

AFRICA: 7 JANVIER 2019 - [US troops in Gabon remain focused on Congo despite local coup attempt - Gabon: deux morts parmi les mutins, le chef du commando arrêté / Kenya earns 1.55 bln USD from tourism in 2018 / UK parliament to debate Bobi Wine and Uganda's democracy / Ethiopia, Eritrea reopen another border crossing / L'Éthiopie lancera son premier satellite en septembre 2019]



Gabon :

Gabon: deux morts parmi les mutins, le chef du commando arrêté

07.01.2019,

[https://www.mediacongo.net/article-actualite-46170_gabon_deux_morts_parmi_les_mutins_le_chef_du_commando_arrete.html]

Au Gabon, une tentative de coup d'Etat a échoué ce 7 janvier. Des militaires ont mené une tentative de putsch alors que le chef de l'Etat, Ali Bongo, est convalescent depuis plusieurs semaines au Maroc.

Peu d'informations ont filtré à ce stade sur le putsch avorté de ce 7 janvier au Gabon. Une vidéo qui a tourné en boucle sur la Radio Télévision Gabonaise (RTH) entre 4h et 7h30 ce matin montre trois soldats coiffés d'un béret vert. L'un d'eux, le lieutenant Kelly Ondo Obiang, prend la parole. Il se présente comme un commandant adjoint de la garde républicaine, l'équipe chargée de la protection de la présidence. Dans cette vidéo, ce responsable militaire fait part de sa frustration suite au message prononcé par le chef de l'Etat à l'occasion du Nouvel An.

« Sauver le Gabon »

Ce mouvement affirmait vouloir « sauver le Gabon ». Dans la déclaration lue ce matin, à la radio, le lieutenant Kelly Ondo Obiang critiquait les institutions qu'il juge « illégitimes et illégales ». Ce groupe de militaires espérait pouvoir mettre en place un « conseil national pour la restauration ». Il a appelé les citoyens à rejoindre l'Assemblée nationale et cité des noms, notamment celui du général Jean Rémi Ntumpa Lebani, un haut gradé originaire du Haut-Ogooué et qui a purgé une peine de prison suite à un autre de putsch avorté en 2009.

D'autres personnalités ont été citées telles que le colonel Rapontchombo, officier de l'armée de terre, les syndicalistes Jean Rémi Yama et Marcel Libama ainsi que des responsables politiques tels que Laurence Ndong, proche de Jean Ping, et l'ex-député du PDG (Parti démocratique gabonais), Bertrand Zibi.

De son côté, le ministre de la Communication et porte-parole du gouvernement, Guy Bertrand Mapangou, précise que cette tentative de coup d'Etat a été menée par cinq militaires qui font partie de la « compagnie d'honneur ». Il assure par ailleurs que la situation est maîtrisée. Guy Bertrand Mapangou minimise l'impact de cet événement. Il appellait ce matin la population à ne pas suivre le mot d'ordre lancé par « ce groupuscule ».

La santé de Bongo en question

Cette tentative de coup d'Etat survient une semaine seulement après le discours du président Ali Bongo censé rassurer les Gabonais. Le chef de l'Etat apparaissait en public pour la première fois depuis son hospitalisation le 24 octobre en Arabie Saoudite.

Dans son message à la Nation, Ali Bongo avait pourtant abordé son état de santé. Il avait reconnu avoir « traversé une période difficile », tout en adoptant un ton rassurant. Cependant, explique l'analyste Mays Mouissi, « le discours du président n'a pas atteint son objectif : c'est la forme physique du président que les gens ont retenu. Cela a plus inquiété qu'autre chose ».

Face à cette absence prolongée, la société civile, tout comme les partis politiques, expriment ponctuellement leur impatience, voire même leur scepticisme sur la manière de gérer les affaires courantes. Comment les décrets adoptés en Conseil des ministres peuvent-ils être mis en application sans la signature du chef de l'Etat ? Par ailleurs, la semaine prochaine, une nouvelle Assemblée nationale doit être installée et le gouvernement doit démissionner suite aux législatives d'octobre dernier.

Une question reste cependant en suspens, à savoir le nombre de personnes réellement impliquées dans cette tentative de coup d'Etat.

(Ré)écoutez notre édition spéciale consacrée aux événements de ce 7 janvier à Libreville :

Tentative de coup d'Etat au Gabon: décryptage et analyse dans notre édition spéciale

RFI / MCP, via mediacongo.net

Burundi :

Burundi : Modernisation du Kirundi, langue Bantu des Barundi

[<http://burundi-agnews.org/afrique/burundi-la-modernisation-du-kirundi-langue-des-barundi/>]

GLOBALISATION, EDUCATION – Les BARUNDI s’interrogent sur la modernisation de leur langue le KIRUNDI, langue linguistiquement BANTU

BUJUMBURA, Lundi 7 Janvier 2019 – Dans le cadre des Politiques Educationnelle et Etrangère des Barundi, M. BANYANKIMBONA Gaspard, ministre burundais de l’Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique, organise une conférence extraordinaire ou une réflexion débat dans les enceintes de l’Université du Burundi, sur la pertinence du KIRUNDI, langue des BARUNDI, dans le contexte du monde GLOBAL d’aujourd’hui.

Le KIRUNDI est une des premières LANGUES qui a été parlée par l’ÊTRE HUMAIN (UMUNTU). Cette LANGUE a été celle de tous les HOMO, de l’AUTRALOPITHEQUE (7 Millions d’années avant notre ère) aux SAPIENS (dit HOMMES MODERNES, 300 000 avant notre ère). La preuve donnait par les LINGUISTES est que le KIRUNDI définit l’HOMME (UMUNTU). Le KIRUNDI fait parti des LANGUES qui ont été les premières à définir L’ÊTRE HUMAIN (UMUNTU), dites LANGUES BANTU. Les mots HUMAIN ou HUMAN, HUMANITE ou HUMANITY viennent du mot UMUNTU. La philosophie de l’UBUNTU que vivent les BANTU, dont les BARUNDI avec le KIRUNDI, est à l’origine en 1948 des DROITS DE L’HOMME à l’ONU . Le KIRUNDI, dont les LANGUES BANTU, sont un patrimoine de l’HUMANITE.

Des intellectuelles Barundi (Professeurs, Politiques, Artistes etc.) sont intervenus dans divers sujets abordant l’Education, la Technologie, les Arts etc.

Selon une étude de l’UNESCO (Rapport 2002 – http://www.axl.cefan.ulaval.ca/Langues/2vital_mortdeslangues.htm -), sur les 6.000 langues existantes dans le monde, 5.500 langues disparaîtront dans 100 ans, pour devenir des langues mortes, à cause : 1/ Du rapport de force militaire (génocide, victoire d’une langue forte sur langue vaincue) ; 2/ La faiblesse numérique (La dispersion démographique ; L’immigration étrangère , Les mariages mixtes et la dénatalité) ; 3/ La domination socio-économique (L’intérêt économique , Le prix du développement économique) ; 4/ L’impuissance politique (Les langues sans État; La dépossession politique ; Les États non souverains) ; 5/ L’impérialisme culturel ; et 6/ Le processus de la mort des langues (le bilinguisme social, l’assimilation dans l’espace).

Dans la tradition des Barundi, c’est le KIRUNDI qui donne la clé de la COSMOGONIE DES BARUNDI, soit du paradigme et de la philosophie des BARUNDI (L’UBUNTU). Sans le KIRUNDI, il n’y a pas de CULTURE, ni de PENSEE, ni de SCIENCES des BARUNDI. Le fait que les BARUNDI n’inventent plus depuis 1920 (Colonisations) à nos jours est le fait que l’élite des BARUNDI ne pensent plus en KIRUNDI. La Politique Educationnelle des Barundi doit remédier à cette situation urgente.

DAM, NY, AGNEWS, <http://burundi-agnews.org>, Lundi 7 janvier 2019

Rwanda :

Francophonie: entre Paris et Kigali, le délicat jeu d'équilibriste de Louise Mushikiwabo

[<https://www.journaldutchad.com/francophonie-entre-paris-et-kigali-le-delicat-jeu-dequilibriste-de-louise-mushikiwabo-2/>]

Publié le 07.01.2019 à 23h50 par AFP

L'Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), parfois perçue comme un outil d'influence de Paris, va-t-elle devenir celui de Paul Kagame ? Sa nouvelle secrétaire générale, la Rwandaise Louise Mushikiwabo s'en défend, mais les analystes sont perplexes.

« Il sera de son intérêt de ne pas apparaître comme le pion de Paul Kagame si elle veut survivre à la tête de cette institution », explique à l'AFP le philosophe camerounais Achille Mbembe, penseur de la Francophonie.

Mme sait que son action sera observée de près. Elle a été l'objet de nombreuses critiques lors de son élection en octobre à la tête de l'OIF, qui ne l'ont cependant pas empêchée d'évincer la sortante canadienne, Michaëlle Jean.

Ministre des Affaires étrangères du Rwanda depuis décembre 2009, elle est une fidèle du président Paul Kagame, souvent dénoncé pour son traitement des droits humains. Une attitude contradictoire, selon les détracteurs de Mme Mushikiwabo, avec le « soutien aux droits de l'Homme » qui figure parmi les missions premières dans la charte de l'OIF, sorte de mini-ONU regroupant 88 Etats et gouvernements (soit près de 300 millions de francophones).

« Le ou la secrétaire générale d'une organisation représente et met en œuvre la politique définie par l'ensemble des États membres », rappelle M. Jocelyn Coulon, chercheur au Centre d'études et de recherches internationales de Montréal. « Elle devra donc défendre les décisions prises pour les États et je ne serais pas surpris de la voir publier des communiqués sur la situation au Rwanda ».

Mme Mushikiwabo semble en être bien consciente : « Désormais, je ne suis plus ministre des Affaires étrangères du Rwanda », assure-t-elle dans un entretien à l'AFP. « Je travaille pour la Francophonie, je représente la Francophonie ».

Mais pour Antoine Glaser, écrivain et journaliste français spécialiste de l'Afrique, la Rwandaise ne réussira pas à s'affranchir de son ancienne tutelle.

« Elle va rester totalement dans le giron de Paul Kagame », croit-il. Ainsi, « la priorité ne sera pas les droits de l'Homme, cela s'est déjà vu dans ses premières déclarations qui ont évoqué plutôt le bien-être, la santé... ».

– Affranchie de Paris –

Accord signé entre Israël et le Rwanda pour des vols directs entre les deux pays

07/01/2019 JACK GUEZ (AFP/File)

[<https://www.i24news.tv/fr/actu/international/192664-190107-accord-signe-entre-israel-et-le-rwanda-pour-des-vols-directs-entre-les-deux-pays>]

La compagnie aérienne rwandaise, Rwanda Air, assurera pour la première fois des vols directs en direction d'Israël, suite à un accord signé entre les deux pays lundi au ministère des Transports et du Renseignement à Jérusalem.

L'accord a été scellé par le ministre Israël Katz et l'ambassadeur du Rwanda en Israël, Joseph Rutabana, après de nombreuses discussions entre les autorités de l'aviation civile israéliennes et rwandaises.

Selon le texte, chaque pays sera autorisé à effectuer jusqu'à sept vols réguliers par semaine entre l'aéroport israélien Ben Gourion et la capitale Kigali, sans limitation de capacité ni type d'appareil.

Joseph Rutabana a d'ores et déjà informé M. Katz que la compagnie aérienne rwandaise avait l'intention d'emprunter le nouvel itinéraire dès les prochains mois.

Une équipe du département de la sécurité du ministère israélien des Transports a par ailleurs participé, il y a quelques semaines, à une visite guidée de l'aéroport au Rwanda, et confirmé qu'il répondait à toutes les exigences sécuritaires de l'Etat hébreu.

Israel Katz a également précisé que cette initiative s'inscrivait dans le cadre du traité Ciel ouvert entré en vigueur en 2002 et qui réunit 35 Etats.

"Le traité Ciel ouvert a entraîné une augmentation significative du nombre de compagnies aériennes desservant Israël. Il ouvre à l'Etat hébreu les portes de centaines d'aéroports dans le monde sans aucune restriction et l'accord avec Rwanda Air s'inscrit dans ce processus", a-t-il déclaré.

Il y a moins d'un mois, le Premier ministre israélien Benyamin Netanyahu avait révélé qu'à présent la compagnie aérienne nationale EL-Al sera aussi autorisée à survoler le sultanat d'Oman, ainsi que la république du Tchad.

UN links ex-Rwandan general Nyamwasa to rebels

Saturday January 5 2019

By IVAN R. MUGISHA More by this Author

[<https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/ea/UN-links-former-Rwandan-general-Nyamwasa-to-rebels/4552908-4922824-4hsrekz/index.html>]

A United Nations report has suggested that exiled former Rwandan general Kayumba Nyamwasa is recruiting fighters and getting ammunition from Burundi, Uganda and DR Congo.

The report by a UN Group of Experts, dated December 31, 2018, says that Gen Nyamwasa, who is exiled in South Africa, has frequently travelled in the region on a recruiting drive for his newly formed rebel group called P5, which is under the Rwanda National Congress (RNC).

