

Zim radio station broadcasts from Emirates

HARARE: A new radio station, Zimbabwe Community Radio, is broadcasting from the United Arab Emirates in a bid to create awareness on the value of community radio for development, freedom of speech and promotion of local culture especially among marginalised minorities in the country.

Zimbabwe Community Radio's daily broadcasts are aired between 10pm - 11pm on shortwave. The broadcasts were scheduled to begin on shortwave 5935 KHZ on 1 March, 2009 but experienced technical hitches necessitating a switch to 5995 KHZ on 29 March, 2009.

According to representatives of the station, broadcasts would be in three languages isiNdebele, English and Shona as well as providing a channel for communication on economic, political, social, cultural and developmental issues affecting Zimbabweans.

Zimbabwe Community Radio joins several externally-based privately owned stations that include SW Radio Africa based in London, Voice of the People operating from Madagascar, and the Voice of America's Studio 7 broadcasting from Washington DC which were forced to transmit from outside the country because of the country's prohibitive licensing regulations. The radio stations are manned by Zimbabwean journalists exiled in the Diaspora.

According to Article 19 of the Global Peace Agreement signed on 15 September, 2008, parties to the government pledged to ensure the immediate processing of licenses by the Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe in terms of both the Broadcasting Services Act. It also states that all Zimbabwean nationals, including those currently working for or running external radio stations, shall be encouraged to make applications for broadcasting licenses in Zimbabwe in terms of the law.