



(American aircraft on Saturday struck a training camp in Somalia belonging to the Islamist militant group the Shabab, the Pentagon said, killing about 150 fighters)

BURUNDI :

**Burundi: à peine lancée, la CVR au centre de controverses**

Par RFI/le 08-03-2016

Au Burundi, alors que s'achève la visite des trois experts mandatés par les Nations unies pour enquêter sur les violations des droits de l'homme, les autorités ont décidé de se pencher sur l'histoire tourmentée du pays. Cette mission a été confiée aux onze membres de la Commission vérité et réconciliation (CVR) prévue dans l'accord d'Arusha, signé en 2000, mais qui vient juste de commencer ses travaux. A peine lancée, elle est déjà au centre de controverses. Ses détracteurs jugent peu opportun de se pencher sur les crimes passés alors que le pays connaît une grave politique et dénoncent une « diversion » organisée par le pouvoir. Quant aux prérogatives à la composition de la Commission, elles ne font pas plus l'unanimité.

C'est d'abord l'absence d'un volet « justice » qui inquiète les détracteurs de la Commission.

Vital Nshimirimana, président du Forum pour le renforcement de la société civile au Burundi (FORSC), dénonce un organe « vidé de sa substance ».

« On a vu que la société civile a été ignorée tandis qu'on a préféré des religieux qui vont fonctionner selon une loi qui vise plutôt le pardon au lieu de la justice et la lutte contre l'impunité des crimes punis dans le passé », a-t-il constaté.

Il ne revient pas à la CVR « de juger » mais « d'établir la vérité », répond son président, Mgr Jean-Louis Nahimana.

« La Commission vérité et réconciliation, nous sommes d'abord un mécanisme non judiciaire pour, justement, essayer de faire la lumière sur ce passé et elle serait alors ce que j'appelle la justice de " plus jamais ça ". Seulement, on a fait le choix de séparer les deux mécanismes », a-t-il précisé.

C'est ensuite la composition de la CVR qui retient l'attention de Vital Nshimirimana. Il la juge trop proche du pouvoir et met en doute son impartialité.

« Parmi les onze commissariats, au moins trois – qui ont participé à des gouvernements – se sont accusés de différents crimes », a-t-il rappelé.

« On peut appartenir à un groupe politique, et cependant être honnête », rétorque le président de la Commission. Il invite ses détracteurs à ne pas juger son travail avant de l'avoir vu à l'œuvre.

Polémique également autour du calendrier de la CVR

Les onze membres de la Commission vérité et réconciliation doivent étudier les crimes commis au Burundi entre 1962 et 2008. Alors que le pays est actuellement plongé dans une grave crise politique, beaucoup s'interrogent sur l'opportunité d'une telle commission. Joint par RFI, Vital Nshimirimana dénonce une « diversion » organisée par le pouvoir.

Du côté de la CVR, on assure avoir pris les dispositions pour que tous les Burundais, y compris les réfugiés ou ceux qui sont en exil, puissent contribuer à ces travaux sur l'histoire du pays. Selon Mgr Jean-Louis Nahimana, le moment est d'autant plus opportun que la crise actuelle trouve ses racines dans l'histoire récente du Burundi. En effet, c'est la volonté du président Pierre Nkurunziza de briguer un troisième mandat, contrairement à ce que prévoyait l'accord d'Arusha, qui a déclenché les premières manifestations au printemps 2015.

RWANDA :

**Africa: Lessons From Rwanda On Women Empowerment**

8 March 2016/The New Times (Kigali)

International Women's Day is a special day to celebrate the socio-economic, cultural and political achievements of women the world over. As we celebrate this day we recognize the achievements and progress made in empowering women, as well as the challenges and barriers hindering them from achieving their full potential and limiting their contribution towards national economic, social and political development.

This year's International Women's Day theme: "Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step it up for gender equality" calls for revamped efforts towards achieving gender equality globally. The campaign theme: #pledge for parity encourages the participation of everyone, including men, in the society to make deliberate decisions that will influence gender equality at the grass-roots level.

Whether or not it is possible to bridge the gender gap by 2030 is dependent on a lot of factors. Already some global bodies like the World Economic Forum (WEF) are warning that the gender gap is not likely to close until 2133. This means that it will be at least 117 years from now before women can enjoy the same socio- economic and political benefits as their male counterparts worldwide.

In 2014, WEF had predicted that gender parity would be achieved by 2095 - 38 years less than what they predicted in 2015. This is a dark, grim picture given world- wide high level conferences, commitments and discussions on gender equality that have taken place over time.

The situation hence begs for some sort of explanation today as we review how far women have come and celebrate some of the achievements. Globally these efforts have yielded counterintuitive results on the ground whereby it seems that the more we talk and commit ourselves, the less results are achieved and it seems the longer it's going to take us to reach our destination.

While some countries have experienced real defining results, others have seen a slow down. Rwanda is one such country that has yielded tremendous results and it's almost impossible for me, and I believe many others, to talk about gender parity and not reference Rwanda as a positive case study.

There has been a lot of talk and surprisingly - for an African state - equally a lot of action. It is therefore no wonder it was ranked 7th on the global gender gap index in 2014, 6th in 2015 and who knows what top 5 position it will grasp this year? It is the only African state to make it to the top 10 list and to be listed ahead of "super power" economies such as United States of America, United Kingdom, Germany and France.

This is the reason I think efforts have been counter intuitive in some countries because one would reason that these so called developed countries would be leading the pack in closing the gender gap as they do during the "gender talks".

I am not saying Rwanda is perfect because it has obviously not yet successfully closed the gender gap but it is well on its way. Hence, it's worth taking a look at what correct steps it has taken to achieve the victories that will be celebrated today and learn from them.

Women are key contributors in the society and having their voices added to political matters is important to empowering them to make even greater contributions to national agendas. The Rwandan parliament has set precedence with the quota system that has seen more than 60% of parliamentary seats occupied by women.

This precedence has infiltrated the public sector where more and more women are being appointed and elected into leadership positions. Women in parliament have been successful in putting forward and influencing the agenda of women empowerment resulting in legislations on various matters ranging from land ownership and inheritance to paid maternity leave. Should this trend continue, quotas in Rwanda may be unnecessary in the future as the results speak for themselves and women's participation in political issues becomes a norm.

The Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF) has been aggressive, to say the least, in combating social and cultural practices that continue to limit women empowerment worldwide. Working within what is referred to as the national gender machinery- a collection of government institutions established to run and monitor gender equality geared programmes - the ministry has been able to reach out to women in the grass-roots level to educate them on their rights and

encourage women to speak up in a culture where silence is golden.

There is however, a lot of more that needs to be done especially with regard to GBV, reproductive and maternal health and financial inclusion. This year Rwanda has adapted the international theme to: "Step it up for gender equality, strive for women empowerment" which is an encouraging theme for me.

It expresses Rwanda's obvious dissatisfaction with what has been achieved so far and its wish to push the boundaries even further to achieve more for Rwandan women. For a country that has already achieved so much in promoting gender empowerment and gained a lot of international recognition for it, this is commendable. Rwanda has come a long way in overcoming the challenges resulting from the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi.

The gains in women empowerment are great examples of what a country can achieve with the right political will. No matter how you look at it, there is undeniable political will to support women overcome obstacles that hinder their contribution to national development.

Aside from the frameworks and policies which have proved effective in promoting gender equality, political will is the greatest take away lesson for the world. Great policies and frameworks would not amount to much if political will to implement is lacking.

Rwanda has proved that gender equality can be a reality through prioritizing and putting your money where your mouth is. The need to empower women and the resulting benefits cannot be understated. It's time for governments to put aside much talk and start to act. If Rwanda can do it, surely every country is in a position to achieve the same or better results.

### Rwanda: Access Bank's "W-initiative " - Giving the Rwandan Woman the Power to Change the World

8 March 2016/The New Times (Kigali)

Access Bank Rwanda recognizes the value of women as an important asset to society and major influencers of social change. Today, the African woman is considered the continent's greatest untapped resource thus it goes without saying that unleashing Africa's female labour force will catalyze the unlocking of Africa's (and by extension Rwanda's) full economic potential.

To achieve this, not only do Africa's women require access to financial resources, the continent's component countries all have to institutionalize the required legal framework of non-discriminatory rules and economic systems, a movement that the Government of Rwanda has remained in the vanguard.

Various stakeholders, including Access Bank Rwanda have since joined Government to ensure that Rwanda's objective of empowering women and promoting female entrepreneurship is achieved as all parties recognize this as crucial in the fight against poverty and a major key to the economic wealth of the Rwandan society. Access Bank's "W initiative", which aims at inspiring, connecting and empowering women in business, is one such platform that is designed to enable the Rwandan woman take full advantage of opportunities that will help them achieve their dreams and aspirations.

The initiative targets three main categories of women; young professionals; women in business and; women with their families. Gloria Bwiza Asimwe, the officer in charge of the program explained that it is open to all women who are desirous of progress.

"The W-initiative is Access Bank Rwanda's contribution towards improving the life of women in our society. Its implementation is in line with the Bank's total commitment to women empowerment and our dedication to support women to build a sustainable and profitable future," Gloria says.