P5 primarily operates in the South Kivu region of DRC, posing another threat to Rwanda in addition to the 24-year-old FDLR active in the same region, which has occasionally attacked Rwanda's border towns.

Rwanda said it had engaged its neighbours to stop supporting rebel activities, but its pleas had fallen on deaf ears.

“The report confirms what Rwanda only knows. As you heard in the president’s New Year’s message, he called out RNC, the FDLR and countries in the region that have been offering them help,” Olivier Nduhungirehe, State Minister for East African Community Affairs, told The EastAfrican.

“We have engaged South Africa on the illegal travels of Kayumba, which are aimed at destabilising the peace of Rwanda and ultimately the region. But we have not yet got a response,” he added.’

“We have good relations with South Africa and the leaders agreed to solve the diplomatic issues that have existed in the past. This P5 group is a rogue militia that is set up by people who have committed atrocities, and plans to conduct military attacks on Rwanda.”

Relations between Rwanda and South Africa have not been the same since 2014, after the killing of Rwanda’s former chief of intelligence Patrick Karegeya, who was found strangled in a hotel in Johannesburg, where he lived in exile.

Tanzania :

How Tanzania's only Billionaire was kidnapped

By Valentine Kondo | Updated Jan 06, 2019

[<https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/ureport/article/2001308440/how-tanzania-s-only-billionaire-was-kidnapped>]

On October 11, Tanzanian billionaire Mohammed Dewji, the CEO of MeTL, a family empire started by his father in the 1970s, was kidnapped in early Thursday morning, an incident which spread like a bush-fire on social media platforms.

A local daily in Tanzania reported that Dewji was kidnapped on his way to the Oysterbay hotel in Dar es Salaam for a routine gym exercise.

Dar es Salaam regional commissioner Paul Makonda issued a statement that the businessman was kidnapped by two men as he entered the hotel.

“They fired a gun and then they opened the gate,” Makonda said, adding that security personnel had started a search for Dewji.

In October 15, The family of kidnapped Tanzanian dollar billionaire offered a reward of a billion Tanzanian shillings (Sh44.1 million) for information leading to his rescue.

Mohamed dewji’s uncle, Azim Dewji, told a press conference that the family believed that the reward will help the police in the investigation.

“We, the Dewji family, want to assure anyone with the information about the whereabouts of our son to come forward and we will treat their information as secret,” he added.

The police at the time arrested 30 people in connection with the incident, believed to have been led by two white men.

On October 17, the police released 19 suspects out of 26 who were being held in connection with the abduction of Mohammed Dewji.

Lazaro Mambosasa, the Dar Es Salaam Special Zone Police Commander said, "The 19 suspects were released on bail after interrogations. “We are still questioning the remaining seven suspects," he said.

On October 20, The 43-year-old Tanzanian dollar billionaire Mohammed Dewji who had been kidnapped for 10 days in Dar es Salaam was found.

His uncle Azim Dewji and family spokesman confirmed to the press that he was safely at home and extended his hand of appreciation to all for their support during the entire period of the kidnap.

“I thank Allah that I have returned home safely. I thank all my fellow Tanzanians and everyone around the world for their prayers. I thank the authorities of Tanzania, including the Police Force for working for my safe return,” Mohammed Dewji said on Twitter.

Mr. Dewji, described by Forbes magazine as Africa's youngest worth \$1.5b (Sh15.3 trillion) and Tanzania's only billionaire, was kidnapped by four masked men outside a swanky hotel gym in the affluent Oysterbay neighborhood, where he was going for his routine morning workout.

Tanzania allows imports of sugar from Uganda

[<https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/business/Tanzania-allows-imports-of-sugar-from-Uganda/2560-4922230-lb1m34/index.html>]

Saturday January 5 2019

By DOROTHY NDALU

More by this Author

Faced with a 290,000-tonne shortage, Tanzania is now issuing permits to traders to import sugar from Uganda.

Last June, Tanzania stopped issuing new permits for importation of sugar to protect local producers and traders.

With a population of more than 50 million, the country's annual sugar consumption is estimated at 590,000 tonnes, of which 135,000 tonnes are for industrial consumption and 455,000 for domestic use.

Tanzania produces about 300,000 tonnes of raw sugar annually, leaving a high demand gap.

Tanzania's Minister of Agriculture Japhet Hasunga said the country is currently experiencing a shortage and needs to fill the gap.

Import duty

However, Tanzania had charged a 25 per cent import duty on sugar from Uganda, contrary to the zero rate recommendation of the EAC Common Market Protocol.

According to Mr Hasunga, sugar production in Tanzania rose to 303,431.14 tonnes in the financial year 2017/2018, from 293,075 tonnes in financial year 2015/2016.

Sugar trade in the region has been dogged by controversy. When Tanzania blocked sugar imports from Uganda last year, it was on the claims that the sugar was actually from Kenya. The restrictions were informed by reports that Kenyan sugar had entered the Ugandan market, where it was repackaged then exported to the regional market.

Tanzanian President John Magufuli said the ban on sugar imports from Uganda was because some government officials had been abusing their powers and issuing orders to import sugar for their own interests.

Sugar in Tanzania comes mainly from four companies: Kilombero Sugar Company, majority owned by South Africa's Illovo Sugar, Mtibwa, Kagera, and TPC, a unit of Mauritius sugar producer Alteo.

More sugarcane plantations and factories are planned across the country to meet the growing demand.

The National Social Security Fund and the PPF Pension Fund, the two leading pension schemes in Tanzania, are growing sugar cane at Mkulazi Sugar Farm in Morogoro region, aiming to produce 30,000 tonnes of sugar per year.

Zoning

Meanwhile, in Uganda, the top three sugar producers are urging the government to reconsider parliament's rejection of zoning for millers, saying it will undermine output due to competition for cane.

Allowing producers to establish mills within 25 kilometres of each other would lead to competition and cause producers to operate below capacity, Jim Kabeho, the chairman of the Uganda Sugar Manufacturers Association, said on Wednesday by phone from Jinja, in eastern Uganda.

“We asked for zoning and we didn’t get it,” he said. “We are now waiting to hear from the government because we are already losing on production.”

At least nine factories were established in the past decade, some too close to other plants, according to the lobby that groups Kakira Sugar Ltd, Kinyara Sugar Ltd, and Sugar Corp of Uganda Ltd.

Last year, lawmakers in the country rejected demands for zoning, saying it would force the government to move millers or to buy land. Under Ugandan law, the president can either sign the bill or ask the lawmakers to review legislation that they have enacted.

Additional reporting by Bloomberg.

World Bank, EU cut Tanzania aid after rights crackdown

[<https://www.nation.co.ke/news/africa/Donors-cut-aid-to-Tanzania-after-rights-crackdown/1066-4914998-boepn6/index.html>]

Sunday December 30 2018

By AFP

More by this Author

NAIROBI,

Tanzania's tough-talking president John Magufuli has earned respect by fighting corruption, but international donors are now concerned by crackdowns on human rights.

The European Union, Tanzania's biggest development partner, and the World Bank have recently taken measures to sanction repressive policies.

CONCERN

President Magufuli's reputation was boosted when he battled corruption after winning election in 2015.

But accusations of repression are growing and donors and former allies are increasingly frustrated at what they say are moves that stifle dissent and create obstacles for journalists and rights activists.

"The European Union and some of its member countries, as well as the United States, have repeatedly drawn the attention of the government to the human rights situation," a European diplomat said in Dar es Salaam, on condition of anonymity.

"Even so, the situation continues to deteriorate, so we have had to move up a gear."

HOMOSEXUALITY

In October, the governor of Dar es Salaam, Paul Makonda, vowed to track down people suspected of engaging in homosexuality -- which is illegal in Tanzania.

In November, the EU said it would thoroughly review its financial support -- more than \$100 million (88 million euros) a year -- in response to moves that undermined human rights and the rule of law.

The EU, which also recalled its ambassador, said it was worried by "a shrinking of public space in Tanzania through the tightening of restrictions on the activities of civil society organisations, the media and many political parties."

Washington accused the Tanzanian government of fostering "an atmosphere of violence, intimidation and discrimination."

The EU's decision to reconsider its aid coincided with one by the World Bank to freeze a \$300 million (265 million euro) loan for girls' education in protest against a move to expel pregnant girls from school and forbid them to continue their education after giving birth.

Meanwhile, Denmark announced the withdrawal of \$10 million in aid owing to "unacceptable homophobic remarks".

PRESSURE

In mid-December, four US senators called for the creation of a common front with "diplomatic partners" to put pressure on the Tanzanian government.

Mr Magufuli has sought to shrug off the cuts, boasting that "Tanzania is on the right track".

The government also insisted that the anti-gay crackdown in Dar es Salaam was not official policy, but rather the "personal views" of the city's governor.

Many donors remain unconvinced however.

NATION'S GOOD

President Magufuli, who says the diplomatic freeze is only with "those who do not want good to our country", has moved to flatter China.

"The Chinese are our friends, true long-time friends," he said recently while inaugurating a state-of-the-art library built with aid from Beijing.

Chinese funds are provided without conditions, he noted.

But observers say neither Magufuli nor donors want the situation to get any worse.

"It is possible that he (Magufuli) changes his course, that he shows flexibility if the pressure is maintained", suggested Jenerali Ulimwengu, an influential lawyer and a former Tanzanian diplomat.

"He cannot in any case rely only on the Chinese, who... cannot provide all the necessary help."

SERIOUS EFFECTS

As for the European diplomat in Dar es Salaam, donors are well aware that cuts hit the poorest the hardest.

"But it is possible to send aid through other channels, including civil society organisations," the diplomat added.

"Bridges are not cut, discussions are underway and we hope that the Tanzanian government will eventually understand that development and respect for human rights must go together."

Others warn that using aid to influence government policy could do more harm than good.

"Suddenly halting or stopping aid can have dire unintended consequences for complex and important projects helping vulnerable people," wrote Irish senator Fintan Warfield, an openly gay LGBT activist, in response to calls for Dublin to review its support.

"It is only through continued support to the Tanzanian people and being a critical friend that we can hope to improve the human rights situation in Tanzania, and end the persecution of our LGBT+ brothers and sisters."

Kenya :

Kenya earns 1.55 bln USD from tourism in 2018

Source: Xinhua| 2019-01-07 21:08:22|Editor: Shi Yinglun

[http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-01/07/c_137726629.htm]

MOMBASA, Kenya, Jan. 7 (Xinhua) -- Kenya earned about 157 billion shillings (about 1.55 billion U.S. dollars) from tourism in 2018, up from 1.18 billion dollars in 2017, reflecting a 31.26 percent growth, a government official said on Monday.

Najib Balala, cabinet secretary in the ministry of tourism and wildlife, said international visitor arrivals increased from 1.47 million in 2017 to 2.02 million in 2018, representing a growth of about 37 percent.

"Kenya's tourism performance for the year 2018 has seen a substantial improvement compared to 2017 in both tourism arrivals, domestic tourism performance and earnings," said Balala who presented the tourism sector performance report 2018 to President Uhuru Kenyatta in Mombasa. He said that domestic tourism bed occupancy increased from 3.64 million in 2017 to 3.97 million in 2018, depicting a 9 percent increase.

Balala singled out the improvement of infrastructure at the tourism resorts in the Coast and across the country as a key contributor to the growth as well as political stability and improved security. The report cites political stability, improved security, growth in the aviation sector including the direct flights to the U.S. and investor confidence as some of the drivers for the growth witnessed in sector last year.

Balala said revitalised marketing efforts such as digital marketing and global campaigns and hosting of international conferences including the first ever global conference on Sustainable Blue Economy and the Africa Hotels Investment Forum also contributed to the growth.

The report shows that the top market source for foreign tourists to Kenya is the U.S., with 225,157 travelers which represents 11.12 percent of the total arrivals.

Will China seize Mombasa port if Kenya can't pay back belt and road loans?

[<https://theloadstar.co.uk/will-china-seize-mombasa-port-if-kenya-cant-pay-back-belt-and-road-loans/>]

By Alexander Whiteman 07/01/2019

Kenyan president Uhuru Kenyatta has reportedly denied the prospect that China may be able to seize the east African nation's "prized" port of Mombasa as compensation for unpaid debt linked to belt and road infrastructure projects. The South China Morning Post reports that the alarm caused has "again raised questions" about taking part in China's massive infrastructure splurge. According to the report, Kenya ranks as the third most indebted African nation to China over the past 19 years, with a reported debt exceeding \$9.5bn.

Uganda :

Uganda's public debt rises by 22%, hits Shs 41.5 trillion

[<https://observer.ug/news/headlines/59574-uganda-s-public-debt-rises-by-22-hits-shs-41-5-trillion>]
Uganda's public debt has increased by 22 per cent, rising from Shs 33.99 trillion as at June 30, 2017, to Shs 41.51 trillion as at June 30, 2018, according to the 2018 auditor general's report released today.

Handing over the report to the speaker of parliament Rebecca Kadaga, the auditor general John Muwanga said that payment for loans worth Shs 3.9 trillion which are 50 per cent of those he has studied, expires in 2020.

Muwanga said that if the government is to service the loans as projected in the next financial year 2019/2020, it would require more than 65 per cent of the total revenue collections which is over and above the sustainability levels of 40 per cent.

