Corporation April 14, 2009

Kibaki and Raila open door to coalition talks: The PNU representative in the coalition secretariat, Kivutha Kibwana had contacted his ODM counterpart in the PM's office, Miguna Miguna, even though details about their discussions were not revealed. They are expected to agree on a draft agenda to be presented to the President and the PM before the second round of coalition talks.--Nation, April 15 2009

Kibaki confident coalition will hold : President Mwai Kibaki has said he was confident he and Prime Minister Raila Odinga would keep the coalition government together. Speaking during the installation of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) Moderator David Ritho Gathanju on Tuesday, the President said that they would work towards enforcing the national agenda. "I want to assure you that definitely for myself and definitely for Mr Raila and we who are these two groups I am sure we will succeed, nobody will set us aside, it doesn't matter what you do and it doesn't matter whatever you say," he stressed.--CAPITAL FM, April 14 2009

Kibaki rules out early elections: President Mwai Kibaki has told the Church to propagate unity among Kenyans and to always remain as the sober voice that engages the public by offering practical solutions to the current challenges facing the country. Speaking Tuesday during the installation of the 19th PCEA General Assembly Moderator at St Andrews Church in Nairobi, President Kibaki said

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the church should lead the way in the entrenchment of necessary reforms before the country can undertake another general election.

--Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) Apr 14, 2009

/***** BEGINNING OF SECTION 2 *****/

CITE OSC RESTON VA 701684

No curtain call as controversial Githii hands over PCEA baton: The Rev David Githii was poised to be a "different leader" from the moment he became the moderator of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa in 2003. From denouncing "Harambee", a motto used since 1963, to calling for the pulling down of Parliament for 'satanic' symbols in its premises, Kenyans will remember the Rev Dr Githii, who retired on Tuesday, as the controversial head of one of Kenya's mainstream churches. The clergyman also extended his tussle into his church when he said some symbols in the church were related to Freemasons. --Nation Commentary, April 15 2009

Reform team 'to be ready in time': A parliamentary select committee is racing against time to ensure all nominees to all reform commissions are ready when the Kenya Parliament reopens next week. On Wednesday, members of the committee will short-list names of applicants gunning for the nine seats on the Interim Independent Boundaries Review Commission (IIBRC). On Thursday, they will come out with names of the applicants to be interviewed for slots on the National Cohesion and Integration Commission.--Nation, April 15 2009

Kenya seeks EAC assistance over Migingo--EAC Treaty does not provide for the militarization of the region's shared resources : The Kenya government has said it will invite other member states of the East African Community (EAC) to the negotiating table, to resolve the ownership dispute over Migingo Island. EAC Minister Amason Kingi told reporters on Tuesday that the row between Kenya and Uganda over the island is no longer a bilateral issue, and as such there is need to involve Rwanda, Tanzania and Burundi. Mr Kingi said it was unfortunate that Uganda had sent its security forces to Migingo, as the EAC Treaty does not provide for the militarization of the region's shared resources. -- CAPITAL FM, April 14 2009

Former Speaker Kaparo, 16 ex-MPs among the 1,158 people who applied to be members of Interim Boundaries Commission: Former MPs, academics and retired military officers are among the 1158 candidates who have applied to become members of the Interim Independent Boundaries Review Commission, that will shape the country's political future. The Kriegler Commission last year

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recommended that the commission be set to redraw constituency boundaries as part a total overhaul the failed electoral system that brought Kenya to the brink of disaster. Among the candidates are former Speaker Kaparo, retired Lt. Gen. Daniel Opande and former Electoral Commission Vice Chair, Gabriel Mukele. --Nairobi Star, April 15 2009

Somali pirates hijack Greek ship -- CAPITAL FM, April 14 2009
-BY AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE

NAIROBI, Kenya, Apr 14 - **Somali pirates** seized a Greek merchant ship Tuesday, showing no sign of halting their attacks despite losing five of their men in robust rescue operations by the French and US navies. Pirates snatched the MV Irene, a Greek-operated merchant vessel flagged in Saint-Vincent and the Grenadines, in at least the ninth hijacking in the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean since the start of the month. "It's a Greek ship, it was seized early today," Andrew Mwangura, from the Kenya-based East African Seafarers Assistance Programme, told AFP. The 35,000-tonne bulk carrier was hijacked in the Gulf of Aden, the European Union's naval mission in the area said. Its 22 Filipino crew is believed to be safe. On Monday, the head of the group that seized the US ship Maersk Alabama vowed to retaliate for the deaths of three pirates in the military operation which rescued an American captain held on a lifeboat over the weekend. "The American liars have killed our friends after they agreed to free the hostage without ransom... this matter will lead to retaliation and we will hunt down particularly American citizens travelling our waters," Abdi Garad said by phone from the pirate lair of Eyl. "We will intensify our attacks even reaching very far away from Somalia waters, and next time we get American citizens... they (should) expect no mercy from us." The captain of the US ship was saved when Navy Seals fired three shots, one for each pirate, bringing an end to the high-seas drama which prompted US President Barack Obama to call for renewed vigour in anti-piracy efforts. "I want to be very clear that we are resolved to halt the rise of piracy in that region," he said on Monday. According to sources close to the pirates, French ships were also prime targets following the rescue of the Tanit yacht in which one hostage was killed, together with at least two pirates. French commandos had already launched rescue operations in two previous cases over the past year, killing and capturing pirates. So far **Somali pirates** have never executed hostages and sought to release ships in exchange for ransoms. International

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Maritime Bureau (IMB) head Noel Choong backed the tough approach against the pirates, whose relentless attacks have disrupted one of the world's busiest maritime trade routes. "We support the robust response against the pirates," he told AFP. But he admitted that revenge attacks were a risk. "It may spark retaliatory action by the pirates. It may increase violence against the ships and crew members," Choong said. The latest releases and hijackings bring to at least 17 the number of ships being held by **Somali pirates** and to more than 250 the number of crewmen held hostage. Following a surge in attacks in 2008, which saw close to 50 ships being seized and millions of dollars paid in ransom money to the pirates, naval powers upped their response. Up to 20 ships -- operating under US, EU, NATO and national commands -- can be off the coast of Somalia at any given time. Most of them patrol shipping lanes in the Gulf of Aden, where maritime traffic bottlenecks in and out of the Red Sea, leading pirates to attack vessels further out at sea in the Indian Ocean.

Don't meddle, US envoy tells uninvited MPs --Nation, Tuesday, April 14 2009 -By SIMON SIELE

/***** BEGINNING OF SECTION 3 *****/

CITE OSC RESTON VA 701684

The US ambassador on Wednesday told uninvited politicians to stay away from peace-building meetings by civil society groups meant to unite Rift Valley Province residents following post-election chaos. Mr Michael Ranneberger was annoyed by what he termed the MPs' penchant for gate-crashing into meetings and spewing political venom that only divides Kenyans. "Politicians can decide to storm meetings to which they are not invited in their big vehicles, yet they do not pay taxes while the electorate go hungry," said Mr Ranneberger during a breakfast talk show on a local FM radio station. He maintained that he had no apologies to make for refusing to allow Molo MP Joseph Kiuna and other politicians to address a peace and reconciliation meeting held last week at Ndeffo in Njoro. Mr Kiuna had not been invited to the meeting although he is area lawmaker, he said. The meeting was organised by a team of non-governmental organisations and lobby groups involved in reconciling locals, mainly Kikuyus and Kalenjins. During the occasion, representatives of the two communities planted trees and lit a torch to signify the return of peace among the residents. Mr Ranneberger, whose government is a major sponsor of the peace drive by civil society groups, was the

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chief guest at the event.