What the initiative offers A maternal health care support scheme is a key component and one of the many perks of the initiative. It is tailored to provide financial support for couples in their quest towards completing their family and covers various forms of fertility treatment and natal support both locally and internationally. Under the initiative, young professionals are availed a wide range of lifestyle oriented value added benefits.

These include mentor-mentee programs and other support networks that ensure they access career development workshops and industry knowledge from more experienced female professionals across the world; there is access to professional advice, mentorship and guidance, education on a wide range of personal money management topics, and discounts, offers and benefits from a wide range of exclusive partner health, beauty, dining and leisure institutions.

### Rwandan Nuns Killed in Yemen Died As Martyrs, Says Bishop Mbonyingete

8 March 2016/The New Times (Kigali)

The two Rwandan nuns who were killed in an attack by gunmen in the war-torn Yemen's port city of Aden last week will be remembered as martyrs, a Catholic cleric has said.

Marguerite Mukashema, from Kivumu Parish in Kabgayi Diocese, and another only identified as Regine from Janja Parish, Ruhengeri Diocese, were killed on Friday when gunmen opened fire on an elderly home.

They were killed with other two nuns from India and Tanzania at an elderly and handicap care home run by Missionaries of Charity, a charity organisation founded by Mother Teresa, according to Bishop Smaragde Mbonyingete, the speaker of the Catholic Church in Rwanda.

Although the death of the nuns is a blow, Bishop Mbonyingete said the Church in Rwanda is proud to have Rwandan nuns die as martyrs.

"We were informed of their deaths by the apostolic nuncio. We deeply regret their deaths but stay proud for their sacrifice that resulted in deaths. We consider them martyrs and they are," he told The New Times yesterday.

Bishop Mbonyingete added that the deceased will not be brought to Rwanda but will be laid to rest in Yemen.

"Usually, when missionaries die, they are buried in countries where they have been serving. This means that they will be inhumed in Yemen. Although we are waiting for the decision of the congregation of sisters of charity in which they belong, there is little chance of their bodies coming," he said.

Bishop Mbonyingete said the Christian community will visit their families and organise a requiem mass that will be held in Kivumu Parish, Kabgayi, on March 13.

He went on to explain that the mass will be time to recognise the mission accomplished by those nuns and to let other Christians know their sacrifice.

"They have set a good example of selflessness, serving in such unsafe country. That spirit compelled them to stay for the sake of others though they could have left."

Nine more Rwandan nuns remain serving for Missionaries of Charity around the world, working for charity works like looking after orphans and the elderly.

This is the second time nuns are killed in Yemen after a similar attack left four other nuns dead in 1998.

RDC CONGO :

**RD Congo : Denis Mukwege réclame la fin de l'impunité pour les violeurs**

Par Jeune Afrique avec AFP/le 08 mars 2016

Le médecin congolais Denis Mukwege, reconnu pour son combat en faveur des femmes violées dans l'est de la RDC, présentera mardi aux Nations unies une pétition réclamant la fin de l'impunité pour les responsables de viols et d'abus sexuels dans son pays.

La pétition, signée par environ 200 organisations, sera remise au Conseil des droits de l'homme de l'ONU à Genève à l'occasion de la Journée internationale des femmes, a précisé lundi le Belge Thierry Michel, coréalisateur du documentaire « L'Homme qui répare les femmes » retraçant l'oeuvre du Dr Mukwege.

« Quand un État ne prend pas ses responsabilités, la communauté internationale doit le faire », a expliqué Thierry Michel lors d'une conférence à Genève.

Création d'un tribunal spécial pour la RDC

Le texte, intitulé « Non à l'impunité », réclame notamment que le Conseil publie une liste jusqu'ici secrète de 617 personnes soupçonnées d'avoir commis des viols et des atteintes aux droits de l'homme en RDC entre 1993 et 2003.

Il appelle aussi l'ONU à soutenir la création d'un tribunal spécial réunissant des juges et des procureurs internationaux pour juger les crimes de guerre et les crimes contre l'humanité commis dans ce pays, et demande que des échantillons d'ADN soient systématiquement prélevés dans les affaires de viol.

Ces viols sont une arme de guerre »

Dr Mukwege a aidé depuis 1999 dans son hôpital de Panzi, à Bukavu, capitale de la province du Sud-Kivu, à se reconstruire physiquement et psychologiquement environ 40 000 femmes victimes de viols accompagnés de violences sauvages commis à grande échelle dans l'est de la RDC depuis une quinzaine d'années, d'abord pendant la deuxième guerre du Congo (1998-2003), puis au cours des différents conflits armés qui se succèdent ou se superposent dans cette région.

« Ces viols sont une arme de guerre », a dénoncé le gynécologue congolais de 61 ans, qui a reçu en 2014 le prix Sakharov des droits de l'homme décerné par le Parlement européen. Le nombre de victimes de viols a diminué avec la baisse des combats, passant de 10 par jour il y a quelques années à un peu moins de 7 par jour, a-t-il précisé.

Des milliers d'enfants violés, y compris en bas âge

Mais le médecin se dit très inquiet par le nombre de patientes qui viennent désormais de secteurs hors de la zone de conflit alors que les violences touchent « un nombre grandissant d'enfants, même des bébés ».

Selon une étude portant sur plusieurs années, plusieurs milliers d'enfants de l'est du pays ont été violés, et 200 avaient moins de cinq ans, a-t-il dit.

Il s'est aussi inquiété du nombre d'anciens enfants soldats, forcés par les groupes armés à commettre des actes de sauvagerie et qui ont été intégrés à l'armée régulière sans bénéficier de soutien psychologique. Le phénomène du viol « s'est métastaté dans notre société », a-t-il affirmé.

UGANDA :

#### Uganda's central bank sells Imperial Bank stake to Tanzania's Exim

By Reuters/Tuesday, March 8th 2016

Uganda's central bank said on Monday it had sold a majority stake in Imperial Bank to a Tanzanian financial institution, almost four months after taking it over due to concerns about its Kenyan parent company.

Formerly owned by Kenya's Imperial Bank Limited, Imperial Bank was a small player in Ugandan banking which was taken over after Kenyan authorities assumed management of the parent, citing "unsafe or unsound business conditions." In a statement Bank of Uganda (BoU) said it had "recently sold 58.6 percent ordinary shares of Imperial Bank (Uganda) Ltd, formerly held by Imperial Bank (Kenya) Ltd, to Exim Bank (Tanzania) Ltd." BoU did not disclose the value of the transaction, but said it had ceased management of the bank on Monday.

#### Construction of Uganda -Tanga Port oil pipeline starts August

[dailynews.co.tz/](http://dailynews.co.tz/) ALVAR MWAKYUSA/ 08 March 2016

CONSTRUCTION of the envisaged 4 billion US-dollar (about 8 trillion/-) pipeline to transport crude oil from Kabale in Uganda to Tanga Port is slated to commence in August, pending ongoing discussions between the two governments and investors.

The Managing Director of Tanzania Petroleum Development Corporation (TPDC), Dr James Mataragio, said the 24-inch conduit to cover 1,403 kilometres is expected to convey 200,000 barrels of crude oil per day.

“Tanzania has been chosen as a priority route due to a number of factors one of which is its experience in implementing gas and oil transportation projects through pipelines such as the 542-km Mtwara-Dar es Salaam gas channel,” Dr Mataragio told a news conference.

He added that, among others, the ongoing discussions are meant to spell out how the government of Tanzania would collect its revenues from the mega project. Construction of the pipeline is expected to take three years.”

Last week, President John Magufuli and his Ugandan counterpart Yoweri Museveni met in Arusha

where they discussed the ambitious project.

The two leaders met ahead of the 17th East African Community (EAC) Heads of State Summit. Apart from its experience in pipeline infrastructure, Tanzania boasts of its natural port in Tanga and the fact that the tube will be passing in an area with low population – hence the minimal compensation for residents along the entire project length. “What is more, the route from Kabale to Tanga is flat and with no reserved areas such as national parks or game reserves.

It will pass through Kagera, Shinyanga, Tabora and Singida to Tanga and this will as well help to spur oil and gas exploration along the route,” Dr Mataragio stated. According to the TPDC boss, the governments of Tanzania and Uganda signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for implementation of the venture in October, last year.

The project is envisaged to create 15,000 jobs during its execution after which it will employ about between 1,000 and 2,000 people.

“The Tanzania Railway Limited (TRL) could on the other hand benefit from the venture through transportation of 123,000 pipes during the construction phase. The project will as well enable us to upgrade the Tanga port and road network in the northern corridor,” he explained.

The corridor to be created, Dr Mataragio said, could be used in the future to put up pipeline infrastructure to convey natural gas to Northern and Lake Zone regions. Uganda has so far discovered 6.5 billion barrels of the precious liquid along the Lake Albert basin.

The first finding was made by Hardman Resources in 2006, which was later acquired by Tullow Oil.

## SOUTH AFRICA :

### South Africa Current-Account Deficit Widens as Exports Drop

March 8, 2016/bloomberg.com

South Africa’s current-account deficit widened more than economists estimated, reaching 5.1 percent of gross domestic product in the fourth quarter as exports declined despite a weaker rand and dividend receipts from abroad decreased.

