

AFRICA : 3 MARS 2020 : [Uganda / Gen. Tumukunde declare ses ambitions presidentielles | Le Burundi débute une exploitation minière de Coltan à NTEGA | La RDC va ouvrir une Ambassade à Jérusalem | CASES COVID-19 : Algeria, Tunisie, Sénégal, Nigeria | Kemi Seba expulsé du Sénégal | Nile Dam: Ethiopia calls US view - totally unacceptable - | China-Africa cooperation to yield more results through Belt and Road Initiative]

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IMAGES : Province Kirundo | mediacongo.net | Bloomberg | newvision.co.ug | RT | beninwebtv.com | vir.com.vn | globalconstructionreview.com

BURUNDI :

Burundi : Début de l'exploitation minière de Coltan à NTEGA / KIRUNDO

<http://burundi-agnews.org/economie/burundi-debut-de-lexploitation-miniere-de-coltan-a-ntega-kirundo/>

ECONOMIE – KIRUNDO (Commune NTEGA) [<http://burundi-agnews.org/kirundo>], Mardi 3 Mars 2020 – M. NANKWAHOMBA Melchior, gouverneur de la province KIRUNDO, a reçu la délégation présidentielle du Burundi. Aujourd'hui, S.E. NKURUNZIZA Pierre, le très populaire Président Africain du Burundi [<http://burundi-agnews.org/TDC> ; <http://burundi-agnews.org/inaugurations>] devait lancer les débuts des activités de l'exploitation minière industrielle de la Colombo Tantalite (COLTAN) au site de BUVYUKANA, en colline GISITWE. Ainsi, après la coupure du ruban, S.E. NKURUNZIZA a eu droit à une visite guidée du site.

La société exploitante est la NTEGA MINING BURUNDI S.M. L'Etat possède 15% de son capital. Elle prévoit extraire 2.5 Millions de tonnes des minerais sur 5.340 hectares. La cérémonie d'inauguration des travaux a eu lieu au stade de NTEGA devant un bon millier de citoyens locaux et de nombreuses autorités gouvernementales, provinciales et communales.

TANZANIA :

Tanzania braces for repossession of undeveloped sisal plantations

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-03/03/c_138840357.htm

Source: Xinhua| 2020-03-03 23:18:01|Editor: huaxia

DAR ES SALAAM, March 3 (Xinhua) -- Tanzanian Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa on Tuesday said the government will audit all sisal plantations with a view to identifying undeveloped plantations and repossess them.

"After the auditing, the government will reclaim all undeveloped sisal plantations from investors and give them to farmers for growing the cash crop," Majaliwa told public rallies at Segera and Kabuku on his six-day official visit to Tanga region.

Majaliwa said the repossession of the undeveloped sisal plantations was part of the government's strategy to revive production of the crop.

At the start of his visit to Tanga region on Sunday, Majaliwa announced government plans to revive production of sisal to enable the crop to contribute to the national economy.

Majaliwa directed all district commissioners in the region to oversee the revival of the crop without delay.

Majaliwa appealed to large investors in the sisal industry to produce high quality sisal seeds in bulk and distribute them to sisal growers.

Tanga region was leading in Tanzania in the production of sisal but production of the crop had deteriorated in recent years due to various reasons, including poor management of the sisal industry.

The sisal industry in Tanzania employed over 100,000 people, with a total production of about 40,000 tonnes annually from the 1970s to 1980s but poor management by the Tanzania Sisal Board led to the collapse of the industry.

In August 2019, the government of Tanzania annulled possession of 15,738 hectares of sisal plantations from a private investor after the investor had failed to observe conditions for the development of the farms.

In August 2017, President John Magufuli ordered repossession of all farms that have remained idle for long time. Enditem

France lists areas of investment interest in Tanzania

<https://www.thecitizen.co.tz/news/1840340-5476464-afpx95/index.html>

Tuesday March 3 2020

By Hellen Nachilongo @musanachi60 hnachilongo@tz.nationmedia.com

RWANDA :

The data and research on geology and mining in Rwanda, which was recorded during the colonial era by Belgium, have been digitised and returned to Kigali.

