



[Effective 2015, citizens of Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi and Rwanda will be traveling using a new generation East African Passport, a modern regional traveling document likely to replace their national ones. A communique from the Heads of States Summit, that took place in Uganda and made available here via the Arusha-based East African Community Secretariat, quoted the five presidents agreeing to launch the new EA passport by November 2015.]

BURUNDI :

Le pouvoir burundais isolé dans son projet de révision constitutionnelle

Par RFI/lundi 09 décembre 2013

Au Burundi, le pouvoir a initié depuis plus de deux mois une révision en profondeur de la Constitution du Burundi. Le gouvernement veut notamment lever le verrou constitutionnel des deux mandats présidentiels ce qui permettrait au président Pierre Nkurunziza de se représenter pour la troisième fois, ou encore ramener la majorité requise au Parlement des deux tiers à une majorité simple des voix, au risque de toucher au partage du pouvoir entre les ethnies. Ce projet de révision est très contesté, et le mouvement de protestation vient de gagner la première église du pays.

Le camp de ceux qui contestent la révision de la Constitution en cours ne cesse de s'élargir. Après la société civile, la quasi-totalité des partis politiques de ce pays, c'est autour de la très influente Eglise catholique du Burundi de prendre position très clairement contre ce projet.

Les prélats de l'Eglise catholique du Burundi estiment que l'heure de réviser la Constitution du Burundi qui s'inspire largement de l'accord de paix signé en 2000 à Arusha n'a pas encore sonné. Le président de la conférence des évêques catholiques du Burundi, Mgr Gervais Banshimiyubusa, explique :

« Ces dispositions et d'autres semblables sont toujours nécessaires car les problèmes auxquels elles

apportent des solutions, telles que la monopolisation du pouvoir par un groupe, l'exclusion des autres à base des partis politiques ou des ethnies, le respect des mandats politiques, sont loin d'être résolus. »

Le gouvernement burundais n'a jamais caché sa volonté d'aller jusqu'au bout de cette démarche, les évêques du Burundi ont lancé une mise en garde très claire contre les dangers d'une démarche solitaire de la part du pouvoir.

« Au temps où nous sommes, une Constitution qui serait adoptée sans dialogue ni consensus, risquerait de compromettre notre processus de paix et de réconciliation. »

Un diplomate en poste au Burundi estime qu'il s'agit là d'un mauvais coup pour le pouvoir burundais, qui se retrouve de plus en plus isolé sur une question aussi cruciale.

RWANDA :

Rwanda: President Kagame Concludes Umushyikirano 2013

7 December 2013/Government of Rwanda (Kigali)/allafrica.com

Kigali — President Kagame today concluded the 11th National Dialogue Council, Umushyikirano, attended by senior government officials, youth representatives from around the country, Rwandans from the Diaspora, diplomats and the civil society.

In his closing remarks, President Kagame said:

"I would like to thank you all, especially the youth from around the country who participated and contributed ideas aimed at boosting national development. What we have discussed during this dialogue must go beyond words, implementation must begin today."

President Kagame noted that the indicators released by various institutions ranking Rwanda on various aspects, some of which are good and some not quite impressive should serve to remind Rwandans that there are possibilities and also that there is a long way to go.

"There may be some people, for their own reasons, try to portray our country in bad light, but our accomplishments to date speak for themselves and show the truth to those who doubt our progress. You cannot force someone to put on your cloths because they will not fit. Rwandans are not a people that accepts left overs, we are a people that know what fits us and determined to achieve it. We will not accept left overs that don't even fit our context...Rwandans deserve more than leftovers."

Resident Kagame asked leaders to look themselves in the mirror and improve their outlook, in relation to service delivery and good governance in general. He asked Rwandans not to be onlookers when acts of corruption are being committed because that way they will be accomplices to destruction of what has been achieved by Rwandans.

President Kagame also asked Rwandans to embrace Agaciro and Ndumunyarwanda program so as to consolidate the country's achievements. President Kagame wished all Rwandans a Merry Christmas and a happy new year.

The interactive session saw participants who included members of the Diaspora at the venue and

outside, youth from the Districts of Ngoma and Huye who were participating through teleconferencing as well as through social media exchange ideas, ask questions and give suggestions. Resolutions were derived from the two-day discussions which will be implemented by the relevant institutions.

Rwanda: National Dialogue Council Eulogises Mandela

By Frank Kanyeigye/The New Times/7 December 2013

The National Dialogue Council yesterday kicked off deliberations at Parliament with a minute of silence in honour of Nelson Mandela.

The anti-apartheid hero, popularly known as Madiba, died Thursday night at his home in Johannesburg, South Africa, after battling lung infection.

Mandela, who became the first black president of South Africa, passed on at the age 95.

"We have lost a global icon and an African hero; let us remember Nelson Mandela a man of vision and a freedom fighter," said Prof. Anastase Shyaka, the chief executive of the Rwanda Governance Board.

Prof. Shyaka, who is emceeding the 11th National Dialogue, better known as Umushyikirano, paid tribute to Mandela before the dialogue opened.

President Paul Kagame and First Lady Jeannette were joined by hundreds of participants in observing a minute of silence in honour of Mandela.

Umushyikirano, an annual event, debates issues relating to the state of the nation, local government, Rwanda Diaspora community and national security.

"There is no doubting Mandela's virtues as a moral exemplar and inspirational figure. There is no modern leader who has done more to deserve the waves of praise and mourning that his passing has unleashed," Kagame wrote in World Time yesterday.

The President also added on Twitter: "Madiba, President (1st, post-apartheid SA) passes on, but what is certain he will continue to live in the hearts of many of us rest in peace."

'The unifier'

Prime Minister Pierre Damien Habumuremyi also tweeted, "We join the world to mourn an African hero, a freedom fighter and unifier, a courageous man of all time. Rest in peace, Mandela."

Mandela was released from prison in February 1990 and was elected president four years later. He ruled from 1994-1999 and stepped down after the single term. He has been one of the most respected leaders globally and well-regarded as a model for world and particularly African leaders.

Various films such as *Invictus* and *Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom*, have been acted to enable the younger generations to learn about the courage and heroism of Mandela.

The *Long Walk to Freedom*, the latest movie on the legacy of Madiba, was in the middle of its premiere in London, UK, when news broke of Mandela's passing on.

Mandela's funeral

South African President Jacob Zuma said the world icon's state funeral and burial will be held on Sunday, December 15, at his ancestral home in Qunu, Cape Town.

There will be a day of prayer and reflection on December 8, followed by a memorial service on December 10, according to Zuma.

The first South African black president will also lie in state for three days from December 11.

Most of government and agency flags across the world are flying at half-mast. Besides tributes and condolences to the people of South Africa, world leaders have also announced their attendance of the December 15 funeral.

