



(Hier dimanche 17 juillet 2016 s'est ouvert à Kigali au Rwanda, le 27e sommet des chefs d'Etat de l'Union africaine (UA).)

BURUNDI :

RWANDA :

SOMMET DE KIGALI : Que peut-on encore attendre de l'UA ?

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Hier dimanche 17 juillet 2016 s'est ouvert à Kigali au Rwanda, le 27e sommet des chefs d'Etat de l'Union africaine (UA). Au menu, il y a deux catégories de sujets qui seront examinés. Dans la première catégorie, l'on peut mettre les sujets qui divisent, comme la succession de la présidente de la Commission de l'Union africaine (UA) Dlamini-Zuma ou l'éventuelle réintégration du Maroc dans l'organisation. Sont inscrits dans la deuxième catégorie, des sujets majeurs et explosifs comme la situation au Soudan du Sud ou au Burundi. De ce fait, ce n'est pas la matière qui fera défaut pour alimenter les échanges entre les princes qui gouvernent l'Afrique. L'on peut même aller jusqu'à dire que c'est un sommet « à problèmes ». Dès lors, l'on peut se poser la question suivante : que peut encore l'UA face à ces problèmes ?

L'éventuelle réintégration du Royaume chérifien sera renvoyée aux calendes grecques

En ce qui concerne la première catégorie de problèmes, c'est-à-dire la succession de Dlamini-Zuma et l'éventuelle réintégration du Maroc dans la grande famille africaine, il est fort probable que les chefs d'Etat optent pour le statu quo pour sauver les meubles. En cause, les éléments d'analyse

suivants.

Relativement à la succession de Dlamini-Zuma, tout indique que cela ne sera pas chose aisée. En effet, les noms avancés pour lui succéder sont fortement contestés par l'ensemble des chefs d'Etat de l'espace CEDEAO (communauté économique des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest). Ce veto, si l'on peut l'appeler ainsi, a de fortes chances d'aboutir à un blocage de la question. De manière générale, l'on peut faire le constat que l'attribution de ce poste a toujours été l'objet de palabres, pour parler comme les Ivoiriens, entre les différentes parties géographiques de l'Afrique, chacune tenant à ce que la femme ou l'homme qui sera appelé à occuper ce poste, pardon cet emploi, sorte de ses rangs. C'est cela, peut-on dire, qui explique que dans leur écrasante majorité, les personnalités qui ont déjà géré ce poste se soient comportées comme les obligés des chefs d'Etat qui ont mouillé le maillot pour qu'elles accèdent à cet emploi de prestige et naturellement bien rémunéré. Le seul président de la Commission qui a fait fi de ce sentiment de redevabilité pour revendiquer une liberté de parole, est l'ancien président malien, Alpha Omar Konaré. En dehors de ce dernier, tous les autres ont été des « yes men » qui n'ont jamais plaidé la cause des peuples africains. En ce qui concerne l'éventuelle réintégration du Maroc dans l'organisation, il faut dire que les débats risquent de se terminer en queue de poisson. Car, s'il est vrai que le Maroc, grâce à la force de sa diplomatie, a rallié à sa cause bien des pays africains, il est aussi vrai que les chefs de file de la cause de la RASD (République Arabe sahraouie et démocratique) que sont l'Algérie et l'Afrique du Sud, sont des poids lourds, très lourds au sein de l'UA. De ce fait, il est à parier que l'éventuelle réintégration du Royaume chérifien dans l'UA sera renvoyée aux calendes grecques. Venons-en maintenant à la deuxième catégorie de problèmes sur lesquels doit se pencher le 27e sommet, c'est-à-dire la crise au Soudan du Sud et celle du Burundi. Relativement au Soudan du Sud, les chefs d'Etat ont opté pour la solution préconisée par le patron de l'ONU (Organisation des Nations unies), qui consiste, il faut le rappeler, au renforcement du mandat de la mission onusienne mise en place pour ce pays. En plus de cela, ils sont partants pour la création d'une force africaine qui sera intégrée au contingent de l'ONU. Cette proposition est belle. Mais encore faut-il la traduire dans les actes, dans un délai raisonnable. Connaissant l'UA, notamment sa manière digne d'un mammoth de se mettre en mouvement, la probabilité est forte que cette fameuse force africaine mette beaucoup de temps avant de voir le jour. Pendant ce temps, les deux scélérats du Soudan du Sud que sont Salva Kiir et Riek Machar, auront toute latitude d'ajouter d'autres cadavres à la montagne de macchabées qu'ils ont déjà suscités. Et si par extraordinaire, ils arrivaient à faire diligence pour la mise sur pied de la force africaine, l'on peut se demander si cela suffira à calmer les ardeurs des deux frères ennemis.

