

# AFRICA's Future

and  
other hot  
topics on  
Facebook

In August 2010 President Barack Obama invited 115 young Africans from 46 countries to a forum on the future of their continent. Fans of the Facebook page [eJournal USA](#) contributed more than 800 comments on the issues most important to Africa. Presented here is a selection of their remarks.



**“It’s my great privilege to welcome all of you to this Young African Leaders Forum. You reflect the extraordinary history and diversity of the continent — and you’ve got an extraordinary future before you.”**

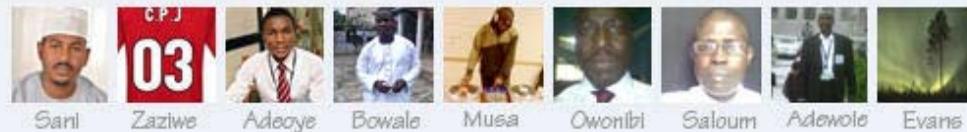


President Barack Obama listens to a question from Bai Sama Gwenning Best from Liberia during a town hall-style meeting with young African leaders in the East Room of the White House in Washington, D.C., on August 3, 2010. [White House photo]

The White House  
Office of the Press Secretary  
July 21, 2010  
Statement on the President’s Forum  
with Young African Leaders

In 2010, seventeen countries across sub-Saharan Africa celebrate fifty years of independence. In honor of this important historic moment; in acknowledgement of the extraordinarily young demographic profile of the region; and as part of an effort to forge strong, forward-looking partnerships in the years ahead, President Obama will host

a forum in Washington, D.C., from August 3 - 5 with approximately 120 young leaders from civil society and the private sector representing more than forty countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Together with American counterparts and U.S. government officials, the participants will share their insights on key themes of youth empowerment, good governance, and economic opportunity. President Obama will host a town hall meeting at the White House with these young leaders to discuss their vision for transforming their societies over the next fifty years.



**Barack Obama calls a President’s Forum With Young African Leaders to discuss the Future of Africa.**

**Sani**

I hope the selected Youths will not see it as an opportunity to travel; they should use the opportunity to highlight the real problems of Our Continent, especially bad leadership which has kept us consistently backward. I hope they will use their God-given talent to press for a good deal from president Barak Obama. I wish them well and fruitful deliberations.

**Zaziwe**

I believe the children of the future. I like what Obama is doing. Big up!

**Adeoye**

I am 100% ready to go.

**Bowale**

We need more peace and unity. We need good leadership to take Africa forward.

**Musa**

Absolute and sound comments; United we flourish! Divided we perish!!

**Owonibi**

We hope some “IMPLEMENTABLE” resolution will come out of the forum.

**Saloum**

Belle initiative, il est temps loin des discours creux, Obama doit aider grâce à son leadership à l’émergence de leaders capable d’aller à la réalisation des Etats unis d’afrique. je dis ce n’est pas la peine de chercher ce qui été trouvé ailleurs, le modèle américain est le seul modélé fiable pour réaliser les Etats Unis d’afrique sur le plan des institutions à mettre en place. félicitations

[Great initiative! Far from being one for hollow speeches, and thanks to his leadership, Obama must help bring about leaders who are capable of achieving the United States of Africa. I say that there is no point in looking elsewhere; the American model is the only reliable one for the realization of the United States of Africa in terms of the institutions that must be established.]

**Adewole**

I am proud to be one of the three Participants from Nigeria, I would be looking forward to discuss on Environmental issues and Alternative Renewable Energy for Africa and Also the Issues of the Niger Delta youth in Nigeria.

**Evans**

Like cherries, African leadership’s gonna blossom. Big up!!



**Jean Claude**

I really support the move and encourage it to be practical and focus on radical transformation. Education is the priority for leadership building, so focus on it.

**Jesús**

Creo que es un evento de trascendencia Mundial; un paso adelante en el camino hacia el empoderamiento de los Jóvenes y de la nueva Democracia Global.

[I think it's a World-transcending event, a step on the road to empowering the youth and the new Global Democracy.]

**Raymond**

This has been the moment that we Youth were waiting for!! We ready to listen to you Mr. President as you revitalize us to build Africa towards better place!!!

**Rotimi**

The future of the world sure lies in Africa. It's time to start preparing able hands to take the mantle of authority. Kudos to President Obama and this initiative.

**Bope**

The reception of young African leaders from different countries by President Obama is a strong signal for a new

political order and a symbol of a new definition of politics in Africa after the Cold War. Thank you very much President OBAMA.

**Ridzuan**

I'm so proud of these young Africans, and of course not to mention there are many others who are just like them as well, who are really proud of their continent & their country and who are determined to create a better Africa for themselves & for the future generation. What they need now is the support from the major powers such as America, which has the capability to help them achieve this dream.

**Wuod Kano**

Young African Leaders let's set up the war against corruption and stop the sequence of our leaders passing it on to the younger ones.

