

# UNIVERSITY

## Speakers to discuss African media

By Colleen Pohlig  
Emerald Reporter

After the editor of a political-oppositionist magazine in Kenya criticized his government, he was detained for nine months.

The magazine has been banned in the East African country since the 1988 incident.

One month later, *The Financial Times*, another Kenyan newspaper, criticized the government for banning the magazine. As a result, *The Financial Times* was also prohibited in the country.

Cases like these are prevalent in many parts of Africa, and the University African Students Association is recognizing the problem by organizing a week-long symposium that deals with the African media's role as government on the continent changes.

The symposium, "Insights on Contemporary Africa: The Role of the Media in the Democratization Process in Africa," will run the entire week with African speakers and cultural events. All sessions are free and open to the public.

The democratization processes occurring in Eastern Europe two years ago have produced a spill-over effect in many parts of Africa. The African media covered the events in Eastern Europe diligently, and this has caused unrest and dissatisfaction with the African government, said Morompi Ole-Ronkei, a Kenyan and a University graduate teaching fellow for the Office of International Services.

"There has been a major swing in the last two years toward democracy — it's really powerful," Ole-Ronkei said. "There's a very clear feeling of dissatisfaction.

"The process is there — it's ongoing and it's affecting other (African) countries," he said.

Ole-Ronkei, who is helping to organize the event, said he is amazed at how the African media are playing a large role in educating the public on democ-

**'If things are happening in a neighboring country, the press will cover it, but if it's happening in their own country, it's difficult to cover the issues.'**

— Lifongo Vetinde,  
ASA president

racy.

Lifongo Vetinde, another organizer of the event and president of the ASA, said African governments are very protective of delicate domestic issues.

"If things are happening in a neighboring country, the press will cover it, but if it's happening in their own country, it's difficult to cover the issues," Vetinde said.

The two keynote speakers, Absalom Mutere and Dr. Polly McLean, will lecture on Thursday and Friday, respectively.

Mutere will give a lecture titled, "Kenya's Media and the Shimmering Illusion of Dual Mandate Politics." He will speak Thursday from 4 to 6 p.m. in Room 221 Allen.

Mutere, from Kenya, is currently a visiting scholar at Hiram College in Ohio. At home he is the acting director of the University of Nairobi's School of Journalism.

Originally from Trinidad, Dr. Polly McLean will speak on "The Winds of Democratic Change and the African Mass Media" on the last day of the official symposium. She will speak from 4 to 6 p.m. in Room 100 Willamette.

McLean is a professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

Three other speakers will talk Monday through Wednesday from 12 to 2 p.m. in the Ben Linder Room. The entire

event will conclude with an African Cultural Night on Saturday that will feature music and food from several African countries.

The cultural night is open to the public; however, tickets must be purchased at the EMU Main Desk for \$5 for students and \$6 for the general public.

"It's the fun part of what we'll be doing all week," Vetinde said. "It's to bring contacts from as many African countries as possible together."

Vetinde will kick off the event Monday with a speech on "Africa and the U.S. Press."

On Tuesday, Ronkei will speak on "Transitional Dilemmas and the African Press: A Quest for Authenticity."

Emmanuel Osam from Ghana will talk Wednesday about "Bread and the Ballots: The Soul of Africa."

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## HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO TELL US WHAT YOU THINK.

The *Emerald* wants to hear from readers! We want to know what you think about how well the *Emerald* does its job of providing news and serving as a forum for the exchange of ideas and opinions on campus and the surrounding community.

Please take a few moments to respond:

- 1) Do you feel the *Emerald* has promoted or hindered diversity in its news coverage? Explain using examples, if possible.

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- 2) What issues do you feel need more coverage?

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- 3) Have there been any *Emerald* advertisements that you have found offensive? Why?

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- 4) It is the *Emerald's* intention to maintain an open and accessible office environment. What has been your experience with this when visiting the *Emerald*?

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- 5) Additional comments and suggestions:

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Thank you! Please bring your response to the ODE office at 300 EMU, or mail it to EMERALD SOUND OFF! P. O. Box 3159, Eugene, OR 97403 by Monday, May 11. If you would like to become more involved in the *Emerald*, please consider applying for a position on next year's staff. All students are welcome.

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