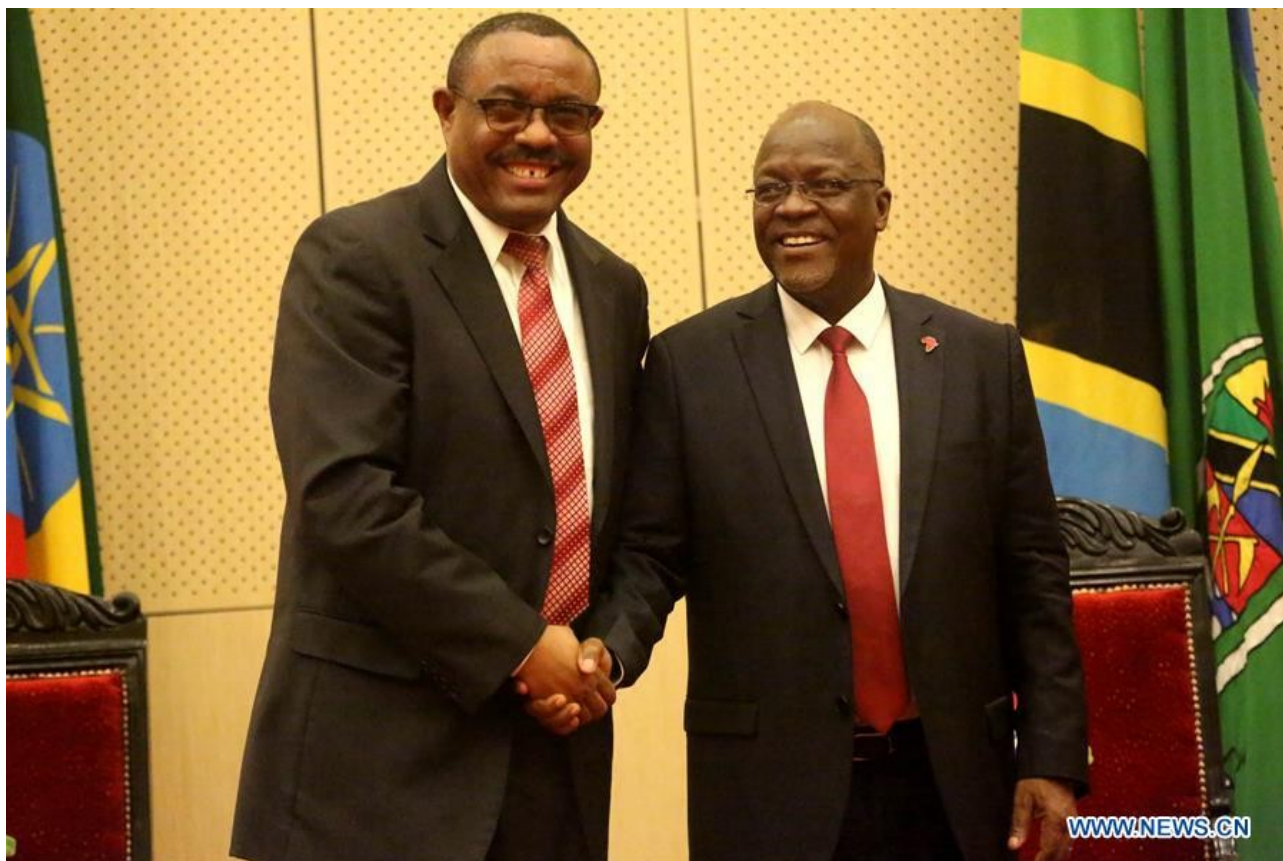


AFRICA : 31 MARS 2017 : (Tanzania plans to import 400 MW of electricity from Ethiopia)



Tanzanian President John Magufuli (R) meets with the visiting Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn at State House in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, March 31, 2017.
(Xinhua/Anthony Siame)

Tanzania plans to import 400 MW of electricity from Ethiopia ... feet (tcf) of natural gas, Tanzania faces chronic power shortages due its reliance ..

BURUNDI :

Le Burundi a quasi doublé son IDH en 10 ans – PNUD

Source : <http://burundi-agnews.org/sports-and-games/le-burundi-a-quasi-double-son-idh-en-10-ans-pnud/>

Le Burundi détient la plus forte croissance en terme de développement humain au niveau de l'East African Community EAC et de la Communauté économique des pays des Grands Lacs (CEPGL), pour la période s'étalant de 2005 à 2015.

A Bujumbura, ce mercredi 29 mars 2017, les autorités burundaises ont observé l'Indice de Développement Humain du rapport du PNUD 2016 [<http://hdr.undp.org>].

Depuis 2005 à nos jours, l'Indice de Développement Humain IDH burundais demeure croissant. D'un IDH de 0,298 en 2005 on est passé à 0,348 en 2010, à 0,355 en 2012, à 0,389 en 2013 et à 0,404 en 2015.

Le Burundi a quasi doublé son IDH depuis 2005, avec l'arrivée du pouvoir démocratique, à la suite de près de 40 ans de

Dictature Hima Burundaise (Micombero, Bagaza, Buyoya). Les croissances les plus fortes s'observe au niveau des indices de Santé et d'Education.

Le Burundi détient aussi la plus forte croissance en terme d'Indice de Développement Humain IDH au niveau de l'East African Community EAC et de la Communauté économique des pays des Grands Lacs (CEPGL) , depuis 2005 à 2015 , l'IDH :

Le Burundi est passé de 0.298 (2005) à 0.404 (en 2015) ;

Le Rwanda est passé de 0.400 (2005) à 0.498 (en 2015) ;

La Tanzanie est passé de 0.450 (2005) à 0.531 (en 2015);

L'Ouganda est passé de 0.450 (2005) à 0.493 (en 2015);

Le Kenya est passé de 0.480 (2005) à 0.555 (en 2015);

Le Sud Soudan est passé de 0.425 (2010) à 0.418 (en 2015) ;

La RDC Congo est passé de 0.370 (2005) à 0.435 (en 2015).

L'Etat burundais, depuis 2006, s'est lancé dans une modernisation de son système socio-économique [<http://burundi-agnews.org/philosophie.htm>].

La politique de développement est à l'honneur [<http://burundi-agnews.org/tdc/>]. Le Burundi s'attend, avec l'équilibre énergétique entre 2019 et 2020 (parc énergétique entre 350 et 550

MegaWatt), au début d'une véritable révolution industrielle et des services.

DAM, NY, AGNEWS, le mercredi 29 mars 2017

RWANDA :

Depuis Washington, le président Paul Kagame loue l'amitié entre le Rwanda et Israël

27 mars 2017 à 03h12 — Par Jeune Afrique avec AFP

Le président rwandais a salué les liens qui unissent le Rwanda et Israël alors qu'il s'exprimait dimanche à Washington devant l'American Israel Public Affairs Committee (Aipac).

Le président rwandais Paul Kagame était l'invité de marque de la conférence annuelle de l'Aipac, un lobby américain pro-israélien, qui se tenait à Washington, la capitale américaine, dimanche 26 mars.

Devant un auditoire enthousiaste, le président rwandais, qui s'était rendu en Israël en 2008, a vanté la réussite de l'État hébreu et a réaffirmé l'amitié que lui porte le Rwanda.

« La sécurité des peuples qui ont été un jour pris pour cibles pour être exterminés ne pourra jamais être seulement matérielle », a-t-il ainsi lancé à son auditoire. Avant d'ajouter sous un tonnerre d'applaudissements : « Tant que nous ne vaincrons pas toutes les idéologies qui justifient les tueries au nom du patriotisme, notre monde ne sera jamais vraiment sûr. »

« Ensemble, avec des amis comme les États-Unis, nous devons appeler à une solidarité mondiale, revigorée contre les dangereuses tentatives qui visent à nier le génocide et à banaliser les victimes », a-t-il encore plaidé.

« Israël a le droit d'exister et de prospérer comme un membre à part entière de la communauté internationale », a enfin souligné le président rwandais. « Ce n'est pas une atteinte aux droits d'un

autre peuple », a-t-il ajouté, faisant allusion au sort des Palestiniens avec lesquels Israël est en conflit depuis 70 ans.

Sommet Afrique-Israël 2017 à Lomé

L'an passé, le Premier ministre Benjamin Netanyahu s'est rendu dans quatre pays africains, dont le Rwanda, une visite hautement symbolique afin de permettre à l'État hébreux de regagner sa place sur le continent.

Le Premier ministre israélien devrait rencontrer en octobre 2017 une trentaine de dirigeants au cours d'un sommet Afrique-Israël au Togo.

Rwanda: nouvelle session de la CARIC, force africaine de maintien de la paix

Par RFI Publié le 26-03-2017 -

<http://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20170326-rwanda-caric-force-africaine-paix-armee-ngendahimana>

Au Rwanda, près de 200 officiers supérieurs, issus de six des treize pays membres de la Capacité africaine de réponse immédiate aux crises de l'Union africaine (CARIC), sont réunis, pour une semaine, depuis samedi 25 mars, dans le pays pour y mener des exercices de commandement. Nommés « Tranquillité en Afrique » ce sont les troisièmes du genre.