RDC CONGO :

UGANDA :

SOUTH AFRICA :

Mandela: South Africa Awaits World Leaders

By Emma Hurd, Sky News Correspondent/Monday 09 December 2013

Some 60 heads of state have confirmed their attendance at this week's memorial events, including US President Barack Obama.

South Africa is preparing for the arrival of scores of world leaders as the official mourning continues for Nelson Mandela.

Some 60 heads of state have confirmed their attendance at this week's memorial events, including US President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama.

They will be joined by former US presidents George W Bush, Bill Clinton, Jimmy Carter and their wives.

Prime Minister David Cameron will attend the main memorial service on Tuesday, while Prince Charles will represent Britain at Sunday's state funeral.

The leaders of France, Australia, Germany, Canada, Spain, Brazil and a host of other nations will also fly into the country.

Celebrities, including Bono, Oprah Winfrey and Sir Richard Branson are also expected to head to South Africa to pay their personal tributes to the man they considered a friend.

Later today, a special joint session of parliament will be held in Cape Town to allow South African politicians from all political parties to mark the passing of the nation's first black president.

President Jacob Zuma has urged the country to remember the values of peace and forgiveness that Mr Mandela lived by and uphold them.

His sentiments were echoed by the anti-apartheid icon's family, who released a statement calling for South Africans to "keep the dream alive".

On Tuesday, the focus will shift back to Johannesburg where a huge memorial service is due to take place at the FNB Stadium, the scene of Nelson Mandela's last public appearance ahead of the 2010 World Cup Final.

Some 80,000 people are expected to attend the event, including President Obama, his wife Michelle and other visiting dignitaries.

From Wednesday, Mr Mandela's body will "lie in state" in Pretoria at the Union Buildings where he governed as president between 1994 and 1999.

A funeral cortege carrying the icon's remains will pass through the capital daily until Friday, with South Africans being urged to line the streets to form a "guard of honour".

The state funeral will take place in Mr Mandela's ancestral homeland of Qunu in the Eastern Cape on Sunday.

It is still not clear whether President Obama will still be in the country, but many other world leaders are expected to travel to the usually sleepy rural village to join Mr Mandela's family, friends and former comrades in bidding farewell to the revered statesman as he makes his final journey home.

The day South Africa came to pray, sing and celebrate in Soweto's cathedral

Gary Younge/The Guardian/Sunday 8 December 2013

The Regina Mundi church still bears the bullet-holes of apartheid and finds the spirit of '94 revived in Nelson Mandela's passing

With hips swaying, shoulders bobbing and Bibles held aloft, the congregation at Soweto's Regina Mundi church thanked God for Nelson Mandela. Suited and booted, with shirts neatly pressed and hair freshly plaited, the faithful flocked to this Catholic church, while others went to mosques, temples and synagogues across the country, to pay their respects.

Sunday was designated a national day of prayer, but the supplications varied. Keorapetsa Marasela, 28, prayed that "everyone would come together" while Sy Mokadi prayed for "Mandela's spirit to go well" and George Tsholo, 49, gave thanks that "the Lord had seen fit to give this great man to us".

Ever wary of the hero-worship that marred the credibility of other former freedom fighters, Mandela always recoiled at attempts to canonise him. "I am not a saint," he once said. "Unless you think of a saint as a sinner who keeps on trying."

But that did not stop the congregation nodding in agreement when Father Sebastian Rossouw suggested that "God sent us Madiba". Drawing parallels between those who did not believe in Jesus's impending arrival in the Bible and those who feared apartheid would continue forever, Rossouw said: "We have asked ourselves, where is God? Where is the light? Why does he allow such evil? Why has he deserted us? Why has he forgotten us? ... Madiba did not doubt the light. He paved the way for a better future, but he cannot do it alone," he said.

Everyone, he said, had a Mandela in them somewhere.

The priest's words were more than just rhetorical questions for the parishioners of Regina Mundi, which has a history of protest as well as prayer. Those who knew where to look, as they raised their eyes heavenwards, could spy the bullet holes in the church ceiling and windows left by the apartheid regime.

Known as "the people's cathedral" it came by these wounds during the 1976 Soweto uprisings when apartheid police followed demonstrating students, who sought sanctuary, into the church and unleashed gunfire and teargas on them. It has kept them as a badge of honour.

After liberation it played host to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings, presided over by Nobel laureate Desmond Tutu.

Elsewhere in South Africa, at more official events, the mood appeared sombre, with functionaries wearing black clothes and dark frowns looking into their laps.

But if Soweto is anything to go by then the nation at large seems to be bearing its grief in a festive spirit. On Saturday night, in the township's nearby Vilakazi street, crowds of youngsters danced outside Mandela's former home and poured out of bars to join in resistance songs.

On Sunday in Regina Mundi, there were only dry eyes in the house. "We are celebrating the fact that he lived his life to the fullest and was always humble," said Mokadi.

But the mood seems to go beyond the man to a nostalgic embrace of the moral certainty and sense of resistance that he came to personify. The scenes of people dancing, waving flags and singing about Umkhonto we Sizwe, the military wing of the ANC, feel like a revival of the spirit of 1994 when first democratic elections took place.

That does not mean there is no grief. "Of course we are sad," said Tsholo. "But he was an old man and we had come to expect his passing and prepare for it. It wasn't like Lady Di where one day she was there and the next she wasn't. We knew this day was coming."

"It is a celebration," said Marasela. "But it is diluted with sadness."

Thought it may seem counterintuitive, Mandela's death appears to have injected a sense of hope and optimism in many South Africans by reminding them of the longer journey on which the country has embarked and how far they have come.

Mandela stood against apartheid and for a non-racial democracy – the rest was detail. To vote for him in 1994 was to vote for liberation. Things were black and white back then. Every election since then has been about the details and inevitably things have turned a murky shade of grey.

The transition from resistance to governance does not lend itself well to chants.

There has been progress, but not enough for many. Corruption remains, and by most counts is getting worse. "Mandela was an invaluable teacher of how a politician should be in relation to values," said Mokadi. "The leaders we have now are failing more and more."

Some argue the ANC has lost its way. But even if it hadn't, its path would not be nearly as captivating or clear as 20 years ago. That's why it has to keep reminding people of its achievements. On the drive from Soweto to Johannesburg ANC posters declare: "Free education and meals for 1.1 million learners" and "Gauteng [the local province] now a better place to live."

So the blanket coverage of Mandela, on every talkshow, television station and newspaper front page, helps make historical sense of the hardships that remain and apparently gives heart to some, particularly to those in the townships who never experienced apartheid first hand but are burdened with its legacy.

One song on Vilakazi street called for former apartheid president PW Botha, who stepped down in 1989, to stop harassing former ANC leader Oliver Tambo, who died in 1993. It looked as though few of those singing it were even born when either man was in office.