**Mustapha**

I am very happy with this forum. Youth, let's join hands to eliminate corruption and fight for democratic leadership.



Delegate Mariam Diallo from Mali speaking with John Hart from the American Democracy Institute during the Networking and Partnering "Unconference" in the Newseum on August 5, 2010.



Chef Gerald Thomas (left) and Founder Robert Egger talk with Sierra Leonean delegate Donald Kalokoh (seated) during a visit to the D.C. Central Kitchen. (August 4, 2010)



Miguil Hassan Farah from Djibouti and Najma Ahmed Abdi from Somalia confer during the delegates' congressional visit to the Senate Dirksen Building. (August 4, 2010)



Delegates listen to Claudia Morris before the tour of the Capital Area Food Bank. (August 4, 2010)



Delegates for the President's Forum with Young African Leaders join elders in ceramics painting at the First Baptist Church Seniors Center on August 4, 2010 in Washington, D.C.



Left: South African filmmaker Palesa Shongwe and Ethiopian actress/media personality Meron Hailegiorgis at the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Washington. (August 4, 2010)

State Department photos by Matthew Whatley

**“Africa has not just the potential, but the promise of becoming a leader in innovation...”**



U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton delivers remarks to the President's Forum with Young African Leaders at the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C., August 3, 2010. [State Department photo by Matthew Whatley]

I see Africa as a continent brimming with potential, a place that has so much just waiting to be grasped. Sixty percent of the population of Africa is under the age of 25. And that means that there's a lot of work to be done to make sure that those young people are educated, are healthy, are motivated, are given the tools of opportunity. But it also means that Africa has not just the potential, but the promise of becoming a leader in innovation, in design, in creativity of all that you, your families, communities, and countries can become.

Across Africa, more citizens believe they now have the power and the duty to shape their own lives, to help their communities, to hold their governments accountable. So for all of the challenges, which we hear much about, I want to focus on these gains, because it is through this positive progress that we can motivate and incentivize even more to take place. And ultimately, it is up to you.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Remarks at the President's Forum with Young African Leaders, August 3, 2010



**What is your vision for the future of your country?**

**Michael**

I have a dream that one day Kenyans shall not be employed, judged, and voted by virtue of tribe, but by the level of their qualification and competence.

**Ana**

Great, dream, but always take action for without it nothing will happen. Minha colega da lingua Portuguesa, sonhos sao excelentes, mas a acao, poem em pratica os reais sentimentos de progresso. [My colleague from the Portuguese language - dreams are great, but action put into practice the real feelings of progress.]

**Caesar**

My vision is to stabilize political conditions and advance economic sectors, then to create an environment of life-long learning & earning for our own citizens.

**Henry**

My vision for my country is to eliminate corruption and to improve the welfare of our people, mostly in rural areas. Equal rights for every citizen!

**Zaziwe**

My Vision for the future of my country and AFRICA is to show a better image to the rest of the world - i.e. a place where there is a high level of science and technology, high development in every aspect and total elimination of illiteracy, war and corruption. YES, It is possible.

**Okey**

My vision for my country is for her to be incorporated as a first-world nation with economic viability, good governance with credible elections, sustaining rich cultures and eliminating absolute poverty; respect for fundamental human rights and strengthening anti-corruption agencies; massive social infrastructural and human/institutional capacity building programmes sustained for life.

**Edwin**

Some people who seem to have vision or mission regardless of age let people down when power eventually corrupts them. If we look at Zimbabwe's civil society activists, they say they are fighting for democracy, but when it comes to exercising democracy in their organizations they refuse to go or amend constitutions claiming their constituencies still want them to lead. They take the organizations as their own same applies to politicians.



**“The future is what you make it. If you keep dreaming and keep working and keep learning and don’t give up, then I’m confident that your countries and the entire continent and the entire world will be better for it.”**



President Barack Obama prepares to take a question at his Forum with Young African Leaders at the White House, August 3, 2010. [State Department photo by Matthew Whatley]

I think the most important thing that maybe young people here can do is to promote the values of openness, transparency, honest debate, civil disagreements within your own groups and your own organizations, because that forms good habits. If you are part of an organization — and I’m going to speak to the men here, in particular — if you are part of an organization where you profess democracy but women don’t have an equal voice in your organization, then you’re a hypocrite, right? And that is something that — (applause.) And that is something that we have to be honest about. Oftentimes, women are not getting the same voice in African countries, despite the fact

that they are carrying more than their fair share of burdens.

So within your own organizations, within your own networks, modeling good democratic practices, listening to people who you disagree with respectfully, making sure that everybody gets a seat at the table — all those things I think are very important.

Because part of what I’m hoping for is that some of you will end up being leaders of your country some day.

President Barack Obama, Remarks at the Town Hall with Young African Leaders, August 3, 2010



### **How can the youth of Africa best help their countries prosper?**

#### **Maggie**

They can start by changing their attitude to life - most young people are content to “stand and stare” and blame it all on the “system!” No spirit of “I CAN DO IT.”