La CARIC a été créée en 2013 comme dispositif transitoire en attendant que la Force africaine en attente (FAA) soit totalement opérationnelle. Ce dispositif repose sur la base du volontariat. En

novembre 2016, l'Union africaine avait estimé que la CARIC était prête à répondre rapidement aux crises sécuritaires et à contribuer aux opérations de soutien à la paix.

C'est l'intervention française au Mali, en 2013, pour enrayer la progression de groupes jihadistes qui a poussé à la création de la CARIC.

« Les solutions aux problèmes africains doivent d'abord venir des Africains au lieu de toujours dépendre de la Communauté internationale ou d'autres partenaires », a expliqué René Ngendahimana, porte-parole de l'armée rwandaise.

Cette force de maintien de la paix est composée de l'Algérie, de l'Angola, du Bénin, du Burkina Faso, du Tchad, de l'Égypte, du Niger, du Rwanda, du Sénégal, de l'Afrique du Sud, du Soudan, de la Tanzanie et de l'Ouganda.

Ils se sont engagés à fournir, en tout, 12.600 soldats, selon Sivuyile Bam, à la tête de la Division des opérations d'appui à la paix de l'Union africaine.

« Les progrès qui ont été faits portent sur ce que l'on peut prévoir en termes de forces disponibles. Nous savons à quoi elles ressemblent et quelles sont leur capacité. Bien-sûr nous avons des défis en matière de financements », a-t-il déclaré.

En effet, ce sont aux pays volontaires de mettre la main à la poche. Malgré tout, Sivuyile Bam l'a martelé, « cette force d'intervention rapide est opérationnelle et les exercices menés au Rwanda visent notamment à s'assurer qu'elle puisse être déployée en sept jours, après décision du Conseil de paix et de sécurité de l'Union africaine ».

Nombre de pays, dont le Nigeria, sont toutefois toujours très réticents à l'égard de la CARIC. Selon Michel Luntumbue, du Groupement de recherche et d'information sur la paix et la sécurité (GRIP), certains pays craignent notamment « une immixtion d'autres Etats » dans leurs crises internes.

RDC CONGO :

L'ONU réduit ses effectifs au Congo

31/03/17 - 19h32 Source: Belga

Le Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies a voté à l'unanimité vendredi une réduction du nombre de militaires et de policiers de la force de maintien de la paix en République démocratique du Congo (RDC).

Aux termes de la résolution qui reconduit la Monusco pour une année supplémentaire, les effectifs de cette force, plus importante et plus coûteuse mission onusienne, passent d'une capacité théorique de 19.815 membres à 16.215.

Casques bleus

Mais dans les faits, moins de 500 Casques bleus vont devoir quitter la mission. En effet, la force ne tournait déjà pas à plein régime et était en réalité composée de quelque 3.100 personnes de moins que sa capacité ne le permettait. Le vote intervient alors que le pays d'Afrique centrale doit organiser d'ici la fin de l'année des élections très attendues, sur fond d'affrontements et de turbulences politiques.

Etats-Unis

Les Etats-Unis de Donald Trump, principaux contributeurs financiers des forces de maintien de la paix onusiennes, assureront la présidence tournante du Conseil en avril. Et Washington entend en profiter pour passer en revue l'ensemble de ces missions pour trouver des coupes budgétaires. Les membres du Conseil ont par

ailleurs rendu hommage vendredi aux deux experts de l'ONU dont les cadavres avaient été retrouvés en début de semaine en RDC.

CONGO :

L'Algérie et le Congo-Brazzaville signent une quinzaine d'accords économiques

30 mars 2017

[<http://www.jeuneafrique.com/423403/politique/lalgerie-congo-brazzaville-signent-quinzaine-daccords-economiques/>]

Le président congolais, Denis Sassou-Nguesso, termine ce jeudi une visite officielle en Algérie où il a rencontré son homologue, Abdelaziz Bouteflika. Libye et partenariats économiques étaient au sommaire de la visite.

Le président de la République du Congo termine ce jeudi 30 mars une visite officielle de quatre jours en Algérie, entièrement dédiée à la situation en Libye et à la relance de la coopération économique.

Mardi 28 mars, Denis Sassou-Nguesso, qui est à la tête du Comité de l'Union africaine (UA) sur la Libye, a rencontré Abdelaziz Bouteflika dans sa résidence à Zéralda. Il ne l'avait pas vu depuis 2011, lorsque l'organisation panafricaine avait envoyé une mission de médiation à Tripoli et à Benghazi pour rencontrer l'ancien président libyen, Mouammar Kadhafi.

A la sortie de la réunion, il a déclaré que l'Algérie jouait un « rôle important dans le règlement de la crise libyenne, comme elle le fait déjà dans d'autres crises de ce genre en Afrique ».

Alger et Brazzaville soutiennent un règlement politique en Libye, sans passer par l'option militaire. Les deux capitales « pensent progressivement réussir à amener les frères libyens à se mettre ensemble autour d'une table pour trouver une solution à la crise qui secoue ce pays ».

Moisson d'accords

Une quinzaine d'accords et de mémorandums d'entente ont été signés lors de cette visite portant sur différents domaines : maritime, éducation, coopération culturelle... La signature de ces accords a été précédée par la réunion de la Grande commission mixte algéro-congolaise qui a appelé les patrons des deux pays « à prendre en charge la relation entre les deux pays et à lui imprimer la cadence qui lui convient ».

Au cours de son séjour en Algérie, le président congolais a visité l'Académie militaire de Cherchell, là où il a été formé dans les années 1960, ainsi que des unités industrielles dans la ville de Constantine pour se renseigner sur le modèle productif algérien. Il s'est aussi rendu à la Somatel, filiale de l'entreprise nationale de matériel de travaux publics ENMTP, dans l'entreprise publique de gerbage et de manutention GERMAN ainsi que chez le fabricant de tracteurs agricoles ETRAG.

Le secrétaire général de l'Onu réclame justice pour les deux experts tués en Rdc

Kinshasa 30/03/2017 Politique - La suède a proposé de fournir une assistance aux enquêteurs pour que la lumière soit faite sur ce double assassinat.

[https://www.digitalcongo.net/article/-KgUCIQWDJ_udRUSOnn7]

Dans un communiqué daté de mercredi 29 mars, le secrétaire général de l'ONU Antonio Guterres a confirmé le meurtre de ses deux experts au centre de la République démocratique du Congo. En effet, l'Américain Michael Sharp et la Suédoise Zaida Catalan avaient été enlevés dans la province du Kasai Central le 12 mars 2017. Leurs corps ont été retrouvés le lundi 27 mars près de la ville de Kananga. L'ONU réclame que justice leur soit rendue.

A cette occasion, M. Antonio Guterres a dressé le portrait de ces deux jeunes dont l'âge nageait dans la trentaine. Le secrétaire général de l'ONU a souligné: « Entièrement dévoués à leur travail, souvent dans des conditions difficiles, ils ont perdu la vie en essayant de comprendre les causes du conflit et de l'insécurité en RDC afin d'aider à ramener la paix à ce pays ».

Par la même occasion, il a demandé aux autorités congolaises de diligenter une enquête sur ce double meurtre, assurant que l'ONU en fera de même, pour que justice leur soit rendue en cas d'actes criminels.

Michael Sharp, 34 ans, et Zaida Catalan, 36 ans, appartenaient à un groupe de six experts indépendants chargés de produire chaque année un rapport au Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU sur les groupes rebelles. Il sied de noter qu'ils étaient dans la province du Kasai Central pour étudier la rébellion des miliciens du défunt chef coutumier Kamuina-Nsapu. Ils étaient accompagnés de quatre Congolais, dont un interprète et trois conducteurs de motos.

Quant à la présence de l'ONU dans la région : le message est clair. Antonio Guterres assure que l'ONU honorera la mémoire de deux

experts en continuant à soutenir le précieux travail du groupe d'experts et toute la famille onusienne en RDC.

Le mobile du crime non éclairci

De nombreuses questions restent toujours sans réponses quant au mobile de cet assassinat. Premièrement, qui sont les assassins ? C'est l'une des interrogations premières de cette enquête, sachant que le meurtre d'experts de l'ONU est un fait inédit en République démocratique du Congo. Aucune réponse définitive, bien sûr, l'enquête est toujours en cours.

Au départ, les autorités congolaises avaient parlé d'un groupe armé non identifié. Désormais, elles évoquent la piste des miliciens de Kamuina-Nsapu, ces gens qui s'opposent aujourd'hui aux autorités dans quatre provinces du Grand Kasai depuis à peu près six mois. Et selon Lambert Mende, porte-parole du gouvernement, le mode opératoire pointe vers ce groupe du fait que l'un de ces corps a été décapité.

Mais pour l'organisation non gouvernementale de défense des droits de l'homme « La voix des Sans Voix pour les droits de l'homme », ce n'est pas la seule hypothèse. Elle pense qu'il pourrait aussi s'agir d'une opération de représailles, de personnes qui auraient commis des violations des droits de l'homme et qui se seraient inquiétées de la présence de ces enquêteurs internationaux.