"Before we couldn't speak our language, we couldn't live where we want. Now we are free and we have hope," says Marasela, who recalls watching Mandela's release on the television with her grandmother as a five-year-old and dancing in the street on the first election day "as though [I] had voted".

How long this mood lasts and what effect it might have if it does is impossible to tell. The day before Mandela died a leaked report alleged the president, Jacob Zuma, had spent 200m rand (£12m) of taxpayers' money upgrading his own house in Nkandla and then lied about it – an accusation he denies.

Nobody's talking about that now. Whether the current ANC leadership can ride this wave of nostalgia or the comparisons will make them look out of their depth remains to be seen.

Ever the populist, Zuma, has given voice to the zeitgeist. "We should, while mourning, also sing at the top of our voices, dance and do whatever we want to do, to celebrate the life of this outstanding revolutionary who kept the spirit of freedom alive and led us to a new society," he said.

"As South Africans, we sing when we are happy, and we also sing when we are sad to make ourselves feel better. Let us celebrate Madiba in this way, which we know best. Let us sing for Madiba."

Ronald Reagan regretted vetoing sanctions against pro-apartheid South Africa

By Adam Edelman / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS/Sunday, December 8, 2013

James Baker III, the late President's Chief of Staff and Treasury Secretary, revealed the detail during a wide-ranging discussion Sunday about Nelson Mandela, who passed away Thursday.

Ronald Reagan regretted vetoing sanctions against South Africa's pro-apartheid government, a top official in the late President's cabinet said Sunday.

"I'm sure he did regret it, in fact, I'm certain that he did," James Baker III, Reagan's former Chief of Staff and Treasury Secretary said on CBS' "Face the Nation" during a wide-ranging discussion about former South African President Nelson Mandela. "It was after all, I think, the only time a veto

of his had been overridden in two terms. Certainly, he regretted it."

"On the other hand," Baker added, "once that happened and control of South Africa policy passed through the Congress, President Reagan was really determined to meet with the black leaders of South Africa and deal with the problems of apartheid, and he was able to do so."

In 1986, Reagan vetoed a bill that would have imposed sanctions on the pro-apartheid South African government. Congress ultimately overrode the veto and the sanctions were imposed anyway.

Baker said Reagan had wanted to impose the penalties via executive order.

Baker's recollections were part of a broader tribute on the program to Mandela, who passed away Thursday night at the age of 95.

Baker went on to describe the first time he met Mandela, just weeks after the icon was released from prison.

"I was really amazed at the soft-spokenness of this man, at the condition of this man, at the dignity of this man," Baker said. "He had an enduring and endearing presence of dignity that I don't think I've ever seen on any other person, and I just have always felt that this was an extraordinarily beautiful human being who became, of course, an icon of freedom, of human rights and of reconciliation."

Mandela death: South Africa parliament to pay tribute

9 December 2013/bbc.co.uk

South Africa's parliament is to meet to pay tribute to Nelson Mandela, as world leaders prepare for Tuesday's memorial service.

The sitting comes at the start of a week of commemorative events before a state funeral on 15 December.

Some 60 world leaders are expected to attend either the funeral or a national memorial service on Tuesday.

On Sunday, millions took part in a "day of prayer" to remember the country's first black president.

Monday's parliament sitting will be a special session.

Mr Mandela's former wife Winnie Madikizela-Mandela and grandson Mandla are both MPs of the African National Congress but it is unclear whether they will attend.

ANC spokesman Moloto Mothapo said: "We hope some members of the Mandela family will be there."

FW de Klerk, South Africa's last white president, who shared the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize with Mr Mandela, has been invited.

World leaders

Over the next eight days, a series of events will commemorate the man who steered their country

out of white-minority rule.

US President Barack Obama, Francois Hollande of France and UK PM David Cameron will be among those attending Tuesday's memorial at a Soweto stadium.

On Saturday, Cuban state media announced that President Raul Castro would be one of those attending Mr Mandela's funeral.

Under Mr Castro's brother Fidel, Cuba was a staunch critic of apartheid, and Mr Mandela had expressed gratitude for his support.

Tuesday's memorial service is likely to be one of the biggest such gatherings of international dignitaries in recent years.

Among those on the list are UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, German President Joachim Gauck, EU Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso, Dutch King Willem-Alexander and Crown Prince Felipe of Spain.

World leaders, global figures and celebrities will join 95,000 ordinary South Africans at the memorial service at FNB stadium in Soweto, where Nelson Mandela made his final major public appearance during the 2010 football World Cup.

The government said 59 leaders had so far confirmed they would be attending: an indication of the special place Mr Mandela held in people's hearts across the world, officials say.

Three former US presidents, George W Bush, Bill Clinton and Jimmy Carter, will join President Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama.

Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff, Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas and India's President Pranab Mukherjee will also be there.

Leading celebrities in the anti-apartheid movement Peter Gabriel and Bono are also expected to attend as are former international leaders such as Martti Ahtisaari who, along with Mr Mandela, were part of a group known as The Elders, promoting peace and human rights.

Mr Mandela's body will lie in state in Pretoria on the following three days and he will be given a state funeral on Sunday, 15 December.

A smaller number of international dignitaries including the Prince of Wales will attend the burial in the Eastern Cape village of Qunu, where the late president grew up.

While Tuesday's memorial service will clearly be a big organisational challenge, the state funeral will be a greater logistical one because of its rural remoteness, BBC correspondent Mike Woodridge reports.

'Light in the darkness'

On Sunday South Africa held a "day of prayer" in Mr Mandela's memory.

At Soweto's Regina Mundi Catholic Church, a centre of the anti-apartheid struggle, the priest Sebastian Roussouw said the late leader had been "a light in the darkness".

Winnie Madikizela-Mandela was among the congregation at the Bryanston Methodist church in

Johannesburg, where President Jacob Zuma urged South Africans not to forget the values he had stood for.

Mourners have gathered every day outside Mr Mandela's house in the Johannesburg suburb of Houghton since Mr Mandela died at home at the age of 95, after several months of ill health.

Well wishers have lit candles there and laid thousands of wreaths of flowers and at his old home in Soweto.

The government has given further details of the state funeral arrangements for this week:

Tuesday, 10 December is the day for South Africa's official memorial service at the FNB Stadium in Soweto, and will be addressed by President Zuma with tributes from other heads of state

The memorial service will be shown on big screens at three "overflow" stadiums - Orlando, Dobsonville and Rand

Between 11-13 December, "selected international visitors and guests" will be able to view Mr Mandela's remains at the Union Buildings in Pretoria.

The public will be able to view the body from 12:00 to 17:30 on Wednesday and from 08:00 to 17:30 on Thursday and Friday

Each morning his body will be taken from the mortuary to the city hall through the streets of Pretoria. Members of the public have been encouraged to line the route and form a "guard of honour".