<https://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/belgium-hands-back-colonial-era-mining-data-rwanda>

The move will support Rwanda's mineral exploration efforts, according to Francis Gatare, the Chief Executive Officer of Rwanda Mines, Petroleum & Gas Board (RMB).

The 16 terabyte files were being stored at the Royal Museum for Central Africa and are critical to identifying areas where mineral explorations were conducted during the colonial era.

Gatare said the digital data will also facilitate Rwanda's search for new mineral prospects.

"This will back exploration which government has embarked on to discover and know the status of minerals we have in Rwanda, their location and quantities," he said.

Mining in Rwanda started in 1934 in Rutongo, meaning the country's colonial masters, Belgium, have kept geology and mining data for 86 years.

“We signed an agreement in 2008 for the files transfer...it has taken over a year to digitize the files. They are very useful because professional mining requires to know location of mineral deposits and their quantities,” Gatare stated.

Professionalising the sector

As part of the efforts to professionalise the sector, Gatare said that the first 120 graduates from the School of Geology and Mining were equipped with skills in minerals exploration.

Over the next five years, the country plans to train more than 500 experts in the mining sector, Gatare disclosed.

“This is the step to shift from artisanal to professional mining. But it requires adequate investments in mining and environmentally friendly techniques for professional mining,” he said.

Rwanda is also keen on diversifying mineral exports to shore-up foreign exchange revenues and bridge the trade deficit.

“We have prospects for new minerals in Rwanda. We are also looking at adding value to the discovered minerals instead of exporting them in their raw form and this will increase jobs to locals,” Gatare added.

Among the newly explored minerals include gemstones, copper, cobalt, nickel, iron, lithium and other rare earth minerals.

With digitised data, the government is confident it will attract more investments in the mining sector, especial in the exploration and processing of lithium.

Studies have indicated that Rwamagana, Nyanza and Muhanga have the potential for lithium metal deposits.

Lithium is used as raw materials to produce remote car locks, a watch, camera, laser pointer, MP3 players, hearing aids, calculators or encountered thermometers, battery backup systems in computers, remote control toys as well as bleaching and sanitation products, agrochemicals, aluminium alloys, cement and concrete additives, dyes and pigments, and pharmaceuticals.

Gatare also disclosed that government plans to establish a Fund to incentivise investors in mineral exploration.

Benoît Ryelandt, the Ambassador of Belgium to Rwanda said that bilateral cooperation between Rwanda and Belgium has led to the transfer of colonial-era minerals data.

“It is a major contribution to share the data on geology and mining we have. It took long because it can’t take a week or even a month. It is a long process since it is huge quantity of data that were in different formats,” he said.

The Chairperson of Rwanda Mining Association, Jean Malick Kalima, said the data will help them to know minerals deposits that were explored during the colonial era and use it new explorations.

“We expect more data related to geology and mining they recorded in this period,” he said.

RDC CONGO :

Joseph Kabila toujours optimiste sur la coalition FCC-CACH
<https://www.digitalcongo.net/article/5e567cc90de71000047cffcc/>

Kinshasa 26-02-2020 Politique - L'ancien chef de l'Etat a reçu, ces derniers jours, un nombre important d'émissaires dans sa ferme de Kingakati, dans la périphérie Est de la capitale congolaise. L'ex-Rais a notamment évoqué avec ses hôtes la marche de deux plateformes au pouvoir (FCC-CACH).

Plusieurs personnalités internationales ont été reçues par l'ancien président congolais, Joseph Kabila, ces derniers temps. La dernière en date, c'est Smaïl Chergui, commissaire de la Commission de l'Union africaine pour la paix et la sécurité. Le 24 février dernier, Joseph Kabila s'est entretenu avec lui notamment sur l'évolution de la situation en RDC et dans la région des Grands lacs. Il était également question d'évoquer la situation sécuritaire avec l'offensive lancée fin octobre 2019 contre les groupes armés, mais aussi les initiatives de dialogue lancées par Félix Tshisekedi dans la sous-région.

Mais d'après des sources proches de ACTUALITE.CD, l'émissaire de l'Union africaine et l'ancien président de la République ont échangé aussi sur la santé de la coalition que le Front Commun pour le Congo (FCC) et Cap pour le Changement (CACH). « Joseph Kabila, détendu, a réitéré face à son hôte sa détermination à faire réussir les initiatives menées dans cette coalition pour la paix, la sécurité et le développement. », rapporte ACTUALITE.CD. Une autre source proche du FCC note que l'ancien chef de l'Etat reste toujours optimiste quant à la coalition FCC-CACH malgré les soubresauts.

