

The David Astor Journalism Awards Trust

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
Monday, 8 February 2010

Three Outstanding Young Journalists Win 2010 David Astor Awards

Three exceptionally talented young newspaper journalists in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda have been selected for the David Astor Journalism Awards programme, which provides professional development opportunities and long-term career support.

The award winners are: Alex Kiprotich, 27, at *The Standard* in Kenya; Jiang Alipo, 28, at *The Daily News* in Tanzania; and Raymond Baguma, 29, at *The New Vision* in Uganda.

They will now join six previous award winners in an expanding regional network of the most promising next-generation leading journalists in East Africa.

“These three young journalists possess qualities that clearly mark them out for future leading roles in the profession – evident talent, determination and commitment,” said Jim Meyer, Executive Director of The David Astor Journalism Awards Trust (DAJAT). “We look forward to seeing them grow and fulfil their very considerable potential.”

DAJAT is a London-based human rights charity that aims to promote, strengthen and support independent journalism in Africa by investing in early-career print journalists with the greatest potential to excel in the profession.

Each award winner will initially take part in a three-month professional development programme tailored to their particular interests, involving attachments with newspapers in the UK or South Africa, and then become a career-long member of the David Astor Journalism Awards peer-support network, with links to media professionals and other organisations regionally and abroad. In addition, they each received a nominal cash award of \$500.

This year’s winners were selected from a field of 35 locally nominated candidates through a rigorous review and assessment process spanning nine months. Three independent judges

from the United States, South Africa and the UK chose the winners after interviewing three finalists each in Nairobi, Dar es Salaam and Kampala last week.

The judges were: William Carmichael, former head of the Ford Foundation's Africa Program and long-time adviser to Human Rights Watch; Paula Fray, Africa Regional Director of the global development news agency Inter Press Service and former Editor of *The Saturday Star* in Johannesburg; and Michael Holman, Africa Editor at *The Financial Times* in London from 1984 to 2002.

"We were immensely impressed by the talent and enthusiasm of the candidates we interviewed," the judges said in a joint statement. "The three winners clearly have exceptional potential."

"Together with the six previous winners, they will not only make a very significant contribution to journalism in East Africa, but also reinforce the values of integrity David Astor stood for," the judges said.

The late David Astor was distinguished Editor of *The Observer* newspaper in London for 27 years, from 1948 to 1975, and a lifelong champion of African development and human rights. In a statement endorsing the awards programme, Nelson Mandela called it "a fitting and meaningful way" to honour "one of the best and most loyal friends" who vigorously supported the anti-apartheid struggle and South African democracy.

The candidate-selection process began in May 2009. All news media houses in the three countries were invited to nominate one candidate each for consideration. Other nominators included local journalists' associations, other media-related groups, journalism lecturers and trainers, civil society organisations, and former editors.

There were no age, educational or minimum work experience requirements but candidates were expected to be at an early stage in their career and had to meet certain key criteria, including solid commitment to the profession, continuing to work in Africa as their long-term career goal, and maintaining the highest ethical standards.

In addition, candidates had to show some special talent and flair for journalism, and requisite qualities to succeed in the profession, such as critical thinking, courage, determination and drive.

Written applications from all of the nominees were reviewed, along with examples of their

published work. Interviews were conducted last September with 10 short-listed candidates in Kenya, seven in Tanzania, and 11 in Uganda. Further opinions of the candidates were then sought from nominators, employers and others, after which three finalists in each country were chosen.

The two runners up in Kenya were Kamore Maina at *The Star* and Kipchumba Some at *The Standard*; in Tanzania, Orton Kiishweko at *The Daily News* and Sayuni Kimaro at *The Guardian*; and in Uganda, Paul Amoru and Yasiin Mugerwa, both at *The Daily Monitor*. They each received a nominal cash award of \$250.

Established in 2006, The David Astor Journalism Awards Trust is a UK-registered human rights charity and an approved tax-exempt organisation in the US. The Trust's founding Patrons are Lord Joel Joffe and Lord Dennis Stevenson of Coddham. Its overall objective is to build journalistic capacity in Africa to defend human rights, promote good governance and further socio-political development.

The 2008 and 2009 award winners were: Murithi Mutiga at *The Sunday Nation* and Jillo Kadida at *The Daily Nation* in Kenya; Valentine Marc Nkwame at *The Daily News* and Erick Kabendera at *The Guardian* in Tanzania; and Tabu Butagira at *The Daily Monitor* and Barbara Among at *The New Vision* in Uganda.

DAJAT will convene a weekend network meeting in Nairobi with this year's award winners and the previous six at the end of March.

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