The gap on the current account, the broadest measure of trade in goods and services, increased from a revised 4.3 percent in the previous three months, the Reserve Bank said in its Quarterly Bulletin released on Tuesday in the capital, Pretoria. The deficit was forecast to reach 4.4 percent, according to the median estimate of 12 economists surveyed by Bloomberg.

A worsening in the trade outlook threatens to undermine the rand further after it fell 11 percent against the dollar in the past six months. South Africa relies mainly on foreign investment in stocks and bonds to help fund the current-account shortfall, inflows that declined in the fourth quarter as investor confidence in President Jacob Zuma’s administration weakened.

“The fact that the deficit has been above 3 percent for some years keeps the pressure on the rand,” Christie Viljoen, an economist at KPMG LLP, said by phone from Cape Town on Tuesday. “This is yet another data set which tells us we have a lot of work to do to fix this economy.”



The rand weakened 1.1 percent to 15.4201 against the dollar as of 11:20 a.m. in Johannesburg on Tuesday. The yield on rand-denominated government bonds due December 2026 rose five basis points to 9.34 percent.

The deficit for 2015 narrowed to 4.4 percent of GDP from 5.4 percent in the previous year. The government is forecasting a shortfall of 4 percent this year.

The trade gap more than doubled to 57 billion rand (\$3.7 billion) in the fourth quarter as exports, excluding gold, fell 3 percent to 969 billion rand. Imports rose 1.1 percent to 1.1 trillion rand in the period.

“Even though the depreciation in the exchange value of the rand boosted the export earnings of domestic producers, the benefits thereof were more than fully negated by a further decline in the international prices of South African export commodities in the fourth quarter,” the Reserve Bank said.

While the weakening in the exchange rate in the fourth quarter helped to boost spending by foreign tourists, it will also add to costs in the economy, according to the central bank. Inflation accelerated to a 17-month high of 6.2 percent in January, exceeding bank’s target band of 3 percent to 6 percent. ‘Bad News’

Inflation pressures intensified in recent months and it’s already outside the target range,” Johan van den Heever, head of economic reviews and statistics in the central bank’s research department, said on Tuesday. “It seems there’s more bad news in the pipeline.”

Foreign investment in stocks and bonds swung to an outflow of 300 million rand in the fourth quarter from an inflow of 11.8 billion rand in the previous three months, while foreign direct investment fell 14 percent to 13.7 billion rand.

Consumption improved last quarter, with growth in spending by consumers, the government and businesses accelerating to an annualized 4.3 percent from 1.4 percent in the third quarter. Household spending, which makes up about two-thirds of expenditure in the economy, rose 1.6 percent, up from 0.9 percent in the previous three months.

Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan last month cut this year’s GDP growth forecast by almost half to 0.9 percent as the worst drought in more than a century, a slowdown in expansion in South Africa’s biggest export market, China, and falling commodity prices weigh on output.

### **Xenophobia: Nigerians ask FG to force South Africa to compensate victims**

By Daily Post Staff/March 8, 2016

Nigerians in South Africa have called on the Federal Government to prevail on the country’s authority to adequately compensate the victims of the 2015 xenophobia outbreak.

The President of Nigeria Union, South Africa (NUSA), Mr Ikechukwu Anyene, made the appeal in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Abuja on Monday.

Anyene urged President Muhammad Buhari to use the occasion of President Jacob Zuma’s two-day visit to Nigeria from Tuesday to address their concerns.

NAN recalls that the federal government had on Sunday said that Zuma's visit would be used to address the challenges being faced by Nigerians in South Africa.

Anyone who said that the April 2015 xenophobic violence affected some Nigerians in South Africa, expressed regret that none of them had been compensated.

"Lots of Nigerians lost their means of livelihood, material possessions and for many, all their hard work.

"We have sought for compensation on behalf of these victims from the South African government through the Nigerian government so that the victims can be adequately compensated.

"Up to this point in time nothing has been heard about the compensation request on behalf of the victims," he said.

He therefore called on President Muhammadu Buhari to urgently intervene and ensure that the rights of Nigerians were not trampled upon.

NAN recalls that Some South Africans accused immigrants of taking jobs and opportunities away from them which resulted in attacks that saw some foreigner in South Africa killed and property destroyed.

The violence followed reported comments by Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini, an influential figure among the Zulu ethnic group, that foreigners should pack their bags and leave.

While acknowledging that the South African government had done a lot of work to curb the xenophobia, Anyone said that, "more still needed to be done".

The President maintained that xenophobia still remained a huge challenge in South Africa and a major concern to Africans.

According to him, there seems to be institutionalised xenophobia in South Africa where Nigerian professionals and students are discriminated against and victimised simply because they are non indigenes.

He expressed sadness that Nigerians in South Africa have for some time now been unduly harassed or killed.

"For some years now, a lot of Nigerians in South Africa have been victims of assassination by unknown people and rogue officers of the South African Police Service.

"Most of the cases have not been solved and nobody has been arrested in majority of the cases, even as many of them were reported to the police with official case numbers," he said.

Speaking further, "this is strange in a country where the police force is efficient and the rate of successful prosecution is high up to 92.2 per cent in 2014/15.

"We implore the minister to demand from the highest level of South African authorities to set up a panel to investigate our claims and address our concerns," Anyone said. (NAN)

**Global Aids conference in South Africa**

8 March 2016/SouthAfrica.info

South Africa will be hosting a series of important international conferences this year, the first being the 21st International Aids Conference, taking place over five days starting on 18 July, International Nelson Mandela Day.

Aids 2016, as the conference is known, is co-hosted with the International Aids Society (IAS), and will be held at Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre (ICC) in Durban.

"This is the second time that Durban will be hosting the International Aids Conference and marks a major milestone in the HIV response," said Olive Shisana, the Aids 2016 local co-chair. "We want to create an enhanced conference experience for everyone involved."

Aids 2016 is convened by five permanent partners: IAS, Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+), The International Community of Women Living with HIV (ICW), International Council of Aids Service Organisations (Icaso) and UNAids in collaboration with international and South African scientific and civil society partners. It is expected to convene over 18 000 delegates from around the world, including up to 1 000 journalists.

Watch Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa talk about the conference:

"This conference will provide a platform for researchers from across the world to share the latest scientific advances in the field, to learn from one another's expertise and to develop strategies for advancing all facets of our collective efforts to treat and prevent HIV," the Cabinet said.

Held under the theme Access Equity Rights Now, it will serve as a call to action to work together and reach people who still lack access to comprehensive treatment, prevention, care and support services.

The South Africa Cabinet said it would advance the country's HIV and tuberculosis response, and leave an impact on one of the most important challenges in the world.

The country will also host the 17th Conference of Parties (CoP17) to CITES at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg from 24 September to 5 October and the 35th International Geological Congress from 27 August to 4 September.

These conferences help to boost the country's influence on global governance, as well as positively contribute to tourism and investment.

### **South Africa: Insurgency - South Africa to Extend Military Special Forces to Nigeria**

8 March 2016/This Day (Lagos)

The Minister of Defence, Mansur Dan-Ali Monday said arrangements are currently on going between South Africa and Nigeria military for the extension of her military special forces to Nigeria.

This he said was a follow up to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the two countries in 2013, prompting the Chiefs of Defence of the two countries to meet and trash out all the areas that are relevant to the two countries.

The minister disclosed this while receiving South African delegation led by the Minister of Defence

, Ms. Nobise Mapisa-Nqakula.

According to him, "The two countries should look at how the two industrial complex would come into being. It is a very good thing that we are thinking that South Africa being the closeness ally to us should come and help us in developing our industrial complex, that is the Defence Corporation of Nigeria."

He added: "We are of the opinion that very soon when the two Commander-in-Chiefs meet, and the visit is finalised, we will look into going deep how the two countries will work together and coming to an agreement between the MoU and technical expertise between the two countries.

When asked about how extension of South Africa military expertise to Nigeria would work, Dan-Ali said: "This is just like the special forces that have been discussed by the two Chiefs of Defence Staff, that one will come into being within the two countries as soon as possible."

Earlier, South Africa Minister of Defence, Ms.Mapisa-Nqakula, said the collaboration between South Africa defence industry and that of Nigeria was meant to strengthen defence ties between the two countries.

She said this would include transfer of skills, technologies, research and development, adding that sharing of information and supporting each other in contemporary challenges are also inclusive.

Mapisa-Nqakula explained: "Whether buying or transfer of technology, it depends on the decision of the two Chiefs of Defence and I know that they have met and held a lengthy meeting, so I think they have also began to identify the critical areas of research development, they have also identify areas for acquisition."

She noted that the Committee of Defence that would be put in place by both countries should be able to reach an agreement by June when the inaugural meeting of the committee would be held to decide whether the Defence industry would be a joint ventures, or procuring from one country by the other country.

### South Africa: Why the Palestine Solidarity Movement in South Africa has to Evolve - or Become Irrelevant

8 March 2016/The Daily Vox (Johannesburg)

The Palestinian struggle has captured the imagination of black South Africans since the 1970s, but of late the movement has been gripped by a dangerous form of populism. It's time for the movement to undertake a critical shift in approach towards one that is principled and immersed in the programmes of the decolonisation movement in South Africa, argues MINHAJ JEENAH.

