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BURUNDI :

Burundi: les craintes de l'ONU face aux différents scénarii possibles

Par RFI/le 12-01-2016

Le Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU a reçu, le 6 janvier dernier, un mémo écrit par le chef des opérations de maintien de la paix Hervé Ladsous. Il fait le point sur la situation politique, économique et sociétale très fragile du Burundi, et évoque trois scénarii possibles, des violences de basse intensité au génocide. Si ce dernier scénario devait se produire, les Nations unies ne sont absolument pas préparées à agir, écrit-il.

Avec notre correspondante à New York, Marie Bourreau

Le document était strictement confidentiel et devait répondre à la demande du Conseil de sécurité de prévoir un plan de déploiement de troupes au Burundi en cas d'augmentation des violences. Mais le mémo envoyé par Hervé Ladsous aux membres du Conseil de sécurité va plus loin et dresse un constat alarmant : la situation ne cesse de se détériorer, écrit-il, et les mois de novembre et décembre ont vu une hausse significative des violences et des assassinats.

Cette situation est encore compliquée par l'apparition de groupes armés, tels que les Forces républicaines du Burundi (Forebu) et la Résistance pour un Etat de droit au Burundi (RED-Tabara). Les accrochages entre ces groupes et les forces loyales au président Pierre Nkurunziza ont causé de nombreuses victimes collatérales. Principale conséquence : les donateurs se font de plus en plus rares et le Burundi s'enfonce dans une grave crise économique, dont les civils sont à nouveau les victimes, avec des pénuries de nourriture et de médicaments.

Le chef des opérations de maintien de la paix dresse enfin trois scénarii : des violences sporadiques que l'ONU pourrait contrôler grâce à un dialogue politique et au soutien de l'Union africaine ; une augmentation de la violence et un risque de guerre civile ; et enfin, scénario du pire, un génocide. Dans ces deux derniers cas, l'ONU devrait déployer un contingent de casques bleus. Mais Hervé Ladsous l'admet : sans l'aide des Etats membres, les Nations unies seraient actuellement impuissantes à assurer la protection des civils burundais.

RWANDA :

RDC CONGO :

UGANDA :

Uganda's president epitomises Africa's perceived democratic deficit
theguardian.com/2016/jan/12

In seeking a fifth consecutive term in office, Yoweri Museveni perpetuates abuses pioneered by the continent's post-colonial 'big men'

As a young man back in 1986, Yoweri Museveni opined that political leaders who overstayed their welcome were at the root of Africa's problems. Next month, Museveni, now 71, will attempt to extend his 30-year reign as Uganda's president when he seeks re-election for a fifth consecutive term.

Despite the challenges mounted by seven rival candidates and numerous ongoing problems including falling agricultural incomes, high youth unemployment and endemic corruption, Museveni is expected to win again, albeit on a reduced turnout and by a narrower margin than in the past.

Uganda's key demographic group comprises under-30s, who account for up to 80% of the population. Their trust in Museveni's brand of one-man democracy is uncertain. Observers say many young people may not bother to vote in the 18 February polls because the campaign, featuring the usual intimidation, large-scale vote-buying and patronage, is already viewed as neither free nor fair.

Museveni has become part of the broader dilemma he diagnosed in his 1986 book, *What is Africa's Problem?* rather than part of the solution, and his bad example is catching. In neighbouring Burundi and Rwanda, incumbent leaders are likewise clinging to power in the absence of open democratic contests and in defiance of the African Union's 2007 charter on democracy, elections and good governance, which all three countries signed.

Uganda's police and security forces stifle political debate and independent reporting, and there are rising fears of a violent backlash. A pro-government youth militia known as "crime preventers" is of

particular concern. Opposition parties are said to be raising their own militias, too.

“The trend of violence has left us worried,” said Kizza Besigye, candidate for the Forum for Democratic Change. Besigye, who has stood in the past three presidential elections, called on the government to “stop using police and other state apparatus to intimidate, harass, arrest our supporters”.

Amama Mbabazi, a former prime minister who was one of Museveni’s closest associates in the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) and is now running as an independent, claimed nine supporters had been assaulted, arrested or killed. “We have seen acts of violence wherever we have been. Police has used teargas and live bullets to stop our rallies ... We ask President Museveni to stop these acts. If he does not act, then people will be forced to rise up and who knows what comes out,” he said.

The government blames opponents for the trouble. “We are following up reports that a small group of the radical opposition are talking and planning violent actions,” the country’s prime minister, Ruhakana Rugunda, said. A Human Rights Watch report published at the weekend said official intimidation of journalists and media outlets, and resulting self-censorship, was rife.