Les Africains ne doivent rien attendre de bon de la part de l'UA par rapport aux grands défis qui se posent à leur continent

En ce qui concerne la crise burundaise, disons-le net, ce 27e sommet de l'UA risque d'accoucher d'une souris. En effet, à l'origine du mal burundais, se trouve le refus de Pierre NKurunziza d'appliquer les principes de la démocratie dans son pays. Cela est de notoriété publique. Or, il serait fastidieux de compter parmi les chefs d'Etat réunis à Kigali à l'occasion de ce 27e sommet, les présidents qui ressemblent, à s'y méprendre, à leur homologue burundais, en termes de violation des droits de l'Homme et des règles élémentaires de la démocratie. A commencer par l'hôte du sommet himself, Paul Kagamé, ou encore l'actuel président en exercice de l'UA, Idriss Deby Itno. Comment de telles personnalités qui ont déjà trucidé la démocratie dans leur pays, peuvent-elles avoir le courage de regarder Pierre NKurunziza droit dans les yeux pour lui dire la vérité ? Et puis, un proverbe africain ne conseille-t-il pas de ne pas évoquer le terme « mort » devant un vieillard qui souffre de maladie ? Et ce qui, davantage, complexifie la problématique de la crise burundaise, est la politique de la chaise vide adoptée par le principal concerné. Bien sûr pour rien au monde, l'on ne doit chercher à disculper pour autant Pierre NKurunziza, mais il faut reconnaître que bien des chefs d'Etat qui sont en train de s'émouvoir aujourd'hui à cause des morts occasionnées par le satrape burundais, sont moralement et politiquement disqualifiés pour le faire. Et tant que l'UA ne va pas se décider à appliquer ses propres textes en matière de démocratie, tant que les critères d'éligibilité du

président en exercice de l'UA n'intégreront pas la qualité de la démocratie des pays dont les dirigeants aspirent à se hisser à la tête de la structure panafricaine, bref tant que l'UA ne va pas cesser d'être un outil au service des têtes couronnées africaines, pour se muer en structure au service des intérêts véritables des peuples, les Africains ne doivent rien attendre de bon de sa part par rapport aux grands défis qui se posent à leur continent. C'est cette triste réalité que Me Hervé Kam, porte-parole du « Balai citoyen », a assenée, au nom des organisations de la société civile africaine, à l'occasion du 27e sommet de l'Union africaine de Kigali. Nul doute que cette vérité fera rougir des yeux à Kigali.

RDC CONGO :

UGANDA :

Uganda: Kazibwe Faces AU Poll Today

18 July 2016/The Monitor (Kampala)

By Frederic Musisi

Kampala — Voting for the next African Union (AU) chairperson to replace outgoing chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma will take place today morning after last-minute attempts by the West African nation's bloc, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to defer the elections were thwarted.

The AU chair, Idriss Deby, who is also the President of Chad, overruled Ecowas' request to defer the voting by the Heads of States to the 28th Summit in January next year when a "qualified candidate" for the job is presented.

Uganda's Dr Wandira Kazibwe, also the choice for eastern Africa, faces competition from Agapito Mba Mokuy, 51, the foreign minister of Equatorial Guinea, also the choice of central Africa and Southern African Development Community (SADC)'s Dr Pelomi Venson-Moitoi, 65, the Foreign Affairs minister of Botswana.

Diplomatic sources told Daily Monitor that, the "matter on request to postpone" the elections of the chairperson was tabled before the assembly but President Deby vetoed the proposal.

Sources said when consulted, the AU legal counsel Prof Vincent Nmehielle submitted that nominations opened up, concluded by member states and vetted by independent experts who reported to the council of Foreign Affairs minister who approved the shortlist.

He also averred that the 15 Ecowas members were involved in the entire process and the request to defer the polls "is irregular and not provided for in the Constitutive Act of AU."

Obligation

According to the AU's Constitutive Act, the chairperson shall represent the Union, during his/her tenure with a view to promoting the objectives and principles of the African Union.

For a candidate to be declared winner, they have to secure a two-thirds majority from all leaders. This applies even if the race has a sole candidate.

SOUTH AFRICA :

South Africa's latest weapon against HIV: street dispensers for antiretrovirals
theguardian.com/2016/jul/17

Patients will no longer need to join five-hour-long queues for their medication

A hole-in-the-wall machine that dispenses antiretroviral drugs to people with HIV will be unveiled in Durban on Monday ahead of a pilot scheme that will see units installed in rural areas miles from the nearest doctor or clinic.

The machine has been developed at the Right to Care project in the Helen Joseph hospital, Johannesburg, and is a prototype of what its South African developers believe could be a game-changer in the fight to contain the Aids pandemic in their country and beyond.

The £63,000 machine – with robotics from Germany teamed with local expertise on software – will be unveiled at the 2016 International Aids Conference, which begins in Durban on Monday.

Fanie Hendriksz, managing director of Right To Care's ePharmacy project, said the pilot would begin immediately afterwards, with four units going into Alexandra, a densely populated Johannesburg suburb where high rates of poverty and lack of education keep infection rates and ignorance about HIV high.

"We hope to have reached six sites this year," said Hendriksz. "They will come with their own power source and have a link via a webcam to a centre where there will be a pharmacist on call if needed – but generally it will be patients scanning in smartcard IDs and accessing their three months' prescription, forgoing the need to come all the way into a hospital or a clinic and wait for hours to access their medication."

To prevent any problems with stigma, the machines won't be identified as HIV-related because other medication will also be available for patients with chronic conditions such as diabetes or TB.