His body will be transported on Saturday, 14 December, from Waterkloof Air Force Base in Pretoria to the Eastern Cape, with a procession from the airport at Mthatha to his home village of Qunu where a traditional ceremony will be held.

A national day of reconciliation will take place on 16 December when a statue of Mr Mandela will be unveiled at the Union Buildings in Pretoria

Some 90 screens will be set up across the country to show all planned national events

Flags at all official buildings are to remain at half mast throughout the period and books of condolence are being circulated across the country and online for people to post tributes, record memories and express their emotions.

A government statement recalled the former president's own thoughts when asked how he wished to be remembered.

"It would be very egotistical of me to say how I would like to be remembered," Mr Mandela said.

"I'd leave that entirely to South Africans. I would just like a simple stone on which is written, 'Mandela'."

The former South African leader spent 27 years in jail before becoming the country's first black president in 1994.

He served a single term before stepping down in 1999.

TANZANIA :

Tanzania: Impact As More Natural Gas Is Discovered

By Orton Kiishweko/Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)/8 December 2013

The discovery of an additional 2-3 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in in Mronge-1 well brings the total of in-place volumes up to 17-20 trillion cubic feet in Block 2, according to Statoil's Senior Vice- President for Exploration Nick Maden.

He said Mronge-1 is being drilled by Discoverer Americas and the site is located 20 km to the North of Zafarani, at 2,500 meters below sea level.

"We have initiated a new and ambitious offshore drilling campaign in Tanzania following four successful discoveries during the first drilling phase.

This furthers the potential for a natural gas development in Tanzania. The new drilling programme allows us to fully explore the remaining potential in Block 2", he said on Friday. He said at Mronge-1 well gas was discovered at two separate levels.

The Minister for Energy and Minerals, Prof Sospeter Muhongo, said on Friday that government is pleased to learn about the additional gas resources.

The Statoil-operated partnership started the new drilling campaign in September 2013. The campaign includes drilling of several new prospects and appraisal of previous discoveries.

Statoil operates a licence on behalf of Tanzania Petroleum Development Corporation (TPDC) and has a 65 per cent working interest, with ExxonMobil Exploration and Production Tanzania Limited holding the remaining 35 per cent. Statoil has been operating in Tanzania since 2007.

Tanzania: East Africans to Carry Single Passport

By Staff Writer/The Arusha Times/7 December 2013

Effective 2015, citizens of Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi and Rwanda will be traveling using a new generation East African Passport, a modern regional traveling document likely to replace their national ones.

A communique from the Heads of States Summit, that took place in Uganda and made available here via the Arusha-based East African Community Secretariat, quoted the five presidents agreeing to launch the new EA passport by November 2015.

The Communique was signed by Presidents: Jakaya Kikwete of Tanzania; Yoweri Museveni of Uganda; Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya; Paul Kagame of Rwanda; and Pierre Nkurunziza of Burundi last weekend in Kampala.

The current East African Passport apparently is only valid within the five countries thus holders also had to depend on their respective national passports when venturing abroad. The new EA traveling document to be released in 2015 will be an international one which means is likely to replace national passports.

According to the official release the EA Heads of States' during their ordinary summit, also discussed the prevailing security situation in the region and the need for concerted efforts towards combating terrorism and negative forces in the region and reaffirmed its commitment to the peace and security in the region.

The summit noted with concern the recent political and security developments in Somalia and urged all parties to embrace dialogue and create an environment conducive for the implementation of Somalia's vision 2016 and facilitate the country's elections slated for 2016.

During the summit the five presidents signed a monetary-union deal, a 10-year marathon for the establishment of a single currency to apply within the five East African States and possibly beyond.

The agreement came after nearly a decade of talks after which Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania Burundi and Rwanda will now try to establish institutions-including a regional central bank and a statistics body-to support the single currency which will sail in 2023.

The deal marks an important touchstone in the region's transition from a collection of conflict zones to one of the world's most promising destinations for investment.

President Uhuru Kenyatta on the other hand became the new Chairman of the EAC Heads of States Summit and in assuming the role, the new leader stated; "East African community is now fully embarked on enormous, ambitious and transformational initiatives for our people."

After establishing the Customs Union in 2005, and the Common Market in 2010, East African countries have reached the third stage toward a united political federation: the Monetary Union Protocol.

With a combined population of nearly 140 million people, East Africa is becoming a potential destination for foreign investment especially with the discovery of natural-gas and oil. Uganda and Kenya have discovered huge amounts of oil, while Tanzania boasts of huge natural-gas reserves.

International companies have already started surveying these potential resources, and the region is in future set to become the next major energy hub in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Member states will also establish the East African Monetary Institute, which will take charge of all the monetary and exchange-rate policies, while the statistics body will produce regular inflation figures to guide price stabilization.

On the other hand Mr Shem Bagaine, Uganda's minister in charge of the East African Community, said that all member states including Tanzania "have reaffirmed" their commitment to the integration following the heads-of-state summit in Kampala.

KENYA :

Kenya: Marsabit Leaders Plead for Peace in Moyale

By Laban Wanambisi/allafrica.com/7 December 2013

Nairobi — Leaders from Marsabit County have appealed for peace in Moyale following three days of inter-clan fighting between communities living in the area.

The leaders led by Marsabit Governor Ukur Yattani said tension is still high in the area with cases of insecurity being reported leading to closure of businesses.

North Horr MP Chachu Ganya urged the government to speed up the deployment of the military to

Moyale to contain the rising ethnic animosity there.

Parliament on Thursday okayed the deployment of the Kenya Defence Forces to restore peace in Moyale, Pokot and Turkana areas.

"We are appealing to the people of Moyale to end this bloodletting so that we can move on together," he said even as he complained of difficulties of getting the all the leaders from region to the dialogue table.

"I am appealing to the residents of Moyale to lay down their arms and go back to their homes. How do they expect to get to the level of counties such as Muranga?" asked Marsabit County Woman Representative Amina Hassan. "We have always complained that the central government has been ignoring our plight, yet now that we have devolved governments, we are the same people who are standing on the road to development."

Ganya said he was concerned over an impending humanitarian crisis if the residents do not have access to food aid and other social amenities.

"We are appealing to the government to set up a task force that will uncover the underlying factors causing all this recurring bloodshed so that we can address it once and for all," he said.

Hassan claimed the fighting is due to political incitement and called for political leaders to be investigated.

"I would like to ask the government to summon and record statements from all the local leaders starting from Governor all the way to the County Assembly representative. Let us not deceive each other yet we know we are the cause of what is happening," said the Marsabit County Woman Representative.

