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BURUNDI :

RWANDA :

RDC CONGO :

UGANDA :

SOUTH AFRICA :

TANZANIA :

KENYA :

**Hoping to boost trade, Kenya launches \$13.8 billion China-built railway**

By Catholic Online (NEWS CONSORTIUM)/Catholic Online (www.catholic.org)/02/12/2013

Railway to run from port city of Mombasa inland to Nairobi

Hoping to boost trade and their economy, the government of Kenya has begun construction of \$13.8 billion railway to be built by Chinese firms. Seeking to increase Kenya's position as a regional economic powerhouse, the railway will run from the busy port city of Mombasa inland to the highland capital Nairobi.

LOS ANGELES, CA (Catholic Online) - It's hoped that the railway will eventually extend onwards to Uganda and then connect with proposed lines to Rwanda and South Sudan.

"What we are doing here today will most definitely transform the course of development not just for Kenya but the whole eastern African region," Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta told crowds at the ground breaking ceremony.

Hailing the construction project as a "historic milestone," Kenyatta added, "As a result east Africa will become a competitive investment destination... a busy growing east Africa is good for us as a country."

The railway will replace dilapidated British colonial-era lines. It's by far the region's largest infrastructure project for a century.

"Kenya is stepping forward... it will be a landmark project both for Kenya and east Africa," China's ambassador to Kenya Liu Guangyuan said at the ceremony.

Thanking Chinese President Xi Jinping, President Kenyatta praised the Chinese leader's "great personal interest in the project and his government's immense support."

China has funded the project only for the first 280-mile section, at \$5.2 billion from Mombasa to Nairobi. Work on that section, by the state-owned China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC), is expected to be completed by 2017.

"Presently our region relies almost exclusively on road transport," Kenyatta said, adding he was looking forward to waving off "the first train to Kigali via Nairobi and Kampala, delivering the

promise of prosperity for all our east African peoples."

The new lines would see passenger journey times cut from the current 12 hours to around four. That's around half the current driving time on crowded and pot-holed roads.

Freight trains are planned to be able to cut the current 36-hour trip by rail to just eight, which will be a major boost for regional landlocked nations.

Some Kenyan lawmakers have criticized the awarding of the contracts, saying that the process was not transparent. Regional nations not included in the line have likewise expressed their displeasure. Burundi's transport minister last week announced a raft of infrastructure plans with Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

ANGOLA :

**Has Angola banned Islam? Not yet, at least**

by syahredzan johan/thestar.com.my/Monday December 2, 2013

LAST week, some international media organisations reported that the southern African country of Angola has banned Islam. Condemnation ensued as the world poured criticism on this seemingly incredible decision by the government of Angola. How could a country ban an established religion, the second biggest in the world, in these modern times?

Turns out the report is inaccurate. Angola has not banned Islam. Not yet, at least. Not an outright ban.

But Islam is not recognised by the State in Angola. In Angola, to be allowed to carry out religious practices and activities, a religious organisation must first apply for recognition by the State. This status would also allow the religious group to construct schools and places of worship.

The problem for Muslims in Angola is that according to Angolan laws, a religious group must have 100,000 members and must be present in 12 out of the 18 provinces. There are only about 90,000 Muslims in Angola out of a population of 18 million people, according to a report. As they failed to meet this requirement, Muslim religious groups are not recognised by Angola laws.

According to reports, Angola Muslims cannot practice their faith freely. Mosques, schools and community centres have been closed down or prevented from being constructed. The Islamic Community of Angola (ICA) reported that there are 78 mosques in Angola, and all of them except those in the capital, Luanda, has been closed down. The ones in Luanda remained opened simply because of the worldwide attention following the inaccurate report on the banning of Islam.

It has also been reported that the majority of Angolans, of Roman Catholic and other Christian denominations, view Islam negatively. Islam has been declared as 'unwelcome' in Angola, with others saying that Islam is not 'common to the values of Angola'. The ICA said that it has documented instances of Muslim women beaten up for wearing the veil so much so that a lot of Muslim women in the country are afraid of doing so.