“How can Uganda hold fair elections if the media and independent groups can’t criticise the ruling party or government leaders without fear?” the report asked. NRM representatives were offering “money, trips, and training in exchange for favourable coverage of the ruling party”, it said. It also said radio stations, the main source of information for a majority of illiterate voters in rural areas, were under heavy pressure to toe the government line.

Uganda’s electoral travails are again refocusing attention on Africa’s perceived “democratic deficit”. In Burundi, Pierre Nkurunziza’s insistence on a third term in defiance of public opinion and the constitution has brought street fighting and mass displacement. In Rwanda, Paul Kagame, in power since 1994, announced last week he would seek a third presidential term next year.

Kagame and Nkurunziza represent a new generation of leaders that is perpetuating democratic abuses pioneered by post-colonial “big men” such as Angola’s José Eduardo dos Santos (37 years in power), Zimbabwe’s Robert Mugabe (36 years), Cameroon’s Paul Biya (34 years), and Libya’s Muammar Gaddafi (42 years).

Like these other old-stagers, Museveni plays the role of experienced statesman who, alone, can keep the country safe. “Those who say ‘let him go, let him go’, they need to know this is not the right time,” he told a weekend rally in Ntungamo district. “This old man who has saved the country, how do you want him to go? How can I go out of a banana plantation I have planted that has started bearing fruits?”

SOUTH AFRICA :

South Africa's Flash Crash Exposes Cracks in Currency Liquidity

January 12, 2016 /bloomberg.com

It took just 15 minutes on Monday morning for South Africa’s rand to plummet 9 percent in what traders said may be a prelude of the new normal in the global \$5.3 trillion-a-day currency market.

Such flash crashes will probably become more common in foreign-exchange trading as liquidity shrinks amid tighter regulation and reduced demand for emerging-market assets, according to Insight Investment Management Ltd. and Citigroup Inc. The rand slid to record lows versus the dollar and yen in Asian trading before recovering the bulk of the day's losses almost as swiftly.

"The rand isn't alone in this," said Paul Lambert, London-based head of currencies at Insight Investment, a Bank of New York Mellon Corp. unit, which manages more than \$582 billion. "The rand is another reflection of the change in the liquidity environment in which we're all operating. We're learning that unless there are clients on the other side, banks are very unwilling to take risk onto their books."

Volatility in the rand versus the dollar surged toward the highest level in four years, while a measure of global currency price swings climbed to the most since October. The difference between prices at which traders are willing to buy and sell the rand, used as a gauge of liquidity, was about 1.5 times wider on average in the past six months than it was during the first half of 2015, according to data compiled by Bloomberg.

Eighth Day

The rand weakened for an eighth day on Tuesday, falling 0.9 percent to 16.9262 per dollar as of 7:24 a.m. in London. It dropped to a record 17.9169 on Monday.

In a phenomenon that's also hit U.S. stock markets in recent years, regulation is pushing banks to reduce their size and cut down on market making, making it more difficult to trade without prices moving adversely. A reduction in liquidity has contributed to similar price swings in fixed-income securities, including the \$13 trillion U.S. government bond market.

Bursts of volatility in currency markets and diminishing liquidity are another affliction for emerging economies such as South Africa, which seek to secure overseas investments amid slowing growth, a rout in commodities and domestic political challenges. Boosting international trade and capital inflows is made harder by currency turmoil as investors and banks become less willing to take on additional risk.

"You need to have a portfolio that is as diversified as you can make it, with not too much risk in any one position," Insight Investment's Lambert said.

Early Trading

The lack of investors trading the rand in early Asian market hours on Monday, combined with reduced interest in South African assets amid uncertainty about the country's financial and fiscal policies may have contributed to the rand's price swings.

"That is why emerging-market currencies need to be risk managed differently," said Richard Benson, a money manager at currency hedge fund Millennium Global Investments Ltd. in London. "I avoid having positions in the highly illiquid currencies."

The rand deepened its decline as Japanese retail investors unwound bets it would strengthen versus the yen, which was a popular carry-trade strategy.

"Similar to the rand, a lot of long positions are built up by Japan's individual investors in the Turkish lira, which could be the next victim of unwinding amid concerns over political instability in the Middle East," said Masakazu Satou, currency adviser in Tokyo at Gaitame Online Co., a retail foreign-exchange brokerage. The Brazilian real is another higher-yield currencies with similar long positions, he said.