Voilà une piste à ne pas négliger, quand on sait que le mandat de ces experts est précisément d'enquêter sur de possibles violations de l'embargo sur les armes, toujours en vigueur dans le pays, mais aussi sur de possibles violations des droits de l'homme ou l'exploitation illégale des ressources naturelles. Un rôle

stratégique, puisqu'au terme de leurs recherches, ces experts dressent une liste des personnes susceptibles d'être sanctionnées par les Nations unies, côté miliciens ou parfois côté officiers congolais.

Sans nouvelles de trois conducteurs de motos

D'autres questions méritent réponse pour l'aboutissement de l'enquête. Le ministre de la Communication et des médias de la République démocratique du Congo confirme la découverte de trois corps, ceux de deux experts et celui de leur traducteur congolais. La mission de l'ONU, elle, ne confirme avoir retrouvé que deux personnes, la Suédoise Zaida Catalan et l'Américain Michael Sharp.

Ce qui est évident est que les trois autres Congolais qui les accompagnaient à moto manquent toujours à l'appel. Ils n'ont pas encore été retrouvés, même pas leurs motos. De son côté, la Suède a proposé de fournir une assistance aux enquêteurs congolais pour que la lumière soit faite sur l'assassinat de ces deux experts.

Donatien Ngandu Mupompa/Le Potentiel

Congo: 40 policiers décapités par des rebelles Kamwina Nsapu au Kasai central

Belga [<http://www.sudinfo.be/1814344/article/2017-03-25/congo-40-policiers-decapites-par-des-rebelles-kamwina-nsapu-au-kasai-central>]

Une quarantaine de policiers congolais ont été décapités vendredi par de présumés rebelles du mouvement Kamwina Nsapu dans le sud de la République démocratique du Congo (RDC), ont annoncé samedi des responsables locaux.

Les forces de l'ordre seraient tombées dans une embuscade tendue par des présumés miliciens de Kamwina Nsapu sur le tronçon Tshikapa-Kananga, deux localités de la province du Kasai central. Les assaillants auraient également ravi armes et véhicules, ont précisé des sources locales, citées par le site d'informations Actualité.cd.

Le Chef de l'Etat en quête de solution pour décanter les points d'achoppement au dialogue

[<https://www.digitalcongo.net/article/-KgYX3BxUFUPOoxWtUni>]

Kinshasa 31/03/2017 Politique - Au cours d'une communication faite jeudi à Kinshasa, le porte-parole de la Majorité présidentielle, l'ambassadeur André Alain Atundu, a souligné que l'engagement et la bonne foi du Président Joseph Kabila dans la réalisation des élections à la date convenue ne peuvent raisonnablement faire l'objet d'aucun soupçon.

Le Président de la République, Joseph Kabila Kabange, initie déjà des contacts informels avec les différentes parties prenantes au Dialogue politique pour baliser le terrain en vue de trouver une solution aux questions d'achoppement sur la mise en œuvre de l'Accord de la Saint Sylvestre, notamment le mode de désignation du Premier ministre et du président du Conseil national se suivi de cet accord.

Au cours d'une communication faite jeudi à Kinshasa, le porte-parole de la Majorité présidentielle, l'ambassadeur André Alain Atundu, a souligné que l'engagement et la bonne foi du Président Joseph Kabila dans la réalisation des élections à la date convenue ne peuvent raisonnablement faire l'objet d'aucun soupçon.

La MP, a-t-il indiqué, attire l'attention de la population à plus de vigilance sur le fait que les incidents provoqués à dessein dans la ville de Kinshasa afin de créer l'impression d'une situation pré-insurrectionnelle participe du dessein du Rassemblement de mettre à exécution son projet initial de semer le chaos afin de prendre le pouvoir par la pression de la rue.

En dépit de ce projet macabre, la Majorité présidentielle confirme son engagement à œuvrer sans ménagement à la mise en œuvre effective de l'Accord du 31 décembre 2016 en vue de l'organisation des élections crédibles, transparentes et apaisées dans les délais prévus.

A cet effet, elle invite le Rassemblement à un sursaut salutaire de patriotisme et au respect du peuple congolais en contribuant de façon constructive à la présentation d'une liste de trois personnalités à la candidature au poste de Premier ministre.

La Majorité présidentielle exhorte, en outre, la jeunesse congolaise à ne pas être l'artisan de son propre malheur en participant à des actions de destruction de la cohésion nationale programmées par le Rassemblement et présentant par ailleurs le risque d'éloigner la perspective des élections.

Les condoléances de la MP au Chef de l'Etat

Par ailleurs, la MP a présenté ses condoléances au Président de la République, Joseph Kabila Kabange, Commandant suprême des Forces armées et de Police ainsi qu'à la Police nationale congolaise (PNC) à la suite de la mort tragique, dans une embuscade, de 39 éléments de la PNC en mission de pacification au Kasai.

Elle exhorte les autorités compétentes à établir les circonstances exactes de cette tragédie et à sanctionner, selon la rigueur de la loi, les auteurs et les commanditaires de cet acte ignoble. La MP exprime toute sa compassion aux familles des victimes et se dit convaincue que le sacrifice suprême de leurs frères contribuera à consolider la paix et la démocratie en RDC.

Mandat et réduction des effectifs de la Monusco : le point de vue de la Rdc partagé à New York

[<https://www.digitalcongo.net/article/-KgYgGZQogMBLefNGU8I>]

Kinshasa 31/03/2017 Politique - « On ne peut verser dans le triomphalisme mais le point de vue de la RDC a été entendu », a rassuré le vice-Premier ministre qui a dit avoir rencontré les membres permanents du Conseil de sécurité, dont le président de cette organisation onusienne, le membre permanent de la Russie ainsi les membres non permanents représentant l'Afrique.

Le point de vue de la RDC a été partagé par le Conseil de sécurité des Nations Unies à New York, concernant notamment la mandat et la réduction des effectifs de la MONUSCO (Mission des Nations Unies pour la stabilité au Congo), a déclaré le vice-

Premier ministre, ministre des Affaires étrangères, Léonard She Okitundu, à sa descente d'avion jeudi à l'aéroport international de N'Djili en provenance des Etats Unis, via Paris, en France.

Il reste cependant à savoir quels moyens la MONUSCO sera dotée pour exercer sa mission, a dit le vice-Premier ministre, faisant remarquer que la RDC veut que ce mandat soit plus offensif car le pays fait face à une guerre asymétrique et exige des moyens adaptés pour faire face à cette situation.

« On ne peut verser dans le triomphalisme mais le point de vue de la RDC a été entendu », a rassuré le vice-Premier ministre qui a dit avoir rencontré les membres permanents du Conseil de sécurité, dont le président de cette organisation onusienne, le membre permanent de la Russie ainsi les membres non permanents représentant l'Afrique.

M. Okitundu a rappelé les étapes de la Belgique où il a échangé sur la question du mandat de la MONUSCO avec les officiels de ce pays entretenant des relations historiques avec la RDC.

« Le point de vue de la RDC a été clairement exprimé », a-t-il dit, avant d'évoquer la rencontre avec son collègue ministre des Affaires étrangères russe, dont le pays est membre permanent du Conseil de sécurité.

La Russie a toujours été un partenaire stratégique de la RDC et la rencontre a permis d'examiner les relations bilatérales entre les deux pays, a indiqué le vice-Premier ministre. Cette rencontre a également permis un échange sur le volet économique de cette coopération d'autant plus que les deux pays disposent des ressources naturelles mais la RDC a besoin d'une expertise russe, a dit le chef de la diplomatie congolaise.

Il a entre autres fait savoir que ce pays a même promis d'augmenter le nombre des bourses d'études et d'assurer un appui à la formation professionnelle à travers l'Institut national de préparation professionnelle (INPP) qui va bénéficier bientôt d'un appui de la Russie.

En outre, She Okitundu a rappelé l'étape de Berlin, en Allemagne, où il a participé à un Forum économique organisé par le gouvernement qui a conçu une nouvelle vision de relations africaines. Celle-ci met en exergue la possibilité d'offrir aux hommes d'affaires allemands d'investir en Afrique, particulièrement en RDC.

Pour le gouvernement de ce pays la coopération traditionnelle n'a pas porté des fruits en matière d'aide au développement et il est nécessaire de céder la place aux investissements privés grâce à une législation promouvant les affaires, a-t-il dit, soulignant que sur ce volet la RDC a connu des avancées significatives dans l'amélioration du climat des affaires et de sécurité.

Une étape importante franchie au Dialogue politique inclusif Une étape importante est franchie au Dialogue politique inclusif sous les bons offices de la CENCO (Conférence épiscopale nationale du Congo), a affirmé le vice-Premier qui a invité à ne pas dramatiser la situation. Il s'est dit persuadé que les pourparlers informels vont continuer et que les négociations vont reprendre entre la Majorité et l'Opposition «peut- être sous une autre forme», en vue de dissiper les divergences et former un gouvernement de large union nationale et mettre le cap sur les élections, a conclu le chef de la diplomatie congolaise qui a été reçu l'aéroport de N'Djili par le vice-ministre des Congolais de l'étranger.