Clearly from these reports, the religious freedoms of Muslims in Angola are being violated. They are unable to practice their faith free from State intervention. There are constant violations of their

human rights.

Yes, 'human rights'. This much maligned phrase, constantly being equated with being 'liberal' (whatever that means), with apostasy, with 'deviant' lifestyles and communities (LGBT, Shiites, take your pick) by so-called ethno-religious organisations in Malaysia is now used to uphold the rights of these Angolan Muslims.

How else can we argue against the persecution and discrimination against them, when by the laws of Angola they do not qualify to be recognised? How else can we argue against the closing of schools, community centres and mosque because by law, they are illegal? Even the constitution of the country does not seem to protect their religious rights.

In 2011, France imposed a ban prohibiting garments that conceal the face in public, effectively banning the burqa or niqab in public. A Muslim women has recently filed a case the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) claiming that the ban violated her right to privacy, freedom of religion and freedom of expression. The ECHR will hear the case and decide whether indeed her human rights have been violated by the ban.

Similarly, a ban on the building of new minarets in Switzerland is also said to be infringing upon the human rights of Muslims in Switzerland. Legally, the ban was supported by a referendum for a constitutional amendment to ban new minarets. The majority of those who voted in the referendum supported the amendment.

Human rights is for all. Muslims in Angola, France and Switzerland have as much entitlement to human rights as Christians, Hindus and Shiites in Malaysia. It would be hypocritical for us to decry the violations of religious freedoms in Angola, France and Switzerland but at the same time claim that 'human rights is incompatible with Islam' or that religious freedoms of minorities must be subjected to 'sensitivities' of the majority. Human rights must be protected, regardless of what the majority feels.

Nor can we argue that the laws of this country must be followed regardless of whether it violates human rights of religious minorities. Remember, what happened in Angola, France and Switzerland are all entirely legal, yet that does not justify the human rights violations.

AU/AFRICA :

### **Africa's Crumbling Center**

By THIBAUD LESUEUR and THIERRY VIRCOULON/[nytimes.com/December 1, 2013](http://nytimes.com/December 1, 2013)

Nairobi, Kenya — The Central African Republic is often called a forgotten country, but that isn't quite right. It has had a long and substantial international presence and sizable foreign investment. It's just that those efforts haven't made much difference. As the country rapidly descends into greater violence, the difficult truth is that more — and much better — international and regional involvement is its only hope.

France has had an almost continuous military presence since the country gained independence in 1960, including the 400 soldiers deployed at the start of the current crisis. The European Union has a delegation in Bangui and has been the main donor for 10 years. United States Army personnel arrived in 2011 as part of efforts to capture Joseph Kony, the leader of the Lord's Resistance Army,

who has been indicted on war crimes charges by the International Criminal Court and is believed to be hiding somewhere in Central Africa.

The foreign presence is not limited to Western countries. South Africa had a bilateral military cooperation program from 2008 to 2012. Last March, 13 of its troops were killed attempting to keep President François Bozizé in power. The regional Economic Community of Central African States has maintained a peacekeeping force since 2008. Its 2,500 troops will soon come under the command of the African Union-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (Misca). Moreover, the United Nations has been working to rebuild the country since 2010.

The Central African Republic was supposed to be a test case for the latest thinking on how to deal with fragile states. Given all this political, military and development assistance, it is difficult to understand why the country is not only weak, but dissolving.

President Bozizé was ousted by a loose alliance of guerrilla fighters from throughout the region known as Seleka, which supported his successor, Michel Djotodia. In September, Mr. Djotodia, in a move that contributed to instability, disbanded Seleka. With no chain of command, the fighters descended into banditry and widespread violence. With no effective national army to challenge them, violent militias are now protecting some elements of the population and terrorizing others.

The spreading conflict has also taken on a religious dimension, with fighting between Muslims and Christians. The transitional authorities are weak and the modest African peacekeeping force is no deterrent against the militias, which includes mostly Muslim fighters.