#### Disclaimer

Let's be clear, the militarised occupation of Palestine by Zionists is one of the starkest and most vicious manifestations of the violence of colonial white power that perpetuates racism, sexism and violent capitalism. The ideological basis of Zionism is to create a community of separateness at the incremental extermination of an indigenous population.

The Palestinian struggle for self-determination is a righteous struggle which is necessarily linked to the Black condition. Its resistance in all its forms, violent or otherwise, is a legitimate resistance.

Let's be clear to set the terms of our engagement through this post: I'm not interested in compromising on or discussing these actualities.

## Background

The Palestinian struggle has captured the imagination of black South Africans since the 1970s - particularly resonant was the Palestinian armed resistance against Zionist colonialism. While exiled South African liberation movements had various forms of contact with the Palestine Liberation Organisation, Palestinian solidarity within South Africa remained very much a Muslim issue until the mid-80s when the Israeli-apartheid analysis started taking shape, promoted by some within the Black Consciousness movement and smaller left groups.

Post-1994 saw certain significant changes to Palestine solidarity work, most notably during the outbreak of the second intifada in 2000 when it was addressed more strongly as an issue of national liberation, and South African civil society was lobbied.

After the call from Palestinian civil society for Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) of Israel in 2005 and the launch of Israeli Apartheid Week, campus-based Palestine solidarity activism was strengthened and focused. Since then, the global BDS campaign helped define and intensify Palestine solidarity in South Africa - through campus-based structures, civil society, BDS South Africa, Muslim and Christian groups, anti-Zionist Jewish groups and unions.

There were also numerous efforts to form broad coalitions to coordinate solidarity work. The most recent such effort was the National Coalition for Palestine, formed during the 2014 massacre in Gaza, and now dominated by the NGO BDS South Africa.

## Towards a critical shift

In the recent past Palestine solidarity work has been gripped by a dangerous form of populism.

After the massive solidarity march in Cape Town in 2014, Palestine solidarity activism has been characterised by the #BoycottWoolworths campaign. As part of a broader consumer boycott, this campaign aims to pressure Woolworths to remove Israeli products from its shelves. In what was, arguably, a bad tactical move Woolworths was targeted for a consumer boycott because the campaign was deemed "winnable" - for a number of reasons. There have been a few voices of dissent against the campaign, within the movement and externally, challenging the moral and tactical value of the boycott.

The "winnable" strategy, which is an approach that has dominated the BDS campaign in South Africa, is problematic and unprincipled - it reduces struggle to a list of feel-good victories rather than moving towards substantive change. Alas, almost two years later, the campaign has seemingly lost steam.

Nevertheless, #BoycottWoolworths succeeded in mobilising some (especially young) activists and now needs to be re-strategised into a new, more rigorous strategy. The campaign should build on its success and now cast the intense focus directly on Israeli products, not particular stores. #BoycottWoolworths must now become #BoycottIsrael.

There has also been dangerous courting with the ANC, with some solidarity groups becoming apologists for the ruling party and feting it in rallies as if it's the vanguard of Palestine solidarity. Although the party has stated its commitment to the BDS campaign, its role has been contradictory, with its government often working contrary to these commitments.

It's deeply concerning and offensive that apparent support for the Palestinian course is often used (particularly before elections) as an ANC buffer to pacify people sympathetic to the course at the expense of interrogation of problematic policy (and, yes, to get votes).

This inability to properly politicise Palestinian solidarity and approach it with principle rather than just tactic has also seen many ad-hoc airy-fairy events that result in minimal understanding of the complexities of Palestinian activism. Admittedly, there have been more substantive campaigns, such as the current campaign to arrest Shimon Peres, but these have not led to large-scale mobilisation.

There is, now, a need for the Palestine solidarity movement in South Africa to undertake a critical shift in approach.

Fallism

International solidarity is fundamentally complex. It requires astute strategy, radical empathy, moral consistency and a very particular commitment to disrupt the politics of differing oppressions.

The South African movement for solidarity with the Palestinian people needs a process of difficult reflection. It must divorce itself from reductionist praxis and undertake serious mass engagement with the political complexities of the Palestinian struggle and internationalism.

The movement must be claimed as a radical collective movement that is intersectional and decentralised. It must direct both our revolutionary anger and our love for freedom, justice and equality through principled, uncompromising and intelligible strategies.

It is, therefore, also clear that solidarity for the Palestinian struggle must be immersed in the programmes of the decolonisation movement in South Africa. The movement will be compromised if it regards its victimhood to the exclusion of other colonial sufferings.

Key to these solidarity strategies is a more strengthened commitment to force unconscious capital, government and academic institutions to submit to the call from Palestinian comrades to isolate Israel. Consistency in praxis, also, includes uprooting and discomfiting Zionist sentiment, in order to de-normalise and remove racist ideology from our spaces.

Israel must fall.

Minhaj Jeenah is the Chairperson of the Muslim Youth Movement Western Cape region, which is a member of the National Coalition for Palestine.

TANZANIA :

**Tanzania: Vodafone Launches Toll-Free Lines for Ambulance Taxi**  
8 March 2016/Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)

UK-based telecom giant Vodafone Group announced yesterday the launch of a pioneering new toll-free emergency line for ambulance taxi service in Tanzania.

The service will be provided by Vodafone Foundation - alongside its NGO partners Pathfinder

International and Touch Foundation and the US Agency for International Development or USAID.

The first-of-its-kind service was launched in districts where maternal and infant mortality rates are believed to be among highest in the world.

The emergency line could help save around 225 lives of women and babies a month and will see a network of 100 taxi drivers responding to emergency calls, taking pregnant women on what is often a three-hour journey to reach the nearest hospital.

Once women arrive at hospital, the emergency taxi drivers are paid using Vodafone's mobile payment service M-Pesa.

The company noted that a trial of the taxi service late last year in an area of Sengerema saved the lives of 323 women and babies. "Our maternal health programme is another example of the transformative power of technology.

Since 2010, our 'text to treatment' programme has benefitted more than 3,000 women living with debilitating maternal condition obstetric fistula.

"Now, this pioneering new service will provide a much-needed lifeline for thousands of high-risk pregnant women in Tanzania without access to emergency healthcare," said Vodafone Foundation Director Andrew Dunnett in a statement.

The emergency line could help save around 225 women and babies' lives a month, and will see a network of 100 taxi drivers responding to emergency calls, taking pregnant women on what is often a three-hour journey to reach the nearest hospital.

#### **Tanzania: Minister for Health to Grace World Women's Day**

8 March 2016/Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)

DAR ES SALAAM Regional Commissioner (RC), Mr Saidi Meck Sadiki, has underscored the need for women empowerment as the country join the world today in celebration of the Day.

Addressing reporters in Dar es Salaam, Mr Sadiki said the Minister for Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, Ms Ummu Mwalimu will grace the celebration at the Biafra ground today morning.

He said as these years celebration advocates for 50-50 by 2030, the RC called for creating conducive environment to empower women so that the mission can be attained.

"A lot needs to be done by the society and the stakeholders as well, for creating conducive environment in which women commitment and contribution in various sectors can be recognised," he said.

He said the society needs to be educated as well on the positive role women can play in the community by giving them a chance to deliver and showcase their talents in a number of sectors.

Mr Sadiki said on the importance of giving women equal chance to participate in education, economic and leadership avenues as they can be stimulators to personal, family and national development.

He said the society should use the celebrations to address the challenges facing women and coming up with plans which will support them to reach their needed end. As a region, Mr Sadiki said they have organised exhibitions which started on Sunday at the Mnazi Mmoja grounds in which women showcase their entrepreneur's skills.

Meanwhile, the Vice-President, Ms Samia Suluhu Hassan, will be a special guest at a seminar organised by a non-governmental organisation (NGO), Kazi Services Limited, in collaboration with the Association of Tanzania Employers (ATE) in celebration of the World Women Day climaxing today.

Speaking to reporters, the Director General of the Kazi Services Limited, Ms Suhura Muro, said the seminar is meant to celebrate women success in social, political, economic and cultural sectors.

In another development, the United Nations celebrates the progress made towards women's rights, gender equality and women's empowerment and reaffirms its commitments to support the government to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

A statement issued by the UN read in part that with the adoption of the newly launched Sustainable Development Goals this year, International Women's Day comes at an opportune time, with gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls having been recognised as a precondition to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In addition, the statement said to the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, the government has also answered UN Women's call for action to Step It Up for Gender Equality and has committed to amending discriminatory laws and provisions, specifically those related to marriage, property and inheritance.

As the world faces great inability and uncertainty, it has become essential to solidify commitments to end violence against women and girls said the United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women, Dr Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka.

KENYA :

**Kenya's Equity Bank expects rise in regional profits in 2016**

Tue Mar 8, 2016 /Reuters

NAIROBI, March 8 (Reuters) - Kenya's Equity Bank expects its regional subsidiaries to more than double their contribution to group profit this year as lending through its mobile banking business continues to grow, it said on Tuesday after posting a 7 percent rise in profits.

The bank said its pretax profit rose to 24 billion shillings (\$237 million) from 22.4 billion shillings a year earlier, helped by a near 17 percent rise in net interest income.