"Although Uganda's debt to GDP ratio of 41 per cent is still below the International Monetary Fund (IMF) risky threshold of 50 per cent and compares well with other East African countries, it is unfavorable when debt payment is compared to national revenue collected which is the highest in the region at 54 percent", reads the summary of the audit report.

He noted that the interest payments on domestic and external debt during the financial year 2017/2018 amounted to Shs 2.34 trillion, 17 per cent of the total revenue collections, which is above the limit set in Public Debt Management Framework, 2013 of 15 per cent.

"Although absorption of external debt has improved compared to last financial year, I noted some loans with absorption levels as low as 10 per cent and below. An example is the USMID project with over Shs 95 billion (95 per cent) still on the various accounts of Municipal Councils by close of the year, despite various incomplete and abandoned works due to non-payment to contractors," further reads the summary report.

Another project cited by the auditor general is the Mbarara-Nkenda and Tororo-Lira transmission line, which, he said has delayed for almost 8 years - resulting into the cancellation of the loan by the funder with a disbursed loan amount of \$6.5 million.

Muwanga also noted that significant value loans have stringent conditions which could have adverse effects on Uganda's ability to sustain its debt.

He says that conditions include a waiver of sovereign immunity by the government over all its properties and itself from enforcement of any form of judgment, adoption of foreign laws in any proceedings to enforce agreements, requiring the government to pay all legal fees and insurance premiums on behalf of the creditor.

Keto Nyapendi Kayemba, the deputy auditor general said that their office carried out a special audit on public debt management saying that it is worrying. She said that the government needs to pay more attention to the the country's indebtedness.

"The revenue to GDP is actually standing at 55% which is the highest in the region. We did a special audit on public debt and we expect you to look at it in detail and see the issues that we're raising. We have concerns about the sustainability of debt, it is currently still sustainable, but if we go at the rate at which we're going, we need to be careful. And there issues there that really need addressing. We're taking in more commercial loans, we're taking in more loans whose conditionalities are probably not very conducive for us as a development country." she said.

UK parliament to debate Bobi Wine and Uganda's democracy

[<http://www.ntv.co.ug/news/national/UK-parliament-to-debate-Uganda-s-democracy/4522324-4924522-81s09h/index.html>]

The UK parliament will on Tuesday 8th January discuss the declining state of democracy in Uganda.

The debate is championed by British MP Dr.Paul Williams, who says President Museveni has become a barrier to Uganda's democracy.

How illicit trade is affecting gold sector

[<https://www.monitor.co.ug/SpecialReports/How-illicit-trade-affecting-gold-sector/688342-4923584-dm2kvhz/index.html>]

Monday January 7 2019

By Emma Mutaizibwa

While anti-graft organisations including the Inspectorate of Government and Ethics ministry deal with corruption-related cases, there is less scrutiny on a far more sophisticated form of crime – illicit financial outflows.

The opaque gold sector in the clutches of cartels has been handed free rein by government to set the rules of the game. This is because government has not streamlined the processes of registration and supervision in the sector.

Firms are now relying on a complex system to hide funds in safe havens and secrecy jurisdictions. One of the companies facing investigation is Africa Gold Refinery (AGR) owned by wealthy Belgian businessman Alain Goetz.

Mr Goetz is a director or owner of 15 different companies located in Uganda, Dubai, Belgium, and Luxembourg, and eight of these have the same address in Belgium, which raises eyebrows.

AGR has established a \$23 million (Shs85.6b) refinery facility in Entebbe to process gold for exports.

An investigation by The Sentry places Mr Goetz, who is close to the political establishment in Uganda, into the crosshairs.

The Sentry is a team of policy analysts, regional experts, and financial forensic investigators that probe corruption, illicit financial outflows, and stolen mineral wealth.

They also focus on abetting profiting from war and genocide largely by the political elite.

According to The Sentry report, AGR exported gold at least worth \$377 million (Shs1.4 trillion) in 2017 to an affiliate of the Belgian refinery Tony Goetz NV, based in Dubai.

Interviews conducted by The Sentry bring to the fore sticky issues among, which include the allegation that Goetz has refined illegally-smuggled conflict gold from eastern Congo at AGR in Uganda and exported it through a series of companies to the United States and Europe.

Given the geo-political implications in the volatile Great Lakes, Uganda should be worried about giving sanctuary to an investor who is dealing in conflict minerals from the DRC.

In 1999, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) slapped a \$10 billion (Shs37 trillion) penalty on Uganda for plundering minerals from eastern DRC and committing crimes against humanity during the protracted conflict in the late 1990s. Uganda is yet to pay this debt, which outstrips its annual budget for this financial year.

According to the United Nations (UN), conflict gold provides the largest source of revenue to militias and other actors involved in the flashpoint eastern Congo, where an estimated 3.3 to 7.6 million people have died.

A number of sources interviewed by The Sentry pointed at AGR as sourcing conflict gold from DRC.

Twelve traders and government officials in the region told The Sentry that AGR has trafficked a huge amount of gold from DRC to Uganda.

This has driven the volumes of Uganda export records reviewed by The Sentry, which indicate that AGR accounted for more than 99 per cent of gold officially exported from Uganda in 2017.

The UN group of experts reveals that Uganda is also the main transit hub for gold smuggled out of Congo. Two major gold smugglers in Congo confirmed to The Sentry that they illegally trafficked gold from eastern Congo to AGR and other regional gold traders backed these accounts.

The Sentry revealed that four regional traders mentioned gold traffickers, Buganda Bagalwa and Mange Namuhanda, who have been named in several U.N. Group of Experts reports on Congo as purchasers of conflict gold, supplied gold to AGR in 2017.

AGR in its response specifically denies having received gold from Bagalwa or Namuhanda. It also rejects allegations that it received significant amounts of undocumented gold from other sources.

These claims are noncompliant with both international supply chain due diligence guidance and international anti-money laundering safeguards because the network's companies buy, refine, and then sell the gold.

In Uganda, AGR has been handed a tax waiver, which was not approved by Parliament.

On the heels of AGR's opening in 2014, Uganda increased its gold exports by a staggering 85,000 per cent, going from exporting a paltry \$443,000 (Shs1.6 billion) worth of gold in 2014 to an estimated \$377 million(Shs1.4 trillion) in 2017.

Mr Goetz resigned from the position of Chief Executive Officer not long after The Sentry report was released, and has since been replaced by Mr Alphonse Katarebe.

Attempts to contact Mr Goetz were futile as he did not respond to our phone calls and emails.

However, AGR recently offered a response to The Sentry report, which was published in the New Vision.

Process. A man dries ore containing gold

AGR position

AGR said: "The Golden Laundromat, a 56-page report by the United States non-governmental organisation; The Sentry, which attacks the African Gold Refinery (AGR), contains several untrue and wild allegations, and is biased."

The company says The Sentry did not attempt to speak to its officials to get their side of the story. Rejecting the allegations they said, "The AGR compliance team conducts detailed checks on our first phase clients by inspecting the relevant documents of the supplier of the raw material. ----. We have turned down a considerable number of individuals who did not have the relevant and necessary documentation."

Highly placed sources that preferred to speak off the record, have revealed that beyond Mr Goetz are senior government officials and security personnel involved in this sector.

Many of them are trading in trafficked gold largely from DRC and South Sudan where Uganda's army has been involved in military adventures.

"Kampala is a major transit for smuggled gold from Congo and South Sudan. Even as we speak now, there is a gold deal being executed in a hotel or elsewhere," revealed the source.

A number of watchdog organisations in Uganda have commenced investigations on AGR including claims of money laundering, under-declaring, tax evasion and flouting registration requirements. Uganda's Financial Intelligence Authority (FIA) is among the bodies tasked with enforcing the registration of gold mining activities.

The FIA's executive director, Mr Sydney Asubo, says the sticky issues surrounding this company were recently thrust into the public domain by The Sentry report.

"Of course we are aware of The Sentry report. We are aware of other reports. One of the issues they claim is the non-reporting arrangement with FIA. We responded to say that [it] is not true. We do not have powers to exclude anyone from reporting."

Mr Asubo told Daily Monitor: "We have written to the Director of Public Prosecutions to have this company prosecuted for two crimes; refusing to register, it is also a crime to disobey the directives of the FIA. The law requires that all accountable persons should register by end of year. They should have been registered by December 31, 2016. That requirement is emphasised in the 2015 anti-money laundering regulations."

He revealed that whereas FIA will enforce the ancillary offences, there are more gross allegations being pursued by the Inspector General of Government and other agencies against AGR including money laundering.

Undeclared royalties

According to an audit report for the financial year 2016/17, Uganda lost a staggering \$16.95 million (Shs65b), in undeclared royalties in the exportation and importation of gold in 2016/2017.

The audit indicates that the Directorate of Geological Surveys and Mines issued gold export permits for only 16.281 kilogrammes, yet records from Uganda Revenue Authority, indicated that 8,691 kilogrammes of gold, valued at \$339 million (Shs1.2 trillion) were exported from Uganda in the financial year 2016/17.

Gold is now the second largest foreign exchange earner for Uganda after coffee, according to Bank of Uganda statistics.

As a result, Uganda loses revenue for both exports and imports. The local gold sector is dominated by small-scale and artisanal miners. They however are being pushed out of the fields by investors who are close to regime cronies.

Recently, in Mubende District artisanal miners were expelled from the gold mines in favour of an investor. Emerging reports indicate that security officials deployed in the area are involved in gold mining.

According to the new mining policy, government plans to streamline their activities, enforce transparency and improve the safety records in mines.

A recent visit to Buhweju District in western Uganda, revealed that many areas rich in gold deposits are enveloped in poverty.

"The schools, roads and hospitals are in an ailing state. Buhweju is the capital of poverty in western Uganda. We shall no longer accept investors who come here to exploit locals," opined the area Member of Parliament, Mr Francis Mwijukye.

Yet in the interest of the cartels, they are better off with an opaque gold sector away from the prying eyes of law enforcement officials.

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Sudan :

Sudanese security disperses protests, arrests university professors and journalists

[<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article66878>]

January 6, 2019 (KHARTOUM) - Sudanese security authorities Sunday dispersed demonstrators in Khartoum streets who marched towards the presidency to demand President Omer al-Bashir to step down. Also, the riot police arrested university teachers and journalists.

Sunday's march was a continuation of the two-week nationwide protests that have posed a first serious challenge for the regime of al-Bashir following the regime's failure solve the endemic economic crisis and the hike in bread prices.

According to the Sudanese Professional Association who called for the rally, the protesters had moved from four gathering points in key areas of Khartoum and then head towards the Presidential Palace in a synchronized manner at 1:00 pm (local time) but the security forces had already blocked these sites since the early morning.

Sudan Tribune reporters saw security forces in uniform riding white vehicles without plates roaming the area of Abu Hamama in southern Khartoum, which was supposed to be one of the gathering points of the demonstrators. The same vehicles also toured the neighbourhoods of Al-Daim which is not far from the first.

At the same time, vehicles of riot police stopped in several strategic points and patrolled other neighbourhoods near Abu Hamama to disperse any crowds.

However, despite the massive security mobilization, dozens of protesters gathered at the Jackson station for public transportation in downtown and chanted anti-government slogans but the security forces used tear gas to disperse them.

The opposition plans to organize a number of protests in the upcoming days hoping that it at least will bring the government to accept its demands for the democratic reforms and freedoms.

However, the left forces led by the Communist Party say they reject any dialogue or political compromise with the regime stressing they are determined to overthrow the regime.

Following the bloody repression of September 2013, the government proposed the national dialogue process in January 2014. However, it diverged with the main opposition groups on the need to ensure freedoms and sign peace agreements with the armed groups.

Eyewitnesses said security agents arrested dozens of protesters, mostly young women.

Also, a number of professors from the University of Khartoum were arrested outside the University as they were preparing to demonstrate.

According to a list seen by Sudan Tribune released by their colleagues, the security service arrested 20 professors and lecturers including among other: Mohamed Youssef Ahmed Mustafa, Mohamed Abdallah, Mamdouh Mohamed al-Hassan, Omer al-Hiber Youssef Nur al-Dayem, Montasser al-Tayeb, Walid Awad Hassan, Mohamed Younes.

This is the first time that the professors of the University of Khartoum decide to participate in the anti-government protests.

Also, a security patrol arrested three journalists in central Khartoum while they were covering the demonstration: Al-Sharq Al-Awsat correspondent Ahmed Younes, and Bloomberg correspondent Mohamed Amin, and Sarah Taj Elsir of Al-Jarida newspaper.

Activists and journalists from Wad Madani say the capital of Al-Jazira State witnessed a huge demonstration on Sunday. Some went to say the mobilization was more important than Khartoum.

Also, protesters took to the street in Atbara, the capital of the River Nile State where the anti-government demonstration erupted on 19 December 2018.

(ST)

South Sudan :

South Sudan minister arrested in anti-shisha operation in Kampala

[<https://www.nation.co.ke/news/africa/South-Sudan-minister-arrested-Uganda-smoking-shisha/1066-4924016-quayk6z/index.html>]

Monday January 7 2019 By DAILY MONITOR More by this Author

KAMPALA,

At least 17 people, including a South Sudan government official, were arrested in bars and detained on Saturday on allegations of smoking tobacco in public places.