#### **Sylvia**

The African youth has to be empowered economically to have an independent voice. Information on an empty stomach will not do much. In my country Kenya they have a Swahili saying -“Kazi kwa vijana,pesa kwa wazee”, [the youth work but the old people get the money]. I propose strategies that will directly empower the youth and encourage them to conduct businesses. As one who works mostly with the youth I have identified amazing potential.

#### **Kwadwo**

I am really impressed with all the comments. Don’t really know what to say but with my little experience as a Ghanaian of the University of Ghana campus I think we the youth are refusing to learn to do the right things. ... So guys, if we want to see change in our continent it should begin with us changing our so-called

normal pattern of doing things. Then we can hold our leaders to task.

#### **Zaziwe**

We are the future generation that are going to be the leaders who will make decisions that will either bring development or chase it away. Thus if we are have the burning desire, pride of being an African, educated, I see African countries’ image changed. My brothers and sisters yes we can!!!

#### **Isac**

Yes! There will be a change.

#### **Akwasi**

Indeed change is coming. But the biggest change for us as African youth is to ignore the geographical borders and work together as one nation toward “Africa’s development.” This is what our forerunners have failed to do and that ‘ why our development is moving at a go slow pace. Good luck fellow Comrades!

#### **Kwabena**

The youth must research ways to offer quality services to the people and be less interested in personal gains.

#### **Kwame**

Keeping your dreams, achievement in



good shape and learning and studying good leaders in the system of government the youth leaders can make significant impact.

### Obiora

Attitudinal change is the catalyst for that development. We should look beyond the corrupt leaders of various countries in Africa and embrace virtue, pursuing it seriously.

### Abdulwahab

The youth of Africa can best help their countries prosper by not behaving like their present leaders who only embezzle, squander and siphon public fund living abject poverty as the order of the day.

### Steve

I think more young people in Africa could be interested in Leadership roles when they see the opportunity to participate in global change and the transformation of their continent. That would certainly require demonstrating that corruption, and tribal/party/class differences do not have to be the determining factor in eligibility to run for office, start a business, etc. I think that begins with education and involves the World Community encouraging democratic practices to flourish where they do not exist currently.

### Pope

I think the growth of Africa depends and begins with the youth, so the best way to go is to create opportunity for the youths of Africa. Let's nurture the African to create jobs for themselves by making available the necessary platforms to guide and motivate them to excel. I feel the wealthy African-Americans should set up a fund or something to support young entrepreneurs, for a start and the others will follow, they should take the lead. Africa has a great future. We have the opportunity to learn from the mistakes of those countries that have taken the lead. WE SHOULD HAVE HOPE.

### Festus

The development of Africa and for that matter Ghana lies not in the number of universities and polytechnic that are built, but rather how productive those coming out of these school can be to the country. It is useless if we build so many schools and graduates from these institutions can't find jobs or create some for themselves.

### Andrew

I think it is by empowering young men and women to participate in leadership and focus on democracy at all levels. Also by shunning away from leaders without vision nor mission.

### Edum

The free political expressions and active participation of young people in politics is more necessary now than ever. The world is changing very fast. It can only take the young-at-heart to braze the trend. I know this is bad news for all those tight-sitter old Africa leaders.

### Jeffrey

It is well said that the youth are the leaders of tomorrow, the elders of today where yesterday youth with the same vision so volatile but disappear sooner with no hope left for the youth of today.

Africa is a blessed continent, for Africa to grow it must ignore our various ethics and traditions. Let's all live as one, let Africa unite to grow. This unity will start from the grassroots.

We need communication. As African countries we should not need a visa to visit a brother country. Africa must unite for growth, for a better economy, and for LIBERATION after our long years of dependence. LONG LIVE AFRICA.

### Ombachi

Youths, we are the world. We are the people. We are the people you see every day in the grocery store. We obey the laws, we pay our taxes, we fly our na-

tions' flags on holidays, sports events. Let us use this God-given chance to change our lives and our people's welfare. Let Reason and not Passion reign in all that we do.

### Stanley

We are the leaders of tomorrow so we have to keep the old school guys on their feet if we are to succeed. Now is the time! If we wait, ask yourself, who will speak for the speechless, who will defend the defenseless? If we, as youths, wallow in indolence and indecision, we will have let these voices down, and ultimately ourselves! Now is the time to act and walk the talk. Ok?

### Eniola

Only those who speak are heard, it's either now or never.