Record Low

South Africa's central bank doesn't target a level for the rand and has said it won't intervene to support the currency. The latest selloff surpasses the slump that pushed it to a record in December after President Jacob Zuma fired his finance minister, Nhlanhla Nene, and replaced him with a little-known lawmaker. Four days later he appointed Pravin Gordhan, who had held the post between 2009 and 2014.

"It's going to be very difficult to stabilize dollar-rand at current levels," said Luis Costa, head of fixed income and currency strategy for central and eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa at Citigroup Inc. in London. "This is the medium-term story. The economy hasn't yet found a new equilibrium level. South Africa struggles with important structural issues. That puts the rand on a huge back foot."

Currency Spikes

A year ago, the Swiss franc surged almost 30 percent versus the euro after the central bank abandoned its currency floor against the shared currency. Banks including Deutsche Bank AG and Barclays Plc lost hundreds of millions of dollars amid the volatility and some retail brokers were forced to shut amid client losses.

New Zealand's dollar tumbled 3 U.S. cents in 10 minutes in late August, before rebounding. The kiwi's average daily range since 2000 has been less than a cent.

"As a real-money investor, you really have to keep your feet out of these kind of markets because that's just too much volatility with no obvious reason," said Christoph Kind, head of asset allocation at Frankfurt Trust, which manages about \$20 billion. "It's really tough. I completely cut down my rand positions and I have no exposure there anymore."

TANZANIA :

What Would Magufuli Do: How Tanzania's President is Fighting Corruption
01/11/2016 /huffingtonpost.com

Since being sworn in as Tanzania's president on November 5, John Magufuli has been cracking down on corruption and wasteful spending, which are problems that continue to plague many African nations. Among Magufuli's measures includes cancelling Tanzania's Independence Day celebration and instead using the nation's funds to battle the cholera outbreak. Rather than celebrating Tanzania's independence with an elaborate ceremony, Magufuli called on citizens to clean up around the country. Magufuli himself participated in these efforts by personally cleaning up the rubbish outside of the state house. He has banned unnecessary foreign travel for government officials. He reduced the cabinet from 30 ministers to 19. After witnessing patients sleeping on the floor at the state hospital in Tanzania's capital, Magufuli fired the managing director of the hospital.

Magufuli previously served as Tanzania's works minister. In this position he earned the nickname the "Bulldozer" due to his ability to expedite the construction of roads. Although Magufuli has been in office for a few months now, his reforms are making him a very popular leader in East Africa. "What Would Magufuli Do" has become a popular trend on social media in Africa, in which people

post pictures of themselves applying Magufuli's values to their daily lives by saving money in ridiculous ways.

KENYA :

Kenya: Program Code Not Targeting Churches Unfairly, Says CA
11 January 2016/Capital FM (Nairobi)

By Margaret Wahito

Nairobi — The Communication Authority of Kenya has stated that it is not trying to outlaw preaching on radio and TV stations.

According to the Authority's Director General Francis Wangusi, the recently published programme code for free to air radio and television services is meant to protect Kenyans from being exploited.

"The fears expressed by some faith-based institutions in respect to spreading the gospel through the mass media are unjustified. What the code outlaws is misuse of broadcasting services to exploit audiences," said Wangusi.

Wangusi stated that the program code outlines the programming content standards that local free to air broadcasters have to observe as they play their role in providing information, education and entertainment services.

Some of the codes stipulated in the program include the restriction of screening programmes with scenes of violence, sexually explicit conduct or having vulgar or offensive language during the watershed period which runs from 5am to 10pm.

"The program also demands that broadcasters observe standards of good taste and decency by requiring them to take into consideration the existing community standards in respect to cultural values, and norms."

"It also demands that local content in programming is promoted as the code requires that broadcasters dedicate a minimum of 40 percent of their airtime to the broadcast of locally produced programmes excluding news and advertising," Wangusi said.

The statement by the authority comes at a time when the Attorney General has set up regulations that demand among others, that all religious societies seek registration and be subject to registrar's inspection, clerics submit certificates of good conduct and their theological training certificates among others.

Operators have until mid this year to comply with the provisions when the code will be effected.

ANGOLA :

AU/AFRICA :

UN/AFRICA :

US/AFRICA :

CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

EU/AFRICA :

The sad truth highlighted by Germany assaults

January 12, 2016/Source: CNN

(CNN)When the Arab Spring erupted in 2011, Western states optimistically assumed that protests against authoritarian regimes across Northern Africa would result in a democratic "fourth wave." But few could have expected the chain of events that would lead to over 2 million refugees crossing the Mediterranean in open boats, seeking safe haven from their own failed states -- or a series of New Year's flashpoints that intensified a national debate that even drew the attention of a U.S. presidential candidate.