After intervening successfully in Mali, France is preparing to salvage another of its former colonies, beginning with an additional 800 troops. Last Monday, the United Nations deputy secretary general, Jan Eliasson, asked the Security Council to reinforce the African Union-led mission and ultimately to transform it into a United Nations peacekeeping force. Discussions are underway on a new resolution. The United States has proposed a budget of \$40 million.

But United Nations peacekeepers are not going to arrive any time soon and the situation in Bangui is fast deteriorating. With a prompt and robust mandate accompanied by effective funding, African and French troops might be able to pull the country back from the brink. But the key to ending the country's nightmare will also lie in the ability of Africa, France and the United Nations to forge a well-coordinated strategic partnership to restore order and rebuild the institutions necessary to preserve order.

When the Security Council meets this week, it should beef up logistical support to the African-led peacekeepers and authorize France to use all necessary means to support that mission. The United States, along with the European Union, should move quickly to provide the necessary financial support.

At the same time, Africa's leaders must step up to the plate and provide more support to the African Union. Stabilizing the Central African Republic will require a doubling of the proposed 3,600 Misca troops. Securing the capital will only be a beginning: This mission should also safeguard the main roads, starting with the major commercial artery running from Bangui to Garoua-Boulaï, at the Cameroonian border. This would both stabilize the Central African Republic and reduce the very real threat of violence spreading to its neighbors.

The Security Council has a precious opportunity to restore security. Without this, the task of implementing the transitional political road map cannot begin, there will be no reforms, elections expected in early 2016 will be difficult to convene, and the transition may stall and even collapse

with only one result: civil war with unspeakable consequences for Africa's volatile center.

Thibaud Lesueur is a Central Africa analyst for the International Crisis Group. Thierry Vircoulon is the group's project director for Central Africa.

### Africa News Round Up, December, Monday 02, 2013

December 2, 2013 /by Administrator/independent.co.ug

In Egypt, a 50-member committee completed Sunday an item-by-item vote on the 247 articles of a new constitution for Egypt, CNN reports.

The next steps in the process for the the draft to become law are for Egypt's interim President Adly Mansour to ratify the charter on Tuesday and then announce a date for it to be put to a popular referendum.

The constitution will replace the one suspended in 2011, state-run al-Ahram reported.

Egypt's new constitution would ban religious parties and put more power in the hands of the military, according to a draft posted on state media earlier Sunday.

"The constitution brings back soft power to Egypt. It's the real power that gave Egypt influence and a role and glory," Amr Moussa, head of the assembly, said at a news conference on Saturday. "It deals with the dangerous circumstance through which Egypt passes."

The new constitutional articles come months after a military coup unseated elected President Mohamed Morsy in July and touched off a series of protests that ended in violence.

The painstaking process of approving the draft of the new constitution started Saturday.

Also on Saturday, security forces dispersed protesters who were demonstrating against Egypt's anti-protest law.

U.S. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel on Saturday called his Egyptian counterpart, Gen. Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, to express concerns over the law restricting demonstrations and protests, among others.

Hagel told him that Egypt's response to free expression will demonstrate the interim government's commitment to a nonviolent democratic transition, according to a statement from the Pentagon.

In Uganda, partner states in the East African Community have set next month as the deadline for the adoption of a single customs system in a bid to increase efficiency in trade logistics within the bloc, Daily Nation reports.

Presidents from the five-member nations on Saturday directed that the Single Customs Territory be adopted in January 2014. Under the single customs regime, revenue authorities would coordinate their business at points of entry into the region.

This would mean that duty for goods in transit to Uganda and Rwanda for instance would be collected at the Port of Mombasa as opposed to the current practice of taxing goods at border crossings.

“The summit directed that the single customs territory commences on January 1, 2014 and that all operational requirements be finalised by June 2014,” read part of a communiqué signed by presidents from Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania and Burundi.

Initially, 2010 was the deadline for the establishment of the single customs territory. However, this has been delayed by failure of the coalition partners to commit to the process.

With the region moving towards a monetary union, experts point out that it is imperative for the bloc to implement all outstanding economic integration measures set out in the Customs Union and Common Market Protocol.