Police arrest Mungiki suspects in Eldoret - --Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) -Written By:Edwin Kiprono/KNA Apr 14, 2009

Police in Eldoret have arrested 120 suspected members of the Mungiki sect in connection with the harassment of motorists and passengers at Huruma stage in Eldoret town. Area OCPD Kioko Muinde said the suspects were arrested on Monday after they allegedly attacking and injuring three traffic police officers who had gone to restore order at the stage following complaints from members of the public of constant harassments. He said the rowdy gang almost overpowered the police officers but quick reinforcement helped to contain the situation leading to the arrests. Muinde said the suspects will be arraigned in court soon to face charges related to harassment of members of the public. The OCPD said police impounded several matatus plying the Huruma-Maili Nne route in connection with the incident. He pledged increased police patrols at all bus stages within the town to ensure the safety of all travellers saying anybody found harassing members of the public will be dealt with firmly.

Kibaki and Raila open door to coalition talks--Nation, Tuesday, April 14 2009 -By MUCHEMI WACHIRA and BERNARD NAMUNANE

Kibaki said there was no crisis in the coalition, and described those alluding to frosty relations between him and the PM as people "expressing words of despair." Kenya President Mwai Kibaki seemed to extend an olive branch to Prime Minister Raila Odinga on Tuesday, raising hope that fractured relations within the Grand Coalition Government could soon be repaired. When contacted through an aide, Mr Odinga did not immediately comment, but held a meeting of ODM ministers at his Treasury office. "I want to assure you that for myself and Raila Odinga, we are working together. I am sure we will succeed. We shall not be set aside by anyone," the President said at a church function in Nairobi. He was responding to comments by the newly-installed Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) Moderator, the Rev David Gathanju, who asked him to comment on the public fall-out in the coalition, which has raised fears that the coalition government and the National Accord and Reconciliation process could collapse. Some reaching out is happening in the background, the Nation has learnt. Former Cabinet minister Kivutha Kibwana, the PNU representative in the coalition secretariat, had contacted his ODM counterpart in the PM's office, Mr Miguna Miguna, even though details about their discussions were not

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revealed. Speaking for the first time since the Kilaguni Lodge meeting that strained his relations with Mr Odinga, the President said he and the PM were not estranged. His statement did not appear to be an acknowledgement of a serious rift in the coalition that needed to be healed if the government was to function smoothly. Mr Odinga has complained publicly that he was short-changed in the power-sharing agreement and has hit out directly at the President, describing his leadership style as "Jua Kali" (informal) and "primitive". PNU coalition leaders, including Vice-President Kalonzo Musyoka, deputy PM Uhuru Kenyatta, Cabinet ministers George Saitoti and Ali Chirau Mwakwere have accused Mr Odinga of disrespecting the President. Business in the coalition, they warned, would not be as usual. Prof Kibwana's contact with Mr Miguna was meant to explore the possibility of a meeting between the two leaders, aides in the PM's office said. They declined to be named because they were not authorised to speak to the media on the issue. Prof Kibwana and Mr Miguna are expected to agree on a draft agenda to be presented to the President and the PM before the second round of talks by members of the Permanent Committee on the Management of the Grand Coalition is arranged. The committee's talks at Kilaguni Lodge in Tsavo National Park collapsed two weeks ago after the two sides failed to agree on the agenda. ..Strong pledges were made by the PM and Mr Musyoka that the two principals would meet after the Easter break. At the PCEA's St Andrew's Church Nairobi on Tuesday, Mr Kibaki said there was no crisis in the coalition, and described those alluding to frosty relations between him and the PM as people "expressing words of despair."