ACP
(CL/TH/Yes)

Masisi: 8 morts lors des combats entre deux milices

Publié le mer, 29/03/2017 - 13:22 | Modifié le mer, 29/03/2017 - 13:22

- See more at: <http://www.radiookapi.net/2017/03/29/actualite/en-bref/masisi-8-morts-lors-des-combats-entre-deux-milices#sthash.pY9vTX9E.dpuf>

Les affrontements entre les miliciens d'APCLS alliés aux hommes de Bahati et ceux de la Force de Défense du Congo (FDC) du chef milicien Lohanda ont fait huit morts dans les rangs de l'APCLS, mardi 28 mars dans le groupement Nyamaboko 1er au Nord-Kivu.

Les miliciens APCLS et leurs alliés se seraient retirés le même mardi des positions qu'ils avaient conquises sur leurs rivaux de FDC.

Le fonctionnaire délégué du gouverneur dans la région signale un retour timide de la population de Nyamaboko 1er qui avait fui les combats. Une accalmie s'observe.

UGANDA :

Commonwealth Baton passes through Uganda on African leg

More sport | 30 March 2017

<http://www.iol.co.za/sport/more-sport/commonwealth-baton-passes-through-uganda-on-african-leg-8423696>

The Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Baton Relay arrived in Uganda on Saturday, as part of the African leg of the tour.

The next edition of the Games itself is being hosted by the city of Gold Coast, Queensland, in Australia in April 2018.

After a number of festivities, the Queen's Baton is departing Uganda on Thursday.

It visited the Gems International School in Butabika, and then moved to the Uganda Olympic Committee offices in Kampala.

The Baton left on its tour from Buckingham Palace in London and the first destination was Sierra Leone. It also stopped in Akwaaba in Ghana and Kigali in Rwanda.

On the Ghanaian section of the relay, the Baton visited the Presidential Palace and the Theodosia Okoh Hockey Stadium in Accra.

Schoolchildren in Accra had a chance to carry the baton, while Commonwealth Games badminton competitor Stella Amasah and boxing world champion Azumah Nelson also were given the honour.

Symbolically, the Baton was taken to Elmina Castle, now a national monument, which serves to remind tourists of the brutality of the slave-trade. Many indigenous people died there, tortured by their Portuguese captors.

In Rwanda, the Baton passed through the Kigali Genocide Memorial, which pays tribute to the victims of the Rwandan genocide in the 1990s.

Street celebrations lightened proceedings on the route from Kigali's Convention Centre to the Petit Stade Stadium, with many of the country's sports personalities in attendance.

The Baton will move on to Cameroon and then Nigeria on April 1. It will then travel to Kenya.

The route travelled subsequent to that will be through Tanzania, Seychelles, Mauritius, Malawi, Zambia, Namibia, Botswana, Mozambique, Swaziland, Lesotho and on to South Africa.

African News Agency

Aide to warlord Kony surrenders as US pulls from mission

By rodney muhumuza, associated press

[<http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/uganda-continue-mission-kony-us-pullout-46461212>]

KAMPALA, Uganda — Mar 30, 2017, 12:44 PM ET

A key aide to warlord Joseph Kony has surrendered to Ugandan forces, the military said Thursday, shortly after the U.S. indicated

it was pulling out of the international manhunt for one of Africa's most notorious fugitives.

Michael Omona's surrender to Ugandan forces in Central African Republic "shows the degraded capacity" of the Lord's Resistance Army rebel group, said Maj. Kiconco Tabaro, the Ugandan military's deputy spokesman. Omona was in charge of communications for Kony.

The United States on Wednesday cited the weakening of the LRA for its decision to remove its military forces, which have included dozens of special forces, from the operation.

The U.S. will "transition to broader-scope security and stability activities that continue the success of our African partners," the U.S. Africa Command said.

Kony, a former Catholic altar boy whose rebel movement aspired to rule Uganda according to the biblical Ten Commandments, is wanted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes and crimes against humanity. One of his former commanders, Dominic Ongwen, is currently on trial at The Hague-based court.

The LRA began in the 1980s and at the peak of its powers was internationally known for its cruelty against civilians in Uganda, Congo, Central African Republic and what is now South Sudan. In 2012, the U.S.-based advocacy group Invisible Children made a highly successful online video highlighting the LRA's alleged crimes, including the abduction of children for use as sex slaves or fighters.

But the LRA's active membership has shrunk under pressure and is now under 100, according to the U.S. Africa Command.

Last week the U.S. Africa Command commander, Marine Gen. Thomas Waldhauser, declared the hunt for Kony largely over. Most of Kony's top lieutenants are now off the battlefield, leaving the leader "irrelevant" and in survival mode, he said.

The latest to surrender, Omona, had been abducted by the LRA in 1994 and later became a high-ranking rebel and served as "chief signaler" for Kony.

It was not clear when the U.S. withdrawal would take effect, and the U.S. Africa Command did not respond immediately to questions Thursday.

The U.S. first deployed about 100 U.S. special forces as military advisers in 2011, and in 2014 sent 150 Air Force special operations members and airmen to assist African forces. At the time, their equipment included four CV-22 Osprey aircraft, two C-130 transport planes and two KC-135 refueling aircraft.

The U.S. withdrawal leaves Uganda's military alone in the mission to shut down the LRA. Uganda currently has about 1,500 troops deployed under an African Union military mission to defeat the rebel group.

Ugandan military spokesman Brig. Richard Karemire said Thursday that Uganda is thankful for U.S. support over the years in efforts to defeat the LRA. Ugandan troops will not immediately pull out of the mission against the rebel group, he said.

Karemire insisted that Kony will be a cause for concern as long as he is still alive.

Counter-LRA efforts should draw support from U.N.'s existing peacekeeping missions in Congo, Central African Republic and South Sudan, A.U. commissioner for peace and security Smail Chergui told a meeting of A.U. defense chiefs Thursday.

"It is critical that Uganda and the African Union forces stay engaged and find Joseph Kony," said Sasha Lezhnev of The Enough Project, which monitors LRA activities. "If the pressure on the LRA is released, Kony will regroup the rebels once again, and tens of thousands of lives will be at stake in this fragile region."

TANZANIA :

Ethiopian PM visits Tanzania to strengthen bilateral ties

Source: Xinhua| 2017-04-01 01:10:07|Editor: yan

ARUSHA, Tanzania, March 31 (Xinhua) -- Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn on Friday arrived in Tanzania's commercial capital Dar es Salaam for his two-day state visit in the east African nation to strengthen bilateral ties.

According to the statement issued by Tanzania's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, the visit followed an invitation from Tanzanian President John Magufuli.

Magufuli extended the invitation during his meeting with the Ethiopian prime minister held on the sideline of the 28th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia early this year.

The visit is aimed at consolidating the existing diplomatic relations between Tanzania and Ethiopia through exploring new areas of cooperation including trade and investment.

During the visit, the Ethiopian prime minister will meet Magufuli in private talks at the state house followed later by official talks between the two countries.

Magufuli and his guest will witness the signing of three cooperation agreements.

"Tanzania and Ethiopia enjoy excellent relations and the latter intends to establish its embassy in the country," the statement said, adding that Ethiopia is currently represented in Tanzania by its ambassador based in Nairobi, Kenya.

Tanzania plans to import 400 MW of electricity from Ethiopia

Times of India-8 hours ago

Tanzania plans to import 400 MW of electricity from Ethiopia ... feet (tcf) of natural gas, Tanzania faces chronic power shortages due its reliance ...

[<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/international-business/tanzania-plans-to-import-400-mw-of-electricity-from-ethiopia/articleshow/57945789.cms>]

KENYA :

Kenya to deport three Italian drug traffickers arrested in Mombasa swoop

Mar. 31, 2017, 6:00 pm

By CALVIN OSARIGO, [http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2017/03/31/kenya-to-deport-three-italian-drug-traffickers-arrested-in-mombasa_c1536010]

Kenya will deport three Italian nationals arrested during a joint anti-narcotic operation in Mombasa and Kwale on Friday.

The three, Leon Aberto Fulvio, Mario Mele, and Stefano Poll were on Interpol's wanted list over alleged deals with criminal activities in Italy.

"They had been on notice for their involvement in various forms of organised crime and pending cases in their country. We intend to deport them to face charges in Italy," police said.

The three were among 11 people arrested over links to drug trafficking at the Coast.

Regional police boss Philip Tuimur said their deportation will send a strong message that the country will no longer be used as a safe haven for criminals.

Hamis Massa, head of the anti-narcotics unit, led the operation where three kilograms of heroin worth over Sh10 million was recovered.

Two pistols with 25 bullets, two motor vehicles suspected to be used to smuggle the drugs, Sh2.5 million cash in US dollars, Euros and Kenya shillings were also seized.

Tuimur said on Friday that Bosire Makori - a wanted drug baron; was among eight Kenyans detained following the seizure.

Coast regional coordinator Nelson Marwa ordered for his arrest last week.

Makori is the main supplier of heroin sourced from Tanzania for markets in parts of south Coast.

SOUTH SUDAN :

South Sudan opposition umbrella condemns killing of six aid workers

JUBA (30 Mar.)

[<https://radiotamazuj.org/en/article/south-sudan-opposition-umbrella-condemns-killing-six-aid-workers>]

An umbrella of South Sudan's opposition political parties led by leader of the People's Liberal Party (PLP), Peter Mayen Majongdit has condemned in the strongest terms possible the killing of six aid workers and the growing hostility, antagonism and aggression toward humanitarian workers in the country.