South Africa has the highest number of people in the world living with HIV – 7 million – with half now accessing treatment. Ensuring people stick to their treatment is essential, not only for keeping them healthy and alive, but also making them less infectious, according to experts who say that poor "adherence" to medication is a key challenge.

The Right to Care project, funded by the South African department of health and the Global Fund, has been working hard on those challenges, not only saving lives, ensuring babies of HIV positive mothers are free of the virus, but reducing waiting times so people who can little afford to travel or to take time off work no longer have to spend hours accessing HIV tests and treatment.

Testing is already improving across the continent thanks to the invention of quick, easy tests including one, the Samba, developed by a team at Cambridge

Dr Sello Mashamaite, the medical manager at Helen Joseph, said: “It’s all about managing more patients with less.

“A lot of patients miss their visits because they cannot afford to miss work; long queues, transport costs, people waiting hours for their medicines. It means as clinicians that we have to think about improving efficiency to ensure adherence to treatment.

“Before, in our pharmacy, people were waiting five hours here, now it’s 20 minutes,” says Mashamaite. “Working with technology is the innovation that will save lives.”

Jenny Ottenhoff, global health policy director of the One Campaign, said: “The life-saving impact of treatment relies on adherence. We know that when a patient is on medication and taking it correctly, the chance of passing the virus on to a partner is virtually zero. This preventative effect is a game-changer and can help make the end of the Aids epidemic a reality by 2030, but only if we ensure that every person accessing treatment has the support needed to take it correctly every day without fail.”

A groundbreaking study in 2011 showed that starting HIV treatment when the patient is positive but still healthy, and strictly adhering to the treatment regimen, reduced HIV transmission to HIV-negative partners by 96%. This has been dubbed “Treatment as Prevention”.

Failure to adhere to treatment limits viral suppression, and so thwarts the preventative effect of treatment.

Treatment as prevention dramatically influenced the WHO’s current policy to treat everyone who tests HIV positive as soon as they are diagnosed and South Africa plans to start offering treatment immediately following diagnosis before the end of 2016.

But it still needs to get the pills to the people, making innovation like a drug vending machine close to peoples’ homes the difference between life and death.

1,300 galaxies discovered from a telescope still being built.

Matt Kim/www.inverse.com/July 17, 2016

The MeerKAT Telescope is a radio telescope currently being built in South Africa. As it stands, it currently has 16 out of the planned 64 dishes integrated into its telescope array. That didn’t stop MeerKAT from capturing 1,3000 galaxies in the first image released by South Africa’s Minister of Science and Technology, Naledi Pandor.

Prior to today’s MeerKAT images, only 70 galaxies were known in this location which comprises less than 0.01 percent of the entire celestial sphere. This is astounding considering the telescope hasn’t reached its planned capacity, making MeerKAT the best telescope of its kind in the southern hemisphere.

MeerKAT is currently being constructed in Karoo, and when complete will be integrated into the Square Kilometre Array (SKA), a radio telescope project built in South Africa and Australia. SKA South Africa Chief Technologist Professor Justin Jonas says that, “[b]ased on the results being shown today, we are confident that after all 64 dishes are in place, MeerKAT will be the world’s leading telescope of its kind until the advent of SKA[.]”

In the press release for today’s findings, Minister Pandor said, “South Africa has already

demonstrated its excellent science and engineering skills by designing and building MeerKAT. This telescope, which is predominantly a locally designed and built instrument, shows the world that South Africa can compete in international research, engineering, technology and science.”

MeerKAT is currently being built in phases so as to make sure each new addition functions properly. When complete, MeerKAT will comprise of 64 receptors, each with a 13.5-metre diameter dish antenna, cryogenic coolers, receivers, digitiser, and further electronics. The next phase, AR2 will expand AR1’s 16 dishes to 32, and the completed 64 dish AR3 is expected in 2017.

For a more detailed look into the images captured by MeerKAT, SKA released these close-ups which shows two galaxies with black holes at their center.

Clear the path for Africa's youth - Bill Gates

2016-07-17/Jeff Wicks, News24

Pretoria - Microsoft founder and billionaire philanthropist Bill Gates said that obstacles in the path of Africa’s youth needed to be cleared so that they can drive the future of the continent.

Gates was delivering the Nelson Mandela memorial lecture at the University of Pretoria on Sunday night.

The theme of the lecture was “living together”.

Gates said that the elder statesman’s life embodied the theme of living together.

“Today South Africans are still striving to live together in the fullest sense, so much closer because Nelson Mandela and many others believed in the promise of one South Africa,” he said.

“As a boy I learned about him [Mandela] in school. The first time I got to speak to him in 1994 when he called me to help fund SA’s election. I admired him so much and I knew the election was historic so I did what I could to help.”

He said on a subsequent trip to Johannesburg, specifically to Soweto, and prompted the founding of the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation.

“Melinda and I had always known that we would give our wealth to philanthropy eventually. The sense of urgency was spurred on by a trip in 1997 when I came to Johannesburg. I spent most of the time in business meetings in the richer part of the city but I also went to Soweto. My visit taught me how much I had to learn outside the world outside the bubble I lived in all my life,” he said.

Gates added that Nelson Mandela was concerned about the future and he believed that people could make it better than the past.