Kenya Red Cross Secretary General Abbas Gullet who also attended the news conference said he feared that the number of casualties and fatalities may escalate if the violence is not quelled.

"We are saying when there is a bit of a lull can they give us the opportunity to go and retrieve the wound people that need assistance," said Gullet.

Several people are reported to have died and many more injured but no official figures have been released.

ANGOLA :

AU/AFRICA :

Comment: Peace and security in Africa, from summitry to solutions
9 Dec 2013/Source : The Conversation

Nelson Mandela's passing is a reminder of the obligations that African leaders have towards their

own countries and citizens, Stefan Wolff.

The death of Nelson Mandela serves as a reminder of the enormous potential of African leaders to bring positive and lasting change to the continent. It is a reminder also of the obligations that African leaders have towards their own countries and citizens.

Almost all of these leaders, as heads of state and government, alongside senior representatives of international organisations, are expected to attend the Elysee Summit for Peace and Security in Africa which begins today in Paris.

Hosted by president Francois Hollande, the summit also reflects France's continuing and increasing importance in Africa's politics. With a majority of attendees from non-Francophone countries, the summit also indicates that the French role in Africa has extended beyond its former colonies, such as recently evidenced in Mali and the Central African Republic, although it remains prominent there.

The challenges for the continent are massive, and it would be unrealistic to expect the Elysee Summit to craft solutions to tackle them all. African countries are frequently associated with a lack of development, poor governance, and violent conflict—phenomena that are clearly connected in one way or another, but with unclear general patterns of causality. The trends, however, are very clear:

According to recent World Bank data, Africa remains the continent with the highest poverty rate in the world (almost half the population lives on \$1.25 per day or less) and the lowest human development indicators (one in 16 children dying before they are five years old).

The 2013 Freedom House Report, has four out of the nine countries on the lowest possible score for political rights and civil liberties located in Africa: Eritrea, Equatorial Guinea, Somalia, and Sudan. Meanwhile, data from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset indicates a significant increase in 2011 and 2012 in the number of violent incidents (especially fighting between regular and irregular forces and violence against civilians).

Unsurprisingly, there is significant overlap between these various rankings. The Failed States Index, for example, which relies on a range of measurements, including data on development, governance and violent conflict, lists seven African countries among its top ten in 2013, including all of the top five, confirming a relatively persistent trend since 2005.

Somalia (except in 2006) and Sudan have never been out of the top five least stable states. Other countries, the so-called Democratic Republic of Congo and Chad, have never left the top ten of the Failed States Index since 2005. Another country conspicuously present in the top ten since 2007 is the Central African Republic, having moved up rapidly from 20 in 2005 to 13 in 2006. Today, the country is at the brink of genocidal violence, and the latest UN Security Council resolution) has given French and African Union troops a robust mandate for military action. Today, there is not a single country in Africa that is classified as stable, let alone sustainable.

Lack of development, poor governance, and violent conflict over time become mutually reinforcing and self-sustaining trends. Poverty and lack of public services, and self-serving elites fuel grievances. In the absence of any real opportunity for democratic change, violence often becomes the only means available to people who are otherwise permanently excluded from political and economic opportunities.

Confronting incumbent regimes and threatening existing patterns of patronage prompts state repression and inter-communal violence. Crises do not always evolve in that exact same linear

sequence, but eventually protracted conflicts emerge in which cause and effect become indistinguishable, in which there are no “good guys” left, and in which civilians bear the brunt of violence and the consequences of economic destruction and social devastation.

Summit of all fears

So what of the Elysee Summit, then? A single two-day summit is unlikely to cure the complex and intertwined ills of an entire continent, so we must have realistic expectations. The fact that the summit is taking place at all and that it has attracted significant African and international buy-in is already a success in itself. If nothing else, it demonstrates that the world has not forgotten Africa. But the summit must not be allowed to be simply a talking shop, where problems are named, but no solutions are identified.

The time where summits like this are merely another iteration of a long-standing blame game and finger-pointing exercise, singling out neo/colonialism as the most convenient scapegoat for all the continent’s problems should be over. The Elysee Summit is a real opportunity for African leaders to live up to their “African solutions for African problems” motto, and for their international partners to enable them to craft and implement effective and sustainable such solutions. Rather than looking to a distant history, contemporary solutions need to be found. As Mandela once put it: “If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner.”

The widespread lack of peace and security is not the only problems that Africa faces, but they are at the heart of them: development and good governance cannot thrive in situations of violence and instability. As such, the very theme of the summit—Peace and Security in Africa—is very aptly chosen. It is a reflection of the challenges for Africa, as well as of the concerns and self-interests of its international partners. This may not be the best combination of motives, but it is one that may yet provide an opportunity for better and more effective security cooperation within and beyond Africa. The best way not to squander this opportunity is a constructive and open dialogue that begins at the summit, and that continues afterwards and is followed through with concrete actions. Given the sheer scale of problems Africa faces, this will be a long and arduous journey that begins with a focus on peace and security and does not lose sight of economic development and improved governance.

What is required from African leaders today is the same kind of vision, skill, and determination that Nelson Mandela had and that was crucial in overcoming apartheid in South Africa. The challenges that today’s African leaders face are no smaller than that which confronted Mandela. Rising to these challenges and overcoming them would mean to fulfil Mandela’s powerful and enduring legacy.

Stefan Wolff does not work for, consult to, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organisation that would benefit from this article, and has no relevant affiliations.

Bob Diamond returns to the City with launch of new Africa banking business

Simon Goodley/The Guardian/Sunday 8 December 2013

Banker ousted from Barclays floats £150m fund for venture in Africa, with Nigeria rumoured to be starting point for investment

Bob Diamond, one of the most controversial bankers to emerge from the financial crisis and the man ousted as boss of Barclays after a direct intervention by the Bank of England, is making a dramatic return to the City with the launch of a new Africa banking business.

The financier once dubbed the "unacceptable face of banking", is attempting to raise \$250m (£153m) by floating a fund on the London Stock Exchange within the next two weeks – he plans to use the proceeds to buy a stake in an African bank with a presence in several countries across the continent.

As part of the deal, Diamond is teaming up with an African entrepreneur called Ashish Thakkar, the 32-year-old chief executive of Mara Group, a conglomerate with "technology, manufacturing, real estate and agriculture" interests in 19 African countries. It is anticipated that both men will sit on the new public company's board.

Diamond's choice of London to float his first major banking venture since leaving the City will surprise many, even though it is thought to reflect London's supposedly better ties with Africa, compared with Wall Street. One London-based banking source said: "It reflects the knowledge of Africa here, plus the time zone".

However, returning to the City will not be without its inconveniences – as even Diamond's friends admit his reputation is lower in Britain than almost anywhere else in the world.