In a press release dated March 28, the group called on both government and rebels to ensure unimpeded access and protection to all aid agencies operating in conflict zones in order to provide humanitarian aid to the people of South Sudan.

The group urged the unity government to reconsider its recent increment of permit charges for foreigners because it directly distresses international humanitarian workers in the country.

The opposition parties appreciated the efforts exerted by international organizations, UN and AU to help improve the humanitarian situation in South Sudan.

The umbrella of opposition political parties also called for immediate actions which include sanctions on those who impede humanitarian accesses.

Photo: PLP leader Peter Mayen during an African Liberal Network meeting in South Africa. (Personal photo Peter Mayen)

SOUDAN :

President Bashir visits Jordan for Arab Summit despite warrant

[<https://nubareports.org/sudan-insider-president-bashir-visits-jordan-despite-warrant/>]

President Omar al-Bashir arrived in Jordan on March 28 for the annual meeting of Arab leaders, defying the travel ban derived from his International Criminal Court arrest warrant. In 2009, the International Criminal Court (ICC) indicted Bashir on charges of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes in Darfur.

In January, King Abdullah II of Jordan invited Sudan's president to attend the summit with 16 other Arab leaders, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and delegations from Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States. UN Secretary General's Deputy Spokesman Farhan Haq called on Jordanian authorities to arrest Bashir and hand him over to the ICC. Sudan's foreign minister Ibrahim Ghandour rejected the statement claiming the UN has "no mandate to talk about the ICC".

Jordan is a party to the Rome Statute of the ICC and hypothetically has an obligation to enforce an ICC arrest warrant for Bashir. Formerly a staunch ICC supporter, human rights groups have widely condemned Jordan's reversed stance allowing Bashir entry.

Jordan has supported the Sudanese government to the detriment of its citizens in the past. In late 2015, Jordan rounded up and deported 800 Sudanese, largely citizens who escaped the conflict in Darfur, from its territory to Sudan. Some Sudanese were even

arrested in front of the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) offices where they had organized a peaceful sit-in for an entire month, calling on the agency to desist from preferential treatment of certain refugee communities over others.

Bashir routinely ignores the ICC travel ban, having traveled to over 100 countries since 2009 according to the international court, including several countries signatory to the Rome Statute. In August, Bashir attended the inauguration ceremony for Chadian President Idris Deby, a country signatory to the ICC. Bashir made similar trips to Uganda and Djibouti last year – with both countries being ICC signatories.

What it means...

Bashir's ongoing defiance of the ICC arrest warrant has garnered him domestic and international praise for resisting alleged western hegemony. The African Union, in particular, has protected Bashir from arrest since the warrant's inception and accuses the court of selective targeting of African countries. This argument ignores the fact that local African prosecutors initiated all the cases except for Sudan and Libya.

In 2009, the AU signed a declaration expressing concern over Bashir's indictment, derailing the Darfur peace process and another in 2010 stating the AU would not enforce the warrant against Bashir. By 2015, the AU called on the UN Security Council to suspend proceedings against the Sudanese president, urging them to withdraw the ICC referral.

Sudan actively lobbies against the ICC, supporting countries such as The Gambia, Burundi and Russia in their individual decisions to withdraw from the international court last year. During the last

Arab Summit, the Sudanese government called on the Arab League to take practical steps to support Sudan's stance against the ICC. In July, the state-owned Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia presented Bashir with the "Africa Dignity Award" for resisting "western hegemony" and "upholding African institutions," according to news reports.

Despite President Bashir's ICC arrest warrant and his government's critical position toward the international court, Khartoum is enjoying improved foreign relations across the globe. In January, the US lifted 19-year economic sanctions that in turn encouraged Britain and other European countries to seek further trade concessions. Improved relations with oil-rich Saudi Arabia may ensure further immunity from international censor in the months ahead despite Khartoum's abysmal human rights record.

Sudan slams UN deputy spokesperson for calling to arrest al-Bashir

[<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article62054>]
March 30, 2017 (KHARTOUM) - Sudan's Foreign Minister Ibrahim Ghandour Thursday has condemned statements by the Deputy Spokesman for the UN Secretary-General, Farhan Haq who urged foreign countries to hand over President Omer al-Bashir to the International Criminal Court (ICC).

In response to a question during the daily press briefing on Wednesday about the silence of UN Secretary General in his speech before the Arab leaders in Jordan about the arrest warrant

by the ICC against al-Bashir, Haq underscored that the UN position on the Sudanese president "remains unchanged".

"And of course, we continue to call on all countries, including those who are parties to the Rome Statute, to abide by their obligations under the Rome Statute and under the resolutions of the Security Council," said the deputy spokesperson.

Reacting to Haq, the Sudanese foreign minister said statements of UN spokesperson in which he requested the extradition of President al-Bashir to the ICC, is a "descent" requiring investigation "to rectify this deplorable situation."

Ghandour further expressed hope that these statements "do not represent the secretary-general of the United Nations in any way".

In statements to the press in Khartoum upon his return from the Arab summit on Thursday, Ghandour said Sudan would investigate through diplomatic channels and Sudan's permanent mission in New York "to verify who was behind this statement and whether it was a unilateral statement by the person who made it."

"The United Nations is an organisation composed of sovereign states including the Sudan, and the respect of its president who is elected by the Sudanese people is important and necessary," said the Sudanese foreign minister.

He further said that the Hague-based court is not part of the UN system and a large number of countries are not a member of the court.

The criminal court is an independent judicial body with jurisdiction to prosecute individuals charged with genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

It has accused President Omer Hassan al-Bashir of genocide and crimes against humanity in his campaign to crush a rebellion in the western Sudan region of Darfur.

The court, which issued two arrest warrants against him, regretted the lack of cooperation from the UN Security Council and member states particularly the African and Arab states where al-Bashir managed to travel several times.

Ghandour said the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres is particularly appreciative of President Al-Bashir and met him during the African Union summit last January, adding he sent recently him two letters on African issues including South Sudan.

He disclosed that the two men had to meet in Oman but the meeting didn't take place due to the previous commitments of President al-Bashir during the one-day Arab summit. (ST)

Sudan hosts joint air maneuvers with Saudi air force

[<http://aa.com.tr/en/africa/sudan-hosts-joint-air-maneuvers-with-saudi-air-force/785097>]

Khartoum moved out of Iranian orbit after joining Saudi-led Yemen campaign in 2015

By Mohammed Amin

KHARTOUM

The Sudanese and Saudi Arabian air forces conducted joint maneuvers on Friday for the first time since Khartoum joined a Saudi-led military campaign in Yemen two years ago.

According to a Sudanese army statement, the exercises -- dubbed "Blue Shield 1" -- are being conducted out of Sudan's Merowe airbase located roughly 330 kilometers north of capital Khartoum.

The maneuvers, which are expected to continue until April 12, are "aimed at improving the operational capacities of the air forces of the two participant countries", the army statement read.

Sudan is participating in the exercise with more than 24 aircraft including Russian-built MiG-29 jet fighters, while the Saudi air force is taking part with F-15s and Eurofighter Typhoon warplanes.

In a major policy shift in 2015, Sudan moved away from its longstanding alliance with Iran to one with the Arab Gulf States when it joined a Saudi-led air coalition against Yemen's Shia Houthi militia group.

ETHIOPIE :

Ethiopian Airlines ready to rescue Air Zimbabwe

[<http://bulawayo24.com/index-id-opinion-sc-interviews-byo-107445.html>]

Ethiopian Airlines, Africa's largest cargo and passenger carrier, is dreaming big. After generating revenue of US\$2,43 billion in the 2016 financial year, which saw a 70% jump in net profit and an 18% increase in passenger numbers to 7,6 million, the airline says it is buying an additional 55 aircraft, expanding its fleet to 142 planes.

Zimbabwe Independent's assistant editor Brezhnev Malaba (BM) interviewed the Ethiopian Airlines managing director (international services), Esayas Woldemariam (EW), in Victoria Falls at the launch of a direct flight from Addis Ababa. He also spoke about the revival of Air Zimbabwe.

BM: You have been involved in discussions to explore the possibility of reviving Air Zimbabwe. Any progress on that front?

EW: The talks still continue and we are very much focussed on helping in that initiative.

BM: How do you envisage to structure this Air Zimbabwe deal if it were to materialise? We are talking of an airline saddled with debts exceeding US\$300 million.

EW: It all depends on the political will of the government of Zimbabwe, and on how they want to put it, whether it is going to be a joint-venture or management consultancy. Ethiopian Airlines is ready for all that.

We have all the human resources, the material resources and the financial resources.

We are looking forward to co-operating with Zimbabwe in a very big way so that we can be able to revamp the whole thing so that Zimbabwe and the rest of Africa are capable of combating the other airlines so that we can defend Africa's resources and defend the traffic of African airlines.

BM: After studying Air Zimbabwe, what weaknesses have you identified in that struggling airline?

EW: It is just focus which is lacking, otherwise I have been able to learn that Zimbabwe is the most literate African nation, the people in Zimbabwe are very intelligent.