**Delegates to the Forum with Young African Leaders speak—**

**“I was really motivated to come to meet with young African leaders that we’re going to work with in years to come, and to network with them and gain different experiences and testimonies from different leaders who are actually my age.”**

Rwandan student leader Dianah Mukundwa



Many young African leaders attending the forum say they especially welcome the opportunity to meet and work toward a shared agenda. [State Department photo by Matthew Whatley]

**“I believe we know our situations in our own countries better than anyone in the rest of the world, so it is up to us to make the right choices that will lead to economic development and eliminate social evils.”**

Namibian business student Michael Mulunga

**“There are no easy solutions to social and economic challenges, but one of the most important steps is realizing that many hands make lighter work. We need political and social consciousness that leads us away from ignorance and the arrogance, isolation and narrow-mindedness it breeds.”**

South African filmmaker Palesa Shongwe



A group of delegates takes a picture together outside the Senate Dirksen Building before departing for the Peace Corps. [State Department photo by Matthew Whatley]

**“I see hope and prosperity for Nigeria and Africa, but social justice must prevail. We have to move away from [being] that country or continent that embraces nepotism, corruption and other social injustice to one where freedom and justice prevail. If this should happen, there would be political stability and investment that would lead to prosperity.”**

Nigerian social activist Bako Sabo

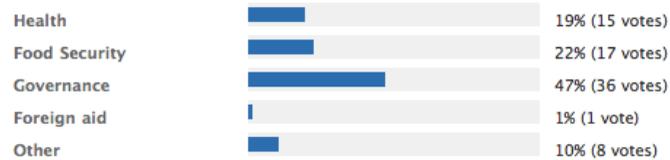
## Facebook Poll: Which of the topics below is most important?

### Result

[View Poll](#) | [Delete](#) | [Edit](#) | [Invite Friends To Vote](#)

77 votes

More than 100 young African leaders gather in Washington DC August 3–5 to discuss the future of their continent. They will meet with President Obama, Secretary Clinton, and other U.S. government leaders. Which of the topics below is the most important for them to address?

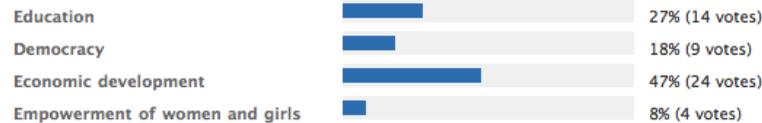


### Result

[View Poll](#) | [Delete](#) | [Edit](#) | [Invite Friends To Vote](#) | [Download Vote List](#)

51 votes

Take this poll please! Which topic is most important for discussion at the President's Forum with Young African Leaders? More than 100 participants from 45 sub-Saharan countries meet in Washington August 3 – 5.

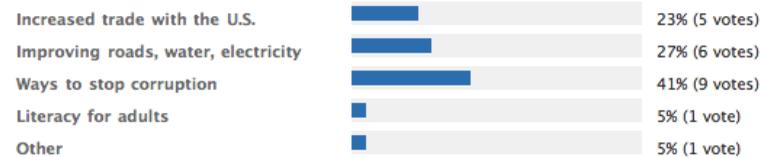


### Result

[View Poll](#) | [Delete](#) | [Edit](#) | [Invite Friends To Vote](#) | [Download Vote List](#)

22 votes

This is Poll #3 in support of the President's Forum with Young African Leaders. Which of the topics below is the most important?



## What are the most important issues for Africa's Future?

Top Issues for Africa Part 1: Pick the most important of these four issues:

- 1:Health
- 2:Food Security
- 3:Governance
- 4:Foreign aid

### Lei

It will all start with good governance. If it's good everything else will follow. There will be no more corruption. Since corruption will be eliminated, economic development will ensue due to trust and confidence with the government of investors. Then education should never be neglected; it's a must for everyone.

### Felix

With 'good' governance, all others fall in place.

### Kwame

I think good governance can promote stability in future of Africa countries.

### Solomon

With a good development programme in place Africa will be the envy of the world.

### Abel

All are important but, good governance should come first then others will follow. I believe good governance is the foundation of others.

### Sharmie

I think they need to focus on food security and governance.

### Thato

All topics must be discussed and governance must be on top of the list because good governance will ensure that other issues are addressed.

### Augustine

@thato, I do support that for all we need in Africa is good governance because if there is good governance there will be food security and so on

### Vera

Nothing discussed about scammer there? Because so many African experts play around in the Internet, so many people lose their money. Even it has become good industry for them.

### Kwame

Foreign aid.



**Chris**

Honestly it's good governance & the rest will follow. The problem of Africa especial my country Kenya is how to manage resource & equally distribute to its citizenship.

**Jeffry**

All are importance but good governance will be the key to everything.

**Justus**

Foreign aid is not that important. It won't end the wounds inflicted in colonial times because it is our resources that are taken and brought back as aid.

Governance remains a great challenge because most African leaders are doing whatever dictated to them by foreigners/ colonial masters instead of its citizens.

Africans being united and protecting their natural resources for proper use can feed the whole world.

**Steven**

I don't think the power lies in government I think the power lies in the people, that is why the Internet is still not available for the underprivileged. I don't think it is funding, I think it is design - information equals development, something the west can not afford

as then Africa will be the strongest continent on the planet. By keeping development back they can further plunder our continent - the basic human rights of air, food, water, shelter, the right to information, the right to have a voice (communication) and education should be for every person, one planet one species one future. In Africa we love our children and want to leave them a planet that can sustain them, not something that has been destroyed by a lack of serious action to do the right thing.