The heads of states also moved to tackle member non-compliance with decisions made collectively by EAC countries. The statement directs the EAC secretary-general, Dr Richard Sezibera (left, below), assumes a policing role with partner nations that are yet to put outstanding directives into effect. Reports on non-compliance will be submitted to the presidents when they meet next in 2014.

“The summit directed the secretary-general in consultation with the relevant heads of state to report regularly on the implementation of decisions including non-compliance,” read a communiqué signed by presidents from Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania and Burundi.

The presidents also endorsed a proposal to empower the East African Court of Justice to mediate in matters of trade and disputes arising from the monetary union protocol.

Applications for membership in the bloc from South Sudan and Somalia, the presidents said, will be considered next year.

In France, at least 40 African leaders will gather in Paris this week for a French-led summit on improving security on the unstable continent following France’s military mission in Mali and a new one in the Central African Republic, News24 reports.

The biggest international summit by France’s Socialist President Francois Hollande since he took power is aimed at helping Africa tackle its security problems on its own with less and less Western backing from former colonial masters.

It comes against the backdrop of French plans to send troops to the Central African Republic and during a time when Paris, which has thousands of troops garrisoned in Africa, is being dragged into action while it is trying to reshape its relations with the continent.

The two-day summit starting Friday will be dominated by the latest unrest in the Central African Republic (CAR), where clashes between armed Muslim and Christian groups have raised fears of sectarian massacres.

France in January intervened in its former colony Mali to stop Islamists and Tuareg rebels from advancing on the capital in a move that was hailed worldwide and boosted Hollande’s sagging popularity back home.

Paris has a long history of interventions in Africa. It joined international military efforts to topple Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi and sent troops to Ivory Coast after a rebellion split the world’s top cocoa producer in half.

Hollande, in line with France’s avowed intention to forsake the so-called policy of “Francafrique”, has said that Paris will “always be at Africa’s side” but not be “the policeman of Africa”.

Critics of “Francafrique” – a term denoting Paris’s complex military and political ties with former colonies – say the policy is aimed at maintaining puppet states and keeping corrupt and despotic regimes in power if it suits French interests.

But the rise of Islamists in a vast swathe of the Sahara and nearby areas, piracy off the lawless waters of Somalia and the rising tide of illegal migration from Africa are factors weighing against a more discreet role for Paris.

In the Central African Republic, rebels began withdrawing from the capital of Bangui as the country on Sunday awaited an international intervention to halt the downward spiral of violence in the country, News24 reports.

The rebels’ retreat came ahead of what is expected to be a key week for the strife-torn country as its crisis tops the international diplomatic agenda.

Efforts to improve security in the Central African Republic will get under way with a UN Security Council vote this week on a French-drafted resolution aimed at strengthening a flagging African stabilisation force on the ground.

That vote will be followed by a mini-summit on the CAR unrest in Paris on 7 December, to be attended by about 40 African leaders, including CAR Prime Minister Nicolas Tiangaye, as well as UN chief Ban Ki-moon.

On Sunday, 500 troops from neighbouring Republic of Congo readied to join the beleaguered African-led Miska force in the CAR, which has around 2 500 soldiers in place but has failed to get off the ground due to a lack of funds and training.

After the French announcement, which was welcomed by transitional leader Michel Djotodia, rattled ex-Seleka rebels have been fleeing Bangui in their pick-up trucks under the cover of darkness.

“We are getting the same information everywhere – the Seleka are leaving Bangui,” a diplomat said on Saturday on condition of anonymity.

Chasing troublemakers from the capital may not be too difficult for France, which has had support forces stationed in Bangui for more than a decade who know the region.

But defeating rebels who flee eastwards, to the forest-covered, virtually impenetrable regions bordering Chad, the Sudans and Democratic Republic of Congo may prove quite a task.

“The Seleka are leaving Bangui, but what will they do in the bush? Who will go and disarm them in the forest?” another diplomat asked.

Saturday’s summit in Paris will focus on how to put France’s resolution – which asks that international troops in the CAR be able to use force rather than maintain a purely peacekeeping role – into action if passed.