Police in Kampala said the suspects, one of whom identified himself as a minister in the East African country had been detained at Kabalagala Police Division.

Kampala Metropolitan Police spokesman, Mr Luke Owoyesigire, confirmed the arrest on Sunday and added that: "He (the minister) only identified himself in the morning during suspects' parade. He has been released after establishing his particulars."

Although police declined to state whether he will be arraigned in court, sources say he might not be taken to court in order to avoid ruining the diplomatic relationship between two countries.

Police raided Kampala Forest, De Posh and Savannah bars on Saturday evening where they arrested the suspects.

TOBACCO ACT

The Tobacco Control Act 2015 entered in force in May 2016. At least three people have been convicted for smoking in public.

Mr Owoyesigyire said the other suspects are to be arraigned in court on Monday on charges of selling and smoking tobacco contrary to Section 16 (7) of the Tobacco Control Act.

According to the Tobacco Control Act, a person convicted of smoking or selling tobacco in a public area is liable to a jail term not less than one year or a fine of Shs480,000 or both.

The owner of the bar in which the tobacco was smoked can be fined Shs20m and his or her licence suspended for at least six months.

Smoking of Shisha is popular among the youth and many bars and entertainment places in the country are selling it despite the ban.

Anti-smoking activists says it is leading to passive smoking thus affecting none smokers.

Smoking is linked to lung cancer which is one of the cause of death of over 13,000 people.

The cost of treatment of lung cancer is too high for individual patients therefore the burden falls on the tax payers to shoulder it.

50 S. Sudanese journalists to be trained on refugees, IDPs

[<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article66876>]

January 4, 2019 (JUBA) – 50 South Sudanese journalists will benefit from a three-day training on refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees issues within the Revitalized Agreement on Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS), a civil society body said.

South Sudanese civil society activist Edmund Yakani (The Niles/File)

Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO), in a statement, said the event will be held in the capital, Juba.

“It is aimed at enhancing capacities of South Sudanese journalists on accurate reporting on refugees, IDPs and returnees concerns in accordance with the implementation of the R-ARCSS,” said CEPO’s executive director, Edmund Yakani.

He said the training, to be held from 14-16 January, is expected to equip journalists with skills for accurate reporting on refugees, IDPs and returnees’ issues in the peace deal signed in September 2018.

“Through various survey reports of CEPO, it was realized that majority of the journalists have inadequate knowledge and skills on reporting on refugees, IDPs and returnees matters accurately,” he stressed.

The project was designed by CEPO’s program of partnership with journalists on R-ARCSS, aimed at empowering journalists with knowledge and skills to consistency and accurately report on refugees and returnees during the peace accord implementation.

To be conducted in all the country’s states, Yakani said the three-day training would influence the upcoming African Union (AU) head of states and governments from the 32nd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU) will take place from 15 January to 11 February 2019, under the theme “Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa”.

“A written petition will be presented to the African Union South Sudan mission to be shared at its summit on matters related to South Sudanese refugees, IDPs and returnees settings,” he added.

The conflict in war-torn South Sudan has killed tens of thousands and displaced millions since it broke out in mid-December, 2013. Also, at least two million people, according to the United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR), are internally displaced within South Sudan. (ST)

Defence Secretary commends UK peacekeepers in South Sudan

[<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/defence-secretary-commends-uk-peacekeepers-in-south-sudan>]

Gavin Williamson visits 300 UK troops in Malakal and Bentiu Published 7 January 2019

The UK must continue to set an example in the battle to bring equality and stability to the world’s most fragile countries, the Defence Secretary has declared.

Gavin Williamson visited the UK’s largest contribution to United Nations peacekeeping, the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), where military personnel have been running a hospital and improving infrastructure to keep internally displaced citizens safe.

More than 300 British troops are currently deployed across South Sudan and, with a £40.8million contribution last year, the UK is the third-largest humanitarian donor to the country.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

The UK is a nation that leads from the front – promoting security, championing prosperity, and protecting human rights. We stand with the people of South Sudan, particularly those who suffer horrific crimes such as sexual and gender-based violence. We all want Africa’s newest country to seek a peaceful and prosperous future.

Last month, UK troops in Bentiu completed upgrades to 15km of roads used to deliver vital food and aid. This means women will no longer be forced to make the long journey by foot each day, exposing them to risk of attack.

During his visit, the Defence Secretary also met with President Salva Kiir Mayardit, to discuss how efforts were going to bring peace to South Sudan following the signing of a peace agreement in October.

He also visited a UN Protection of Civilian (PoC) camp in Malakal to hear the stories of some of those who have been affected by the conflict and spoke with UK-funded aid workers to discuss the challenges they face daily.

Mr Williamson then went to a UK aid funded female only safe space which has been created for victims of sexual violence to find out what more the UK's military can do to support those who have suffered horrific crimes such as rape and kidnap. He finished the South Sudan leg of the visit by travelling to Bentiu to officially hand over control of a Level 2 Field Hospital, which had been built and run by the UK, to Vietnamese medical staff who are on their first UN deployment.

Gavin Williamson visiting a UK aid funded female only safe space which has been created for victims of sexual violence.

Gavin Williamson visiting a UK aid funded female only safe space which has been created for victims of sexual violence. Crown copyright.

Following South Sudan, he travelled to Somaliland to meet with President Bihi. The first British Cabinet Minister to visit Somaliland, Mr Williamson discussed the shared priorities of security and economic development as well as counter terrorism and the role UK military plays in mentoring the Somaliland coastguard.

RDC Congo :

Report de la publication des résultats : le FCC se " plie" à la décision de la Ceni, Lamuka et CACH s'inquiètent

07.01.2019, Kinshasa

[[https://www.mediacongo.net/article-actualite-](https://www.mediacongo.net/article-actualite-46167_report_de_la_publication_des_resultats_le_fcc_se_plie_a_la_decision_de_la_ceni_lamuka_et_cach_s_inquietent.html)

[46167_report_de_la_publication_des_resultats_le_fcc_se_plie_a_la_decision_de_la_ceni_lamuka_et_cach_s_inquietent.html](https://www.mediacongo.net/article-actualite-46167_report_de_la_publication_des_resultats_le_fcc_se_plie_a_la_decision_de_la_ceni_lamuka_et_cach_s_inquietent.html)]

L'annonce du report de la publication des résultats provisoires de l'élection présidentielle par la Commission Électorale Nationale Indépendante (CénI), a suscité divers réactions dans le camps des autres parties prenantes au processus électoral en République démocratique du Congo.

Dans une interview accordée ce lundi 07 janvier à Media Congo Press (MCP), le Front Commun pour le Congo (FCC), se "plie" à la décision de la CénI et rappelle que "seule la CénI est habilitée" à proclamer les résultats.

" Nous soutenons que la CENI est le seul organe habilité à compiler les résultats des élections et en assurer la proclamation. Si la CENI demande plus de temps pour faire son travail, nous ne pouvons que nous y plié à cela. D'autant plus que tous les rapports d'observateurs y compris ceux de la SADC, de l'Union Africaine montrent que le processus électoral s'est bien déroulé avec l'appréciation de tout le monde " a déclaré Kodjo Ndokuma, l'un de porte-parole d'Emmanuel Ramazani Shadary.

De son côté Lamuka par son porte-parole, Steve Kivuata, pense que l'annonce du report des résultats par la CENI est de " trop".

" Nous l'avions accueilli avec beaucoup des déceptions et de regret parce qu'après plusieurs reports pour ce qui est du scrutin, ce report en terme de proclamation des résultats est de trop. Tout simplement parce que la CENI bien avant lorsqu'il fallait organiser les élections au 23 décembre 2018, la CENI se disait être prête dans 48 heures pour proclamer les résultats. Mais après le vote du 30 décembre déjà c'était une semaine. Maintenant une semaine après elle ne se dit pas prête pourtant elle se disait hier pouvoir être 48 heures accès prêtes déjà ça nous fait poser des questions. Ne telle pas entrain de cherchait à compiler les résultats au lieu de les compiler? " se questionne, le porte-parole de Lamuka.

Quant à la coalition Cap pour le Changement (CACH), avec ce report la CENI "cherche à" se donner le temps pour falsifier les résultats " et appelle cependant cette dernière à annoncer une nouvelle date.

" Nous n'arrivons donc plus à comprendre où veut nous emmener la CENI ? cette dernière qui a fixé son propre calendrier électoral sans contrainte paraît aujourd'hui incapable d'appliquer son calendrier. En même temps ça suscite des suspicions. Ça nous laisse croire que peut-être qu'on se donne le temps de falsifier les résultats puisque nous apprenons de gauche à droite des bourrages des urnes à travers les centres des compilations qui sont entrain de se faire. Nous en appelons

instamment à la CENI de bien vouloir fixer une nouvelle date puisqu'aujourd'hui le report est sans limite" a déploré, Peter Kazadi, directeur de cabinet adjoint de Félix Tshisekedi.
Djodjo Vondi
MEDIA CONGO PRESS / mediacongo.net

« Les évêques n'ont pas dévoilé le nom du président élu » au président Kabila (CENCO)

07.01.2019,

[[https://www.mediacongo.net/article-actualite-](https://www.mediacongo.net/article-actualite-46169_les_eveques_n_ont_pas_devoile_le_nom_du_president_elu_au_president_kabila_cenco.html)

46169_les_eveques_n_ont_pas_devoile_le_nom_du_president_elu_au_president_kabila_cenco.html]

« On raconte beaucoup d'histoires » sur la Conférence épiscopale nationale du Congo (CENCO), déplore son secrétaire général.

L'abbé Donatien Nshole relève qu'il y en a qui disent que « nous avons donné le nom (du président élu) au Chef de l'Etat. Ce qui n'est pas vrai. Il y en a qui racontent que le Chef de l'Etat a grondé les évêques comme de petits enfants. Ce qui est une fausseté. Il y en a qui racontent que la CENCO n'a pas déployé 40.000 alors que nous avons toute la traçabilité de ce que nous affirmons ».

Une délégation de la CENCO conduite par Abbé Donatien Nshole a échangé avec le président de la République Joseph Kabila vendredi dernier.

Pas de nom, ni des tendances

« La CENCO n'a pas le droit de publier les résultats ni les tendances. Ce qui équivaut à donner les chiffres ou le nom. On ne les a pas donnés jusque-là », précise le secrétaire général de la CENCO.

Démentant la rumeur, l'abbé Donatien Nshole indique que « la CENCO a rendu compte de ce qu'elle a observé, entre autres les fiches des résultats et PV. C'est sur base de cela qu'elle est arrivé à la conclusion qu'un candidat a été consacré sans dire quel candidat et quel pourcentage ».

Le secrétaire général de la CENCO dément également l'information selon laquelle les évêques seraient invités à dévoiler les conclusions de leur rapport d'observation à l'ONU.

« Nous n'avons pas reçu l'invitation pour cela, à ce que je sache ».

Devenue la cible des attaques tous azimuts après avoir dit détenir le nom du vainqueur de la présidentielle du 30 décembre dernier, « la CENCO encaisse. Nous n'attendons pas une récompense humaine. L'église reste sereine. Elle n'a pas d'intérêts humains ».

Dans son rapport d'observation, la CENCO relève avoir observé 39082 bureaux de vote des 74000 actifs le jour du vote, soit 53% du total.

Top Congo / MCP, via mediacongo.

US troops in Gabon remain focused on Congo despite local coup attempt

By JOHN VANDIVER | STARS AND STRIPES Published: January 7, 2019

[<https://www.stripes.com/news/us-troops-in-gabon-remain-focused-on-congo-despite-local-coup-attempt-1.563461>]

STUTTGART, Germany — A failed coup attempt in the central African nation of Gabon hasn't yet changed the mission of U.S. troops deployed there last week in response to potential violence in the nearby Democratic Republic of the Congo, U.S. Africa Command said Monday.

On Friday, the White House said it had ordered about 80 combat-equipped military personnel to Gabon amid concerns that elections in Congo would result in violent clashes and possibly pose a threat to U.S. diplomatic assets. However, on Monday members of Gabon's military launched a coup attempt and seized control of state radio in the country. Later in the day, Gabon's government said four of five mutiny ringleaders had been arrested.

“At this time there is no change in the status of our forces in Gabon,” AFRICOM spokesman John Manley said as events were unfolding Monday. The troops are not currently tasked with securing diplomatic assets there, he said.

Gunshots were reported early Monday in Gabon’s capital of Libreville. The country’s president, Ali Bongo Ondimba, is reportedly out of the country for medical treatment.

The takeover attempt was sparked by “reinforced doubts about the president’s ability to continue to carry out the responsibilities of his office,” said Lt. Kelly Ondo Obiang, the leader of a breakaway military force, quoted in a Reuters report.

The sudden revolt in Gabon, which has a long history of military relations with the U.S., highlights the region’s volatility. The country plays host to one of AFRICOM’s cooperative security locations, which function as bare-bones launching pads for quick-reaction troops called upon to secure U.S. diplomatic facilities in the broader region.