Diamond's name is still widely associated with some of the more emotive events of the financial crisis, as he was frequently criticised for the level of his pay and an aggressive attitude to business – even before the scandal over the fixing of the benchmark interest rate, Libor, forced him out of Barclays. In 2010 he was memorably dubbed the "unacceptable face of banking" by Lord Mandelson after it emerged that he had received cash and share awards that could net him £63m.

However, his downfall came in July last year, in the face of relentless pressure from politicians and regulators for him to go following the interest rate manipulation scandal which resulted in Barclays being fined £290m to settle claims that it used underhand tactics to try to rig financial markets.

Marcus Agius, Barclays' then chairman, and Sir Michael Rake, the bank's most senior non-executive director, were summoned to see the then Bank of England governor Lord King, where they were told that "Bob Diamond no longer enjoyed the support of his regulators".

That stain on the banker's reputation has been tricky to shift and it emerged last week that Diamond is to be called as a witness as part of Guardian Care Homes' £70m suit alleging Barclays mis-sold its interest rate hedging products based on Libor.

Quite how his return to banking will be viewed in Africa is unclear, as Barclays' own Africa business was forced to launch a charm offensive following the Libor fallout. However, sub-Saharan countries appear to be attractive investments for bankers, as only a quarter of the population is said to hold a bank account.

The financier has also made no secret of wanting to invest in Africa, where his family foundation is active. He recently met senior officials in Nigeria, which helped fuel rumours he might be looking at one of the country's troubled banks.

Diamond will be assisted in his latest project by the British-born Thakkar, who moved to Rwanda with his family when he was 12, before the family fled the Rwandan genocide to Uganda. He has said he started selling computer equipment to friends and his school in Kampala and built his business up into what became Mara Group.

The new London-listed vehicle will be called Atlas Mara – after Diamond set up a company called Atlas Merchant Capital in New York this year as an old-style merchant bank that is looking to sign

deals with partners.

The pair's plan to raise money via a publicly-quoted cash shell with the purpose of buying assets in emerging markets is a controversial one. It is not without successes, but the reputation of such structures has received a large knock-back over the past couple of years with the corporate governance woes of Bumi Plc, an Indonesian mining firm created from a shell launched by the financier Nathaniel Rothschild.

Despite Diamond's reputation, the banker did leave the City with some supporters. He is widely credited with building Barclays' investment bank – Barclays Capital – which was an insignificant institution when he joined the firm in 1996.

Within a year it had merged with the fund management and trading arms of Wells Fargo and Nikko Securities and its stellar growth meant it provided an increasing chunk of Barclays' overall profits, which had previously come from more traditional lending.

Also, while Barclays was the first bank to be fined for Libor manipulation, Royal Bank of Scotland, Switzerland's UBS and Dutch lender Rabobank have subsequently been handed much larger fines.

Neither Diamond or Thakkar would comment.

AU holds memorial services for late Mandela

Xinhua/By Agencies /2013-12-9

The African Union (AU), the South African Embassy and the Ethiopian government on Sunday held memorial services for the late anti-apartheid leader and former South African president, Nelson Mandela, at the AU headquarters in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa.

Hosted by Erastus Mwencha, Deputy Chairperson of the AU Commission, and Febe Potgieter Gqubule, former South African ambassador, the memorial services kicked off with interfaith prayers by religious leaders.

Clips and music celebrating Rolihlahla Nelson Mandela's legacy were also screened during the memorial service in the presence of senior officials from the AU, the Ethiopian government and diplomats.

Eulogy was conducted by Ndumiso Ntshinga, South African Ambassador to Ethiopia, and the AU, whereby the Ambassador presented the life of Mandela.

"By 1939, at the age of 20, Nelson Mandela began his tertiary education and qualified as a lawyer. His years at university opened up a new world to him. A world of ideas, political beliefs and debates, a world where people were passionate about politics, it is in this academic environment where Mandela was exposed to young men and women who would form the vanguard of the most important political movements of the years to come. People were willing to sacrifice themselves for the cause of the oppressed," said the Ambassador.

"By 1944, Nelson Mandela co-founded the African National Congress (ANC) Youth League. By 1951, he was elected President of this body. Madiba often said that he could not pinpoint a moment in his life when he became politicized, a specific moment when he knew that he would spend his life in the liberation struggle," he said.

Children also read the obituary.

Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Chairperson of the AU Commission, praised Mandela's struggle and contribution to freedom and humanity, as well as his contribution to Africa's peace, development and prosperity.

In her statement on the passing away of Mandela prior to the memorial service, the chairperson said, "Madiba, as he was fondly known, symbolizes the spirit of Pan Africanism and solidarity in the struggles of humanity against apartheid, oppression and colonialism and for self-determination, peace and reconciliation."

Hailemariam Desalegn, Ethiopian Prime Minister, and also Chairperson of the African Union, said Mandela is one of Africa's greatest sons and an icon figure of exceptional contribution to humanity.

The premier underscored on the lesson learnt from the life of Mandela.

"As we celebrate his exceptional life today it is incumbent upon us to once again dedicate ourselves to the very ideals this great man stood for; justice, equality, freedom, democracy, unity and diversity and of course the renaissance of our mama Africa," he said.

The AU has also opened book of condolence and the flags on the premises of the AU headquarters has been flying half-mast since Friday.

UN/AFRICA :

US/AFRICA :

US has 'deep concern' over C. Africa bloodshed: Power
Agence France Presse/12/09/2013

NEW YORK - Washington's United Nations envoy called the Central African Republic's interim President Michel Djotodia on Sunday to express "deep concern" over the rising tide of violence in the country.

Ambassador Samantha Power urged Djotodia to "ensure the arrest of perpetrators of recent atrocities," urging him to denounce violence and call for an immediate return to law and order, her office said.

Power also asked Djotodia to "use his influence to reduce inter-religious tensions and protect civilians" and to give "full support" to French and African Union forces that are deploying to the Central African Republic.

Hundreds have died in a fresh outbreak of bloodshed in the Central African Republic, which has been in turmoil since a coalition of Muslim fighters led by Djotodia known as the Seleka overthrew the country's leader Francois Bozize in March.

Djotodia became interim president following Bozize's ouster, making him the first Muslim leader of the mostly Christian country.

Although Djotodia disbanded the Seleka, some militiamen went rogue and warlords soon imposed a reign of terror on large swathes of land.

Local Christians responded by forming vigilante groups and the government was never able to assert its authority over the sprawling, landlocked country.

Reports have described a series of horrors, with security forces and militia gangs razing villages, carrying out public killings and perpetrating widespread rapes.

CANADA/AFRICA :

Harper, Canadian delegation depart for South Africa for Mandela tributes

The Canadian Press/ Dec 08, 2013

Former PMs Brian Mulroney, Jean Chretien and Kim Campbell also going

A who's who of Canadian politics is on its way to South Africa with Prime Minister Stephen Harper to pay their final respects to Nelson Mandela.