**Cameroon**

YES. Governance is the key point.

**Michael**

Governance, like development, is participatory.

**Bowale**

We need nothing but GOOD LEADERSHIP, DEMOCRATIC LINE OF LEADERSHIP. We are sick of dictatorship style of government.

**Zaziwe**

Governance 2 me> people who all live according to the laws and NOBODY is above the RULE OF LAW.

**Top Issues for Africa Part 2: Pick the most important of these four issues:**

- 1:Education
- 2:Democracy
- 3:Economic development
- 4:Empowerment of women and girls

**Isaac**

What is education without good governance? I agree we all need education but if the policies are not implemented brother, there will be no way for us.

**Jesús Torres Navarro**

La Educación es desarrollo económico y empleos mejor pagados, así como gobernabilidad y sobre todo es más y mejor Democracia

[Education is economic development and better paid jobs, as well as governance and above all is more and better democracy]

**Chris**

All are very important, except no.4, 'empowerment of women and girls.' It should really be 'empowerment of youths & women' because boy child is beginning to be sacrificed for sake of girl child in Kenya.

**Lilian**

They are all important and urgently need to be addressed but I will go for education as I think it's the key to the others.

**Ene**

Yep, no education, no life.

**George**

We need our educational financing to be looked into. 90% of the African parents who claim to train their children in school only pay the school fees for their children and leaving other expenses on the children to fend for themselves thereby exposing the child into looking for a way of getting additional money with little or no experience to provide other necessities for their study, so the child's concentration to study has been distracted and affected and some of them find themselves committing crime as they may not know the implications. Some of the students end up frustrated. There must be a way to look into this matter in the whole Africa. There has to be enough study loans and scholarships for the young Africans if we want to have a better future for Africans on this matter.

**Abdirashiid**

I think education shall be the backbone of African future, because illiteracy is



the major concern among the people. Leaders without education are nothing.

**Anum**

Education is paramount because even the African leaders also need intensive education on all the rest before the continent can be transformed.

**Sindhu**

DEMOCRACY

**Heather**

... These all need to be addressed in parallel, and God knows there are enough smart, talented people and enough resources in this country to figure out how to do exactly that.

**Lydia**

Empowerment of women and girls.

**Raphael**

Democracy and economic development. They are interlinked and hardly one can be effective without the other. This two factors still determine the kind of education and empowerment either community or group can gain or acquire.

**Francisco**

“Education is an ornament in prosperity, and a refuge in adversity.” Aristotle

**Evans**

Of course Education. You need to educate your masses which will act as springboard for the other democracy, development and empowerment. Plain and simple.

**Willy**

Definitely democracy. It's the core business of every country.

**Eleanor**

Education then economic development; also empowerment of women.

**Abdulwahab**

Quality Education is the best legacy you can give to any society before any other thing.

**Ramsey**

Economic development. All others are linked to the economic development.

**Young**

Needed are Education/Education Incentives, Economic Development within Rural/Sub-Rural and low class urban areas. Governance with strict attention to details and legislation, increased trade with U.S. in the areas needed the most. Ways to stop corruption at its core. It will not work 100% in the beginning but 10-50% will show production within a set period of time and also goal schedules

have to be found met and achieved.

The whole point of a civilization is for the upliftment of those who are a part of it. If it tips off-balance everything goes haywire but if it runs smoother and more efficient over time it's more stress-free and gives more opportunities for everyone.

**Tolu**

Give me education and take all else away. With sound knowledge I will build it again. Governance takes intelligence (education). Economic development is nothing but theory without sound education that will develop those that will SUSTAIN the development.

Increased trade with U.S.— where is the competence to trade on the global scale?

Not many have it. Required managerial and technical skills are needed to trade successfully on the global market. Corruption? I learnt that a particular dominant tribe in my country refused to allow the study of Philosophy in their states, reason? They feared the impact of rational thinking. THE KEY IS STILL EDUCATION. SOUND KNOWLEDGE CHANGES EVERYTHING.

**Hamisu**

Supporting the acquisition of Literacy and Numeracy Efforts in Africa. This

was sometimes done by USAID through programmess like LEAP, COMPASS etc. but there is need for more and to extend it to the provision of literacy to the adults knowing fully the importance of having literate parents and literate citizens towards development. There is also a need for support towards vocational skills acquisition for the youth and almajiris so that they can be more useful to themselves and the society and may not have time to be thinking towards evil and joining militant groups including BOKO HARAM, TA TSINE, TALIBAN etc. which are all products of unemployment. I am sure governments will be ready to partner with U.S. in these efforts. They only need a little push!

**Nelson**

As an African & especially as a Kenyan, I would like equality in both power & development. Human rights have also been violated whereby no freedom of expression exists as the few who fight for the poor & ignored groups face brutality from the police. Moreover even the few educated ones still practice tribalism and I experienced this during the University elections where majority of my comrades voted on tribal basis. Mr. President Obama stretch your arm to sort out this mess please.