President Donald Trump, in his letter of notification Friday to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi about the U.S. deployment to Gabon, said more troops could be dispatched to Gabon, Congo or the separate Republic of Congo as needed.

The troops “will remain in the region until the security situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo becomes such that their presence is no longer needed,” Trump said.

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Revue de la presse kinoise de ce lundi 7 janvier 2019

[<https://www.digitalcongo.net/article/5c33767c155ace0004375d43/>]

Kinshasa 07-01-2019 Revue de presse - Une semaine après les élections, les regards de journaux parus ce jour sont tournés vers la Commission électorale nationale indépendante (CENI) dont l’opinion attend la publication des résultats. Cependant, au menu se trouve aussi la rencontre entre le chef de l’Etat et une délégation de la CENCO après sa déclaration relative aux résultats de ce scrutin, alors que la CENI ne s’est pas encore exprimée à ce sujet.

« Corneille Nangaa maintient le suspense !!! », s’exclame L’OBSERVATEUR qui rapporte dans son article ainsi intitulé : « Annoncée pour le 6 janvier 2019, la publication des résultats de la présidentielle par la CENI est reportée à une date qui jusqu’ici n’a pas encore été révélée par ses autorités ».

A en croire certaines sources, cite ce journal, le retard dans la transmission des plis dans les différents centres de compilation serait à la base de ce report.

L’OBSERVATEUR rappelle par ailleurs : « Le calendrier de la CENI partiellement réaménagé annonçait la publication des résultats définitifs pour le 15 janvier, alors que quatre circonscriptions ne voteront qu’en mars 2019 ».

Ceci dit, les Congolais devront encore prendre leur mal en patience car, estime notre confrère, la publication des résultats provisoires attendus le 6 janvier dernier n’a pas eu lieu.

« La CENI reporte la publication des résultats », titre pour sa part L’AVENIR. « Initialement prévue le 6 janvier 2019, la publication des résultats provisoires ne peut intervenir ce jour. C’est le président de la CENI qui l’a annoncé devant la presse. Pour cause, les travaux de ramassage et de transmission des plis de différents bureaux de vote se poursuivent non seulement vers les différents centres locaux de compilation, mais aussi vers d’autres destinataires légaux », écrit ce journal citant la Président de la CENI.

Toujours à ce sujet, LA PROSPERITE titre : « Corneille Nangaa : Il faut attendre jusqu'à la consolidation finale des procès-verbaux ». Cette fois, écrit-il, le président de la CENI n'a pas fixé la date de la publication des résultats provisoires de trois scrutins directs combinés présidentiels et législatifs national et provincial.

Corneille Nangaa dit être en possession de 53 % de compilation des procès-verbaux, rapporte de tabloïd.

Au sujet de la déclaration de la CENCO relative aux résultats du scrutin du 30 décembre dernier, L'AVENIR titre : « Face-à-face Kabila - CENCO : Seule la CENI est habilitée à publier les résultats des élections ». Quelques jours après l'organisation des élections, la Conférence épiscopale nationale du Congo était en même de désigner le gagnant des élections, elle qui ne disposait que de 40.000 observeurs pour 80.000 bureaux de vote, indique ce journal.

Selon ce dernier : « Une prouesse qui a surpris tous les experts de la CENI et qui a risqué de semer des troubles sur toute l'étendue du territoire national. C'est dans ce contexte que le président de la République a reçu en audience, le vendredi 4 janvier, les évêques de la CENCO, conduits par Mgr Marcel Utambi son président. Il rapporte en outre qu'« Au sortir de l'audience, le Sg de la CENCO, l'Abbé Nshole a tenu à préciser que seule la CENI est habilitée à publier les résultats des élections ».

B. Tsala/MMC

Dans son message de Nouvel an à la nation, Joseph Kabila lègue le serment de la démocratie à la postérité congolaise

[<https://www.digitalcongo.net/article/5c29e4936f1801000450a68d/>]

Kinshasa31-12-2018Politique - Dans son message à la Nation, le Chef de l'Etat, Joseph Kabila, s'est exprimé avoir légué à la postérité non seulement une République, mais aussi une démocratie. Pas de doute possible car, il s'agit là d'un deuxième acquis à préserver après celui nous légué par les pères de l'indépendance à savoir : un pays libre et uni, a-t-il exhorté à tous les Congolais.

Pour le président de la République, la République démocratique du Congo (RDC) montre à suffisance, à la face du monde, l'affirmation de sa volonté de consolider sa souveraineté.

S'exprimant le 29 décembre, à la veille des élections présidentielle, législatives nationale et provinciales, dans le cadre de son message de nouvel An, Joseph Kabila s'est félicité de l'appropriation complète du processus électoral par les Congolais eux-mêmes, affirmant à la face du monde leur volonté de consolider leur souveraineté. « Le peuple est demeuré maître de son processus. Ainsi, il aura prouvé à la face du monde qu'il connaît les vrais enjeux de ces élections : ceux de l'affirmation de sa dignité et de la consolidation de sa souveraineté », a-t-il déclaré, fier de constater que le troisième cycle électoral que connaît la RDC soit entièrement financé par son pays.

Rappelant, par ailleurs, les règles de jeu aux différents candidats qui, visiblement, ne semblent pas encore cerner le rôle combien important que joue la Commission électorale nationale indépendante dans le processus électoral, Joseph Kabila a tenu à remettre la Centrale électorale sur son piédestal en tant que seul pouvoir organisateur des élections : « La Constitution ne confère la compétence d'organiser les élections et d'en publier les résultats qu'à la Commission électorale nationale

indépendante, et in fine à la Cour constitutionnelle », a-t-il indiqué. Il a, en outre, accordé la grâce à une catégorie de prisonniers dont les identités ne sont pas encore connues.

Ce dimanche 30 décembre, le président de la République a accompli, à l'instar de ses compatriotes, son devoir civique en allant voter au centre érigé à l'Institut de la Gombe flanqué de son épouse, Marie-Olive Lembe, sa sœur, Jaynet Kabila, et de son fils, Laurent-Désiré Kabila.
Alain Diasso/Le Courier de Kinshasa/Forum des As

US deploys troops to Gabon amid fears of unrest in DRC

[<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/01/deploys-troops-gabon-fears-unrest-drc-190105055926860.html>]

US troops will assist US citizens, personnel in DRC if violent protests over recent elections threaten their security.

The US military has deployed soldiers to Gabon amid fears of violent protests in neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) after its presidential election.

US President Donald Trump told US Congress on Friday that the first of about 80 troops had arrived in Gabon on Wednesday to protect US citizens and diplomatic facilities should violence break out in DRC's capital Kinshasa.

Voters in the DRC went to the polls on December 30, two years after the election was first scheduled to be held, to elect the successor to President Joseph Kabila, who has been in power for 18 years.

'No revenge': Martin Fayulu on DRC elections and corruption

"The first of these personnel arrived in Gabon on January 2, 2019, with appropriate combat equipment and supported by military aircraft," Trump's letter to Congress read.

"Additional forces may deploy to Gabon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, or the Republic of the Congo, if necessary for these purposes.

"These deployed personnel will remain in the region until the security situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo becomes such that their presence is no longer needed."

The DRC's electoral commission is scheduled to release the provisional results of the presidential election on Sunday, but it has said there could be delays because of the slow arrival of tally sheets.
'Potential unrest'

Observers and the opposition say the election was marred by serious irregularities, the DRC's government says the election was fair and went smoothly.

Kabila's ruling coalition is backing his hand-picked successor Emmanuel Ramazani Shadary.

Observers and the international community have raised concerns that a disputed result could cause unrest, as was the case after the 2006 and 2011 elections.

Al Kitenge, CEO of London-based Innovation Task Force, said there was "huge risk of trouble in the coming days".

"We've had violence in the countryside for the past 40 years... Today everyone is worried because the violence might spread to Kinshasa. The people most at risk in such a case are civilians and we hope everything can be done to avoid that," he told Al Jazeera.

On Thursday, the US Department of State called on the electoral commission to ensure votes were accurately counted and threatened to impose sanctions against those who undermined the process or threatened peace and stability in the country.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) also warned against any manipulation of the results.

Will there be a peaceful transfer of power in DRC?

"The African Union and other governments should make clear to Congo's leadership that any manipulation of the election results will have serious consequences," said Ida Sawyer, deputy Africa director at HRW.

"Rigged or fake vote tallies would only inflame an already tense situation and could have disastrous repercussions."

Large-scale ethnic violence broke out in Yumbi, in western DRC's Mai-Ndombe province, leaving at least 150 dead in a previously peaceful region, according to HRW.

Yumbi was among the three areas whose elections were postponed until March, in addition to Butembo and Beni, because of concerns over an Ebola outbreak and ethnic violence.

SOURCE: Al Jazeera and news agencies

Ethiopia :

L'Éthiopie lancera son premier satellite en septembre 2019

Lfrii l'entrepreneant (Satire) (Communiqué de presse) (Blog)-28 Nov 2018

L'Éthiopie aura à partir de l'année prochaine, son propre satellite. Et ceci grâce à l'aide de la Chine, <https://l-frii.com/léthiopie-lancera-son-premier-satellite-en-septembre-2019/>

Ethiopia is set to launch its first satellite into space—with China's help

By Abdi Latif Dahir November 26, 2018

[<https://qz.com/africa/1474369/china-to-help-launch-ethiopias-first-satellite-in-2019/>]

With Beijing's assistance, Ethiopia is heading to space in just under a year.

The Horn of Africa nation announced it would launch its first earth observatory satellite in Sept. 2019, with China footing much of the bill. Officials from both governments' space agencies met both in August and November (in Amharic) to advance talks on technological transfer and sign cooperative agreements on space activities.

Designed and built at a cost of \$8 million, China will pay for \$6 million of the capsule's price, the head of the Ethiopian Space Science and Technology Institute (ESSTI) at Addis Ababa University Solomon Belay Tessema told The EastAfrican newspaper. The satellite will be launched from China, but its command and control center will be based in Ethiopia. Once launched, Addis Ababa says it will utilize it to collect data on changes in climate and weather-related phenomena.

The latest announcement marks a noteworthy development to Ethiopia's space ambitions, which started accelerating in the last few years. In 2016, the government established ESSTI as a way to fully exploit space technologies for development purposes. In Jan. 2017, the ministry of science and technology announced it would launch a satellite into orbit in three to five years to improve its weather-monitoring capabilities. This followed the launch of a privately-funded, multi-million-dollar astronomical observatory in the Entoto hills overlooking Addis Ababa—a one-of-its-kind station that would allow Ethiopia to observe both the northern and southern hemisphere skies. Just this month, ESSTI announced plans to build (in Amharic) a satellite assembly and test center.

As satellites get smaller and cheaper, an increasing number of African nations are declaring their plans to look skyward. Countries including Kenya, Egypt, Nigeria, South Africa, and Morocco have partnered to launch or launched their own programs to power their own scientific, technological and military ambitions. The African Union has also introduced an African space policy, which calls for the development of a continental outer-space program and the adoption of a framework to use satellite communication for economic progress. And as criticisms abound over the anomalous use of resources in the face of more pressing day-to-day concerns, the demand for satellite capacity is expected to double in the next five years in sub-Saharan Africa.

China, which has deepened its place in Africa in all spheres economic and political, wants to wade into this sector. Conquering the space business and providing space mapping services is part of Beijing's globe-spanning Belt and Road Initiative, with both state-run and private Chinese space companies selling made-in-China satellites abroad. In January, China gave \$550 million to Nigeria

for the purchase of two satellites from Chinese manufacturers both of which are slated for launch in the next two years.

Yet China's technological transfers to Africa have increasingly come under scrutiny, with experts warning that these digital systems could be used for Beijing's intelligence operations and electronic surveillance. While Addis Ababa says it would use the satellite to monitor crops and the weather, it could also use it for spying purposes. And even though Ethiopia is opening up and reforming under its new prime minister Abiy Ahmed, that doesn't mean it wouldn't use the satellite to boost its military and surveillance might.

Ethiopia, Eritrea reopen another border crossing

Published January 7, 2019

[<https://punchng.com/ethiopia-eritrea-reopen-another-border-crossing/>]

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki on Monday reopened a border crossing between their countries as part of an ongoing reconciliation between the former foes.

The two leaders re-opened the border crossing between Humera in Ethiopia and Oum Hajer in Eritrea on the western edge of both nations, according to the state-owned Ethiopia Broadcasting Corporation.

In September, an initial two land crossings between the countries were ceremonially reopened for the first time in 20 years, after Abiy settled a long-standing border dispute by agreeing to adhere to a United Nations ruling.

However, the major crossings between Bure-Debay Sima in the east and Zalambessa-Serha in the west were closed again last month without explanation, according to local media reports.

Nevertheless, relations between the neighbours have continued to improve rapidly with Monday's reopening of the Humera-Oum Hajer border post the latest sign of normalisation allowing the free movement of people and goods.

Borders were sealed in 1998 as the neighbouring Horn of Africa nations cut diplomatic ties at the outbreak of a short but bloody two-year frontier battle.

READ ALSO: How Aisha Buhari impersonator defrauded firm chairman of N150m

An ensuing cold war stymied development, trade and undermined regional security, but in a surprise move last year, Abiy began peace overtures, which were welcomed by Eritrea.