Equity, which also operates in Uganda, Tanzania, South Sudan, Rwanda and Democratic Republic of Congo, said these subsidiaries contributed 23 percent of total assets, 23 percent of total deposits, 17 percent of its loan book and 6 percent of the group's profits.

"We want to make Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Uganda and Democratic Republic of Congo to contribute at least 30 percent of the assets ... and hopefully contribute 15 percent of the



profitability," Chief Executive Officer James Mwangi told an investor briefing.

Mwangi said 2015 had been a difficult year due to a depreciation in regional currencies against the dollar, especially in conflict-stricken South Sudan.

"Last year was one of the most turbulent in terms of macroeconomic environment. We saw significant devaluation of the South Sudan pound, where the currency was devalued by 84 percent," he said.

"We also saw in the fourth quarter, particularly in Kenya, significant interest rate volatility," he said.

The yield on Kenya's 91-day, 182-day and 364-day Treasury bills surged above 20 percent at the start of the fourth quarter, before sliding below 13 percent by the end of the year.

The bank, the biggest in Kenya by number of depositors, said profits rose due to a jump in net interest income to 34.1 billion shillings from 29.2 billion shillings last time.

Its loan book expanded to 269.9 billion shillings from 214.2 billion shillings while the ratio of non-performing loans to total loans fell to 3.3 percent from 4.2 percent in 2014.

Equity said 78 percent of the group's loans were made through its mobile banking service, with 72 percent of lending going to small and medium businesses.

"We see the future to be driven by the digital bank, not the bricks and mortar," Mwangi said.

It said total assets rose to 428.1 billion shillings from 344.6 billion shillings, while customer deposits rose to 302.2 billion shillings from 245.6 billion shillings. (\$1=101.4500 Kenyan shillings) (Reporting by George Obulutsa; editing by Edith Honan, Greg Mahlich)

### **Kenya: Police Arrest 4 Men for Trying to Join Islamic State**

By tom odula, associated press/Mar 7, 2016

Kenyan police Monday said they are holding four men on suspicion of trying to leave the country to join the Islamic State group in Libya, as authorities worry that the increasing number of citizens joining the extremist organization could be a sign that IS is trying to create a presence in this East African country.

The four men were on a bus bound for the Uganda border when armed policemen stopped it at a roadblock on March 1 and arrested them, police said.

Police were on the lookout for young men and women going to Sudan through Uganda, the route commonly used by the Kenyan recruits going to Libya, said police officials who insisted on anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the press about the ongoing investigation. The four matched this description, they said.

The four men arrested — Mohamed Kassim, Faraj Swaleh alias Mustafa Kheri, Ali Bwabnadi and Kassim Ahmed alias Abdirahman Saidi — appeared in court in the coastal city of Mombasa Monday. The magistrate granted police the authority to hold the suspects for an additional 30 days to make further investigations before filing charges.

Samuel Ouma, the officer investigating the case, told the court that Kassim, Swaleh and Ahmed are

facing separate charges of extremist activities in the coastal town of Lamu where they had been released on bail.

At least 20 Kenyans have gone to join the Islamic State group in Libya and Middle East, according to the officials. Kenya is already struggling to stop recruitment of youths to Somalia's al-Shabab, which is allied to al-Qaida. The Kenya recruits to al-Shabab are estimated to be in their hundreds and have been used to carry out numerous attacks in Kenya after the extremist group vowed in 2011 to avenge the deployment Kenyan troops to Somalia to fight the militants. Both extremist groups are targeting Kenya's Muslims, who make up about 4.3 million of Kenya's 44 million people.

"The rate of radicalization is alarming and needs urgent measures to contain it," former National Counter Terrorism Center Director Isaac Ochieng, said late last year. Martin Kimani, the current director of the center declined to comment.

The number of those recruited by IS from Kenya is likely to grow, say analysts.

"The numbers cited by the Kenyan authorities remain low, although social media monitoring suggests that there is a considerable level of interest in IS among parts of Kenyan society so the figure is likely to grow over time," said Matt Bryden the former head of the United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and a leading expert on jihadi groups. "While Kenya is right to be concerned, youths from dozens of countries have travelled to join IS and there is no indication that Kenya is being especially targeted by the group."

The Kenyan government's capacity to directly counter the Islamic State group's aggressive recruitment campaign is limited but it can do much more to understand and address the factors that nudge some Kenyan youths toward radicalism and violence, said Bryden.

Human rights activists and Muslim leaders have warned that major driving factors encouraging youths to enroll in extremist groups include a feeling of marginalization and alleged government discrimination against Muslims, as well as the government's response to the problem. Government security agencies have been accused of torture and extra-judicial killings of suspected extremists and attacks on Muslim human rights groups.

"The government has allowed the situation to fester," said human rights activist Alamin Kimathi. "It has burned bridges with the Muslim community with the wholesale criminalization of the Muslim community."

### **Kenya: Lamu or Tanga? Intriguing Tale of Two Pipelines**

7 March 2016/The Nation (Nairobi)

Kenya and Uganda were about to announce that a \$4 billion crude oil pipeline would take the Northern route through Lamu when things took a sudden turn.

President Yoweri Museveni met Jabier Rielo, Total E&P vice president for Eastern Africa in Uganda's state house in July 2015, and talks on a completely different pipeline passing through Tanzania's Tanga were initiated.

Officials in Uganda's ministry of Energy and Mineral Development said Mr Rielo was acting on a tip that President Uhuru Kenyatta planned to meet Museveni, with the view of sealing the Lamu crude oil pipeline deal. Still the two Presidents met in Uganda and announced on August 10, last year that the pipeline would pass through Albertine to Lokichar in Turkana County.

Uganda gave Kenya conditions on financing, security guarantees, hastening construction and transportation tariffs. Kenya was to ensure that these conditions, said to have been pushed by Total, are met before actual construction started.

"It is this meeting with Total that brought a rift between Kenya and Uganda, even as crude oil pipeline discussions went on," said a senior official from Uganda's Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development who sought anonymity citing sensitivity of the negotiations.

After Ugandan talks, Mr Riello then moved to Dar es Salaam and met the then Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete on August 22, last year. This meeting gave impetus to the idea of building the Tanga pipeline.

Aside from Total's interest in the security of the pipeline, the firm is said to have exploration interests around Lake Eyasi, North Tanzania.

Mr Riello in late 2014 met Tanzania's Energy and Minerals Minister Sospeter Muhongo to initiate participation in the licensing round.

The result of the recent Dar meeting was a memorandum of understanding between Tanzania and Uganda on October 12, last year. The MoU proposed a study that would give way for construction of a crude oil export pipeline.

Present during the signing ceremony in Kampala, were officials from Tanzania Petroleum Development Corporation, Uganda's ministry of energy and Total E&P Uganda.

The team was convinced that this would be the best option for exportation of Uganda's 6.5 billion barrels of crude oil from Hoima via northern Tanzania to the Indian Ocean port of Tanga.

About six months after Kenya and Uganda settled on the deal, it did not come as a surprise that Tanzania and Uganda agreed on a pipeline through Tanga.

## AGREED

A statement by Tanzania's presidential press unit last week stated that President John Pombe Magufuli met Museveni, and agreed that the pipeline will pass through Tanga.

"The two agreed to begin construction of the crude oil pipeline from Tanga to Uganda, for the benefit of the two countries and their East African counterparts," said Director of State House Communication in Tanzania Gerson Msigwa on Tuesday. "The pipeline will have a length of 1, 120 km and the project will create employment to over 15, 000 people."

Ugandan and Kenyan officials working on the pipeline negotiations have since dismissed the current deal (Uganda-Tanga route) on the pipeline, arguing that Tanzania is not a member of the Northern Corridor Integration Projects summit (NCIP) hence the project cannot take the Tanga route.

"The talks are developing, and as you know they are being conducted through the NCIP. Our interest is that the route goes through Northern Kenya," said a Ugandan official privy to the talks.

"You must take note that no study has been conducted yet on the Tanga route, by April or end of March, we will report the progress on the crude oil pipeline talks."

While Kenya's Energy Cabinet Secretary Charles Keter kept mum on the project's developments, his Ugandan counterpart Irene Muloni who is reported to have frequently travelled to Kenya for the pipeline talks appeared careful not to take sides.

"Hopefully before the end of the month we will disclose to you the pipeline discussions for the Tanga route as well as negotiations in Kenya," said Mr Muloni in a phone conversation last week.

"Just wait, at the moment, we cannot disclose anything."

He spoke a few days after a statement from Uganda's State House had confirmed the deepening relations with Tanzania on the crude oil pipeline. This was further affirmed by President Magufuli's announcement on the move to explore the Tanga route, which would create thousands of jobs.

Senior official at the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development in Uganda said Total CEO Patrick Pouyanne visited Mr Museveni in December prior to the elections.

"During the visit, Total insisted that it will produce Uganda's oil despite falling crude oil prices, but through the port of Tanga," said the Uganda energy official.

It is however strange that Uganda is bowing to pressure by Total, which is one of the investors together with Tullow Oil Uganda and China National Offshore Oil Company (CNOOC) in Uganda's upstream sector.

Tullow Oil, also an investor in Kenya's oil exploration, sides with Kenya on the northern route where they have discovered 600 million barrels of oil and have further prospects of getting over a billion barrels if exploration activities continue.