Kibaki confident coalition will hold --CAPITAL FM, April 14 2009
- BY JUDIE KABERIA

NAIROBI, Kenya, Apr 14 - President Mwai Kibaki has said he was confident he and Prime Minister Raila Odinga would keep the coalition government together. Speaking during the installation of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) Moderator David Ritho Gathanju on Tuesday, the President said that they would work towards enforcing the national agenda. "I want to assure you that definitely for myself and definitely for Mr Raila and we who are these two groups I am sure we will succeed, nobody will set

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us aside, it doesn't matter what you do and it doesn't matter whatever you say," he stressed. The Head of State at the same

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time cautioned the political class against making negative comments about the government in public, reiterating that some of the statements were creating unnecessary tension in the country. He asked them to concentrate on the reform agenda and support the coalition government to achieve the development agenda. The President urged them to consult with the government before going to the media with accusations against one another, calling on them to cultivate respect through dialogue. "It is imperative that as leaders, we concentrate on the major reforms that need to be undertaken and not resort to public sideshows. I believe in the importance of honest consultations before leaders engage in public utterances that confuse the public and give the impression of a crisis." He re-affirmed the government's commitment to implement Agenda Item Four of the mediation talks, which involve reforms. While he welcomed criticism from religious groups, the President asked them to offer solutions that would help the government to remain united and succeed in its development agenda. He asked them to actively participate in reforms especially in the constitution process, but at the same time gave them a tongue lashing against spreading messages of despair. "I am very depressed when I hear many people express words of despair and many of them are people inside the church, they are people who should be preaching. It is not your role to discourage us, it is your basic role to pray for us," the President spelt out. Mr Kibaki admitted that the government was faced with many challenges owing to the 2007 post election violence, the global economic crisis and the current famine. He said the government was still struggling with unemployment and resettling internally displaced persons who were still residing in camps. He asked the country to be peaceful and begged for support and patience as the government continues to source for ways of alleviating the difficulties. Meanwhile, Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) leaders from the larger Mru backed their party leader Mr Odinga, saying he deserved more respect from President Kibaki and the Party of National Unity (PNU). The party officials asked the President to recognize the PM as an equal partner in the coalition government as envisaged in the National Accord. "We are fully behind our party leader and support his recent sentiments that ODM was getting a raw deal in the coalition. The President should swallow his pride and recognise that he is sharing the power with PM," said Dr Japheth Mwongo, the Imenti North ODM chairman. "Just as Lands Minister James Orengo proposed, let the Attorney General

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interpret the accord so that the PNU side can understand and fully embrace it," said Dr Mwongo. The leaders accused President Kibaki of letting Kenyans down by failing 'to respect the power sharing arrangement which placed the two partners in the coalition at par'.

Kibaki rules out early elections --Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) - Written By: PPS, Tue, Apr 14, 2009

President Mwai Kibaki has told the Church to propagate unity among Kenyans and to always remain as the sober voice that engages the public by offering practical solutions to the current challenges facing the country. Speaking Tuesday during the installation of the 19th PCEA General Assembly Moderator at St Andrews Church in Nairobi, President Kibaki said the church should lead the way in the entrenchment of necessary reforms before the country can undertake another general election. President Kibaki challenged the church to be at the forefront in encouraging Kenyans to face with courage the challenges they faced as a nation and shun rumors that may create despair. The President cautioned the church against fuelling differences among political leaders. "We are in Government with Hon Raila Odinga and as a Grand Coalition we shall overcome any differences that there may be and the church should not encourage disunity by calling for unnecessary elections," said President Kibaki. The President noted that religious leaders should come out to preach hope and harmonious coexistence among all Kenyans to correspond with biblical teachings. The President said that the church should take up its frontline role of civic education to enable Kenyans embrace change and take advantage of opportunities arising in the country. He said, "In doing so, let the church be one that brings Kenyans together." The Head of State said that Kenyans presently are interested in sustainable peace and revival of the economy after the post election skirmishes of last year and all energies should be directed towards providing necessary hope in forging ahead as one nation. The President congratulated the newly installed moderator Rt. Rev. David Gathanju, and newly elected Secretary General Rev Festus Gitonga and the Honorary Treasurer Mr. Johnson Njatha for attaining an opportunity to serve God and mankind. President Kibaki said, "My prayer is that you will continue to be of even greater service to the church and the people of Kenya in your new capacities." President Kibaki also told leaders to concentrate on the major reforms that need to be undertaken and desist from public sideshows. He reassured Kenyans