“One topic with Nelson Mandela came back to was the power of the youth...that is one reason why I am optimistic about the future of this continent. The youth are special source of dynamism,” he said.

“We must clear the obstacles for young people...if we invest in the right things and ensure that the basic needs of Africa’s young people are taken care of, they will have the ability to change the future,” he said.

“Let us do everything within our power to help build a future Nelson Mandela dreamed of and a future we can achieve together,” Gates added.

HIV/Aids resurgence in Africa feared as Durban hosts conference

18 July 2016 /theguardian.com

Latest figures indicate increase in the virus in some countries, as international funding for research and treatment falls

Sixteen years after a groundbreaking conference shocked the world into the realisation that thousands of Africans were dying of Aids because they did not have access to life-saving drugs, campaigners and scientists meeting once again in Durban this week will warn that the progress made since 2000 is not enough to end the epidemic.

Although the argument for drugs for Africa was won and 17 million people are now on treatment that keeps the virus at bay, there are 36.7 million people living with HIV, according to UNAIDS, meaning that fewer than half of those who need the drugs are getting them. The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends that anybody diagnosed with HIV should be put on antiretroviral drugs as soon as possible, to keep them well and because the medication prevents them infecting others.

Meanwhile, the numbers becoming infected every year, which had been dropping, have now stalled and are rising in some countries. Just under 2 million people become HIV positive every year, so the epidemic continues to grow and the cost of keeping people alive continues to rise.

There is mounting anxiety among the experts and the activists at this year’s Durban International Aids Conference that the epidemic may slip out of control once more.

The WHO is among those flagging up serious issues that could put in jeopardy the UN’s plans to end the epidemic. In a statement at the start of the week-long conference, the WHO called for new attention to prevention and warned of growing resistance to the antiretroviral drugs used to control HIV, which could mean that newer, more expensive versions will be needed in the developing world.

“The enormous progress on HIV, particularly on treatment, is one of the big public health success stories of the century,” said Dr Margaret Chan, director general of the WHO. “But this is no time for complacency. If the world is to achieve its goal of ending Aids by 2030, it must rapidly expand and intensify its efforts.”

Money is a growing concern. A report from the Kaiser Family Foundation in the US and UNAIDS this weekend said that funding from donor governments had fallen last year for the first time in five years from \$8.6bn in 2014 to \$7.5bn.

“2015 marked a drop in donor funding for HIV,” said Jen Kates, director of global health and HIV policy at the Kaiser Family Foundation. “Donors faced many competing funding demands, including humanitarian emergencies and the refugee crisis, all against a backdrop of fiscal austerity in a number of countries. Looking ahead, donor funding for HIV remains uncertain as leading donors face changes in political leadership and the world is still digesting the effects of Brexit.”

The US put in the biggest proportion, as it always has, at 66.4%, followed by the UK with 13%. France provided 3.7% of funding, Germany 2.7%, and the Netherlands 2.3%.

Luiz Loures, the UNAIDS deputy executive director, said the decline in funding was worrying. “Countries still need urgent support over the next few years to fast-track their responses to HIV, enabling them to end the Aids epidemic by 2030 and save millions of lives. Diverting resources from the HIV response now will mean much greater human and financial costs over the long term.”

In recent years, there have been many optimistic pronouncements about innovations that may help end the pandemic, from circumcision to microbicides that allow women to protect themselves from HIV to drugs used for treatment that also prevent infection.

The results of further studies showing that these things can work will be presented at Durban. But the major hurdle may be making them routinely available – particularly in the case of drugs that can be taken by people without HIV to protect themselves.

HIV scientists are focusing on research to bring closer a “cure” for HIV infection, which is usually interpreted as long-term remission from the effects of the virus rather than its elimination. The work has been inspired and encouraged by a few remarkable cases, including the Berlin patient who had a bone marrow transplant that eradicated all trace of HIV in his body. More recently there was the Mississippi baby who was given intensive treatment with antiretroviral drugs shortly after she was born with HIV and remained well without drugs for two years. In 2014, she was found to have detectable virus in her bloodstream once again.

The conference, which takes place in a different country every two years, will not hear of any major breakthrough on the road to a cure in Durban, but scientists say their increasing understanding of the way the virus can hide in the body and its relationship with the immune system encourages them to believe that it will eventually happen.

TANZANIA :

Mixed feelings over child marriage

FAUSTINE KAPAMA/dailynews.co.tz/18 July 2016

LAWYERS have expressed different opinions on the High Court’s decision, nullifying some provisions under the Marriage Act, allowing a girl under the age of 18 years to get married.

While some of the advocates support the judgment, saying it has come at the right time, others are on the contrary, claiming that many societies practising the custom would be highly affected, notably the Muslims.

The Attorney General (AG), Mr George Masaju, who is the government’s chief adviser on legal matters, could not be reached for comment on the court’s decision as his mobile phone kept on ringing without being answered when contacted on several occasions.

Advocate Hudson Nduyepo is the first lawyer to open the debate on this matter. He told the ‘Daily News’ in an interview that he has been impressed by the decision which has come up with a clear position on the matter which has been under criticism for a long time.