On New Year's Eve, marauding groups of "north-African looking" men reportedly surrounded women in public spaces in the German cities of Cologne, Hamburg and Frankfurt, grabbing their purses, cell phones and intimate body parts. So far, some 500 victims have filed robbery and sexual assault complaints. Despite initial reports that "all was peaceful," we now know that Cologne's police force had turned down reinforcements from Duisburg, and that officers on duty that night were so overwhelmed by the crowd that they reportedly could not even rescue one of their own female undercover agents, who was also allegedly assaulted.

At a subsequent press conference, Cologne Mayor Henriette Reker suggested women "keep an arm's length" between themselves and unknown men. This seems inappropriate advice from a woman who was herself stabbed in the throat by a native-born neo-Nazi two months earlier for supporting refugee integration.

North-Rhine Westphalia's interior minister, meanwhile, railed against bands of "organized North African men humiliating defenseless women with impudent sexual attacks." A right-wing blogger insisted that "the crazy chancellor has allowed millions of male, sexually starved asocial illegals from the Middle East and Africa to come to Germany."

"Blond German women are, according to the Quran, 'prey-women' who can be abused according to your whims or enslaved," the blogger wrote.

Defenseless women? Judging by this type of account, you would think the only people congregating around the main train stations in Cologne, Hamburg and Frankfurt on New Year's Eve were dark-haired, foreign men, blond German women and a few police unable to manage the crowd. But why didn't large groups of German men come to the rescue? And why are there so few video images of the perpetrators among hundreds of selfie-loving iPhone owners?

The truth is that politicians have known for years that women also face higher rates of sexual assault at the hands of drunken men during Germany's world-famous Oktoberfest and pre-Lenten Carnival celebrations. That raises the question as to why officials have waited until now to revise rape laws that still expect women to prove they have actively resisted their attackers. It also makes one wonder why officials were not just as concerned about reported rapes and assaults occurring in the refugee reception centers.

Right-wing extremists linked to far-right organizations such as Pegida and the AfD reject policies that would really strengthen gender rights in Germany, such as equal pay, a 30% female quota for corporate boards and tougher laws against domestic abuse, even as they shamelessly exploit the New Year's debacle to legitimize their own racist agendas "to protect our women."

But if protecting women is the goal, then shouldn't there have been a little more outrage over the report from the Ministry for Family, Seniors, Women, and Youth that 25% of all German women will experience some form of domestic violence during their lifetime? Dorothea Moesch, who operates a center for migrants, needy locals and their children in Westerfilde, received an anonymous phone threat in June declaring: "You're going to burn witch, just like all of the other c---." Or when Chancellor Angela Merkel visited a refugee camp in Heidenau, anti-migration protesters held up signs calling her a slut and an "enemy of the German state."

So much for wanting to protect German women.

Arch-feminist Alice Schwarzer described the event in Cologne as a "gang-bang party ... 1,000 men who were acting as if they were in Tahir Square in Cairo, dreaming of being heroes like their brothers in the civil wars of North Africa and the Middle East."

As reprehensible as I find these assaults on women, along with police chief failures to have taken additional security precautions given the recent terrorist attacks in Paris, I think Schwarzer is right, but for the wrong reason. Because while she stresses "misplaced tolerance" in her country, I believe the bigger problem rests with European and American tolerance of violence against women everywhere else.

For decades, Western leaders have pursued lucrative trade deals with authoritarian leaders ranging from former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad to the Saudi royals, selling them weapons, automobiles and luxury goods while ignoring U.N. and EU gender mainstreaming mandates. Indeed, German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier is scheduled to visit Saudi Arabia next week, the very country whose Wahhabism gave rise to Osama bin Laden and initially tolerated extremist Sunni formations like al Qaeda.

Merkel is directly involved in negotiating with Turkey to secure its external border while also providing decent reception conditions for asylum-seekers. She asked at the recent Christian Social Union party convention that she be "given the time to try these things out." I would sooner trust the Chancellor's cool-headed, systematic approach to the challenges posed by the mass influx of refugees than the flash-in-the-pan cries urging her to pull up the drawbridge and slam the gates of Fortress Europe. She is the only one who actually has a national integration plan, and who still believes the European Union has a special responsibility to ensure equal treatment, solidarity and human rights.