The route through Lamu is the best option for Kenya and Tullow since it makes economic sense and passes through Lamu Port South Sudan Ethiopia Transport (Lapsset) corridor, which will provide the offloading port for East African oil.

## ECONOMICAL

A feasibility study by Toyota Tsusho, contracted by Kenya, South Sudan, Rwanda and Uganda on the crude oil pipeline route indicated that the northern route is the most economical.

The study states that the route through Lamu would cost \$4.7 billion while the southern route via Tanga would cost \$5.26 billion. The cost of moving oil across the two routes will however vary by an estimated \$2 dollars a barrel only, with the Tanga route experiencing higher costs because of its length.

Toyota Tsusho further states that the Northern route is shorter at 1,500km, the Southern route is 1,545km. The route via Tanga could also be longer to Uganda. The port is at the Indian Ocean, more than 340 Km north of Dar es Salaam. Its capacity to offload cargo has been constrained and it's currently set for an upgrade to accommodate more cargo.

The concern about the cost of transporting oil per barrel is genuine because the proceeds will be used to offset the total cost of the pipeline. A cheaper pipeline would therefore be valuable to both Kenya and Uganda.

Even as the negotiations on the crude oil seem to be shaky, Kenya in January initiated discussions

among top officials in energy, to begin exploring ways of transporting crude oil by rail and tracks beginning September.

President Kenyatta is treating the rail and road transport plan to export oil as a short-term measure awaiting the final solution, which is the construction that could see the crude oil pipeline. Observers have viewed the rush to have the oil transported by road and rail as a negotiating tactic that will see Uganda budge on its final pipeline route decision.

On the other hand, it is also seen as a rush to have the deal sealed ahead of the 2017 general elections in Kenya. The successful commencement of the project would give more clout to President Kenyatta during the polls.

UK's Tullow Oil Plc in its latest report states that it will make its final investment plan for both Uganda and Kenya in 2017. The firm in an operational update released in January, said it submitted the field development plan to the government in December, discussions on production is ongoing.

#### Key dates

July 2015: President Yoweri Museveni met Jabier Rielo, Total E&P vice president for Eastern Africa in Uganda's State House and talks for a completely different pipeline passing through Tanzania's Tanga was initiated.

August 10, 2015: Presidents Uhuru Kenyatta and Yoweri Museveni met in Uganda and announced that the pipeline would pass through Albertine to Lokichar in Turkana County.

August 22, 2015: After Ugandan talks, Mr Rielo then moved on to Dar es Salaam and met the then Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete . This meeting gave impetus to the idea of building the Tanga pipeline.

October 12, 2015: A memorandum of understanding between Tanzania and Uganda was signed as the result of the recent Dar meeting. The MoU proposed a study that would give way for construction of a crude oil export pipeline.

A statement by Tanzania's presidential press unit last week stated that President John Pombe Magufuli met Museveni, and agreed that the pipeline will pass through Tanga.

ANGOLA :

AU/AFRICA :

"Le but était d'établir un émirat de Daesh en Tunisie"

8/03/16/Source: AFP

La Tunisie a subi des attaques simultanées "sans précédent" dans une région voisine de la Libye, attribuées par les autorités au groupe Etat islamique (EI), lors desquelles au moins 36 djihadistes, 11 membres des forces de l'ordre et sept civils ont été tués.

Dans le détail, au moins 36 jihadistes, 11 membres des forces de l'ordre et sept civils ont été tués lundi. Déjà frappée en 2015 par une série d'attentats sanglants, la Tunisie a annoncé la fermeture des postes frontaliers et le renforcement des patrouilles y compris aériennes à sa frontière avec la Libye, où le chaos profite notamment à l'EI.

"Un émirat de Daesh en Tunisie"

"Le but de cette attaque était de troubler la situation sécuritaire dans notre pays et d'établir un émirat de "Daesh" à Ben Guerdane", a dit le chef du gouvernement Habib Essid, faisant référence à l'EI par un acronyme arabe. "Mais grâce à tous les efforts, à la coopération entre notre armée nationale et nos forces de sécurité intérieure, la réaction a été forte et rapide", a-t-il ajouté.

Perpétrées à l'aube, ces attaques ont visé une caserne de l'armée, un poste de police et un poste de la garde nationale (gendarmerie) tunisiennes à Ben Guerdane, localité de 60.000 habitants toute proche du territoire libyen. Dans un bilan encore provisoire, les ministères de la Défense et de l'Intérieur ont indiqué que 36 djihadistes, six gendarmes, trois policiers, un douanier et un soldat avaient péri. Sept civils ont également été tués, dans des circonstances non précisées.

Le nombre total de djihadistes impliqués n'est pas connu mais les autorités ont souligné que sept d'entre eux avaient été arrêtés et que des opérations étaient toujours "en cours pour pourchasser des terroristes". En fin d'après-midi, des échanges de tirs ont de nouveau été rapportés par des témoins. Hedi, un habitant de la ville, a raconté sur la radio privée Shems FM que des hommes armés qu'il avait croisés s'étaient réclamés de l'EI. "Ils ont dit: "N'ayez pas peur, nous sommes l'Etat islamique"". Ils nous ont dit de dire Allah Akbar (Dieu est grand, ndlr), nous avons dit Allah Akbar".

"Nouvelle province"

"Il s'agit d'une attaque sans précédent, coordonnée", a réagi le président Béji Caïd Essebsi. "Les Tunisiens sont en guerre contre cette barbarie et ces rats que nous allons exterminer", a-t-il enchaîné, dans des propos retransmis par la TV publique. Un couvre-feu est entré en vigueur à Ben Guerdane à 19H00 (18H00 GMT), jusqu'à mardi 05H00 (04H00 GMT). Les forces de l'ordre patrouillaient dans les rues et ont incité par haut-parleur les citoyens à rester chez eux, selon un correspondant de l'AFP sur place. Des soldats montaient la garde du haut de certains toits.

Outre la fermeture des postes-frontières pour une durée indéterminée, les autorités avaient aussi bouclé en matinée la route côtière reliant Ben Guerdane à Zarzis (nord).

La Tunisie est confrontée depuis sa révolution de 2011 à l'essor d'une mouvance jihadiste responsable de la mort de dizaines de policiers et de soldats ainsi que de touristes. Cette attaque simultanée contre des installations sécuritaires, d'ampleur inédite, intervient moins d'une semaine après de premiers heurts armés dans cette même région.

Raid américain

Cinq extrémistes venus de Libye, retranchés dans une maison, avaient été tués par les forces de sécurité. Au moins quatre étaient Tunisiens, d'après les autorités, qui avaient dit avoir mis la main sur un arsenal de guerre. Ce bombardement avait fait des dizaines de morts, parmi lesquels a circulé le nom du Tunisien Nouredine Chouchane, décrit comme un cadre opérationnel de l'EI impliqué dans deux des attaques perpétrées en 2015 en Tunisie.

Paris et Berlin ont condamné les attaques, le président français François Hollande assurant que "la Tunisie a, une fois encore, été visée parce qu'elle est un symbole". Washington a "condamné avec force" les attaques, le porte-parole du département d'Etat américain, John Kirby, dénonçant "les

menaces extérieure et intérieure" posées par "l'extrémisme" sur la "stabilité et la prospérité" de la Tunisie.

#### Obstacles à la frontière

Tunis, qui compte plusieurs milliers de ressortissants dans les rangs d'organisations djihadistes à l'étranger, exprime régulièrement son inquiétude à propos de la Libye. Pour tenter de se protéger, elle a construit un "système d'obstacles" sur près de la moitié des 500 km de frontière. Le mois dernier, Londres a annoncé l'envoi de 20 soldats afin d'aider la Tunisie à sécuriser cette frontière.

#### Little time left to protect Africa's food supply from climate change

by Megan Rowling/bdlive.co.za/mars 08 2016

BARCELONA — Without action to help farmers adjust to changing climate conditions, it will become impossible to grow some staple food crops in parts of sub-Saharan Africa, with maize, beans and bananas most at risk, researchers said on Monday.

In a study of how global warming will affect nine crops that make up half the region's food production, scientists found that up to 30% of areas growing maize and bananas, and up to 60% of those producing beans could become unviable by the end of the century.

Six of the nine crops — cassava, groundnut, pearl millet, finger millet, sorghum and yam — are projected to remain stable under moderate and extreme climate change scenarios.

"This study tells where, and crucially when, interventions need to be made to stop climate change destroying vital food supplies in Africa," said Julian Ramirez-Villegas, the study's lead author who works with the CGIAR Research Programme on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS).

"We know what needs to be done, and for the first time, we now have deadlines for taking action," he said.

For example, the study warns that about 40% of maize-growing areas will require "transformation", which could mean changing the type of crop grown or, in extreme cases, even abandoning crop farming.

Sorghum and millet, which have higher tolerance to drought and heat, could replace maize in most places under threat.

But for 0.5% of maize-growing areas — equal to 0.8-million hectares in SA that now produce 2.7-million tonnes — there was no viable crop substitution, the study said.

In a few places, the need to adapt to climate change is already urgent, the researchers said. Those include pockets in highly climate-exposed areas of the Sahel in Guinea, Gambia, Senegal, Burkina Faso and Niger.