He explained that when comparing rights for children in other laws, a child cannot enter into contract and he or she does so through a guardian and even the guardian would be involved in the

transaction without seeking consent of the child.

“Under this decision, children rights will be protected. The Marriage Act was forcing the girl under 18 years to enter into a marriage contract, while such contract is entered upon consent of parents or guardian, while such guardian is not part to the terms and conditions of the contract,” the lawyer said.

Mr Nduyepo, who was a trial attorney before jumping out of the prosecution’s wagon to the defence side pointed out further that the Marriage Act had given obligations to the child to perform the marriage contract, while such child was not recognized by the law.

Former President of the Tanganyika Law Society Mr Francis Stolla went extra miles, arguing that it is a cardinal principle of law that in every general rule, there must be exceptions. He is quick to point out, however, that the nullification of the provisions in question was not supposed to be absolute. According to him, the court was supposed to leave a certain room to accommodate some of circumstances that may arise in the society.

However, he said, he agreed with the findings of the court because under normal circumstances nobody was required to consent on someone else’s behalf. “The consent must come from a particular person, especially to children because they are presumed to lack that requisite capacity to consent.

Therefore, no person should consent on behalf of a person who has no ability and capacity to consent and for this matter, for marriage,” the seasoned lawyer said. Mr Stolla was, however, so critical on part of implementation of the court’s decision in particular when the girl under the age of 18 years get pregnant and the child who is expected to be born would be entitled to the parental care for both sides, that is, mother and father.

“If the general rule remains absolute, then the child born will be illegitimate for that matter, while if there were exceptions, that marriage would be allowed for the purpose of giving right to the newly born child,” he said.

He pointed out further that such kinds of practices have been there for a long time and he could not know whether the judges had taken into consideration the circumstances prevailing in the society. He was of opinion that the law should not seal the house without leaving a fire exit.

Advocate Yahaya Njama criticized the High Court decision, claiming that it has an adverse impact and would affect the majority in the society especially tribes and regions which are still practising such customary procedures, including Muslims and that the judges never considered what prevails in society.

He pointed out that the Islamic law allows girls under the age of 18 years to get married and the court decision was a result of an action by human right activists, who did not represent the whole society including those involved in the customs.

“Furthermore, these communities were not involved in the matter. There is no proof that efforts were made to make members of the community to be affected to be aware of the proceedings. As a result, they have been condemned unheard,” Mr Njama, also a seasoned lawyer, said.

Advocate Daim Khalfan also criticized the decision in question because the marriage under 18 years was not a mandatory requirement, as there were some conditions in place for one to contract such kind of marriage for the same to be valid.

He explained further that there was no proof showing that the reasons that had enabled the enactment of the provisions to allow marriage of girls under the majority age do not exist at the moment. According to him, it should be noted that the Marriage Act was a result of collection and alignment of several other laws relating to marriage or family law like customary law, religious laws and some society laws. “That is why 14 years of age for some societies is possible.

Therefore, there were no cogent and compelling reasons to strike the provisions. The Marriage Act was subjected to white paper and scientific research which led to its enactment.

If there was something wrong, it was imperative to conduct a similar research to involve all necessary communities, which are applying the laws allowing the marriage under the age of 18 years and not to rush to nullify the provisions concerned,” the advocate concluded.

Recently, a High Court panel comprising former Principal Judge Shaban Lila, Sekiet Kihyo and Ama Munisi nullified sections 13 and 17 of the Tanzania Law of Marriage Act, which allow girls to marry at age 15 with parental permission and at age 14 with the permission of a court.

They ruled that the provisions were unconstitutional and, therefore, gave the Attorney General one year from the date of the decision within which to make arrangements for amendments of the law to put the age of 18 years as minimum for one to contract marriage.

Such decision was a result of a case which was filed earlier this year by Rebeca Gyumi, who is the director and founder of the Msichana Initiative. The organisation advocates for the rights of women and girls, claiming that the persistence of child marriage is a threat to an already vulnerable group in society.

The court ruling follows a series of new legal measures, adopted by the Tanzanian government, that make it a crime to attempt to marry school-going children under 18, as well as any “person who impregnates a primary school or a secondary school girl.”

The Court pointed out that while the Law of Marriages Act may have been enacted with good intentions in 1971, this intention is no longer relevant because the effect of the Act now is to discriminate against girls by depriving them of opportunities that are vital for all citizens.

Tanzania-Zambia Railway Authority (TAZARA) lands big deal with DRC
[exchange.co.tz/July 18, 2016](http://exchange.co.tz/July%2018,%202016)

The Tanzania-Zambia Railway Authority (TAZARA) has landed another big deal to transport 18 million litres (18,000 metric tonnes) of petroleum products to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in the next one year.

The first consignment of about one million litres (1,000 metric tonnes) has already departed the Port of Dar es Salaam, the authority said adding they were confident that the initial two million litres (2,000 metric tonnes) would be delivered to the DRC within the next one month.

“As we consolidate our turnaround mission, we are delighted to announce the conclusion of an Agreement with African Fossils Limited of Tanzania to move 18 million litres (18,000 metric tonnes) of petroleum products to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in the next one year,” TAZARA spokesperson, Conrad K.