Ultimately, whatever solution Merkel proposes, one thing should be crystal clear: The more the leaders of Western democratic states ignore the brutal, sexist treatment of women in other countries, the sooner it will come back to haunt all of us on our own turf.

Mass migration into Europe is unstoppable

Jan 12 2016 /afr.com

by Gideon Rachman

In the 18th and 19th centuries, Europeans populated the world. Now the world is populating Europe. Beyond the furore about the impact of the 1m-plus refugees who arrived in Germany in 2015 lie big demographic trends. The current migration crisis is driven by wars in the Middle East. But there are also larger forces at play that will ensure immigration into Europe remains a vexed issue long after the war in Syria is over.

Europe is a wealthy, ageing continent whose population is stagnant. By contrast the populations of Africa, the Middle East and South Asia are younger, poorer and rising fast. At the height of the imperial age, in 1900, European countries represented about 25 per cent of the world's population.

Today, the EU's roughly 500 million people account for about 7 per cent of the world's population. By contrast, there are now more than 1 billion people in Africa and, according to the UN, there will be almost 2.5 billion by 2050.

The population of Egypt has doubled since 1975 to more than 80 million today. Nigeria's population in 1960 was 50 million. It is now more than 180 million and likely to be more than 400 million by 2050.

The migration of Africans, Arabs and Asians to Europe represents the reversal of a historic trend. In the colonial era Europe practised a sort of demographic imperialism, with white Europeans emigrating to the four corners of the world. In North America and Australasia, indigenous populations were subdued and often killed - and whole continents were turned into offshoots of Europe. European countries also established colonies all over the world and settled them with immigrants, while at the same time several millions were forcibly migrated from Africa to the New World as slaves.

When Europeans were populating the world, they often did so through "chain migration". A family member would settle in a new country like Argentina or the US; news and money would be sent home and, before long, others would follow.

Now the chains go in the other direction: from Syria to Germany, from Morocco to the Netherlands, from Pakistan to Britain. But these days it is not a question of a letter home followed by a long sea

voyage. In the era of Facebook and the smartphone, Europe feels close even if you are in Karachi or Lagos.

Countries such as Britain, France and the Netherlands have become much more multiracial in the past 40 years. Governments that promise to restrict immigration, such as the current British administration, have found it very hard to deliver on their promises.

The EU position is that, while refugees can apply for asylum in Europe, illegal "economic migrants" must return home. But this policy is unlikely to stem the population flows for several reasons.

First, the number of countries that are afflicted by war or state failure may actually increase; worries about the stability of Algeria are rising, for example.

Second, most of those who are deemed "economic migrants" never actually leave Europe. In Germany only about 30 per cent of rejected asylum seekers leave the country voluntarily or are deported.

Third, once large immigrant populations are established, the right of "family reunion" will ensure a continued flow. So Europe is likely to remain an attractive and attainable destination for poor and ambitious people all over the world.

One possible reaction for Europe is to accept that migration from the rest of the world is inevitable - and embrace it wholeheartedly. Europe's debt-ridden economies need an injection of youth and dynamism. Who will staff their old-age homes and building sites if not immigrants from the rest of the world?

But even those Europeans who make the case for immigration tend to argue that, of course, newcomers to the continent must all accept "European values". That may be unrealistic, partly because many of these values are of relatively recent vintage.

In recent decades, feminism has made great strides in Europe and attitudes to gay rights have been transformed. Many immigrants from the Middle East and Africa bring much more conservative and sexist attitudes with them. It will take more than a few civics classes to change that.

Europeans are profoundly confused about how to respond to these new challenges. In the age of imperialism, they justified settling foreign lands with the confident belief that they were bringing the benefits of civilisation to more backward parts of the world.

But post-imperial, post-Holocaust Europe is much more wary of asserting the superiority of its culture. It has replaced a belief in its civilising mission and the Bible with an emphasis on universal values, individual rights and international treaties.

The big question in the coming decades is how Europe's faith in universal liberal values will withstand the impact of mass immigration. A battle between nativists and liberals is beginning to shape politics.

In the long run I expect the nativists to lose, not because their demands are unpopular but because they are unenforceable. It may be possible for island nations surrounded by the Pacific Ocean, such as Japan or Australia, to maintain strict controls on immigration. It will be all but impossible for an EU that is part of a Eurasian landmass and is separated from Africa only by narrow stretches of the Mediterranean.

CHINA/AFRICA :

INDIA/AFRICA :

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

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