What needs to be done is to tweak that potential and direct it to the right channel so that we can channel it in the right direction. Instead of building 30 000 kilometres of railway from here to Cairo, we build just three to four kilometres of runway and connect people and goods and culture and services. It is cheaper to build and it's faster to connect. Right now Africa is transacting only 10% internally and 90% with the rest of the world; we want Africans to transact with each other so that employment creation and capital benefit this continent.

BM: It must be a wonderful feeling to know that you are now flying to one of the top tourist destinations in Africa, Victoria Falls, one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World. How do you feel?

EW: It really feels great because Ethiopian Airlines has always been inspired by the continent and the airline is very African, right down to the bone marrow. Our commercial tagline is "The New Spirit of Africa" and it's our civic duty to our home continent to promote Africa's nature, culture, history and wildlife. That's why we succeeded in building the largest African network in the history of aviation. Ethiopian has been flying in the African skies since 1945.

BM: That's a long time. What has changed since the old days?

EW: At that time, Ethiopian Airlines was inspired to bring Africa together. At that time, our commercial motto was 'Bringing Africa Together'. The only way to travel from one part of Africa to another was via Europe, but Ethiopian Airlines came to connect the continent and now we fulfil our civic duty to our home continent. We connect Africa more than any other airline, be it African, American or European. We fly in Africa to 56 destinations. We are operating 87 aircraft.

BM: When are you getting these new planes?

EW: The 55 aircraft have been ordered. Many of them are already getting phased into the fleet. In fact, last month we received additional Airbus A350s, so these will come successively in the next five to seven years.

The 87 aircraft we are operating range from the largest Boeing 777-300, which is a 400 seater and the Dreamliner Boeing 787 and the Airbus A350, the most modern one and the Boeing 737-800, the Sky Interior with next-generation engines.

Our network spans from Tokyo to Los Angeles and just about anywhere in between. The only inhabited continent we do not fly to currently is Australia, but in the next couple of years we are planning to go to Melbourne.

BM: In recent years, we have seen an increase in budget airlines, particularly in Africa, small carriers that charge very low fares. Are they a threat to large airlines like yours?

EW: We are not competing with them; we're co-operating with them. We want to see more budget airlines and more national carriers in Africa. The more the merrier.

We want to keep the traffic from the Middle East big three (Emirates, Qatar and Etihad) and from the Europeans and from the others, to boost African airlines, because Africans have more to benefit from co-operating than from competing. If tourists from Zimbabwe come to Ethiopia and Ethiopian tourists come to Zimbabwe, job creation, hotels and other related businesses will thrive and capital will remain in Africa and not leave the continent.

BM: You speak of the big three Middle Eastern airlines. How have you remained afloat in the face of such stiff competition?

EW: Number one, we're African to the core, to the bone marrow. We know Africa better than anyone else. We know what the African customer wants by way of customer service, in-flight and on the ground.

The others cannot compete, this is number one. Number two, what we do is that, with African people going everywhere, we try to conduct good market research on the primary and secondary destinations in Africa. We have a very good vision, a very good strategy about where to go and when to go. We have good corporate governance. All these factors combined enable us to beat the competition.

BM: Ethiopian Airlines has been heavily involved in the establishment of a regional airline for West Africa, ASKY. How has that project gone?

EW: We have been assisting to establish ASKY airline in Lome, Togo, for the West African sub-continent. And also Malawian Airline, in Malawi.

BM: Why is it still extremely difficult to travel from one African country to another without having to fly via Europe first?

EW: We are changing that. Within the continent, without having to go via Europe, you can now travel to many places.

Ethiopian Airlines is committed to the building of an alliance of African aviation so that we can work with each other to serve the African continent.

Source - the independent

EGYPTE :

Despite talk of good relations, security concerns darken Egypt-Sudan ties

[<http://al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/03/egyptian-security-concerns-affect-ties-with-sudan-challenges.html>]

CAIRO — In an interview with Al Arabiya TV in early February, Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir accused the Egyptian regime of supporting Sudanese rebels and opposition movements.

Tensions are already high between Cairo and Khartoum, and security concerns prevail over bilateral ties despite Bashir and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi's talk of friendship, economic integration and common interests during their last meeting in Egypt in October 2016.

Though both sides seem to be trying to downplay the conflicts, Egypt-Sudan relations remain far from friendly as Sudan accuses the Egyptian regime of supporting Sudanese rebels and Egypt accuses Sudan of hosting terror training camps.

Author Ayah Aman Posted March 31, 2017

Translator Joelle El-Khoury

During the interview, Bashir stressed that although Sudanese-Egyptian relations are good, there are outstanding issues such as the disputed Halayeb-Shalateen Triangle. He added that Sudan knows that the Egyptian intelligence services are supporting Sudanese opposition leaders and harboring them in Egyptian territory.

The accusations did not stop there. On March 7, a number of Sudanese newspapers republished an article that appeared in Assayha daily: “Egyptian intelligence services increase meetings

with Sudanese opposition.” The article revealed that Cairo-based figures of Sudanese opposition factions such as the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) attended these meetings. It also alleged that the Egyptian regime is conducting media campaigns accusing Sudan of harboring members of the Muslim Brotherhood. Egyptian newspapers had reported on Jan. 19 that investigations into the terrorist Hasm Movement indicated that its members had attended military and intelligence training in Sudan in preparation for returning and carrying out attacks in Egypt.

Egypt expressed no support for former US President Barack Obama’s decision to lift economic sanctions against Sudan. While Egypt has not issued any official statement regarding the US decision, some Sudanese circles believe that Cairo will not support Sudan before the US administration, particularly since reports circulated saying that members of terror groups continue to be trained in Sudan.

Commenting on Sudan's accusation, JEM representative in Cairo Huthaifa Muhieddine told Al-Monitor, “The Sudanese security services are putting out fabricated information and reports on us receiving financial or military support from Cairo.”

He went on, “Egypt does not have time to support the Sudanese opposition movements,” adding, “JEM does not have an official representation office in Cairo. Our activity is limited to communications with some civil political parties and movements interested in Sudanese affairs, not with the Egyptian regime itself.”

Muhieddine noted, “The concerned Egyptian agencies warned against any political or media activities in Egyptian territory. Also,

the number of JEM members in Cairo is very limited, [as most] are based in Darfur.”

An Egyptian diplomat who is well-informed about the Sudanese dossier told Al-Monitor on condition of anonymity, “Tension and mutual accusations have returned following several developments. Most notable among these are the Sudanese-Saudi rapprochement and the six-month probation period set by the Obama decision before lifting economic sanctions against Khartoum.”

The diplomat added, “The official Egyptian institutions have demonstrated that they have good faith and are serious in promoting ties with Sudan, as a neighboring country with whom they have strategic, security and economic interests. Yet a number of signs coming from the Sudanese side have affected the Egyptian trust.” He expressed his dissatisfaction at “the harmful media campaigns and security reports accusing Cairo of supporting the Sudanese opposition without offering any evidence, which is unacceptable in international relations.”

Commenting on Egypt's stance on Sudanese support for the Brotherhood, he said, “The Egyptian administration is nearly convinced that the Sudanese regime is supporting members of the Brotherhood and is Islamist, even though it tries to pretend otherwise.” He pointed to past incidents such as Sudan harboring al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden in the 1990s.

The diplomat stated that the Egyptian administration appreciates the importance of ties with Sudan, despite its disappointment with Khartoum’s Nile waters policy and lack of support for Egypt in its disputes with downstream countries on Nile negotiations.

He stressed, “Khartoum is also aware of how influential the Egyptian opinion and orientation is in the terrorism dossier, particularly since it is still in the probation period under the Trump administration, in light of Islamophobic policies toward a number of Islamic countries, including Sudan.”

On March 21, the Sudanese government announced the formation of a committee consisting of various government agencies to drive the Egyptians out of Halayeb via diplomatic means. On March 17, it banned Egyptian goods from entering Sudan. Egypt has refrained from making any official statement on the moves.

The diplomat explained, “We have a clear policy of not getting carried away by attempts by any official or unofficial Sudanese parties to escalate the situation. We did, however, officially object before the Sudanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the offenses circulated in the Sudanese newspapers.”

In March, Bashir took several measures as part of Sudan’s attempts to curry favor with Cairo and the international community to keep them from accusing it of supporting Islamist currents and harboring members of Islamist groups. He embarked on a broad reshuffle in the government, dismissing all Islamist figures and appointing military ones, such as Bakri Hassan Saleh as prime minister. Egyptian Islamist leader Abdel Moneim Aboul Fotouh was blocked March 24 from entering Sudanese territory to attend the Popular Congress Party’s conference, though it was attended by multiple Hamas leaders and Tunisian Islamist leader Rachid Ghannouchi.

Ayman Abdel Wahab, a researcher on African affairs at Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, told Al-Monitor, “The Sudanese regime has found it more beneficial to coordinate with

Ethiopia than with Egypt in the terrorism file. Also, it is getting closer to the Gulf countries in countering terrorism at the Arab level.”

Tension and security concerns will likely continue to prevail over Egyptian-Sudanese relations until the United States makes a final decision regarding the Bashir regime and Sudan is removed from the US list of countries accused of sponsoring terrorism, the reason for its 20 years of economic sanctions.