Banana-growing regions of West Africa, including areas in Ghana and Benin, will need to act within the next decade, as the land is expected to become unsuitable for bananas by 2025.

Maize-growing areas of Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Tanzania also had less than 10 years left to change tack under the most extreme climate change scenarios, the study added.

"If we don't do anything now, farmers are no longer going to be able to grow certain crops in certain sites," Mr Ramirez-Villegas told the Thomson Reuters Foundation from Colombia.

"But we know there are several adaptation options ... with which farmers should be able to carry on growing these crops for a longer period of time than we project."

Time 'running out'

Those options begin with shorter-term actions like improving irrigation and weather information services for farmers, and developing new varieties of maize and beans that can better tolerate heat and drought.

Such measures are already under way in parts of Africa, including the Drought Tolerant Maize for Africa initiative that has released 160 varieties, benefiting up to 40-million people in 13 countries.

But governments will still need to reassess agricultural and food security policies to see whether bigger transformations are needed, such as switching to different crops or livestock.

If so, they will need to help farmers access markets or build processing and storage facilities for new crops.

Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security researcher Andy Jarvis, a co-author of the paper published in the journal Nature Climate Change, said adjusting national policies could take decades.

"Our findings show that time is running out to transform African agriculture. This will require not only increased funding but also a supportive policy environment to bring the needed solutions to those affected," he said.

A separate study released on Monday, by researchers from Brown and Tufts universities, suggested scientists had overlooked how two important human responses to climate would affect food production in the future: how much land people chose to farm and the number of crops they planted.

Looking at Mato Grosso, a key soy-producing state in Brazil, they found a temperature rise of 1°C was tied to substantial decreases in crop area and double cropping, accounting for 70% of the overall loss in production.

Only 30% was attributable to falling crop yield.

"If you look at yields alone, you're not looking at all of the information because there are economic and social changes going on as well," said Leah VanWey, professor of sociology at Brown and one of the study's senior authors. "You're not taking into account farmers' reactions to climate shocks."

UN/AFRICA :

**Africa projected to have 2bn people by 2050 – UN**

March 8, 2016/vanguardngr.com

Abuja – Ms Fatima Samoura, the UN Resident Coordinator in Nigeria, on Monday said Africa's population has been projected to be two billion. Samoura added that out of this figure one billion



would be below 25 years in the next 34 years. The official disclosed this at opening of Regional Leadership Summit on the African Demographic Dividend in Abuja. The three-day summit is organised by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Samoura said the idea of the regional summit is to transform the huge population into an opportunity for economic and scientific development.

She said the summit would also ensure that the outcome of the discussions and other documents did not stop on the economy but also goes to education and other disciplines. She said some universities in Africa do not adjust their curricular to the needs of science, technology and economy but remain very traditional and vertical in the way they are approaching demographic dividends. “The concept of demographic dividend, which is integral to inclusive growth and poverty reduction; is not new, but dates back to Reverend Thomas Malthus (1798). “Issues of the demographic dividend have gained prominence in international development arena due to the increasing and obvious relationship between population dynamics and sustainable development. “This has also resulted in many international affirmations on population and development including the `Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.

She said the Agenda 2030 underlines the importance of integrating population dynamics into development interventions. She stressed the need to take population projections and trends into consideration in development policies planning and implementation. According to Samoura, Africa with an estimated population of 1.2 billion in 2016 remains the world’s second-largest and second-most-populous continent in the world with relatively young population. “More than half of the population is under age 25 in many countries. Since the population of most countries in the continent are growing more than two per cent every year.” She said channelling the potential positive energies of the youth is crucial in building a better future in the continent.

She said youth means more active people working towards developing agriculture and industries and improving the health sector. Ms Ratidzai Ndhlovu, Country Representative, said UNFPA has been supporting institutional capacity in demographic analysis, population and development research, and the effective translation of research into relevant policy guidance for government. She said the summit has been convened to deepen understanding of the demographic dividend issues and discuss ways by which donors can support seed funding to select institutions. Ndhlovu said the summit would also discuss how donors can invest in their institutional resources, build institutional capacity in the demographic dividend and foster a new generation of experts on the continent.

US/AFRICA :

### U.S. Strikes in Somalia Kill 150 Shabab Fighters

nytimes.com/By HELENE COOPER/MARCH 7, 2016

WASHINGTON — American aircraft on Saturday struck a training camp in Somalia belonging to the Islamist militant group the Shabab, the Pentagon said, killing about 150 fighters who were assembled for what American officials believe was a graduation ceremony and prelude to an imminent attack against American troops and their allies in East Africa.

Defense officials said the strike was carried out by drones and American aircraft, which dropped a number of precision-guided bombs and missiles on the field where the fighters were gathered. Pentagon officials said they did not believe there were any civilian casualties, but there was no independent way to verify the claim. They said they delayed announcing the strike until they could assess the outcome.

It was the deadliest attack on the Shabab in the more than decade-long American campaign against

the group, an affiliate of Al Qaeda, and a sharp deviation from previous American strikes, which have concentrated on the group's leaders, not on its foot soldiers.

It comes in response to new concerns that the group, which was responsible for one of the deadliest terrorist attacks on African soil when it struck a popular mall in Nairobi in 2013, is in the midst of a resurgence after losing much of the territory it once held and many of its fighters in the last several years. The planned attack on American and African Union troops in Somalia, American officials say, may have been an attempt by the Shabab to carry out the same kind of high-impact act of terrorism as the one in Nairobi.

The fighters had just completed "training for a large-scale attack" against American and African Union forces, said Capt. Jeff Davis, a Pentagon spokesman.

Pentagon officials would not say how they knew that the Shabab fighters killed on Saturday were training for an attack on United States and African Union forces, but the militant group is believed to be under heavy American surveillance.

The Shabab fighters were standing in formation at a facility the Pentagon called Camp Raso, 120 miles north of Mogadishu, when the American warplanes struck on Saturday, officials said, acting on information gleaned from intelligence sources in the area and from American spy planes. One intelligence agency assessed that the toll might have been higher had the strike happened earlier in the ceremony. Apparently, some fighters were filtering away from the event when the bombing began.

The strike was another escalation in what has become the latest battleground in the Obama administration's war against terror: Africa. The United States and its allies are focused on combating the spread of the Islamic State in Libya, and American officials estimate that with an influx of men from Iraq, Syria and Tunisia, the Islamic State's forces in Libya have swelled to as many as 6,500 fighters, allowing the group to capture a 150-mile stretch of coastline over the past year.

The arrival of the Islamic State in Libya has sparked fears that the group's reach could spread to other North African countries, and the United States is increasingly trying to prevent that. American forces are now helping to combat Al Qaeda in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso; Boko Haram in Nigeria, Cameroon and Chad; and the Shabab in Somalia and Kenya, in what has become a multifront war against militant Islam in Africa.

The United States has a small number of trainers and advisers with African Union — primarily Kenyan — troops in Somalia. Defense officials said that the African Union's military mission to Somalia was believed to have been the target of the planned attack.

Josh Earnest, the White House press secretary, called the attack a "good example" of how the United States military can work with local partners to advance security.

"The removal of those terrorist fighters degrades Al Shabab's ability to meet the group's objectives in Somalia, including recruiting new members, establishing bases and planning attacks on the U.S.," Mr. Earnest told reporters on Monday. He insisted that avoiding civilian casualties is a "very very high priority, both for moral reasons but also because extremist organizations like Al Shabab would just use the death of innocent civilians to try to recruit additional members and whip up additional anti-U.S. sentiment."

Saturday's strike was the most significant American attack on the Shabab since September 2014,

when an American drone strike killed the leader of the group, Ahmed Abdi Godane, at the time one of the most wanted men in Africa. That strike was followed by one last March, when Adan Garar, a senior member of the group, was killed in a drone strike on his vehicle.

If the killings of Mr. Godane and Mr. Garar initially crippled the group, that no longer appears to be the case. In the past two months, Shabab militants have claimed responsibility for attacks that have killed more than 150 people, including Kenyan soldiers stationed at a remote desert outpost and beachcombers in Mogadishu.

In addition, the group has said it was responsible for a bomb on a Somali jetliner that tore a hole through the fuselage and for an attack last month on a popular hotel and a public garden in Mogadishu that killed 10 people and injured more than 25. On Monday, the Shabab claimed responsibility for a bomb planted in a laptop computer that went off at an airport security checkpoint in the town of Beletwejn in central Somalia, wounding at least six people, including two police officers. The police said that one other bomb was defused.

At the same time, Shabab assassination teams have fanned out across Mogadishu and other major towns, stealthily eliminating government officials and others they consider apostates.

The Shabab have also retaken several towns after African Union forces pulled out. The African Union peacekeeping force, paid for mostly by Western governments, features troops from Uganda, Burundi, Kenya, Djibouti and other African nations.

The Shabab were once strong, then greatly weakened and now seem to be somewhere in between, while analysts say the group competes with the Islamic State for recruits and tries to show — in the deadliest way — that it is still relevant. Its dream is to turn Somalia into a pure Islamic state.