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that despite the current challenges, the Grand Coalition Government would continue working together to steer the country through the current hard times. The President also called on leaders to practice mature politics that would steer the country forward and avoid rhetoric that only served their sectarian interests saying utterances that may scare investors and other visitors to the country should be avoided at all costs. "I believe in the importance of honest consultations before leaders engage in public utterances that confuse the public and give the impression of a crisis," he said. He further urged Kenyans to count their blessings and to particularly cultivate a positive attitude towards the country's well being and its achievements. President Kibaki said that despite the existence of a number of challenges, the country was making commendable progress in addressing key challenges such as modernization of the infrastructure to create jobs for the youth and tackling the famine situation in the country. With regard to various issues of concern raised by religious leaders, the President reiterated the

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commitment of his Government to implementing comprehensive reforms including constitutional review and electoral reforms. "You have also raised issues of governance and the need to forge ahead with reforms, especially those in Agenda Four of the National Accord. In this regard, I assure religious leaders that my Government will continue to listen to them and to act on constructive ideas and criticism," he said. The President, however, cautioned Kenyans against negative propaganda that could create hopelessness among citizens and divert their attention from nation building. He said, "It is, however, understandable for there to be a perception that the Grand Coalition Government is not functioning when there is constant grumbling and wrangling over the media by leaders." President Kibaki said that the tribulations afflicting the nation require concerted efforts by all leaders to safeguard the welfare of all Kenyans at all times. "Our country is experiencing challenges arising from a slow economic growth, famine and recovering from the post-election violence. We have high unemployment rates and rising food prices," the president said. The President said that governance must be based on constitutionality and the rule of law but should be anchored on dialogue and mutual respect. The Head of State, however, commended the church for playing its supportive role to

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the government's efforts in tackling some of the critical challenges afflicting the nation. President Kibaki said, "I appreciate the contribution of the Church and wish to reaffirm my Government's commitment to forging an even stronger partnership with the Church in our efforts to build a peaceful and prosperous nation." The newly installed PCEA Moderator Rev. David Ritho Gathanju expressed appreciation of the free primary education programme among other Government policies formulated to improve the living conditions of Kenyans. Rev. Gathanju said the church, as a key stakeholder would continue partnering with the Government in providing the leaders with alternative viewpoint and guidance to put in place a new constitution among other priority reforms. The moderator also said the PCEA church which sponsors hundreds of schools would supplement Government efforts to instill discipline in learning institutions. Basing his speech on the theme 'My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge' derived from the book of Hosea 4:6, the Moderator encouraged church members to take advantage of Government established ICT villages and devolved funds to empower themselves and therefore support the church mission.

Kenya seeks EAC assistance over Migingo -- CAPITAL FM, April 14 2009 -BY EVELYN NJOROGE

NAIROBI, Kenya, Apr 14 - The government has said it will invite other member states of the East African Community (EAC) to the negotiating table, to resolve the ownership dispute over Migingo Island. EAC Minister Amason Kingi told reporters on Tuesday that the row between Kenya and Uganda over the island is no longer a bilateral issue, and as such there is need to involve Rwanda, Tanzania and Burundi. "I think it should be resolved within the provisions of the Treaty (EAC Treaty) that whenever there is a problem or when there's a dispute between member states, then a peaceful resolution ought to be looked for. I believe that is what is happening now," he said. Since late last year, Kenya and Uganda have been claiming ownership over the one-acre island in Lake Victoria, which has historically been part of Kenya's territory. Uganda has already deployed its military forces and is said to be arresting Kenyan fishermen, despite a pledge by President Mwai Kibaki and his Ugandan counterpart Yoweri Museveni that they will settle the matter. Mr Kingi however said it was unfortunate that Uganda had sent its security forces to Migingo, as the EAC Treaty does not provide for the militarization of the region's shared resources. He said Kenya was aware that