**C Africa rebels flee as AU troops assemble**  
gulf-times.com/ 2 December 2013



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Last week France announced its intention to deploy some 1,000 troops to its former colony in a bid to stop a string of abuses allegedly carried out by militia gangs and ex-members of the mostly Muslim Seleka rebel coalition that toppled CAR's leader in a March coup.

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The international community has repeatedly voiced its concern about the mineral-rich Central African Republic, where the aftermath of the coup has sparked violent chaos across the vast landlocked country.

Ex-president Francois Bozize was toppled by the Seleka coalition and replaced with the Christian-majority country's first Muslim president, Djotodia, who then formally disbanded the rebels.

Reports from watchdogs such as Human Rights Watch have painted a grim picture of ex-Seleka members, security forces and militia gangs torturing and executing villagers and perpetrating widespread rape.

The clashes have also taken on a religious undertone, pitting Christians against Muslims and raising fears of sectarian massacres.

Lying in the heart of Africa, the impoverished Central African Republic has struggled with a series of coups and rebel uprisings since independence in 1960.

The UN estimates that the latest strife has forced 400,000 people, or 10% of the population, to leave their homes.

Analysts have warned that the conflict could engulf the country's neighbours.

### Vers une inversion du calendrier électoral en Egypte

le 01-12-2013/ Reuters

LE CAIRE (Reuters) - L'Assemblée constituante égyptienne a adopté dimanche un projet de Loi fondamentale qui donne la possibilité d'organiser un scrutin présidentiel avant des élections législatives, contrairement à la "feuille de route" fixée par l'armée après le renversement le 3 juillet du président islamiste élu Mohamed Morsi.

Le projet original tel que présenté par les militaires prévoyait d'abord la tenue d'élections législatives, suivies d'un scrutin présidentiel.

Le projet de constitution, dans sa version définitive adopté dimanche par les 50 membres de la constituante, ne précise désormais plus l'ordre des scrutins.

Il indique seulement que des élections devront se dérouler au plus tard six mois après la ratification de la constitution lors d'un référendum prévu en décembre ou janvier.

Une telle disposition ouvre la voie à une inversion du calendrier électoral, avec un scrutin présidentiel programmé avant des élections législatives, .

Cette modification, annoncée par le président de la constituante, Amr Moussa, sème le trouble sur le déroulement de la transition politique dans un pays toujours marqué par l'instabilité, près de trois ans après la chute du président Hosni Moubarak et cinq mois après la destitution de son successeur par les militaires.

Les membres de la constituante ont dans un premier temps rejeté un article voulant que les élections législatives précèdent le scrutin présidentiel.

Trente-trois constituants sur les 50 désignés par le chef de l'Etat par intérim, le président Adli Mansour, ont voté contre cet article, qui a été ensuite amendé.

Certains membres de la Constituante rêvent de voir le chef d'état-major des forces armées, le général Abdel Fattah al Sissi, se présenter à l'élection présidentielle, et souligne qu'un président bien élu pourra forger des alliances politiques avant les législatives.

Il appartient désormais au Président par intérim Adli Mansour, considéré par ses adversaires comme un simple exécutant des décisions des militaires, de décider quel scrutin doit avoir lieu d'abord, ou si présidentielle et législatives peuvent se dérouler en même temps.

## In Egypt Charter, New Rights, but No Great Change

By KAREEM FAHIM and MAYY EL SHEIKH/nytimes.com/December 1, 2013

CAIRO — On paper, a draft Egyptian Constitution — which was made publicly available in its entirety for the first time over the weekend — appears to afford citizens important new rights, including by criminalizing torture and human trafficking and requiring that the state protect women from violence.

But experts say the draft text also gives privileged status to institutions that have repeatedly thwarted change during Egypt's years of revolutionary turmoil, including the police, seen as the main instigator of abuses. And, in recent days, discussion about the Constitution has been overwhelmed by reports of growing unrest that have highlighted the gap between official rhetoric about human rights and the state's longstanding repressive tactics.