(AFP)

The Trouble With Ethiopia's Ethnic Federalism Opinion

[<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/03/opinion/ethiopia-abiy-ahmed-reforms-ethnic-conflict-ethnic-federalism.html>]

The reforms by the country's new prime minister are clashing with its flawed Constitution and could push the country toward an interethnic conflict.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed of Ethiopia. Credit: Alex Welsh for The New York Times

By Mahmood Mamdani

Mr. Mamdani is the director of the Institute of Social Research at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, and a professor at Columbia University.

Abiy Ahmed, the 42-year-old prime minister of Ethiopia, has dazzled Africa with a volley of political reforms since his appointment in April. Mr. Abiy ended the 20-year border war with Eritrea, released political prisoners, removed bans on dissident groups and allowed their members to return from exile, declared press freedom and granted diverse political groups the freedom to mobilize and organize.

Mr. Abiy has been celebrated as a reformer, but his transformative politics has come up against ethnic federalism enshrined in Ethiopia's Constitution. The resulting clash threatens to exacerbate competitive ethnic politics further and push the country toward an interethnic conflict.

The 1994 Constitution, introduced by Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front governing coalition, recast the country from a centrally unified republic to a federation of nine regional ethnic states and two federally administered city-states. It bases key rights — to land, government jobs, representation in local and federal bodies — not on Ethiopian citizenship but on being considered ethnically indigenous in constituent ethnic states. The system of ethnic federalism was troubled with internal inconsistencies because ethnic groups do not live only in a discrete "homeland" territory but are also dispersed across the country.

Nonnative ethnic minorities live within every ethnic homeland.

Ethiopia's census lists more than 90 ethnic groups, but there are only nine ethnically defined regional assemblies with rights for the officially designated majority ethnic group. The nonnative minorities are given special districts and rights of self-administration. But no matter the number of minority regions, the fiction of an ethnic homeland creates endless minorities.

Ethnic mobilization comes from multiple groups, including Ethiopians without an ethnic homeland, and those disenfranchised as minorities in the region of their residence, even if their ethnic group has a homeland in another state.

Ethnic federalism also unleashed a struggle for supremacy among the Big Three: the Tigray, the Amhara and the Oromo. Although the ruling E.P.R.D.F. is a coalition of four parties, the Tigray People's Liberation Front representing the Tigray minority has been in the driving seat since the 1991 revolution. The Amhara, dominant before 1991, and the Oromo, the largest ethnic group in the country, complained they were being treated as subordinate minorities.

When the government announced plans to expand Addis Ababa, the federally run city-state, into bordering Oromo lands, protests erupted in 2015. The Amhara joined and both groups continued to demand land reform, equal political representation and an end to rights abuses.

Prime Minister Haile Mariam Desalegn, who took office in 2012 after the death of the long-term premier and Tigray leader Mr. Zenawi, responded brutally to the protests. Security forces killed between 500 and 1,000 protesters in a year. Faced with a spiraling crisis, the ruling E.P.R.D.F. coalition appointed Mr. Abiy, a former military official and a leader of the Oromo People's Democratic Organization — a constituent of the ruling coalition — as prime minister.

Mr. Abiy's reforms have been applauded but have also led to greater ethnic mobilization for justice and equality. The E.P.R.D.F.'s achievement since 1991 was equal education for girls and boys, rural and urban, leading to greater prominence of women, Muslims and Pentecostal groups.

The recent reforms of Mr. Abiy, who was born to a Muslim Oromo father and an Orthodox Amhara mother and is a devout Pentecostal Christian, have further broadened political participation to underprivileged groups.

Mobilization of ethnic militias is on the rise. Paramilitaries or ethnic militias known as special police, initially established as counterinsurgency units, are increasingly involved in ethnic conflicts, mainly between neighboring ethnic states. A good example is the role of the Somali Special Force in the border conflict with the Oromia state, according to Yonas Ashine, a historian at Addis Ababa University. These forces are also drawn into conflicts between native and nonnative groups.

Nearly a million Ethiopians have been displaced from their homes by escalating ethnic violence since Mr. Abiy's appointment, according to Addisu Gebregziabher, who heads the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission.

Fears of Ethiopia suffering Africa's next interethnic conflict are growing. Prime Minister Abiy himself is constantly invoking religious symbols, especially those linked to American Protestant evangelical megachurches, and has brought a greater number of Pentecostals into the higher ranks of government.

Ethiopians used to think of themselves as Africans of a special kind, who were not colonized, but the country today resembles a quintessential African system, marked by ethnic mobilization for ethnic gains.

In most of Africa, ethnicity was politicized when the British turned the ethnic group into a unit of local administration, which they termed “indirect rule.” Every bit of the colony came to be defined as an ethnic homeland, where an ethnic authority enforced an ethnically defined customary law that conferred privileges on those deemed indigenous at the expense of non-indigenous minorities.

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The move was a response to a perennial colonial problem: Racial privilege for whites mobilized those excluded as a racialized nonwhite majority. By creating an additional layer of privilege, this time ethnic, indirect rule fragmented the racially conscious majority into so many ethnic minorities, in every part of the country setting ethnic majorities against ethnic minorities. Wherever this system continued after independence, national belonging gave way to tribal identity as the real meaning of citizenship.

Many thought the Tigray People’s Liberation Front, representing a minority in the dominant coalition, turned to ethnic federalism to dissolve and fragment Ethiopian society into numerous ethnic groups — each a minority — so it could come up with a “national” vision. In a way it replicated the British system.

But led by Mr. Zenawi, the T.P.L.F. was also most likely influenced by Soviet ethno-territorial federalism and the creation of ethnic republics, especially in Central Asia. Ethiopia’s 1994 Constitution evoked the classically Stalinist definition of “nation, nationality and people” and the Soviet solution to “the national question.”

As in the Soviet Union, every piece of land in Ethiopia was inscribed as the ethnic homeland of a particular group, constitutionally dividing the population into a permanent majority alongside permanent minorities with little stake in the system. Mr. Zenawi and his party had both Sovietized and Africanized Ethiopia.

Like much of Africa, Ethiopia is at a crossroads. Neither the centralized republic instituted by the Derg military junta in 1974 nor the ethnic federalism of Mr. Zenawi’s 1994 Constitution points to a way forward.

Mr. Abiy can achieve real progress if Ethiopia embraces a different kind of federation — territorial and not ethnic — where rights in a federal unit are dispensed not on the basis of ethnicity but on residence. Such a federal arrangement will give Ethiopians an even chance of keeping an authoritarian dictatorship at bay.

Mahmood Mamdani is the director of Makerere Institute of Social Research in Uganda, a professor of government at Columbia University and the author of “Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism.”

Egypt :

Senegalese diplomat: Sisi restored Egypt's leading role in Africa

By: MENA [<http://www.egypttoday.com/Article/2/63137/Senegalese-diplomat-Sisi-restored-Egypt-s-leading-role-in-Africa>]

Mon, Jan. 7, 2019

KUWAIT CITY, 7 Jan 2019: The Dean of Diplomatic Corps in Kuwait and the Ambassador of Senegal Abdulahad Mbaki said that President Abdel Fattah El Sisi succeeded in restoring Egypt's leading role in the African continent.

In statements to MENA on Monday, Mbaki said that President Sisi's stances since he took the helm in 2014 reflected his keenness on promoting ties with African countries.

He further wished Egypt's stability which is part and parcel of stability in the whole African continent.

As for ties between Egypt and Senegal, he asserted the depth of relations between the two countries at the public and official levels.

Commenting on President Sisi's inauguration of El Fattah El Aleem Mosque and the Nativity of Christ Cathedral, the biggest cathedral in the Middle East, in the New Administrative Capital, the Senegalese diplomat stressed that this explicitly proved that there is no religious discrimination in Egypt.

He also lauded the success of the third edition of the Africa Forum that was held in the Red Sea resort of Sharm El Sheikh in September, under the aegis of President Sisi.

The forum was held under the theme "Bold Leadership and Collective Commitment: Advancing Intra-African Investments.

El-Sisi says Egypt and Israel co-operate against ISIS in Sinai

[<https://www.smh.com.au/world/middle-east/el-sisi-says-egypt-and-israel-co-operate-against-isis-in-sinai-20190106-p50pt9.html>]

By Hamza Hendawi 6 January 2019 — 11:12am

Cairo: Egypt's president has told a US television network that his country and Israel, with whom it fought four wars, are cooperating against Islamic militants in the Sinai Peninsula, a startling and potentially damaging acknowledgment that could explain the Egyptian government's request that the network not air the interview.

Excerpts from the interview released by CBS over the weekend also quoted President Abdel-Fattah el-Sisi as denying there are political prisoners in Egypt, where he has overseen one of the largest crack-downs on dissent in the country's modern history since the ouster by the military, then led by him, of an Islamist but divisive president.

CBS, which was to air the full interview on Sunday (US time) on its show "60 Minutes", said it has rejected a request by the Egyptian government not to show it. It did not say which part of the president's comments the Cairo government objected to, but the co-operation with Israel, with whom Egypt has a 1979 peace treaty, appears to be the most contentious part. Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sisi has tried to suppress an interview with US network CBS in which he admits co-operating with Israel.

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sisi has tried to suppress an interview with US network CBS in which he admits co-operating with Israel. Credit: AP

El-Sisi gave the interview in New York about three months ago, when the Egyptian leader was there attending the UN General Assembly, but CBS did not say why it was not aired earlier. Egypt's foreign ministry spokesman could not be reached for comment.

Egypt's military last year denied press reports that Egypt and Israel were co-operating against the militants in northern Sinai, a rugged region of mountains and desert bordering Israel and the Gaza Strip where Egyptian security forces have for years battled the extremists, now led by the Islamic State group.

According to the excerpts, el-Sisi was asked if his country's cooperation with Israel was the closest ever between the two countries. "That is correct. ... We have a wide range of cooperation with the Israelis," he responded. The excerpts did not provide the complete question on bilateral cooperation or specifically mention the Sinai militants.

Israeli officials have publicly praised security co-operation with el-Sisi's Egypt, which has successfully secured Israel's permission to deploy troops, armour and helicopter gunships close to the Israeli border to fight the militants, contravening the peace treaty's limitations on the number or troops and type of weapons Egypt can have in the region.

El-Sisi has since taking office in 2014 met at least twice with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Their meetings have received little media attention in Egypt, a country where most people still view their neighbour as their sworn enemy and where trade unions and most political parties are vehemently opposed to "normalisation" of relations with Israel.

In the interview, el-Sisi questioned a recent Human Rights Watch report that said Egypt was detaining 60,000 political prisoners.

"I don't know where they got that figure. I said there are no political prisoners in Egypt. Whenever there is a minority trying to impose their extremist ideology we have to intervene regardless of their numbers," he told CBS, according to the excerpts.

Related Article

Security forces near the bomb sight, less than four kilometres from the Giza pyramids.

Terrorism

Egypt security forces kill 40 suspected militants after tourist bus bombed

El-Sisi has in the past claimed that everyone in detention is facing legal proceedings for a specific crime committed, but rights activists complain of long detentions without charges - as long as two years or more in some cases. They say that the trials that don't follow proper judicial processes and are more concerned with "protecting the state" - a cornerstone of el-Sisi's rule - than enforcing the law.

The detentions are part of a large crackdown on dissent that includes tight control of the media, placing draconian restrictions on rights groups and reversing most of the freedoms gained by a 2011 uprising against autocrat Hosni Mubarak. El-Sisi also won a second, four-year term in office last year after running virtually unopposed.

On Saturday, an Egyptian police officer was killed while attempting to defuse a bomb found near a church in an eastern Cairo suburb less than two days before Egypt's Christians celebrate the Coptic Christmas.

The device was one of two found inside a bag on a nearby rooftop, three security sources and state media reported.

Two policemen and an onlooker were also injured when the device exploded.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility. Egyptian security forces have for years battled Islamist insurgents who have attacked Coptic Christians, tourists and security personnel.

AP, Reuters

Congo-Brazzaville :

RDC : Afflux de réfugiés vers le Congo-Brazzaville

Samedi 5 janvier 2019 - 13:25

<https://actualite.cd/2019/01/05/rdc-afflux-de-refugies-vers-le-congo-brazzaville>

Environ 16 000 réfugiés congolais de la RDC sont arrivés au Congo-Brazzaville. Ces déplacements massifs sont la conséquence d'affrontements meurtriers, en décembre 2018, entre les Banunu et Batende, à Yumbi, dans la province de Mai-Ndombe. Au moins cent personnes avaient été tuées et plusieurs autres blessées. La population de Yumbi a déserté la cité.

Les réfugiés sont composés essentiellement des Banunu et sont installés dans les localités de Makotipoko, Bouemba, Mopongo et Mpouya, dans le département des Plateaux, au Congo-Brazzaville.

« Il s'agit de l'afflux de réfugiés le plus important en provenance de la RDC vers le Congo, depuis près d'une décennie. En 2009, environ 130.000 personnes avaient été contraintes d'y chercher refuge en raison d'affrontements ethniques perpétrés dans l'ancienne province de l'Équateur, en RDC », explique le HCR.