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boundaries would not matter once the EAC political federation is achieved and that is it was pushing to have the row determined amicably. "We are journeying towards a federation and most of the things that we are fighting for, the boundaries that we are clinging on, are things that will be brought down," Mr Kingi stressed, adding that the issue should not cause a major rift between the two nations. Mr Kingi's sentiments echoed those of his Permanent Secretary David Nalo, who last month expressed confidence that the various issues that are cropping up within the Community would not affect the region's integration process. Mr Nalo told Capital Business that the disagreements on issues such as the ownership of Migingo Island and land ownership, were mere perceptions and not deep rifts among the member states. He reckoned that the exposure the region was now getting had enriched the integration and enabled the teams involved to genuinely address concerns raised by member states. However, it remains to be seen what direction the Island dispute will take and how the partners will react.

Share the danger of trying pirates --Nation Editorial, -- Nation, April 15 2009 -

The killing of three **Somali pirates** by American soldiers perhaps shows the tough action need to make the Horn of Africa seas safe from the marauding modern-day buccancers. It actually has been baffling that despite the huge deployment of naval forces from the US and many other powerful countries including France, Russia, China, Britain, India, Germany and Malaysia, pirates in comparatively ramshackle craft and puny arsenals have continued capturing merchant vessels in the Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden waters off **Somalia**. The **pirates** have in the past fortnight dramatically stepped up their attacks. They may have sensed that despite the superior firepower and capacity for swift air and sea responses to any SOS, the multinational forces have often been too slow to take action. And even when they did respond in time, they preferred not to employ lethal force, often waiting idly by while ransom demands were negotiated. The response that freed the captured American captain of a ship that had escaped the pirates thus ups the ante in the war against piracy. Shippers plying the dangerous waters and others dependent on the sea lanes must now

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brace themselves for an escalation of piracy. The multinational forces must be ready to act more decisively to prevent ships

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falling into the hands of the pirates. Of the countries in the region, Kenya has pivotal interest in the war against piracy. For some reason nearly, all the captured brigands are being brought here for trial. That might be Kenya's noble contribution to the fight against piracy, but it may also expose the country to retaliation, especially if the pirates are linked to international terrorist groups that have reportedly set up bases in lawless Somalia. It would make more sense if the burden of trying the terrorists was shared by all the countries in the greater Horn of Africa region. Tanzania, Djibouti, Sudan, Eritrea, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Egypt can all share that risk.

No curtain call as controversial Githii hands over PCEA baton --Nation, Tuesday, April 14 2009 -By KIBIWOTT KOROSS
The Rev David Githii was poised to be a "different leader" from the moment he became the moderator of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa on April 22, 2003. From denouncing harambee, a motto used since 1963, to calling for the pulling down of Parliament for 'satanic' symbols in its premises, Kenyans will remember the Rev Dr Githii, who retired on Tuesday, as the controversial head of one of Kenya's mainstream churches. The clergyman denounced the word harambee as a word that referred to, in his words, an Indian goddess and warned that Kenya was disaster-prone because it worshipped the Hindu deity. Upon taking over the leadership mantle from the Rev Dr Jesse Kamau six years ago, the new moderator announced that the PCEA method of worship would change to adopt that "more agreeable to the modern Christian community".
The harambee motto came into usage in Kenya courtesy of the Indian coolies who built the Kenya-Uganda railway and would chant the phrase as they toiled. The moderator's call for the ban of harambee was not received well by a section of Kenyans, including the retired outspoken PCEA cleric Timothy Njoya, who launched a scathing attack on the church leader. Dr Njoya, at that time, said the condemnation of the word smacked of racism and appealed to other leaders to work towards attracting members of other races and ethnic communities to the church. "To say that we ban a word simply because it originates from another race is to say we don't welcome members of that race into our church," he said. Dr Githii was also opposed to the inscriptions at Parliament Buildings and outside the High Court. He argued that "the two snakes at the entrance of Parliament, the huge Masonic star at the entrance of the High Court, the frogs and tortoise signs in the High Court must be demolished." The clergyman also extended his tussle into