Read more: <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/03/egyptian-security-concerns-affect-ties-with-sudan-challenges.html#ixzz4cwvhtnKw>

SOUTH AFRICA :

South Africa's Zuma oversees swearing in of new cabinet ministers

JOHANNESBURG (Reuters) - South Africa's new cabinet ministers were sworn in on Friday, following a reshuffle that replaced Pravin Gordhan as finance minister with Malusi Gigaba along with various other ministers and their deputies.

Zuma's sacking of his finance minister shook South African markets on Friday, and triggered dissent in the African National Congress that has governed since the end of apartheid in 1994.

(Reporting by Tiisetso Motsoeneng; Editing by James Macharia)

Read more at

<http://www.thestar.com.my/news/world/2017/04/01/south-africas-zuma-oversees-swearing-in-of-new-cabinet-ministers/#33cPUKwkMvm3xtPf.99>

ANGOLA :

Angolan authorities have closed a border point with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) due to the deterioration of the security situation in the latter's Kasai Province.

<http://www.nan.ng/news/angola-closes-border-point-drc/>

Angola's Lunda Norte Province Governor Ernesto Muangala said that the border markets could not remain open in the prevailing circumstances.

Luanda Norte Province is located 656km north of the capital Luanda, and shares borders with both DRC and Congo-Brazzaville.

According to reports, instability in Kasai has led to tensions at the border point.

DR Congo's central region of Kasai has seen a spike in violence since September, that has left at least 400 dead Africa Review reports.

The uprising erupted when government forces killed a tribal chief and militia leader Kamwina Nsapu.

Nsapu was leading a rebellion against President Joseph Kabila.

On Tuesday, the bodies of two UN experts who were missing in DRC were found dumped in central Kasai.

The two were abducted two weeks ago while investigating reports of human rights abuses after local rebels took up arms.

Some 40 police officers had been found beheaded in the region earlier.

Last week, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) leaders appealed to the international community to support DRC hold peaceful and credible elections.

DRC was expected to hold a General Election by the end of 2017 as stipulated in a power-sharing deal reached on the New Year's Eve.

However, the United Nations has criticised the lack of progress towards implementing the deal, which also called for the establishment of a transitional council.

The conflict in DR Congo has forced several citizens to flee to Angola and other neighbouring countries.

Eastern DR Congo has been wracked by conflict since 1994, when Hutu militias fled across the border from Rwanda after carrying out a genocide against Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

<http://www.africareview.com/news/Angola-shuts-border-point-with-DRC/979180-3872390-rluqj1z/index.html>

General elections are scheduled to be held in Angola in August, but Dos Santos, 74, has said he does not intend to seek a further term.

Massive oil boom

He has named his defence minister, Joao Manuel Goncalves Lourenco, as his successor.

Dos Santos has governed the oil-rich central-western African power since 1979, just four years after independence from Portugal, making him Africa's second-longest serving leader after Equatorial Guinea's Teodoro Obiang Nguema.

For half of his tenure, Angola was gripped by a bloody civil war that ended only in 2002, which was followed by a massive oil boom.

But critics say millions of Angolans have missed out on the wealth, corruption is widespread and dissent is brutally repressed.

[2017-03-16 15:31 -

<http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/angola-jails-alleged-coup-plotters-for-up-to-10-years-20170316>]

AFRICA UNION :

U.S. to Expand Fire Support of African Union Mission in Somalia

March 31, 2017 Press Latest National News,
<https://enewspf.com/2017/03/31/u-s-expand-fire-support-african-union-mission-somalia/>

WASHINGTON—(ENEWS PF)—March 30, 2017 — President Donald J. Trump has approved a Defense Department proposal to provide additional precision fires in support of African Union Mission in Somalia and Somali security forces operations to defeat al-Shabab in Somalia, Pentagon spokesman Navy Capt. Jeff Davis said today in a statement.

“This authority is consistent with our approach of developing capable Somali security forces and supporting regional partners in their efforts to combat al-Shabab,” Davis said. “Somali and AMISOM forces have already achieved significant success in recapturing territory from al-Shabab, and additional U.S. support will help them increase pressure on al-Shabab and reduce the risk to our partner forces when they conduct operations.”

AMISOM is a regional peacekeeping mission operated in Somalia by the African Union with the approval of the United Nations. It was first established in 2007 with an initial six-month mandate. Troops from U.S. Africa Command support the mission through information exchanges, partnership building exercises and precision strikes.

“We stand with the international community in supporting the Federal Government of Somalia as it strives to improve stability and security in Somalia,” Davis said. “The additional support provided by this authority will help deny al-Shabab safe havens from which it could attack U.S. citizens or U.S. interests in the region.”

Source: <http://defense.gov>

USA – AFRICA :

CHINA – AFRICA :

Racist attacks in India give China the edge in Africa

By Nilanjana Bhowmick 31 Mar 2017

<http://www.scmp.com/week-asia/geopolitics/article/2083846/how-north-korea-got-away-murder-malaysia>

If India is in competition with China for a toehold in Africa, as geopolitical experts say, the past week's racist attacks on the streets near New Delhi must have set it back far behind its northern neighbour.

For three years in a row, India has been in the news for racist attacks against African nationals. The latest came last week after a local boy died of suspected drug overdose in Greater Noida, a satellite town of the Indian capital. Police had detained five Nigerians after parents of the boy accused them of supplying the drugs. However, when they were released due to a lack of evidence, the local people turned on them. Hundreds of people joined the rampage. Another violent mob attacked two African students outside a shopping mall in Noida.

“These attacks will affect bilateral ties adversely. It will damage recent Indian initiatives to promote people-to-people contact under India-Africa forum summit initiatives,” said Ajay Dubey, a professor at the Centre for African Studies in India's premier Jawaharlal Nehru University.

[Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj promised an 'impartial' inquiry into the attacks on Africans in Noida. Photo: AFP] Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj promised an 'impartial' inquiry into the attacks on Africans in Noida. Photo: AFP

India was quick to condemn the attacks as “deplorable” and Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj promised an “impartial” inquiry into the attacks. She also assured a “fair and impartial investigation” into the incident. “It looks racially motivated,” senior police officer Sujata Singh told reporters.

Last May, a Congolese national was stoned to death in a road-rage dispute in Delhi. Around 12 Africans were attacked in south Delhi over their “free lifestyle” the same month. In October 2014, a mob attacked African students at a central Delhi metro station. In January the same year, a lawmaker led a mob to an African ghetto in South Delhi, ostensibly to bust a sex and drug racket. Four African women, two from Nigeria and two from Uganda, were attacked by the mob although the drug racket allegation could not be substantiated.

[A woman walks past bicycles for sale in Monrovia, Liberia. Bicycles in West Africa are mostly used for commuting and uses related to transport. Due to high fuel costs bicycles are often used as a primary means of transport, and repair shops thrive getting many parts sourced from China. Photo: EPA] A woman walks past bicycles for sale in Monrovia, Liberia. Bicycles in West Africa are mostly used for commuting and uses related to transport. Due to high fuel costs bicycles are often used as a primary means of transport, and repair shops thrive getting many parts sourced from China. Photo: EPA

Over the years India, an attractive destination for Africans for higher studies and medical tourism, has been wooing Africa for business opportunities.

About 40,000 Nigerians visited India in 2015, half of them for medical reasons. India’s pharmaceutical exports to Africa

increased from US\$247.64 million in 2000 to US\$3.5 billion in 2014.

India's education sector has been reaching out to Africans as well. In 2013, African students formed 13 per cent of India's total foreign-student population. In 2015, at the Indo-African summit that saw a high level of participation by all 54 African states, India announced concessional credits of US\$10 billion to Africa over the next five years, a US\$600 million grant plus 50,000 scholarships in India over five years.

The African diplomatic ripple that could stir a tsunami for Taiwan

According to data from the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Sudan and Nigeria are the fourth- and fifth-largest contributors to India's foreign-student rolls. The UN says at least 11 per cent of visits by Nigerians to India are for educational purposes.

India also has trade interests and wider geopolitical goals in Africa. It has provided more than US\$1 billion in technical assistance and training over the last few decades and pledged US\$7.5 billion toward African infrastructure.

Keen to reduce its dependence on the Middle East, India gets about 17 per cent of its oil imports from Africa, and expects to get more. Africa's 54 states are also key to India's ambition of becoming a permanent member of the UN Security Council.

“Africa, particularly countries like Nigeria, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Ghana, etc, are a major source of remittances to India,” said Mohan Guruswamy, a distinguished fellow at the New Delhi-based United Service Institution of India, a leading military and

foreign policy think tank. “Indians settlers also have vast trading and other intersects in Africa.”

[People enjoy the first departure of the Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway at Gare De Nagad Station in Djibouti. The railway was built by the China Railway Group and the China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation. Handout photo] People enjoy the first departure of the Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway at Gare De Nagad Station in Djibouti. The railway was built by the China Railway Group and the China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation. Handout photo

Indian and Chinese companies are competing for market share in Africa, but annual trade between China and Africa exceed US\$200 billion compared with India’s US\$75 billion. With bilateral trade growing at 700 per cent in the 1990s, China is now Africa’s largest trading partner. According to China’s Commerce ministry, the country invested US\$3.2 billion in manufacturing and other areas in Africa in 2016. Between 2000 and 2011, China invested almost US\$75 billion through various infrastructure development projects, including buildings and dams.