On Saturday and Sunday, the committee that helped draft the charter held a televised voting session and approved its 247 articles. The charter is intended to replace a Constitution that was passed by a public vote last year during the tenure of former President Mohamed Morsi, who was ousted by the military in July. Officials in the new military-backed government have said that the draft will be put to a referendum this month, in what they view as a critical milestone in a proposed road map to democracy and a crucial vote of confidence in the legitimacy of the interim rulers.

But an unexpected change to an article in the draft charter cast uncertainty over planned parliamentary elections and raised the possibility of delays in the military's road map. Committee members on Sunday left open the question of whether presidential or parliamentary elections would be held first after the ratification of the constitution — a move that some speculated was intended to clear the way for the powerful defense minister, Gen. Abdul-Fattah el-Sisi, to become president.

Television news programs on Sunday switched between staid coverage of the constitutional committee's voting and scenes of unrest in Tahrir Square in Cairo, where hundreds of students gathered before they were dispersed by a storm of tear gas — providing a contrast between the idealistic language in the charter and a more bitter reality. Despite notable improvements over earlier constitutions, analysts said the draft was unlikely to lead to the kind of fundamental change that Egypt sorely needed.

The current draft, like others before it, was based on Egypt's 1971 Constitution, which the writers have repeatedly returned to "like it's a bible," said Zaid al-Ali, a Cairo-based constitutional expert with the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. "It's remarkable that, in a revolutionary environment, you don't have a revolutionary constitution," he said.

Recently, the voices clamoring for change have grown louder. The government has faced anger for what its critics say is an authoritarian turn, including by passing a repressive protest law that has led to a renewed crackdown on demonstrations by students and non-Islamist activists. On Sunday, officials said they had extended the detention of Alaa Abd El Fattah, a well-known activist who is being charged with violating the protest law.

The detentions of Mr. Abd El Fattah and other prominent leftists and liberals have begun to widen opposition to the interim government beyond Mr. Morsi's Islamist supporters, who have borne the brunt of the state's repression. The security services have killed more than 1,000 Islamist protesters since July. Thousands of others have been detained, including leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood,

Mr. Morsi's Islamist movement, but also young people who have received harsh prison sentences for protesting against the military.

In some respects, the charter being debated now is a further attempt to wipe away the vestiges of Islamist rule. The Constitution passed under Mr. Morsi left a bitter legacy, with critics arguing that its Islamist drafters rushed it to approval without consensus, amplified the role of Islamic law and restricted freedoms. It was passed by a majority of voters, but the low turnout — 33 percent — left it open to further criticism.

The committee writing the new Constitution included a handful of Islamists, making it vulnerable to similar charges of exclusion. And while the current draft removes many of the religious references that secular-leaning figures objected to — including the mention of “public morals” — it did not offer significant new protections for religious minorities or fundamentally alter the relationship of religion and the state, analysts said.

For instance, while the new draft refers to freedom of belief as “absolute,” rather than “protected,” as the old draft had, both charters leave freedom to practice religion subject to the state's laws, which have traditionally offered scant protection against religious discrimination.

The new charter also bans political parties based on religion, potentially outlawing Islamist parties.

Experts noted several significant improvements over the last Constitution, including detailed provisions on children's rights and a commitment to abide by international human rights treaties signed by Egypt. The charter enshrines a defendant's right to silence and creates a commission to fight discrimination.

In the change to one of the articles on Sunday, the committee members voted down a provision that would have set parliamentary elections for between 30 and 90 days after the ratification of a constitution — as mandated by the road map. Instead, they left the decision about whether parliamentary or presidential elections would be held first in the hands of the military-backed interim president, Adli Mansour.

Analysts speculated that the switch could be intended to give non-Islamist parties more time to organize themselves ahead of parliamentary elections, while giving a sitting president more control over the makeup of Parliament. One of the most frequently mentioned candidates for president is Egypt's de facto leader, General Sisi.

“No political party seems ready to run,” said Nathan J. Brown, an expert on Egyptian law at George Washington University. If General Sisi were to stand for president, “then he might not mind getting there first, and shaping things,” Professor Brown said.

