

CNN turns an eye on Africa



By [Louise Marsland](#)

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CNN has announced its first week-long focus on Africa with the official launch of 'Eye on Africa' in Johannesburg yesterday, 12 July 2006. The week of broadcast programming from Africa will spotlight current developments, including the good news stories taking place across the African continent. The aim is to provide international viewers with a comprehensive view on the emerging Africa and the potential for hope on the continent.



Chris Cramer, managing director, CNN International Networks

The special programming will be broadcast the week of July 16 - 22, 2006, and will include broadcasts on mainstream CNN channels across the US, as well as the international channel.

Special programming includes a 'CNN Connects' debate recorded in Soweto's historic Regina Mundi Church, this Friday, 14 July; a documentary by Christiane Amanpour focusing on the plight of Kenya's AIDS orphans; and a live hour of daily programming from Johannesburg and from Nigeria's capital, Abuja. Reports from across the African continent also air throughout the day during that week on CNN's regular news programmes, while headline guests to appear include Kofi Annan and Africa's first woman president, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf.

News agenda

"What is important about this week is that it takes the news agenda from Africa away from the perceptions that are so often, by necessity, the main focus of the media's reporting from the continent. Instead we will be highlighting emerging trends and the positive impact they are having on growth and development in Africa," commented Chris Cramer, managing director, CNN International Networks.

"We do this every week on 'Inside Africa', but this programming initiative will go further with a concentrated look at the

scope for opportunity created by the wealth of natural resources with which so many African nations are endowed and the truly entrepreneurial workforce. Eye On Africa will look at the struggle to put the technology and infrastructure in place to exploit those resources and the initiatives being taken by individual nations to overcoming the obstacles that have so often blocked advancement in Africa. It is a landmark moment in the history of the CNN network."

CNN correspondents, including Jeff Koinange, Femi Oke, Paula Newton and Alphonso Van Marsh, have travelled across the African continent to prepare special reports to feature on 'Eye on Africa'. South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Namibia, Mali, Ghana and Liberia all feature. African leaders who will also appear include Kofi Annan, Wole Soyinka, Liberia's newly-elected president, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and Paul Kagame, president of Rwanda.

Speaking at the press conference in Johannesburg yesterday at the Westcliff Hotel, Cramer called the week of special programming on Africa, "a week of possibilities".

"This is CNN's most ambitious coverage of this remarkable continent from all perspectives."

Also included in the week is a regional attitudinal survey, conducted in a partnership between CNN.com and the African magazines, *New African* and *African Business*. The survey has been commissioned to find out about attitudes from within Africa about the leadership and the resources needed to help further progress across the continent. The results will feature throughout the week of special programming.

Commenting on a question about the view by some African leaders that Africa's story is best told by Africans... Cramer said CNN recruited the best journalists globally.

"We don't believe in parachute journalism. We believe the best type of journalism is from people who have grown up on a continent and know it... providing news that is comprehensive, impartial and pushes the boundaries... that's our agenda! And if that sounds 'public servicey', then so bet it!" Cramer proclaimed.

Journalism awards

'Eye on Africa' airs in the week following the presentation of the CNN MultiChoice African Journalism Awards in Maputo, Mozambique, this weekend.

Cramer lauded African journalists for the quality work they produce on the continent. "The CNN African Journalism Awards humble me and remind me of the quality of journalism on this continent. Journalists here in South Africa and on the continent have a harder job than many to produce quality content that impacts - so peer recognition is very important."

The week of special programming is supported by five major regional sponsors: Cell C South Africa, South Africa's International Marketing Council (IMC), the Westcliff Hotel, Akwa Ibom State and the United Bank of Africa.

In addition, in the week following 'Eye on Africa' CNN is live in the Democratic Republic of Congo with Jeff Koinange, CNN US anchor, Anderson Cooper and CNN's medical correspondent, Sanjay Gupta to cover the historic elections - the first since Mobutu Sese Seko seized power in the 1960s.

Koinange emphasised that this was "unprecedented coverage" on Africa by CNN.

CNN, the world's leader in 24-hour global news and information, celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2005. CNN's combined branded networks and services are available to more than two billion people in more than 200 countries and territories in seven different languages. CNN International can be seen in more than 180 million television households and hotel rooms around the world, including over 15 million in Africa, reaching more than 200 countries and territories worldwide, via a network of 38 satellites.

ABOUT LOUISE MARSLAND

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