Top Issues for Africa Part 3: Pick the most important of these four issues:

- 1: Increased trade with the U.S.
- 2: Improving roads, water, electricity
- 3: Ways to stop corruption
- 4: Literacy for adults

**Amoroso**

U.S. market access for African agricultural and other produce. Democracy. Blood resources & how the sustain bad governance. Education, health, capital markets and physical infrastructure.

**Karuhanga**

I think increased trade with the U.S. makes sense. For the fact is that the U.S is the most blessed country on earth so there will be sustainable partnership that brings with it a string of offerings to the developing world.

**Joan**

Improving roads, water and electricity - when these are improved it will open up more trade and investments in the African continent.

**Uduma**

Joan, I see stopping corruption as a starting point then, followed by all this social amenities you have mentioned plus EDUCATION and HEALTHCARE.

**Chris**

Start with corruption. If you stop corruption the rest will accompany easily. Corruption is a killer disease in Kenya.

**Justus**

Barriers to trade anywhere are meant to benefit the top ones only and there is no need why resources are exported out of Africa to be brought back as products sold at the highest prices. Let's have industries here and export finished products from our land. Corruption is everywhere but since we lack common sense to make money we gamble to use human beings to make money fast and even on getting money there is no free flow/evenly distributed way to balance the gap between rich and poor. Have you ever asked why someone can have lands, billions of dollars, and so much to say when someone next to him has totally nothing?

**Phil**

Africa does not have less talent than any other continent, but it has the greatest number of tribes. This translates to a crucial need of education. Education is where the African nations should concentrate their resources for at least five decades. The world will benefit immeasurably from an educated (99% educated) African continent.

**Lydia**

Improving on ways to stop corruption. This will go a long way to make life comfortable to d common man on de street.

**Karen**

Roads, clean water and electricity would help the infrastructure here so much. The corruption is so bad that they will not let me give books to start a library for the public. They want to have the books for themselves.

**Malek**

Improving roads, water, and electricity. In my opinion this goal itself insures that corruption, trade, and all above is fixed.

**Onuegbu**

Improving roads, water & electricity, and stopping corruption are vitally important to Africa. As matter of fact these are the paramount challenges Africa is facing right now.

**Akan**

Option 3—stopping corruption—is the most important considering the current state of affairs in some African Countries. If corruption is successfully dealt with, other issues shall surely be taken care of.

**Emma**

Africans, our destinies lie within us. ...

**Eleanya**

I think option 3, Ways to stop corruption, is the most important. If the issue of corruption is dealt with then the others cannot effectively be achieved so option 3 is the best.

**Amol**

We need a Great Social reformer who will lead the people of Africa to change there life style you see after that every thing will change.

**“With this Constitution, the people of Kenya have set a positive example for all of Africa and the world”**



Kenyans watch the signing of the new constitution into law, at Uhuru Park in Nairobi, Kenya, August 27, 2010. (AP Photo/Sayyid Azim)

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary  
August 27, 2010

Statement by President Obama on the Promulgation of Kenya’s New Constitution

I congratulate Kenya on the promulgation of the new constitution, which was approved by a majority of voters on August 4, 2010. This historic approval and signing of the constitution is an important step forward, and demonstrates the commitment of Kenya’s leaders and people to a future of unity, democracy, and equal justice for all – even the powerful. With this Constitution, the

people of Kenya have set a positive example for all of Africa and the world.

Today represents a moment of promise for Kenya, similar to the early days of independence – a new moment of promise that must be seized to usher in an era of progress for the Kenyan people. The United States looks forward to partnering with Kenya as it moves through the multi-year process of implementing the new constitution. We share the expectations of the Kenyan people that this process will usher in an era of deepened democracy and expanded economic opportunity for all Kenyans.



**Kenya votes Yes on a new constitution—will it deliver on its promises for Kenya? Which features are most important?**

**Jessica**

I am positive and very optimistic that things will get better for Kenyans. In due time, yes, the new constitution will deliver.

**Zaziwe**

I believe it will. Which is important? I think reforms of land ownership.

**Perdin**

I think that policy of combating corruption is more important because with that subsidies can be received directly into the hands of the people.

**Alex**

It may offer a platform where POSITIVE changes can take place, especially in the relationship between Government and the governed. On its own it may not achieve much to promote the wishes of the people, rather it gives more room for participation -a chance, hopefully, to chart a new course for the Nation.

**Nick**

Much ado about nothing since Kenyan politicians are notoriously fickle.

**Peter**

The new constitution sets stage for long-term reforms and desired changes in the various spheres of our lives.

**Abdikey**

The old constitution couldn’t stop corruption and violence during the national election. I believe this Constitution is gonna help us in different circumstances.

**David Ndaye**

I just hope and wish that the new constitution will bring changes that Kenyans have always been waiting and looking for.