UN/AFRICA :

**Amnesty: UN must take 'immediate' action over Central Africa**

December 2, 2013/themalaymailonline.com

LONDON, Dec 2 — Rights group Amnesty today urged the United Nations to act quickly and authorise “a robust peacekeeping force” to quell the wave of violence engulfing the Central African Republic.

Last week France announced it would deploy 1,000 troops to its former colony in a bid to stop a string of abuses allegedly carried out by militia gangs and ex-members of the mostly Muslim Seleka rebel coalition that toppled CAR's leader in a March coup.

The French soldiers will work alongside some 2,600 African Union (AU) forces already on the ground.

The UN Security Council is expected to approve a vote this week on a French-drafted resolution aimed at strengthening the flagging African stabilisation force, but the London-based charity said a more robust response maybe required.

"The consequences of this life-and-death decision will affect an entire country," said Salil Shetty, secretary general of Amnesty International.

"If the Security Council does not act now to stem the horrific cycle of violence in the Central African Republic, that failure will hang heavily on the international community for years to come."

The charity said that a "full-fledged UN peacekeeping operation" may be necessary to rein in the security forces and armed groups, who it said were responsible for "spiralling human rights violations and abuses".

"The Security Council must request that the UN Secretary-General immediately start preparations for the deployment of a robust peacekeeping force," added Shetty.

"Troops on the ground must have the resources necessary to stop the ongoing abuses and rein in armed groups and forces that have already spun out of control over the past year."

The international community has repeatedly voiced its concern about the mineral-rich Central African Republic, where the aftermath of the coup has sparked chaos.

Ex-president Francois Bozize was toppled by the Seleka coalition and replaced with the Christian-majority country's first Muslim president, Michel Djotodia, who then formally disbanded the rebels.

The UN estimates that the latest strife has forced 400,000 people, or 10 per cent of the population, to leave their homes. — AFP

US/AFRICA :

CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

EU/AFRICA :

### Centrafrique : arrivée de plus de 200 militaires français

Le Monde.fr avec AFP/02.12.2013

Un peu plus de 200 militaires français sont arrivés durant le week-end en renfort à Bangui, capitale de la République centrafricaine, ce qui porte à « plus de 600 » les effectifs français dans la ville avant le lancement attendu d'une opération pour rétablir l'ordre dans le pays, a indiqué dimanche 1er décembre le ministère de la défense.

Le détachement déployé à l'aéroport est composé notamment de spécialistes des transmissions et du service des essences. Ce déploiement a été réalisé en préparation « à un éventuel renforcement du dispositif à Bangui, comme l'a souhaité le président de la République », précise l'état-major des armées.

La France a annoncé la semaine dernière le déploiement d'environ un millier de soldats français, qui devront officiellement appuyer la force africaine, la Mission internationale de soutien à la Centrafrique (Misca), déjà présente dans le pays. Dimanche, quelque 500 militaires congolais ont de leur côté quitté Brazzaville pour renforcer la force africaine en Centrafrique.

### 433 MILITAIRES EN CENTRAFRIQUE

Dans les jours qui viennent, une dizaine de rotations d'avions gros porteurs Antonov 124 achemineront le matériel nécessaire à l'installation du contingent français, indique l'état-major. « Si la situation l'exige, la force est également en mesure d'assurer la protection des ressortissants français », précise-t-il.

Jeudi, les effectifs français en République centrafricaine s'élevaient, selon l'état-major, à 433 militaires, après l'arrivée d'une unité du génie de l'air qui a entrepris d'aménager l'aéroport pour préparer le déploiement de la force française et des contingents africains de la Misca. « Par ailleurs, environ 350 hommes et une centaine de véhicules ont débarqué ces derniers jours d'un bâtiment de la marine nationale, le BPC Dixmude, dans le port de Douala, au Cameroun. Selon l'état-major, ce détachement devait rester dans un premier temps » à proximité de Douala, à environ 600 km de la frontière centrafricaine.

CHINA/AFRICA :

INDIA/AFRICA :

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

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