The Pentagon's announcement of the attack in Somalia came as the Obama administration said it planned in the future to be more transparent about the number of casualties caused by the use of counterterrorism strikes outside declared war zones. Lisa Monaco, President Obama's counterterrorism and homeland security adviser, said a report would be released "in the coming weeks," on the total number of casualties caused by strikes since Mr. Obama took office.

CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

**Somalia: Cache of Weapons Headed for Somalia Seized - Australian Navy**

7 March 2016/The Nation (Nairobi)

More than 2,000 warfare gadgets including assault rifles, rocket launchers and machine guns were found hidden under fishing nets in a Somalia-bound boat, Australian Navy officials said Monday.

The HMAS Darwin navy ship seized the weapons from the vessel during normal patrol of the Middle East-Eastern Africa coast waters.

Sunday's recovery of the weapons could signal a continual but clandestine attempt by the Shabaab to keep their supply of arms despite a global operation against the terror group.

On Monday, Australia's Vice Admiral David Johnston who is also the Chief of Joint Operations for the multi-nation patrol operation called Combined Maritime Forces, said the seizure of the cache could be significant even though there was no revelation of the origin of the weapons.

"Darwin's successful boarding and subsequent seizure of the weapons concealed under fishing nets highlights the need to remain vigilant in the region," Mr Johnston told the Australian Navy magazine Navy Daily.

"Australia worked as part of the multinational Combined Maritime Forces to discover and seize these illegal weapons," he added.

The ship upon netting the weapons, classified them as 1989 AK-47 assault rifles, 100 rocket propelled grenade launchers, 49 PKM general purpose machine guns, 39 PKM spare barrels and 20 60mm mortar tubes.

The fishing boat crew of 18 had reportedly hidden the arms under fishing nets and were nabbed approximately 330km off the coast of Oman, heading towards Somalia.

The UN has imposed an arms embargo on Somalia in a bid to control the supply of illegal weapons to the war ravaged nation.

Under the United Nations sanctions, patrolling ships can intercept vessels in the high seas suspected to be ferrying weapons to Somalia.

The captured boat did not have an identification flag and the Australian Navy classified it as stateless.

Australia is part of a multinational team called the Combined Maritime Forces that routinely patrols about four million square kilometers of international waters lying between the Middle East and the Eastern Africa region.

The force, established in 2002 to fight terrorism, piracy and secure high seas for shipping lines currently includes up to 31 countries mostly from Asia and members of international security bloc the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)

The African Union Mission in Somali (Amisom), to which Kenya Defence Forces belong, have been fighting the Somali terrorists who have occasionally employed guerrilla attacks on the mission's camps in Somalia.

Last week troop contributing countries Kenya, Uganda, Djibouti, Nigeria (police), Burundi, Ethiopia and Somalia jointly called for enhanced funding for Amisom and more restrictions on the militants to cut off their arms and financial supply.

EU/AFRICA :

EU welcomes Turkey plan to stop migrants, defers decision

Tue Mar 8, 2016 /Reuters

By Humeyra Pamuk and Gabriela Baczynska

BRUSSELS (Reuters) - European Union leaders welcomed Turkey's offer on Monday to take back all migrants who cross into Europe from its soil and agreed in principle to Ankara's demands for more money, faster EU membership talks and quicker visa-free travel in return.

However, key details remained to be worked out and the 28 leaders ordered more work by officials with a view to reaching an ambitious package deal with Turkey at their next scheduled summit, on March 17-18.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and British Prime Minister David Cameron among others hailed the surprise Turkish proposal at an emergency summit in Brussels as a potential breakthrough in Europe's politically toxic migration crisis.

More than a million people fleeing war and poverty in the Middle East and beyond have flooded into the EU since early 2015, most making the perilous sea crossing from Turkey to Greece, then heading north through the Balkans to Germany.

Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu told EU leaders that Ankara was willing to take back all migrants who enter Europe from Turkey in future, including Syrian refugees, as well as those intercepted in its territorial waters.

"With this game-changing position in fact our objective is to discourage illegal migration, to prevent human smugglers, to help people who want to come to Europe through encouraging legal migration in a disciplined and regular manner," he told a news conference after the summit.

In exchange for stopping the influx, he demanded doubling EU funding through 2018 to help Syrian refugees stay in Turkey and a commitment to take in one Syrian refugee directly from Turkey for each one returned from Greece's Aegean islands, according to a document seen by Reuters.

He also asked to bring forward EU visa liberalisation for Turks to June from end-2016 and to open five more negotiating chapters in Turkey's long-stalled EU accession process.

The EU leaders agreed to the earlier target date for visa-free travel provided Ankara meets all the conditions including changing its visa policy towards Islamic states and introducing harder-to-fake biometric passports.

They left open how much additional aid they would provide for refugees in Turkey and made only a vague reference to preparing for a decision on opening more areas of membership talks - a particularly sensitive issue for Cyprus.

European Council President Donald Tusk, who chaired the summit, said the outcome would show migrants that there was no longer a path into Europe for people seeking a better life.

"The days of irregular migration to Europe are over," he told a joint news conference with Davutoglu.

Merkel, who requested the special summit to show results before regional elections in Germany next Sunday, said: "The Turkish proposal is a breakthrough, if it is implemented, to break the chain from getting into a boat to settling in Europe."

Desperate to end the influx of Syrians, Iraqis, Afghans and others, EU leaders brushed off warnings from the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees that the EU should not shut its doors and should be willing to take in hundreds of thousands more refugees from Turkey.

Davutoglu said the summit showed how indispensable Turkey was for Europe, and Europe for Turkey.

At a preparatory meeting with Merkel and Rutte on Sunday night, he demanded double the 3 billion euros (2.30 billion pounds) earmarked so far to support Syrian refugees in Turkey.

Diplomats said Merkel and Rutte pressed hard for a deal on the Turkish plan but met resistance from central European states opposed to taking refugee quotas, as well as from Greece and Cyprus which have conditions for the Turkish accession talks.

Three days after the Turkish government seized the best-selling opposition newspaper Zaman, the leaders said they had discussed the situation of the media in Turkey with Davutoglu.

Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi said he had insisted on a reference to media freedom in the final statement.

USE FORCE?

Polish Prime Minister Beata Szydlo, one of several central European leaders who has resisted pressure to accept a quota of refugees, said the Turkish proposal, if honoured and implemented, would be a big step toward solving the migrant crisis.

The EU leaders pledged to help Greece cope with a backlog of migrants stranded on its soil and welcomed NATO naval back-up in the Aegean Sea to help stop people smugglers.

Merkel refused to endorse border closures by Austria and Balkan neighbours that have stranded over 30,000 migrants in Greece, but the statement noted: "Irregular flows of migrants along the Western Balkans route have now come to an end."

The German leader, facing a possible political backlash in three regional polls over her welcoming of the refugees, said the question of Turkish EU membership was "not on the agenda today" but strategic cooperation with Ankara was in Europe's vital geopolitical interests.

Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras said the bloc must speed up the process of relocating asylum seekers from Greece to other EU countries as promised last September. EU states have so far taken in only a few hundred of a promised 160,000 people and central European countries have rejected the whole principle.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said the alliance had begun patrols in the Aegean to support efforts to locate migrant boats, overcoming territorial sensitivities in Greece and Turkey to patrol in the waters of both NATO states.

"NATO is starting activities in territorial waters today," he told a joint news conference in Brussels with Davutoglu.

"We are expanding our cooperation with the EU's border agency, Frontex, and we are expanding the number of ships in our deployment," he said, adding that France and Britain had agreed to send

ships to the Aegean.

Germany is leading the NATO mission that was agreed on Feb. 11, which also includes ships from Canada, Turkey and Greece. Until now, ships had been in international waters.

Britain's Cameron said he was sending a naval force to the Aegean to join the NATO force even though Britain is outside the Schengen zone of passport-free travel and has refused to take any share of the migrants from Europe.

While Cameron stressed Britain would take no part in any common EU asylum policy, further migrant chaos could damage his efforts to win a June referendum and keep Britain in the EU.

CHINA/AFRICA :

Chinese group organises consortium of private companies to invest in Angola

March 8th, 2016/macauhub.com.mo

The Wahaha Group, based in Hangzhou, in China's Zhejiang Province, will organise a consortium of Chinese private enterprises to invest in Africa in general and Angola in particular, the group's chief executive said Monday in Beijing.

Zong Qinghou said in a panel at the National People's Congress that he had received from the President of Angola and several ministers, "a cordial invitation for Zhejiang enterprises to invest in the country."

He said he had been attracted to Africa because of the immense natural resources of the continent and the fact that the Chinese government actively promotes the internationalisation of Chinese companies and groups.

Cited by the South China Morning Post, Zong also said the time had come "to look with fresh eyes to Africa, given that we need to industrialise and we need its resources."

Reinforcing what he had previously said, Zong Qinghou said he would promote the establishment of the consortium, a large group of private companies in China, "to offer help to African countries in their industrialisation processes."

In the case of Angola, he said, the occurrence of natural gas reserves, copper and diamond mining and large available land areas were the most attractive points for Chinese companies.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of China, Wang Yi, who attended the panel agreed with the statements of the President of the Wahaha Group and gave assurances that the government would support Chinese private companies that want to deploy capital in Africa.

INDIA/AFRICA :

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

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