**Moses**

Bright future for Kenya. I hope partisan interests wont get in the way of implementation. So far it’s a big breakthrough for us.

**David**

“Many Kenyans see the vote as paving the way for greater government accountability and a fairer distribution of resources. But analysts say the tough work is just beginning.”

You bet. A constitution is a platform and a framework for laws, but you still have to have a free, critical press, ethical



lawmakers, judges, law enforcement, and people who stand up for equal rights, to make the laws work justly.

**James**

It is a new peaceful Kenya. With peace we will work together with each other n live in harmony. It has united us. Am proud to be Kenyan. God bless Kenya.

**Michael**

It is good that we finally have a new constitutional dispensation but i'm opposed to those calling themselves winners and branding others as losers. a win to the proposed law is a win to all Kenyans because its not only those who voted for it that are going to enjoy the benefits that come with it but also those who voted against it. a loss to the proposed law would have been a loss to the whole nation. i'm saying this because it wasn't a political contest but rather a civic process.

**Prince-a-Lex**

Theoretically, it looks like we are doing good. Kenya having a great referendum and Nigeria stabilizing her democratic institutions with a promising round of national elections in the offing.

**Nyokabi**

We hope we shall participate to make the new constitution helpful in all spheres of our lives, and more so our leaders to give a lead in this.

**Ombachi**

Long live Kenya. Long live democracy, prosperity and peace! Am proud to be Kenyan

**Sherley**

There is no looking back. The Kenyans have done it- Congratulations!!!! Kenya will climb high and make its mark in Africa as one of the democratic leaders.

**Joan**

Am proud to be Kenyan and this is a very important step in the Kenyan democracy and congratulations Kenya for making it a peaceful process - we have shamed all who thought otherwise.

**Ombachi**

Thank you brave Kenyans. But the question lingers, who then will speak 4 the common good of this constitution? Youths, especially in KENYA, we have a task.

We must attempt on a larger scale to fulfill the promise in our new constitution: "Equality 4 all and privileges 4 none!"

**Andrew**

We are the people, we are the ones to build better Kenya, we are the one to make change no matter the different opinions. WE ARE UNITED, we can embrace change at all levels by now and the other countries should do the same!

**Justus**

We have already shown the goodwill and interest of working together as a nation to build strong institutions that will go further to see Kenya's example towards achieving united states of Africa. The journey has been long since the colonial period, when our first black leaders feared delivering to us laws that will govern us and instead embraced the ideas planted by our colonial power to mishandle our country. But one thing is certain—for every journey there must be an end. Thanks to God we are living and witnessing all, thank you all our partners who have supported us in all this difficult times of 50 years.

**Taiwo**

Congrats Kenya. I believe the next 50 years in Africa will be great, if the Democrats in the great Country called USA will not abandon Africa midway.

**Alfy**

Well, it's a new dawn for Kenya. We needed change and now it's time to work together and make Kenya a better place.

**Stephen**

Thank you Kenya for the peaceful election. God Bless Kenya.

**Polycarp**

This is a new dawn for Kenyans, me included. Our next challenge is the implementation.

**Stephen**

It is big step, the new constitution is the foundation of many reforms.

**Evans**

Big up 2 all Kenyans. The hard work starts now!!!!

**“I believe the challenge here is to balance that right of criticism with the need for media professionalism and standards for truthful and fair reporting.”**



Sidewalk newstand in Lagos, Nigeria. (AP Photo/Africa Media Online, Mohamed Abdou)

America's founders recognized that the best way to fight corruption and promote democracy in their new nation was through a free press.

America still believes that a free press serves as the front line in the defense of democracy. We believe that, at the most basic level, governments are accountable to citizens, and democracy requires those citizens to make choices. A free press provides the information that permits the public to make informed choices. ...

Just as America's founders were concerned about the quality of the media in America's early days, I also understand the government's concern about the professionalism of the ... press.

... I believe the challenge here is to balance that right of criticism with the need for media professionalism and standards for truthful and fair reporting. ...

In the United States, the balance of criticism with fair reporting includes protections of national secrets, but these protections are strictly and clearly defined and articulated. In the United States, 'national interests' are issues of national security.

We believe this balances the public's need to know, freedom of speech and the protection of national security.

In the early days of America, our third president Thomas Jefferson said, "Our liberty cannot be guarded but by the freedom of the press, nor that be limited without danger of losing it."

Excerpted from remarks by U.S. Ambassador to South Africa Donald Gips, August 18, 2010



## **Is responsible media necessary for free and fair elections?**

### **Gideon**

A free press must report factually and responsibly, not sensationally.

### **Felix**

Even Lucifer quotes the scriptures. Action should speak for any government, not sweet-flowing rhetoric.

### **Nana**

The African press is Africa's worst nightmare - full of greedy and irresponsible unprofessionals interested in only their stomachs.

### **Paradzai**

The press can only regulate itself. Any external influence is bad for press freedom.