Harper will attend a public memorial for Mandela on Tuesday in Johannesburg, as well as his lying in state in Pretoria on Wednesday.

He's being accompanied by three of his predecessors — Brian Mulroney, Jean Chretien and Kim Campbell, all of whom were invited by Harper to fly on the prime ministerial plane to attend the service. Joe Clark, meantime, is already in Africa and will join the Canadian delegation when it arrives in South Africa.

Mulroney spearheaded Canada's efforts to free Mandela from prison and pressure South Africa to end apartheid, while Chretien was prime minister when Mandela was granted honorary Canadian citizenship in 2001.

"He was a great, great man," Chretien said of Mandela as he boarded the plane.

Harper and his wife, Laureen, waved to the assembled media on the tarmac at the Ottawa airport as they got on the plane, a chilly sunset serving as their backdrop.

NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair also joined the delegation, but not Justin Trudeau, the Liberal leader. Instead, Liberal MP Irwin Cotler joined the delegation. It wasn't immediately known if Trudeau declined an invitation from Harper .

Cotler, who was an international human rights lawyer prior to his political career, served as counsel to Mandela and other prisoners of conscience and political dissidents around the world.

Two former governors general, Michaëlle Jean and Adrienne Clarkson, were also on board.

"To see representatives of all political families together going to South Africa to pay tribute to

Mandela is totally in the spirit of the man, so I'm proud of us," Jean said as she prepared to board the plane.

Premiers Darrell Pasloski of the Yukon, Nova Scotia's Stephen McNeil, Alberta's Alison Redford and Bob McLeod of the Northwest Territories are also travelling to South Africa with the prime minister.

Redford, a lawyer specializing in constitutional and legal reform law, worked for Mandela in the early 1990s in efforts to rebuild South Africa's legal system and lay the groundwork for the first all-race elections that led to him becoming president.

In addition, Deepak Obhrai, who is the parliamentary secretary to the foreign affairs minister, and Assembly of First Nations national chief Shawn Atleo were also on board.

Mandela died on Thursday at the age of 95.

His body will lie in state from Wednesday through Friday.

A state funeral for the former South African president is planned for next Sunday.

AUSTRALIA /AFRICA :

Australia's South African community remembers Mandela

9 Dec 2013/sbs.com.au

As world leaders gather in Soweto to remember the life of Nelson Mandela, the South African community in Australia is also paying its respects.

Hannah Sinclair reports.

Nelson Mandela has been remembered as the man who rid South Africa of the injustice of apartheid and brought peace and stability to the nation.

And for South Africans now living in Australia, Mr Mandela's message of tolerance still rings true.

Carla Afrika Sitar is the founder of the Out of Southern Africans Club in Geelong, Melbourne.

She says the Australian community can learn plenty from Mr Mandela's life.

"I would be hopeful that people in our multicultural society could learn a lot from his life and his teachings. And you know, just take those on board and go forward in the spirit of hope and goodness for all humanity that he stood for."

Ms Sitar says the work Mr Mandela did throughout his life is more relevant now than ever.

But she does fear that with his passing, people may forget what Nelson Mandela stood for.

"The message is far, far stronger than it ever has been for me. Because now I've lost what I believed the greatest and best thing, that belonged to Africa. Mr Mandela was a father of Africa, he

represented a lot. I came from an era where he was of major importance but not only that. People really, really respected him. For me the fear is now that people perhaps will forget what he was about and not live by his credo."

The South African Military Veterans Organisation is comprised of those who were called up or volunteered to serve in the South African Defence Force.

National chairman of the Australasian branch, Tony Macquet, says many Vets now living in Australia played an important role in forming the 'rainbow nation' alongside Mr Mandela.

"He's being remembered as a remarkable man I do believe that he is and will always be known as the man of the century. He brought ultimately peace to South Africa, and it's an enduring peace. And we like to believe that we were partners in that, in that we managed to bring the political people together at the time back in 1994. So that the rainbow nation could be formed."

After recently visiting the country, Mr Macquet says while there are still issues of violence, he is hopeful that Mr Mandela's vision of a unified South Africa will be fully realised.

"I think that it will take time. Nothing happens over night. And it might be another generation before people are totally comfortable with the situation."

Community groups across Australia are also planning memorial services for Sunday 15 December, when Mr Mandela is due to be buried.

Abraham Mamer from the African Australian Community Centre in Melbourne says he's anticipating a large and varied turnout.

"I think it's going to be all Australian's and all people who love peace and unity. Who love to live together, who love the multiculturalism. They will definitely be out there. So I wouldn't be surprised if I could see and hear thousands of people coming out that day and celebrating his legacy and be a part of his work. It wouldn't be a surprise, and I'm thinking up to 5-10 thousand should be there. Because this is short notice, but it's something we're all looking forward to it."

EU/AFRICA :

VIDEOS. Centrafrique : les soldats français désarment les milices, «par la force s'il le faut»
le 09.12.2013/leparisien.fr

Après un relatif retour au calme à Bangui, la capitale centrafricaine, les troupes françaises de l'opération Sangaris entament ce lundi le désarmement des milices. «La période d'impunité est terminée, a prévenu dimanche soir Jean-Yves Le Drian, lors du Grand Jury RTL-LCI-Le Figaro.

Lundi, tout le monde pose les armes», «D'abord, on leur demande gentiment et puis s'ils ne répondent pas, on le fait par la force. C'est un mouvement qui va durer longtemps», a déclaré le ministre français de la Défense, précisant qu'une partie de ces groupes armés avait commencé à se fondre dans la population, créant une «confusion».

À Bangui, les 1200 soldats français, sur les 1600 que compte l'opération Sangaris, ont étendu leur champ d'action dans tout Bangui. En véhicules blindés ou à pied, pour la deuxième journée

consécutives, les soldats français ont été très visibles sur les boulevards et carrefours stratégiques de la capitale, où l'activité est restée réduite malgré une accalmie après les massacres des jours derniers. En trois jours, 394 personnes ont été tuées, selon un dernier bilan donné dimanche par le chef de la diplomatie française, Laurent Fabius.

Tensions au contact des hommes de la Séléka

«La situation est plus calme mais elle reste (...) tendue», a commenté depuis Paris le colonel Gilles Jaron, porte-parole de l'état-major français. «Ce que l'on constate depuis aujourd'hui, c'est une tension assez palpable lorsque nos forces sont au contact de groupes armés». Les soldats français ont notamment observé cette «tension» à l'approche d'éléments armés de l'ex-rébellion de la Séléka (au pouvoir). «Ils ont compris qu'ils vont devoir être regroupés, désarmés, que la force française est en train de s'imposer à leurs dépens dans la capitale, ce qui crée une tension».