A noter que le Congo Brazzaville accueille actuellement environ 60.000 réfugiés, principalement originaires de la République Centrafricaine, de la RDC et du Rwanda.

Catégorie

Zimbabwe :

Zimbabwe teachers to strike for salaries to be paid in US dollars

07 January 2019 - 15:08 By Reuters

[<https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/africa/2019-01-07-zimbabwe-teachers-to-strike-for-salaries-to-be-paid-in-us-dollars/>]

Zimbabwean teachers will go on strike from Tuesday to press for salaries to be paid in US dollars, a union said, as pressure builds on President Emmerson Mnangagwa to contain a runaway currency crisis.

Cash shortages have plunged Zimbabwe's financial system into disarray, threatening social unrest and undermining Mnangagwa's efforts to win back foreign investors who were sidelined under his predecessor Robert Mugabe.

With not enough hard currency to back up funds showing in bank accounts, the value of electronic money has plummeted, prompting businesses and civil servants to demand payment in US dollars they can withdraw.

Just over four months into Mnangagwa's contested presidency, the Zimbabwe Teachers' Union (Zimta) said its members would strike as spiralling inflation has left them unable to buy basic goods and fuel that are in short supply.

Zimbabwe MPs demand three-course meals, cars and gym facilities - reports

MPs in Zimbabwe are demanding more allowances and incentives such as three course meals for parliamentary sittings.

Government doctors have been on strike for more than a month over the same issue.

"To enable the teachers to report for work and to subsist, we demand the payment of salaries in US dollars," Zimta president Richard Gundane said in a statement dated January 6.

The government employs more than 100,000 teachers and Zimta has 44,000 members.

Acting Labour Minister July Moyo was set to meet all government unions on Monday, according to an official circular.

On Monday, police arrested 10 members of the smaller Amalgamated Rural Teachers Union of Zimbabwe who were picketing at a park in central Harare, according to a Reuters witness.

There was a heavy presence of police with water canon elsewhere in the capital.

As doctors continue their strike, Zimbabwe's public hospitals have been left short of drugs and reliant on patients to buy them.

Zimbabwe doctors halt emergency treatment after being told 'government does not print US dollars'
Doctors have effectively stopped attending to emergency cases in Zimbabwe.

Pharmacies have stopped accepting insurance policies for purchases and demand payment in dollars.

Zimbabwe is also struggling with acute shortages of fuel, forcing motorists to queue for hours.

Civil servant salaries accounted for 90% of the budget last year but Mnangagwa's government has made an ambitious pledge to cut this to 70 percent in 2019 as part of reforms aimed at boosting growth and investment.

Mnangagwa came to power in November 2017 after Mugabe was forced to resign following an army coup. He was declared president in August 2018 after a presidential vote that his main opponent says he won fraudulently.

South Africa :

South Africa pushes UN to postpone DR Congo meeting

2019-01-07 19:02

[<https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/south-africa-pushes-un-to-postpone-dr-congo-meeting-20190107>]

The UN Security Council has postponed a key meeting on the elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo, at South Africa's request, after an announcement on the results was delayed, diplomats said.

The council was due to hold a public meeting on Tuesday, which is now expected to take place on Friday, according to council diplomats.

Last Friday, a closed-door council meeting was held at France's request, but world powers failed to agree on a press statement ahead of the release of the results.

South Africa, along with Russia and China, argued strongly in favour of holding off on any action until the results were announced, diplomats said.

The election commission in Kinshasa was due to release the results on Saturday but announced that there would be a delay until later this week, without specifying a date.

South Africa, a non-permanent council member, is a leading power in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) that includes the DR Congo.

South African Ambassador Jerry Matjila told reporters on Friday that the world must "be very, very patient" while vote-counting is under way and said his government would await an announcement from the election commission.

Fears of vote-rigging

During the council meeting, France had pushed for "press elements" to be released on behalf of the council urging DR Congo authorities to respect the outcome of the vote amid fears of vote-rigging that would hand victory to the ruling party candidate.

Western powers hope sub-Saharan Africa's biggest country will see its first peaceful change of the presidency since independence in 1960.

President Joseph Kabila, in power since 2001, did not run in the elections but his ruling party has put forward former interior minister Emmanuel Ramazani Shadary as its candidate.

A total of 21 candidates are vying for the presidency, including opposition leaders Martin Fayulu and Felix Tshisekedi.

A little over half of the ballots have been counted since the December 30 polls, according to DR Congo's election commission.

South Africa's military at a crossroads

By Todd M. Johnson • 7 January 2019

[<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2019-01-07-south-africas-military-at-a-crossroads/>]

South Africa has myriad development priorities and observers are right to ask why the nation should be spending money on its military when sectors such as public education and infrastructure are also in great need of investment. While it is a question worthy of serious consideration by policymakers, a simple answer is that a robust defence capability is required of any nation with aspirations for continental leadership.

South Africa's martial traditions and military heritage run deep. This fact was fully evident at the City of Johannesburg's official Remembrance Day commemorations on 11 November 2018, which I had the honour to attend. As this was the centenary of the end of the First World War, the event was particularly poignant and South Africa's outsized contribution to that horrific conflict featured prominently.

The Remembrance Day tribute to South Africa's servicemen and women served as a welcome respite from the steady stream of disheartening news about the declining funding and diminishing capabilities of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF). The SANDF — composed of the army, air force, navy, and military health service — has faced some of the steepest declines in its budget among all government departments, with its 2018/19 allotment at just under R48-billion (around 1% of GDP) and a reduction of R5.8-billion from the year prior.

Minister of Defence and Military Veterans Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula has vocally lamented government's neglect of the defence force's budget, noting that funding of the SANDF “poses serious constraints to defence and the plan to arrest the defence decline remains unfunded”. The Chief of the South African Army, General Lindile Yam, was even more blunt when appearing before Parliament in October, warning when speaking of budget cuts that “there is a danger coming and it seems like no one is seeing it”.

A mismatch between means and ends

South Africa has myriad development priorities and observers are right to ask why the nation should be spending money on its military when sectors such as public education and infrastructure are also in great need of investment. While it is a question worthy of serious consideration by policymakers, a simple answer is that a robust defence capability is required of any nation with aspirations for continental leadership. However, there is a clear mismatch between the many tasks requested of the SANDF — primarily protection of borders, internal security and deployments in African peace operations — and its fiscal well-being.

From the comments of senior officials like Minister Mapisa-Nqakula and General Yam, to independent defence experts, the consequences of this disconnect are becoming all too clear as key military assets such as the air force's C-130 transport fleet, the navy's Valour-class frigates and the army's Ratel infantry fighting vehicles suffer the consequences of overuse and under-budgeting for maintenance.

While most South Africans understandably will associate the military with combat operations, its role in a variety of activities traditionally outside the sphere of defence may surprise observers. The navy and air force, for example, have a mandate to protect the nation's economic resources, including patrolling South Africa's abundant fishing grounds that face an onslaught of illegal fishing, which is depleting the nation's hugely valuable marine stocks.

This task requires patrolling the massive 2.4 million square kilometres that compose South Africa's offshore exclusive economic zone using an existing naval fleet that is overstretched and ill-suited to the requirements of fisheries protection. The air force, for its part, is asked to patrol the nation's waters using a handful of 80-year-old C-47 patrol aircraft that are under severe maintenance pressures.

The navy's leadership has not shied away from issuing stark warnings about the service's long-term viability. Vice Admiral Mosuwa Hlongwane, Chief of the South African Navy, said in May of 2018 that we "must think deeply and intelligently about our future because the navy sits at the crossroads where its very existence is threatened".

The SANDF performs numerous other tasks not typically associated with the military, but with a direct impact on the lives of South Africans. Its units are active in countering poaching nationwide, patrolling borders to check illegal migration, periodically deploying in high-crime areas, and in relief operations following national disasters. Most recently, SANDF engineers were dispatched to the Vaal River to identify and control sources of pollution in that key waterway.

Many of these jobs, such as policing and infrastructure maintenance, are better left to specialist agencies. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the SANDF is very much an actor in the nation's daily life. However, the significant number of "asks" from government are not being matched by budgetary resources. The outcome of this misalignment was summarised by defence analyst Guy Martin, who noted in 2017, when commenting on the regular rhythm of budget cuts, that "one does not do more with less; one does less with less".

A force to be reckoned with... to a point

Beyond the "soft" tasks so frequently undertaken by the SANDF, the need remains, of course, for the military to perform the "sharp end" operations that are the bread-and-butter of any defence force. These tasks occur outside the general public's visibility, but they are certainly no less important.

Take for instance the long-standing deployment of army and air force personnel to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The SANDF has well over 1,000 troops in the DRC, most of them part of the UN's Force Intervention Brigade, which has a unique mandate to conduct preventative combat operations. Its capability and that of support units such as the air force's Rooivalk attack helicopters — which by all accounts have performed admirably in their first combat deployment — has served for years as one of the few anchors of stability in the DRC's ever-restive eastern provinces.

Beyond the DRC, the SANDF regularly conducts peacekeeping missions to other regional hotspots such as Sudan, South Sudan, and the Central African Republic. It was in the latter country in 2013 that a small SANDF force of around 300 soldiers, most from the army's elite 1 Parachute Battalion and 5 Special Forces Regiment, deployed to protect the beleaguered government of then-President François Bozizé. This highly trained but lightly equipped force found itself serving as the only real protection for the Bozizé regime from a large rebel force known as the "Seleka". Over the course of a two-day engagement that became known as the "Battle of Bangui", the SANDF detachment fought a pitched battle against at least 3,000 Seleka, in the process suffering 13 dead and 27 wounded, but also killing hundreds of Seleka and significantly impeding their advance on the capital.

Defence expert Helmoed-Römer Heitman, whose monograph on the battle is a chilling read, concluded in the Sunday Independent in 2013 that:

“This was one of the hardest-fought actions that the SA Army has experienced, and the soldiers fought well, even outstandingly.”

However, Heitman and other analysts have also pointed to the battle as proof that declines in key capabilities — in particular, airlift capacity in the air force — severely impeded the SANDF’s ability to equip and later reinforce the Bangui detachment. Heitman succinctly captured in his study of the battle the outcome of a “do more with less” approach to defence planning.

“Do not blame the soldiers and junior leaders: they are doing their best and their best is often quite outstanding. The fighting around Bangui was a particular demonstration of that. Do not blame the generals for deploying small or under-armed forces: they can only ‘do the best with what they have’... and ‘what they have’ in terms of the number of soldiers, the type of equipment and the support capabilities is simply inadequate for the role that South Africa’s government wishes to play.”

If one is to believe the bleak prognoses on the SANDF’s future — again, it must be noted that senior ANC leaders have not shied away from these predictions — then it appears that the problems of 2013 have only become more entrenched in the intervening years.

Reportedly, the air force can only count on two serviceable C-130 transports available on any given day, a severe hindrance to any deployment or resupply operation. As for the army, Secretary for Defence Sam Gulube in early November 2018 told Parliament that budget cuts are severely impacting that service’s ability to acquire a replacement for the ageing Ratel fleet, exactly the sort of vehicle that would have proven a massive force multiplier had they been deployed in Bangui.

‘Arresting the decline’

It appears that President Cyril Ramaphosa and Minister of International Relations and Co-operation Lindiwe Sisulu (herself a former defence minister and critic of its declining budgets) are intent on crafting a reinvigorated foreign policy; this effort should be extolled.

It can also be assumed that an “Africa first” approach to diplomacy will be a foundational driver of this effort. This focus is only fitting as South Africa remains a continental economic power and one of the few African nations with genuinely continent-wide interests. However, to execute on this aspiration, it will surely call on the deployment of SANDF forces in demanding peacekeeping, crisis response and similar missions.

In order for the SANDF to effectively execute on any expansion — or even continuation — of its operational rhythm, it is essential that budgetary resources be made available in order to deploy forces with the appropriate equipment, training, and support structure. Otherwise, the already fragile condition of many frontline units and equipment will be further eroded with it becoming ever more costly to apply band-aid solutions to issues that require genuine long-term planning (such as the expensive practice of leasing transport aircraft rather than procuring new platforms to replace the overburdened C-130 fleet).

The government has already applied its mind to many of the long-term challenges facing the defence force. The 2015 Defence Review (first published in draft in 2014) serves as a highly instructive roadmap for the security challenges facing South Africa and its military in the decades ahead. It offers analytically sound proposals for dealing with a wide range of issues such as

procurement, personnel management, and future force structure. The Review also pulls no punches — its “Planning Milestone One” is labelled “Arresting the Decline” — and it provides a clear warning that further ad-hoc deployments and shifting operational priorities, if not matched by tough choices on issues such as personnel costs, will quickly lead to a rapid decay in SANDF capabilities.

The Defence Review, formally accepted by government as its plan of action, unsurprisingly calls for greater budgets in order to meet operational demands along with critical procurement needs. Nonetheless, this reality is unlikely to come to pass as proven by the continued reduction in defence force funding since the review’s publication. Furthermore, since the review, South Africa’s economy has underperformed and many other essential state institutions such as Eskom and the SABC require urgent injections of capital. So where does this leave the SANDF?