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his church when he said some symbols in the church were related to Freemasons. Some of the symbols at St Andrews Church in Nairobi, were destroyed in 2004 by church elders led by the moderator for their alleged links to devil worship. A dispute over Freemasonry split the PCEA, leading to the removal of priceless historical fittings from its prayer houses. Two factions were locked in an expensive and potentially destructive wrangle over symbols and artefacts used in the church for many years, but which critics linked to Freemasonry and demanded they be destroyed. The other faction saw nothing wrong with the symbols that had been in the church for decades. At least 30 stained glass windows and metal grilles, more than a century old, were removed from St Andrews Church - the main seat of the PCEA - and destroyed by supporters of one faction, who claimed the designs were similar to symbols used by Freemasons. Police had to intervene more than once to quell confrontations between the two factions at St Andrews, whose members include prominent Kenyan businessmen and politicians. The 62-year-old clergyman will also be remembered for his strong opposition to ordination of gay priests by the Anglican Church in the West. He warned Americans practising homosexuality that they were "doomed to hell". The Rev Dr Githii warned that just as God refused to spare Sodom and Gomorrah from fire, He would not spare homosexuals and those defending the act. At the height of post-election crisis last year, the church leader criticised Western countries for trying to prescribe a solution to political crisis in Kenya as Mr Kofi Annan mediation efforts were under way at the Serena Hotel in Nairobi. The preacherman said despite the country being a sovereign state, some Western nations "had not let go the country from their hearts and minds". He said a solution to the crisis should come from Kenyans and not through pressure from foreigners.

Reform team 'to be ready in time' -- Nation, Tuesday, April 14 2009 -By BERNARD NAMUNANE

A parliamentary select committee is racing against time to ensure all nominees to all reform commissions are ready when the Kenya Parliament reopens next week. On Wednesday, members of the committee will short-list names of applicants gunning for the nine seats on the Interim Independent Boundaries Review Commission (IIBRC). On Thursday, they will come out with names of the applicants to be interviewed for slots on the National Cohesion and Integration Commission. The Parliamentary Select

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Committee on the Constitution Review chairman, Mr Mohamed Abdikadir, who is also the Mandera Central MP, on Tuesday said that they were determined to be ready with names of each commission by Tuesday next week. "As a committee, we do not want to slow down the pace of reforms," he said at Parliament Buildings. The two commissions are among reforms stipulated under Agenda Four of the National Accord, and which were agreed upon during the Serena talks as being key to the stability of the country. Others are the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) and the Interim Independent Electoral Commission (IIEC). While the ministry of Justice has already named a panel to select nominees to the TJRC, the 27-member House select team has already agreed on the names of nominees to the IIEC, including that of the chairman. Apart from the reforms which were directly agreed upon during the Serena talks, another package of reforms was proposed by the Waki and Kriegler /***** BEGINNING OF SECTION 7 *****/

commissions which investigated the post-election violence and disputed presidential election results respectively. These include the IIEC, the IIBRC and the envisaged Special Tribunal for Kenya that is meant to try key architects of the post-election chaos. Just like the IIEC which is set to replace the disbanded Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK), the IIBRC will consist of nine commissioners, among them a chairman, whose names will be approved by Parliament and appointed by President Kibaki in consultation with Prime Minister Raila Odinga.

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Source Metadata

Source Name: US Embassy Political Section
Source Type(s): Publications
Source City: Nairobi
Source Country: United States
Source Start Date: 15 Apr 09

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Source End Date: 15 Apr 09

Language(s): English

Article Mctadata

Document ID: AFP20090416636006

Content Type: Summary

Processing Ind: OSC Hosted Product

Precedence: Routine

Country(s): Kenya

Region(s): Africa

Subregion(s): East Africa

Topic(s): DOMESTIC POLITICAL, FOUO, INTERNATIONAL

POLITICAL

CABLETYPE: FBISEMS ACP 1.0.

ADMIN

BT

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