Simuchile said in a statement issued yesterday. “This import order is particularly key because it fulfils our desire to balance the flow of traffic in both directions of our line as most of the traffic we are currently moving comprises exports from Zambia and DRC”, he said.

The DRC fuel order is the second import consignment to be secured within a month, following the transportation order for 48 million litres (48,000 metric tonnes) of petroleum destined for Malawi in June.

Malawi government had given an order to the Tanzania-Zambia Railway Authority (TAZARA) to move 48 million litres of petroleum products in the next 12 months, starting July 2016.

The spokesperson said the target for the 2016/2017 financial year was to transport 381,000 metric tonnes, a three-fold improvement from 130,000 metric tonnes that were hauled in the 2015/2016 financial year.

“We are grateful to African Fossils Limited for giving us a vote of confidence through this order, which also reaffirms the faith that our customers have generally placed in us to transform the Authority,” he said.

“We believe we are well on course to turn around TAZARA’s performance, which had dropped to the lowest in the Financial Year 2014/2015, when a paltry 87,680 metric tonnes was transported.”

KENYA :

Kenya should capitalise on UNCTAD

By The Standard/Mon, July 18th 2016

NAIROBI: This week Nairobi hosts the 14th United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). It is one of the many high-profile conferences that have been held in Nairobi in the recent past.

The conferences have gone a long way in marketing Kenya as the ideal place for doing business, especially now that the world is increasingly opening up and as intercontinental trade deepens. For Kenya, besides the boost that the tourism industry gets from such events, it is now more visible to the rest of the world for hosting successful international conferences, something we must take advantage of to market the country even more. With over 7,000 delegates attending the conference, a much-needed shot in the arm for business people around Nairobi and the hospitality industry in terms of bed occupancy will be provided. The conference also offers the perfect opportunity to showcase what we have while looking for markets necessary to bring in foreign exchange. And it is important in as much as it helps assuage fears that Kenya is not a safe place following the bad impression terrorist attacks gave it sometime back. However, trade imbalances seem to the favour developed countries only and this is a matter the meeting in Nairobi ought to address.

ANGOLA :

AU/AFRICA :

Morocco seeks to rejoin African Union after 32 years

bbc.com/18/07/2016

Morocco has formally announced its wish to rejoin the African Union, 32 years after leaving the organisation.

In a message to the AU summit in Rwanda, the Moroccan King Mohammed VI said the time had come for his country to retake its place within its institutional family.

Morocco left the AU in 1984, after the organisation recognised the independence of Western Sahara.

Moroccans describe Western Sahara as their country's "southern provinces".

For more than three decades, Morocco has refused to be part of the organisation.

In March, it threatened to pull its soldiers out of UN global peacekeeping missions because of the dispute.

Now, the Moroccan authorities seem to have concluded their absence hasn't helped them diplomatically over Western Sahara and many other issues, says the BBC's Africa Reporter James Copnall.

They sent a special envoy to lobby African leaders at their summit in the Rwandan capital Kigali this weekend.

The AU has said that it will continue pushing for the rights of the people of Western Sahara to hold a self-determination referendum.

Morocco is the only African country which is not an AU member.

Xi praises African Union's integration role as AU launches single passport

July 18, 2016/thebricspost.com

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Sunday sent a congratulatory message to the 27th summit of the African Union (AU), which kicked off on Sunday in the Rwandan capital of Kigali.

Xi noted that "the AU has played an important role in promoting unity, self-improvement as well as integration of Africa" said state news agency Xinhua.

The African Union which represents 54 states, wants to abolish the need for Africans visiting African countries to require a visa by 2018 and has officially launched the African Union single passport on Sunday. Outgoing Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Dlamini-Zuma issued the first two copies to Chairperson of the AU and Chadian president, Idris Deby Itno and Rwandan president Paul Kagame.

The AU also wants to establish a free trade deal across the continent by 2017, as intra-African trade costs more than any other region.

On Sunday, Chinese President Xi sought to highlight the extensive trade and development ties with the continent.

“China attaches great importance to its relations with Africa and will push for the implementation of the 10 major cooperation plans announced at the Johannesburg summit, so as to lift the China-Africa comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership to a higher level for the benefits of the Chinese and African peoples,” said Xi. He was referring to the Johannesburg summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in December 2015.

During that summit in December, Chinese and African leaders discussed cooperation strategy and jointly drew a blueprint for future cooperation, said Xi.

Xi had announced \$60 billion in funding to promote cooperation and support development efforts in the African continent. This includes \$5 billion of interest-free loans and \$35 billion in preferential financing, export credit lines and concessional loans. Xi also committed \$1.2 billion for work on power plants in Zimbabwe and pledged to invest 94 billion rand (\$6.5 billion) in infrastructure and other projects in South Africa.

Exports to China rose to 6.5 per cent of Sub-Saharan Africa’s GDP in 2014 from 2.4 per cent in 2005.

Meanwhile, the impact of the Chinese economic slowdown on African growth prospects is overstated, experts say.

On Sunday, AU Chairperson Dlamini Zuma spoke about the many successes of the Commission: championing the rights of women, the launch of the African passport and championing youth involvement in the continent’s journey into the future.