### **Ogedengbe**

When the press are given free expression they tend to be destructive and corruptible by political vices, especially on African soil. I will suggest there be regulations in all ramifications.

### **Samuel**

I support playing by clearly spelt out democratic rules. Actually, falsehood is

not the same as journalism, and that's why there are laws on libel. For me the rule of law should be applied irrespective of who is involved while everybody including journalists do their jobs, bearing in their minds the ethics of their profession.

### **Akankwasa**

I totally agree no free media should be destructive, taking note that the media handling information that can be disruptive it needs to take note of the repercussion in the communities in which this information is released.

### **David**

I support a destructive press every day and twice on Sundays over a restricted press, which will inevitably lead to an oppressive, unaccountable government, having its citizens part from their civil rights, wealth and happiness.

### **Odyssee**

Maybe the questions should be, what is freedom and where do the rights of others end? Whose freedom are we talking about anyway? Food needs to be on the table and then we can be on the same page and argue about other issues. Press in Rwanda needs to be professional and sensitive too. Press needs to prove itself worthy of the freedom it's calling



out for. Press like everyone else needs to be kept responsible.

### Saudah

Unfortunately, I think that is the price to pay for press freedom and truth. The media is a vital tool of democracy and accountability and at NO point, can a news report satisfy an entire country. ...

It is time that the Rwandese government put faith in their people and hope that they have had enough time to heal. We cannot live by fear. The greatest bastion of democracy in our time, the USA, is still battling over civil rights for its peoples and it is light years ahead of us. But they do NOT censor their media, which is why Fox news can coexist with NPR and the like. Their situation is not perfect, but they have put faith in their institutions and their people. It is time we in Africa did the same.

### Gassim

When people start banning Media and calling something hateful because it goes beyond their views, now that is destructive. Free Press is Free Speech. I don't understand how leaders themselves can go around this and consider something called "hate media." I would rather be able to listen to different perspectives and ideas to make my own choice, and it's eventually my own vote.

### Andrew

Freedom of the media is one of the fundamentals that guarantee room for democracy. If media practices hate speech the law should take its way but there's no need for suppression. Media plays a key role in free and fair elections.

### Mercy

A free press should be FACTUAL and RESPONSIBLE to avoid hate speeches that can result to violence. Our brothers in Rwanda i wish you all a peaceful elections.

### Ogechukwu

True democracy thrives on press freedom. However, every press freedom should be properly situated in the context of reporting news factually other than sensationally or to incite to cause public opprobrium. Equally, the government should also be tolerant to opposing views that are factual & reflect the wishes of the people. There should be an honest balance of these extremes as it were.

### David

If you want to combat corruption, the free press is the public eye that exposes corruption and prevents it.

## Secretary of State Hillary Clinton: "On behalf of President Obama and the people of the United States, I congratulate you on the 50th anniversary of your Independence Day."

**1960 – 2010 Celebrating 50 years of Independence: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Togo.**

### Caryce

Congrats! Wish u all the best n do Africa proud

### Andres

I am Andres from Philippines. Really like those good politicians doing good for others. Congratulations!!!!

### Joseph

I'm a proudly African & I don't have boundaries in terms of democracy. Congo have done their best in strengthening the government to secure their independence, not as an individual but a motivation to other struggling African countries.

### Aska

C.AFRICA as u celebrate today, the rest of Africa is with you. Let us all of Africa unite and NEVER let go. It's time for Africa.

### Mary

Africa awakes. Let's not give up that good spirit and we will forever enjoy living in Africa.

### Justus

The day we will embrace the spirit of having a UNITED STATES OF AFRICA is the day we will have better and more congratulations full of respect and a human face. Africans we are divided and that's why different interests brainwash us easily and continue ribbing from our motherland. WHAT A WONDERFUL BLACK, GREEN AND NATURAL CONTINENT but lost due to brainwashing. We can, let's try.

### Eric

Cameroon my lovely Country not long celebrated 50 years of independence. I will like that we should use 10 good years to correct our wrongs by copying good patriotism works from highly democratized countries and the next 40 years should be for continuous growth and Development.

### Senator

Happy anniversary Ivorians. We in Kenya are celebrating a new dawn/ constitution. Hope you have one.

### Ford

Africa should rise up now to tell the rest of the world that it can depend on its self.

### Joan

I agree. We are celebrating a new beginning and I hope all African nations will follow our example.

**“Today, you represent a different vision, a vision of Africa on the move — an Africa that’s ending old conflicts, as in Liberia; an Africa that’s modernizing and creating opportunities — agribusiness in Tanzania, prosperity in Botswana, political progress in Ghana and Guinea; an Africa that’s pursuing a broadband revolution that could transform the daily lives of future generations.”**

**President Barack Obama at the Forum with Young African Leaders, August 3, 2010**



President Barack Obama hosts his "Forum with Young African Leaders" during a town hall-style meeting in the East Room of the White House, Tuesday, Aug. 3, 2010, in Washington. (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)