Aligning budgets with ambitions

The nation’s political leadership, as it conducts necessary exercises such as the strategic review of South Africa’s foreign policy interests, must decide what is critical for the military to do and, as important, what it shouldn’t do. Surely it must be capable of deploying on urgent crisis response missions across Africa, protecting the country’s borders from national and transnational threats, and (as there is no national coast guard) protecting the nation’s waters from the very real economic threat posed by illegal fishing. What it shouldn’t do is attempt to be a police force, with tasks such as prevention of illegal migration, cross-border smuggling, and visible policing best managed by the South African Police Service.

Beyond a necessary reduction in its operational commitments, the military also must confront its massive expenditure on personnel. The review found that well above 50% of SANDF funding went to people costs, a noted contrast to the global defence force norm of 35-40%. This burden must be lifted, but it will require politically contentious decisions such as reducing the ranks of ageing soldiers and limiting the number of costly senior officer billets.

The SANDF can continue to pretend it will meet the government’s wide-ranging demands using men and material that are stretched to breaking point. This false sense of capability will probably be reinforced by deeply dedicated SANDF personnel who will accomplish many of the objectives set by their political masters, no matter the disconnect between means and ends. However, if that roll-of-the-dice approach to defence planning is allowed to persist, the nation also must gird itself for further misfortunes such as that which occurred in Bangui in 2013.

It is understandable for South Africans to ask why government should be investing in new transport aircraft or armoured vehicles when primary schools and public hospitals are in such a distressing condition. The nation has many competing priorities and perhaps increased defence budgeting will be judged a “nice to have, but hard to justify”.

If this judgement is reached, then it is incumbent on South Africa’s policymakers to recognise the limits of the SANDF’s capabilities and consequently ask of it only that which it can reasonably achieve. If not, then the consequences in terms of the lives of South Africa’s fighting men and women will be all too evident. DM

Todd Johnson is the risk leader for a large multinational company. He has previously held roles in corporate strategy, political and partnership risk management, and in the US government as a political-military analyst. He writes here in his personal capacity.

Zambia :

Zambia Vedanta unit halts operations at underground mine

[<https://www.iol.co.za/business-report/international/zambia-vedanta-unit-halts-operations-at-underground-mine-18709344>]

International / 7 January 2019, 11:30am / Reuters

INTERNATIONAL – Zambia’s Konkola Copper Mines (KCM), majority owned by Vedanta Resources, suspended operations at its Nchanga mine following the introduction of import duty on copper concentrates, the company said.

Zambia, Africa’s No.2 copper producer, introduced new mining duties, increased royalties and plans to replace Value Added Tax (VAT) with a sales tax by April to help bring down mounting debt.

KCM said in a note to employees, seen by Reuters, that operations at the mine would be suspended from Jan. 4 due to low availability of acid as a result of rationalised operations at its Nchanga smelter.

Operations at the smelter were downsized due to low availability of concentrates after the government introduced an import duty on concentrates, KCM said.

“The introduction of 5 percent import duty on concentrates has made the smelting of imported concentrates commercially unviable,” the company said.

KCM said it needed to import concentrates in order to meet smelter capacity and blending requirements.

The Chamber of Mines said last month mining companies may lay off over 21,000 workers due to reduced capital expenditure over the next three years due to the changes.

Reuters

Angola :

Angola Might Grow 1.9 Percent, International Consultant Says

[<https://www.plenglish.com/index.php?o=rn&id=37410&SEO=angola-might-grow-1.9-percent-international-consultant-says>]

Luanda, Jan 7 (Prensa Latina) Angola might grow 1.9 percent in 2019, after three consecutive years of recession, according to the consultancy firm IHS Markit, which was quoted by local media.

The company noted that the prediction is based on the 3.7-billion-dollar deal signed in late 2018 between the Government and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which sends strong signals of political stability.

The agreement with the IMF will ease liquidity pressures on Angola's economy in a short term, said the consultancy firm, who assured that the diversification of the economy combined with the efforts to attract private investments can place the country on the path to sustainable growth.

With the three-year-long Expanded Financing Program, Angola is trying to achieve fiscal sustainability, the decrease in inflation and the promotion of a more flexible and stable exchange regime.

jg/mem/ro/gdc

Cameroun :

Cameroun: Les combattants séparatistes refusent de déposer les armes

[<https://fr.allafrica.com/stories/201901070332.html>]

Un mois après la création du comité national de désarmement, de démobilisation et de réintégration (CNDDR), des redditions n'ont véritablement pas été observées dans les régions du nord-ouest et du sud-ouest.

En mettant sur pied le comité de désarmement le 30 novembre 2018, le Président Paul Biya est passé à une étape supérieure dans la lutte pour la sécurité du Cameroun.

Une sorte de main tendue aux combattants séparatistes qui tardent à saisir cette opportunité de sortie de crise, et poursuivent leur lutte sur le terrain semant terreur et désolation.

"J'ai perdu des gens, des amis, des frères. Des familles qui n'ont plus de maison, qui vivent dans la peur, qui sont frustrées. Même moi je ne sais pas si je vais vivre. Mais je demande la paix, je ne veux plus de tout ça... Regardez cet homme qu'on a tué, qui va s'occuper de ses enfants ?", raconte Tibah kennedia, en larmes.

Le CNDDR a pour mission d'accueillir et de désarmer les ex-combattants, de collecter et de stocker les armes et munitions. Mais en un mois d'existence, le comité ne s'est pas encore véritablement déployé sur le terrain.

"En un mois vous ne pouvez pas résoudre les problèmes qui durent depuis 2016. Il faut d'abord asseoir les mécanismes pour qu'au-delà de ce qui est officiel, que l'officieux puisse faire le travail et que l'officiel ne vienne déclarer que, quand le processus a commencé à éclore. Et puis avec ce genre de processus, dites-vous bien qu'il n'est pas bon de faire du bruit ", explique Roland Ntsa, expert en questions de sécurité. Il estime que "la mise en place d'une telle initiative prend plus de temps."

Le 31 décembre 2018, lors de son adresse à la Nation, le président camerounais a rappelé que la situation n'a que trop duré.

"Si l'appel à déposer les armes que j'ai lancé reste sans réponse, les forces de défense et de sécurité recevront les instructions de les neutraliser. Je suis bien conscient, en effet, de la désolation que ces insurgés infligent aux populations de ces régions. Cette situation ne peut plus durer", a martelé le président Biya.

Nigéria :

Le président nigérian s'engage à organiser des élections libres et justes

[http://french.china.org.cn/foreign/txt/2019-01/08/content_74350119.htm]

Le président nigérian Muhammadu Buhari s'est engagé lundi à garantir des élections crédibles, libres et justes, tandis que ce pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest se prépare aux élections générales qui auraient lieu le mois prochain.

S'exprimant à Abuja au cours d'un événement politique du Congrès des progressistes (APC), le parti au pouvoir au Nigeria, M. Buhari a indiqué que les élections libres, justes et crédibles constituaient la base de la stabilité politique et de la paix d'un pays.

"Permettez-moi de réaffirmer mon engagement en faveur d'élections libres et justes. S'il est un héritage que je veux laisser derrière moi, c'est la pérennisation d'un système de gouvernement démocratique au Nigeria. Et pour que la démocratie soit pérennisée, les élections doivent être libres et justes", a déclaré le président nigérian.

La qualité du processus électoral dans le pays le plus peuplé d'Afrique n'a cessé de s'améliorer depuis 2015, et les problèmes dans ce domaine sont de moins en moins nombreux, a-t-il affirmé.

"Nous avons insisté pour que tous les votes comptent, et nous avons maintenu une politique de non-ingérence dans les élections. Depuis 2015, l'INEC (Commission électorale nationale indépendante) a réussi à organiser des élections justes et crédibles dans 195 circonscriptions électorales. Ces élections ont été qualitativement supérieures à toutes les élections jadis organisées dans le pays", a-t-il ajouté.

M. Buhari brigue un second mandat présidentiel aux prochaines élections générales du 16 février, en dépit des doutes qui planent sur l'état de santé et sur les capacités de cet homme de 76 ans à diriger la plus grande économie d'Afrique.

Les élections générales permettront également d'élire les membres de l'Assemblée nationale, outre le chef de l'Etat nigérian.

Au total, 91 partis politiques seront officiellement en lice, et 73 candidats présidentiels s'affronteront dans les élections générales de février. F

Suivez [China.org.cn](http://china.org.cn) sur Twitter et Facebook pour rejoindre la conversation.

Source: Agence de presse Xinhua

TCHAD :

La Libye lance des mandats d'arrêt contre 22 rebelles tchadiens

[<https://www.journaldutchad.com/la-libye-lance-des-mandats-darret-contre-22-rebelles-tchadiens/>]
Publié le 07.01.2019 à 13h29 par journaldutchad.com

Le pays a également émis des mandats d'arrêt contre neuf soudanais et six Libyens. Ceux-ci sont accusés d'avoir attaqué des installations pétrolières libyennes.

Au total, c'est 37 mandats d'arrêt qui ont été émis par le gouvernement libyen. Ces mandats ont été lancés à contre 22 rebelles tchadiens, neuf rebelles soudanais et six rebelles libyens. Il leur est reprochée, leur implication dans des attaques contre des installations pétrolières dans l'est libyen en 2018 et contre la base aérienne de Tamenhant, à 500 km au sud de la capitale, Tripoli, qui avait fait plus de 140 morts en 2017.

Toutefois, le communiqué annonçant ces mandats d'arrêt, précise que les Libyens mis en cause dans cette affaire n'ont pas agi eux-mêmes. Ils « ont fait appel à des éléments des oppositions soudanaise et tchadienne » pour perpétrer ces attaques. En résumé, se sont eux les « cerveaux » de l'affaire. Les autres sont juste des exécutants.

Toujours selon ce communiqué, plusieurs chefs rebelles tchadiens seraient présents dans le sud de la Libye. Donc le contact entre les Libyens et eux est facile.

Notons également que, Depuis leur émission, des copies de ces mandats d'arrêts circulent sur les médias et réseaux sociaux.

MAROC :

Terrorisme: le Danemark extradite un islamiste radical au Maroc

Par H24info -

7 janvier 2019 à 19:18

[<https://www.h24info.ma/actu/terrorisme-le-danemark-extradite-un-islamiste-radical-au-maroc/>]

Les autorités danoises ont annoncé l'extradition d'un citoyen marocain, Saïd Mansour, vers le Maroc, qui attendait son expulsion du pays après avoir été condamné en 2016 à quatre ans de prison pour avoir affiché son soutien à Al-Qaïda.

Le Danemark ne veut plus des islamistes affiliés à des organisations classées terroristes, nous informe Akhbar Al Yaoum dans sa livraison du lundi 7 janvier 2019. L'homme qui a passé 4 ans dans les prisons danoises a été déchu de sa nationalité pour infraction au Code pénal. Saïd Mansour, 58 ans, a immigré au Danemark en 1984. Il est le père de cinq enfants et vit grâce aux services sociaux depuis deux décennies.

Une mesure nouvelle et actée par la nouvelle loi antiterroriste en vigueur au pays scandinave et a été validée par la Cour suprême danoise, il y a deux ans. «Je suis très satisfait d'avoir livré Saïd Mansour au Maroc», a déclaré le premier ministre danois, Lars Luka Rasmussen. «Nous envoyons un signal clair: les étrangers qui portent atteinte à nos valeurs et promeuvent le terrorisme n'ont pas leur place dans notre société», a-t-il ajouté.

Une décision qui n'est pas du goût de l'avocat de l'homme, jugé pour terrorisme. Eagle Strand, l'avocat de Mansour a déclaré à la chaîne TV2 qu'il n'a pas été informé avant l'arrivée de son client au Maroc. La ministre danoise de l'Immigration et de l'Intégration, Inger Stoiberg, a confirmé que Rabat avait donné des garanties à Copenhague sur la sécurité de Mansour.

Nouvelle découverte de gaz au Maroc

Par LE SITEINFO [<https://www.lesiteinfo.com/maroc/nouvelle-decouverte-de-gaz-au-maroc/>]

- 7 janvier 2019 à 18 h 57

La société pétrolière britannique Sound Energy vient d'annoncer, ce lundi 7 janvier, la découverte de nouvelles traces de gaz dans son puits d'exploration TE-10 situé sur le permis de recherche Tendirara, dans la région de l'Oriental.

“La quantification de la ressource globale est en cours et nécessitera une analyse globale des parois et une évaluation plus poussée”, affirme la compagnie.

Rappelons que l'explorateur gazier britannique a récemment signé un nouvel accord pétrolier avec le Maroc. C'est la région de l'Oriental (Tendirara et Matarka) qui est concernée pour une période de 8 ans.

Cet accord avait été signé par l'Office marocain des hydrocarbures et des mines (ONHYM), le ministère de l'Energie et celui de l'Economie. Les deux concessions s'étendent sur une superficie de 14.500 km².

Sound Energy détient 47,5% des deux concessions contre 27,5% pour son partenaire Schlumberger et 25% pour l'ONHYM.

La société britannique avait installé en juillet dernier un forage à Tendrara après confirmation de la présence d'importants gisements de gaz naturel.

S.L.