In her opening address at the AU summit on Sunday, Zuma referred to the recent fighting in South Sudan, where fighting between forces loyal to the president and his rival has plunged the nation into its worst crisis since the end of a two-year civil war.

“South Sudan, Africa’s youngest nation, whose people in their five years of independence have experienced violence and trauma no nation should bear... We therefore welcome the bold decisions taken by the IGAD + 5 Mechanism to once again give hope to the people especially the civilians of South Sudan,” Zuma told African leaders.

Forces loyal to South Sudan’s President Salva Kiir and Vice President Riek Machar engaged in five days of street battles with anti-aircraft guns, attack helicopters and tanks until a ceasefire was reached on Monday last week.

UN/AFRICA :

S. Sudan refugees in E. Africa could exceed 1 million: UN
Monday 18 July 2016/sudantribune.com

July 17, 2016 (JUBA) – The United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) said it expects the number of South Sudanese refugees in East Africa to exceed a million this year, and urged on armed groups to allow safe passage for people fleeing due to the latest fighting.

The agency says it requires up to \$700 million in aid to help it cope with the influx of South Sudanese fleeing the violence to neighboring countries.

At least 42,000 civilians have been displaced in the recent fighting that occurred in the South Sudan capital, Juba, a senior UN official said last week.

The head of the UN peacekeeping operation, Hervé Ladsous told the Security Council that 7,000 of those displaced were accounted for at the two UN compounds and the remaining about 35,000 were sheltering between the World Food Programme (WFP) compound, other non-governmental organisations and churches in the city.

He expressed concerns over potentials for the resumption of violence and spill over into others parts of the young nation.

On Wednesday, according to Ladsous, the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) was been able to conduct limited patrolling again to assess the security situation, the safety and security of personnel and assets at UN compounds.

The senior UN official, however, noted that securing freedom of movement remains an uphill battle as security forces limit the mission's movement every step of the way.

He further urged the South Sudanese government to allow UNMISS and other humanitarian actors in the country freedom of movement and access to provide vital assistance to the civilian population.

Meanwhile, Ethiopia said it was ready to send more soldiers to strengthen the UN peacekeeping mission in South Sudan.

"We're more than willing to take on our part of responsibility in restoring calm in South Sudan," Getachew Reda, the spokesperson for the Ethiopian government told Reuters.

South Sudan President Salva Kiir told reporters in Juba last week that his country would not accept the deployment of additional peacekeepers in the young nation.

US/AFRICA :

US "not taking any offensive military actions" in S. Sudan
Monday 18 July 2016/sudantribune.com

July 17, 2016 (JUBA) - The United States said it is not taking any offensive military actions aimed at destabilizing South Sudan, but is only sending a small contingent to assist its embassy in the country.

The move comes barely two weeks after a spate of violence, involving South Sudan's rival forces in the capital, Juba left hundreds dead before a ceasefire, which has since held, was declared.

"The United States wants to reassure the people and the government of South Sudan that it has no plans to target any government or military leaders or import special military equipment with the

goal of destabilizing the nation,” the deputy spokesperson of the US State Department, Mark Toner said in a statement.

"Any suggestion that the United States has done so or will do so is false, baseless, and not in the interest of peace in South Sudan," he added.

Last week, the US President Barack Obama on Friday announced that Washington would deploy up to 200 troops equipped with combat equipment to South Sudan to protect US citizens and the embassy in Juba, with troops to be stationed in Uganda.

The outbreak of fighting has already forced the United Nations to evacuate its non-essential staff from the young nation. The US, Germany, Uganda and Sudan also evacuated its citizens from Juba.

Toner said to help keep its embassy open and help non-emergency workers to depart, the US sent military personnel to Juba on 12 July.

"Citizens of Juba can expect to see a rotation in military personnel during the week of July 18," he further stressed.

"This rotation of troops is to replace not reinforce the number of military personnel. All of the additional troops will return home when the need for additional security no longer exists," added the official.

Meanwhile, the US government welcomed the 11 July ceasefire in put in place by the SPLA/M-In Government and the SPLM-In Opposition, urging both sides to remain committed to the ceasefire, protect and ensure the welfare of civilians in Juba and other parts of the nation.

South Sudan's largest single donor of humanitarian assistance, Washington has reportedly donated nearly \$1.6 billion to the young nation since the start of conflict in the country in mid-December 2013.

CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

EU/AFRICA :

CHINA/AFRICA :

INDIA/AFRICA :

India's Outreach To African Nations Mutually Beneficial – OpEd

July 18, 2016/eurasiareview.com

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's four nation Africa trip from July 7-11 came at an important time. India-Africa ties have witnessed a significant transformation thanks to the increasing economic synergies between both. This point is strongly reinforced by the fact that trade was estimated at USD 72 Billion as of 2015, up from 30 Billion in 2008. At the political level too, engagement has witnessed a steady rise.

In June 2016, President Pranab Mukherjee toured Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire and Namibia, while in May 2016, Vice President Hamid Ansari visited Morocco and Tunisia. Modi began his Africa tour with Mozambique (July 7) and then traveled to South Africa (July 8-9), Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania (July 10) with his last stop in Kenya (July 11). In October 2015, India hosted the India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi, where representatives from all 54 African countries and 40 heads of state and government attended this mega event-cum-interaction.

