



Prince Claus Fund for  
Culture and Development

## Press release

Amsterdam, 18 May 2009

# Prince Claus Fund supports satirical puppet series in Kenya *XYZ Show first aired yesterday*

The first episode of the **XYZ Show** was broadcast on the Kenyan television channel **Citizen TV** on Sunday, 17 May. The **XYZ Show** introduces Kenya to a new form of satire television, with life-sized puppets made to resemble famous persons. The **XYZ Show** was inspired by famous puppet satire series like the British “Spitting Image” and the French “Les Guignols de l’Info” shows. In the **XYZ Show**, the puppets will be commenting on news and current events from Kenya and abroad. The **XYZ Show** was developed and initiated by Kenyan cartoonist and Prince Claus Awardee **Godfrey Mwampembwa, alias Gado**.

The **XYZ Show** challenges famous figures from Kenyan high society and politics using humour and satire. The programme aims to become a new forum for social and political debate, one that provides room for open discussion.

Although freedom of the press is a constitutional right in Kenya, it is difficult for many journalists to practice their profession without interference. Gado and his team hope that the **XYZ Show** will contribute positively to strengthening freedom of the press and increasing political and social awareness among the people of Kenya. The show provides commentary on current social and political developments and aims to use humour and artistry to reinforce freedom of speech in Kenya.

Gado is one of the most popular and important cartoonists in Africa. He publishes a daily cartoon in *The Nation*, the largest newspaper in Kenya, and his work has been published in *Le Monde* (France), *Washington Times* (US), *De Standaard* (Belgium) and *The Japan Times*. He received the Prince Claus Award for his work in 2007. The jury praised him for his daring cartoons, in which he uses humour to expose social problems and political conflicts. The Prince Claus Award is also in recognition of his role in the battle for the right to freedom of speech.

The Prince Claus Fund supported Gado and his team in making the puppets for the **XYZ Show**. In part, this support has made it possible for the producers of the programme to buy materials and equipment. Major characters in the **XYZ Show** are Mwai Kibaki (President of Kenya), Raila Odinga (Prime Minister of Kenya) and politician Martha Karua. American President Barack Obama is also one of the characters portrayed. The producers hope that the **XYZ Show** can serve as an example for other African countries.

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## The Prince Claus Fund

The Prince Claus Fund considers culture as a basic need for the development of a society. The Fund is a platform for intercultural exchange. It works jointly with individuals and organisations that are mainly located in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean on the realisation of activities and publications that contribute to a positive exchange between culture and development. The Prince Claus Fund is supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Dutch Postal Code Lottery. [www.princeclausfund.org](http://www.princeclausfund.org)

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More info: [www.xyzshow.com](http://www.xyzshow.com). The trailer of the first XYZ show can be seen on YouTube:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lv0tch2vIXE>