Près de l'aéroport, une patrouille française a répliqué dimanche après avoir été la cible de tirs, selon des témoins. Il n'y a eu aucun blessé côté français, d'après une source militaire. De facto, l'avertissement de Paris s'adresse en priorité à ces ex-combattants rebelles, coupables de nombreuses exactions ces derniers mois (pillages, exécutions sommaires) à l'encontre de la population. Haïs des habitants, qui les voient le plus souvent comme des «occupants» venus du Tchad et du Soudan voisins, les ex-Séléka, majoritairement musulmans, sont les seuls à évoluer en armes dans la capitale, face aux milices villageoises et chrétiennes «anti-balak» (anti-machettes, favorables à l'ancien régime), présentes dans la brousse ou infiltrées dans les quartiers.

Des militaires français ont aussi été déployés dans le nord et l'ouest de la Centrafrique, notamment dans les villes de Bossangoa et Bossembélé. L'opération dispose de huit hélicoptères, et du soutien d'avions de chasse Rafale, en provenance du Tchad, qui ont de nouveau survolé Bangui dimanche en guise de démonstration de force.

L'ambassadrice américaine à l'ONU, Samantha Power, est intervenue par téléphone auprès du chef de l'État par intérim Michel Djotodia pour lui demander d'appeler au calme et de sanctionner les responsables des récentes violences. Le président centrafricain a déclaré examiner une demande française consistant à abrégé le calendrier de transition et à organiser des élections en 2014 au lieu de 2015.

La situation humanitaire est critique : l'Unicef dénombre 480 000 déplacés dans tous le pays, dont 50 000 à Bangui. La Commission européenne a annoncé dimanche l'organisation d'un pont aérien entre Douala, au Cameroun, et Bangui, pour appuyer les opérations humanitaires en Centrafrique.

France tries to rewrite old role as Africa's policeman

By ELAINE GANLEY/The Associated Press/Sunday, December 8, 2013

Since 2011, France has intervened in four African countries: in Ivory Coast, on a joint mission in Libya, in Mali, and now Central African Republic.

PARIS — France is coming to the rescue again, deploying soldiers in a former African colony to help stave off catastrophe — dirty work Paris says it doesn't really want. France has its eyes on a dynamic new Africa that is creating jobs, not conflicts.

But the image of France as the gendarme of Africa is hard to erase.

French troops deployed to deal with the deadly chaos in Central African Republic just as some 40

leaders from Africa, including the Central African Republic's transitional prime minister, met in Paris on Friday and Saturday.

The summit made progress toward creating a French-trained African rapid-reaction force to enable the continent to meet its own security needs — while allowing France to maintain ties to the region that may pay off economically in the longer term.

France's idea of itself as a one-time colonial master cannot be easily shaken off. The French empire unraveled in the 1960s, but a half-century later, African leaders routinely call for help, and the calls don't often go ignored.

Since 2011, under two presidents from opposing political camps, France has intervened in four African countries: in Ivory Coast, on a joint mission in Libya, in Mali, and now Central African Republic.

In January, France sent in 5,000 troops to Mali to quash al-Qaida and other radicals in the north seen as a terrorist threat to countries around the region.

That dwarfs the mission in Central African Republic, where President François Hollande says 1,600 French troops will help some 6,000 African troops secure the nearly lawless country, where sectarian strife has grown after Muslim rebels ousted the president in March.

In both Mali and Central African Republic, Paris obtained African and international backing via the U.N. Security Council. U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said Saturday he's "grateful to all the countries contributing with soldiers ... and in particular to France for boosting its military support."

Yet Hollande doesn't want France to be the first, and sometimes only, responder to emergencies in Africa. France tried over several months not to intervene in Central African Republic.

Hollande announced a push to change France's role as savior to assistant at an African Union summit in Ethiopia in May, saying it is Africans who must assure their own security. Many African officials agree on the concept, though details of the plan are still being worked out.

France is pushing for the AU's rapid-reaction force to be in place in the coming months, and promised at the weekend summit to provide equipment and train up to 20,000 African troops a year. The U.N. would fund peacekeeping operations once it's fully operational.

Until then, Hollande said the EU should pitch in money "because the two continents are linked."

Hollande is not the first president to try to disassemble a heavy heritage, or profit from a continent whose image is changing from one of endless conflict to a burgeoning hub for investment.

Even the symbols of war are getting softer. The French move into Central African Republic is dubbed Operation Sangaris, after a local butterfly. The 1979 intervention to depose Jean-Bedel Bokassa, Central African Republic dictator and self-proclaimed emperor accused of cannibalism, was called Operation Barracuda.

Extricating France from its colonial past, without abandoning traditional partners in time of need, can be complex. The paternalistic partnerships Paris cultivated for decades with former colonies lined the pockets of dictators and dealers, and encouraged dependency. Today, the unwritten policy known as Franceafrique is officially disdained.

But Mali President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita says both sides remain bound to each other.

“France, alas, has a historic duty” to its ex-colonies, Keita said in an interview with the daily *Le Monde*. “When you have traveled the road together, as painful as it sometimes may have been, something remains. ... We are condemned to walk together.”

France’s government insists it doesn’t want to interfere in internal African affairs. But Hollande expressed open distaste Saturday for the rebel-leader-turned-president of Central African Republic: “I don’t want to point fingers, but we cannot keep in place a president who was not able to do anything, or even worse, who let things happen,” Hollande said on France-24 television, urging elections “as fast as possible.”

Aline Leboeuf, a security and development specialist at the French Institute for International Relations, said that a decade from now France won’t be able to intervene as it is today. For one thing, budget squeezes won’t allow it to replace aging equipment.

“So there are many small gaps in terms of capacity,” she said. And, she added, “There’s a big gap between the vision France has of itself as a global power and as a power that can intervene.”

The real question, she said, is: “Can you intervene in the right way, and when do you leave?”

That’s a question that has particularly haunted France since its failure to prevent the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, where 800,000 people were killed. French troops were in the country when the massacre of minority Tutsis by Hutu militias began.

Rwanda has sometimes accused French troops of participating in the killings — which France flatly denies. But it acknowledges it shares responsibility with the international community for not stopping the slaughter.

Meanwhile, Paris also wants a piece of the economic pie in a rising Africa, where average growth is above 5 percent. At the Africa summit, French officials reached a deal aimed at doubling trade with the continent by 2020.

“We can sell Airbuses, food. We can invest,” Fabius said Sunday on France-3 television. “The interest of Africa and the interest of Europe, notably France, is to move closer together. ... Our future is with the Africans.”

CHINA/AFRICA :

INDIA/AFRICA :

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

EN BREF, CE 09 Décembre 2013... AGNEWS/ DAM, NY, 09/12/2013