While the India-Africa relationship has witnessed significant positives, there have been a number of hiccups. There were strong reactions from a number of African envoys in the aftermath of the murder of a Congolese citizen, Masonda Ketada Oliver who was bludgeoned to death in New Delhi. This was followed by attacks on a Nigerian student in Hyderabad.

'Soft power' has played an important role in ties between India and the outside world, especially with Africa, and one aspect of this soft power has been the African students in India.

It is estimated that there are 25,000 African students in private and government universities in India. Notably, one of the important decisions taken during the India-Africa Forum Summit in October 2015 was to increase the number of scholarships provided to African students. The murder and attacks on Africans residing in India caused immense damage to the relationship, with most African envoys even threatening to boycott the Africa day celebrations.

It required deft handling from the External Affairs Minister, Sushma Swaraj to defuse the tensions, though some Ministers, including the Culture and Tourism Minister Mahesh Sharma, made some unnecessary statements.

If one were to look at the thrust of the visit that will be undertaken by the Prime Minister, there is likely to be an emphasis on accelerating development assistance, working together on multilateral forums on issues pertaining to terrorism and the environment, enhancing cooperation in the spheres of energy and agriculture as well as greater maritime cooperation.

The Indian Prime Minister discussed the progress of current projects being funded by India, and deepen cooperation in areas like Information Technology (IT) and medicine where India has an advantage, and which can immensely benefit Africa.

If one were to look at energy cooperation, this was high on the agenda during the PM's Mozambique visit. Mozambique President Filipe Jacinto Nyusi had signed an MOU for expanding cooperation during his visit to India in August 2015, this was taken forward subsequently during the India-Africa Forum Summit and by Minister of state for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Dharmendra Pradhan during his visit to Mozambique in April 2016.

During the PM's Tanzania and Kenya visit greater Agricultural Cooperation was on the agenda since India and Africa have been exploring ways of cooperation for food security and strengthening agricultural synergies. India can address its own food shortages by assisting in increasing the level of agricultural production of pulses and edible oils. Agriculture Minister, Radha Mohan Singh while addressing the India-Africa Agribusiness Forum had stated:

“Can we think of a dispensation that where Indian companies can consider investing in Africa for growing pulses and edible oils, which are in short in supply in India. Similarly, African businesses can think of engaging mutually beneficial collaborators in India”.

The issue of greater maritime cooperation and enhancing linkages through the Blue Economy was also of importance. During the Indo-African Summit in October 2015, the Prime Minister had referred to both aspects. With Mozambique there is immense potential for cooperation since both India and Mozambique have vast coastlines and are connected by the Indian Ocean.

Finally, both sides explored possible cooperation in the sphere of counter-terrorism. The Al Shabab Group was responsible for the dastardly attack on Westgate Mall, Nairobi, Kenya 2013.

In Johannesburg, South Africa and Nairobi Kenya, Modi addressed the Indian Diaspora. Modi also met members of the Diaspora in Maputo (Mozambique) and Tanzania.

It is tough to talk about India's approach towards Africa without comparisons with China. While it is true that there are a number of advantages which India has, not just in the context of strong historical ties, but also the fact that Indian businesses are relatively popular since they generate local employment and benefit local economies more, India's financial assistance has been witnessing an increase. India has implemented 137 projects in 41 countries without seeming to be obtrusive or patronizing; the same cannot be said about China though.

Yet, there is no doubt that India needs to pull up its socks. Firstly, India's engagement with Africa has fallen behind China with India-Africa bilateral trade estimated at 70 Billion USD, while China's trade with Africa is estimated at 200 Billion USD.

Second, while there is no doubt that India's financial assistance for Africa has less conditionalities. The LOC's are not utilized because of turf wars between Ministries and a convoluted process for getting approvals. India has extended concessional credit lines worth USD 7.4 billion, less than 6.8 Billion were approved and 3.5 Billion disbursed as of October 2015, this issue was raised by a number of leaders during last year's India-Africa Summit.

Third, India needs to expand its outreach to Africa and not restrict it to Southern and Eastern African shores alone. This has been the tendency thus far, due to historic ties, a substantial Diaspora population and the fact that India works jointly with South Africa in multilateral setting. In the recent years, ties with other parts of Africa have also intensified and there is a desire to broaden engagement with the continent as is evident from the India-Africa Summit in October 2015. Yet, a number of African countries complain of neglect and of India's policy being centered around a few African countries.

It is important to address this issue if India needs to strengthen economic ties with the region. One possible way could be involving state governments especially those such as Andhra Pradesh, whose economic ties with Africa are strengthening, apart from this states such as Gujarat and Punjab which have sizeable diasporas in Africa should also work jointly with New Delhi. Greater interactions with state governments are also important to increase awareness about Africa, since a number of

students study in private universities outside Delhi. A number of African envoys have been proactive in reaching out to state governments and universities beyond the national capital.

In conclusion, India needs to improve its implementation of projects and use its soft power effectively in Africa, mere goodwill by itself is not enough. Promises need to be backed by action.

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

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