“Racist violence in India will have consequences. It might trigger off retaliatory attacks in countries like Nigeria where we have large expat populations,” said Guruswamy. “We don’t have much edge over China beyond the fact we have been in Africa long before the Chinese even contemplated it. We also can communicate in English which is widely spoken in Africa, except in Francophone Africa. But the Chinese have much more money to spend and are doing so. They also implement projects on time. Our record is quite the opposite. In any case, whatever historical goodwill we may have is eroded by these attacks.”

[China helped with its 19th berth expansion project in East Africa's largest port of Mombasa in Kenya, significantly improving its operational efficiency. Photo: Xinhua] China helped with its 19th berth expansion project in East Africa's largest port of Mombasa in Kenya, significantly improving its operational efficiency. Photo: Xinhua

Africans have been facing racism in China as well, though not so much by way of violent mob attacks. A Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference member recently told reporters his plans to "solve the problem of the black population in Guangdong", adding that "Africans bring many security risks". Hundreds of supportive comments on social media followed about the dangers of a "black invasion". Last year, a Chinese TV ad for a detergent featured a Chinese woman stuffing a black man into a washing machine to turn him into a Chinese man.

[Part of 131 nooses are displayed in the hall of executions at the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg, South Africa, in memory for 131 freedom fighters who were executed by the authorities. India supported the anti-apartheid movement in the 1990s. Photos: AFP] Part of 131 nooses are displayed in the hall of executions at the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg, South Africa, in memory for 131 freedom fighters who were executed by the authorities. India supported the anti-apartheid movement in the 1990s. Photos: AFP

India has a long history in Africa, playing a crucial role in the movement against apartheid in South Africa by refusing to maintain diplomatic relations in the 1990s. It could have positioned itself as a more conducive Asian country for African visitors. But as the number of Africans on its soil grows, the inherent racial biases seem to become more pronounced.

Racist attacks against Africans in India are based on skin colour, a prejudice over their lifestyle and suspicion over alleged involvements in the illegal drug trade. Indians are also not very familiar with African culture – Africa is not a very popular tourist destination among Indians.

An ethnic tribe of at least 20,000, descendants of the Bantu people of East Africa, has been living in small, isolated pockets in India for centuries. Known as Habshis – a term still widely used to refer to all black people – they came to India as traders or were brought as slaves. Africa, too, boasts of a million-plus Indian diaspora. As of January 2015, the number of Indians and people of Indian origin living in Africa was estimated at 2.76 million, according to a United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and Confederation of Indian Industry report in 2015.

Is China railroading Kenya into debt?

This unfamiliarity feeds into with Indians' instinctive dislike of dark-skinned people to create openly racist behaviour, leading to dangerous mob situations. A quick dip into Indian mythology reveals how racism based on skin colour has been normalised in India for centuries now. Most gods and kings and heroes are fair-skinned, while demons and villains are depicted as dark-skinned.

Soon after the attacks, the Indian foreign ministry said in a statement that India “is committed to ensuring safety and security of all foreigners in India. People from Africa, including students and youth, remain our valued partners.” But the alarming frequency of racial attacks against Africans in India is a wake-up call for India to go beyond practised official rhetoric and take concrete action to ensure they stay truly safe on its soil.

“India needs to create more awareness about Africa and its importance to India. There is need for a law to penalise racial attacks such as these,” Dubey said.

In 2015, India’s home ministry had said it will introduce an anti-racism law to address race-related violence, to be punishable with a maximum of three years in jail and a fine. It might be time to dust the files and enact that law.

INDIA – AFRICA :

Africa wants Indian cos to invest in power, infrastructure

Times of India-12 hours ago

New Delhi, Mar 31 () AfDB has asked Indian companies to invest in African power, infrastructure and farming sectors as it wants strong ...

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/africa-wants-indian-cos-to-invest-in-power-infrastructure/articleshow/57941432.cms>

EUROPE – AFRICA :

Can the relationship between Europe and Africa stand the test of time?

[<https://www.moneyweb.co.za/moneyweb-opinion/soapbox/can-the-relationship-between-europe-and-africa-stand-the-test-of-time/>]

Both sides have to accept that a more equitable partnership requires continued commitment to cooperation.

The signing of the Treaty of Rome, which established the European Economic Community (EEC) 60 years ago in March 1957, came at a tumultuous time in relations between Europe and Africa. The Conversation

Just weeks earlier Kwame Nkrumah had declared Ghana a republic, an event which was a turning point in the decolonisation of sub-Saharan Africa.

Nkrumah remarked that the treaty's inclusion of colonial territories was to neocolonialism what the Berlin Treaty of 1885 had been to colonialism.

He had a point. Two of the six founding members of the EEC – Belgium and France – still held substantial colonial interests on the continent. Accession to the community thus posed the crucial question of what to do about them.

The question became contentious enough to threaten the collapse of the entire Treaty of Rome negotiation process. The other four members of the EEC were Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

France in particular was steadfast that its colonies be “associated” with the community. Paris envisaged that its preferential colonial terms of trade would be extended to the entire EEC. But Germany and the Netherlands were opposed, wary of being forced to share the financial and political responsibilities that came with trading with former colonies.

The French argument ultimately won, albeit with some compromises. The treaty’s association agreement would last five years and the preferences France enjoyed from its colonies would be gradually expanded to the rest of the EEC.

The agreement, inscribed into articles 131-136 of the treaty, served as the originator of Europe’s subsequent relationship with the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP). This was codified in the Yaoundé Agreements, the Lomé Convention and today’s Cotonou Agreement.

So this 60th anniversary is not just about Europe. The treaty created a framework for multilateral relations between Europe and Africa.

The principles of trade and aid enshrined in the treaty’s association agreement form the basis of Europe’s development agenda in Africa to this day, even though relations have expanded into many more areas in the 21st century.

A common future

The Treaty of Rome laid out the blueprint for the creation of the world’s largest single market. It also contributed to the post World War II process of cooperation and reconciliation in Europe.

The push for European unity persisted for 37 years, culminating in the creation of the European Union (EU) under the Maastricht Treaty in 1993.

Although difficult to imagine amid the doom and gloom of Brexit, rising populism and the migration crisis, there is still reason to celebrate when you consider the region's relationship with Africa.

The EU, for all of its troubles, has generally been a progressive partner to Africa, especially with respect to the establishment of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy and the unique programming efforts it has generated.

This of course does not negate instances of neocolonialism, nor the damage done by the clumsy promotion of the European Partnership Agreements (EPAs).

The EPAs in particular remain a sore point. Indeed, the preferential trade terms given to African countries by EU member states have been judged discriminatory and in contravention of World Trade Organisation rules.

Beyond the EPA debate, a number of factors have contributed to challenges facing some of the original asymmetries between the two sides.

For one, the global South, and China in particular, continues to alter global trade dynamics. African countries and regional organisations now have more trading partners to turn to.

In addition, Africa is in the middle of constructive upheaval, brought on by more than 20 years of robust growth.

The Africa of today is not the Africa of 1957. The African Union is also a more robust partner than its predecessor, the Organisation of Africa Unity.

Trade and aid

Back in 1957, the Treaty of Rome laid down the twin principles of EU-Africa relations throughout the 20th century and beyond: trade and aid. These principles were framed within the larger idea of development cooperation.

The association agreement provided reciprocal trading arrangements between 31 ‘overseas territories’ – including 18 African ones – and the ECC countries. An overseas development fund was also created, with all six EEC members contributing to it.

Controversially, the agreement served to perpetuate African dependency on Europe. Even the Lome Convention’s much touted “non-reciprocal” principle, which was supposed to nurture African industries, further attached them to Europe.

The convention eventually met strong criticism as a system of “collective clientelism”, which was perpetuating dependency and “elite capture” in Africa.

This contradictory relationship between dependency and progressive thinking has made Africans understandably circumspect.

What next for Europe and Africa?

The twin principles of trade and aid still exist. But the growth of the EU-Africa partnership since 2000 – outside of EU-ACP channels – has broadened the relationship into less traditional

areas such as science and technology, higher education, private investment, infrastructure and continental integration.

But Kwame Nkurumah's 1957 criticism is still being levied at the EU today for its alleged neocolonial promotion of the EPAs. Pundits in East and Central Africa have been vociferous in their opposition to the agreements.

However, EU officials have a dramatically different interpretation. The EU Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica, described the 2016 EPA with six Southern African Development Community (SADC) members as helping to tap the economic potential of the private sector and increase trade.

With such contrasting perceptions, it is perhaps unsurprising that SADC is the only regional body to have signed an EPA with the EU despite more than 10 years of negotiation.

What is crucial is that both sides recognise how far they have come since the Treaty of Rome. And that they accept that a more equitable partnership requires continued commitment to cooperation.

John Kotsopoulos, Research Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Governance Innovation, University of Pretoria

This article was originally published on [The Conversation](#). Read the original article.