Toujours au mois de février, Peter Pham avait également échangé avec Joseph Kabila. Les deux hommes avaient discuté notamment sur « les obstacles qui entravent la paix, la prospérité et l'état de droit ». Mais en dehors des hôtes étrangers, Joseph Kabila a aussi reçu une délégation de la communauté katangaise faisant partie de la Coordination de l'Espace Katanga (COEKA). Ces membres s'étaient réunis autour de l'ancien président Joseph Kabila, à l'occasion d'une cérémonie d'échange des vœux. Au cours de cette cérémonie, le Président de la République honoraire a exhorté ses frères et sœurs à travailler de concert avec d'autres communautés du pays pour le développement harmonieux de la République démocratique du Congo. Dido Nsapu

AIPAC : bientôt un ambassadeur de la RDC à Jérusalem (F. Tshisekedi)
02.03.2020, https://www.mediacongo.net/article-actualite-64743_aipac_bientot_un_ambassadeur_de_la_rdc_a_jerusalem_f_tshisekedi.html

Le chef de l'Etat congolais, Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi est déterminé à renforcer les liens économiques et diplomatiques entre son pays, la RDC, l'Etat d'Israël. Il a partagé sa vision, ce dimanche 1er mars 2020, aux membres de l'American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC).

Après plus de 20 ans sans une représentation au niveau adéquat, Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi a, avant tout, annoncé la nomination prochaine d'un ambassadeur extraordinaire et plénipotentiaire auprès de

l'Etat d'Israël. « Les relations entre mon pays Israël sont restées longtemps en léthargie. Nous avons pourtant d'énormes domaines de convergence, d'intérêts sur le plan sécuritaire, économique, culturelle et scientifique ».

À l'occasion de son discours devant la communauté juive des États-Unis (AIPAC), le président de la république a notamment cité en exemple Israël comme « un pays qui a réussi un développement très rapide et peut servir d'exemple à la RDC dans sa lutte contre la corruption et le blanchiment d'argent ». « Sur le plan sécuritaire, les défis nouveaux liés à la lutte contre le financement du terrorisme et le blanchiment des capitaux ainsi que la lutte contre la cyber criminalité nous donnent l'obligation de renforcer nos liens pour des objectifs partagés », a précisé le chef de l'Etat.

Ensuite, il a appelé à la mise en place d'une section économique animée par un personnel de haut niveau pour promouvoir les relations économiques entre les deux Etats. Il a aussi invité les investisseurs juifs à se rendre en RDC.

« L'expérience et le savoir-faire d'Israël dans les domaines de l'agriculture, des sciences et technologies, ont tous leur place dans mon pays qui s'étend sur 2 345 410 km² avec plus de 85 millions d'habitants mais il n'exploite encore que 10 % de ses 120 millions d'hectares de terres arables est réglable et une partie infinitésimal de ses ressources évaluées (mines) à plus de 24.000 milliards de dollars », a-t-il déclaré.

Il envisage, dans ce sens, l'ouverture prochaine d'une représentation commerciale congolaise à Jérusalem.

« Notre Ambassade étant installée à Tel Aviv, je ne trouve aucun inconvénient que la section économique soit installée dans la ville bénie de Jérusalem », a-t-il déclaré sous les ovations de la communauté. « J'invite Israël à accroître sa présence diplomatique et économique dans mon pays à la dimension du potentiel qu'offre la relation entre nos deux états et nos deux peuples », a-t-il rajouté.

Raffermissment de nos relations spirituelles

Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi désire tisser avec Israël des liens forts et une alliance dans laquelle son pays sera une bénédiction pour la nation d'Israel selon la promesse de l'Eternel à Abraham écrite dans Genèse 12 verset 3 qui dit : « je bénirai ceux qui te béniront ».

Il s'agit pour lui d'un processus qu'il réaffirme solennellement et qui se renforcera à la mesure de la consolidation de l'amitié israélo-congolaise et des intérêts réciproques.

Le chef de l'Etat a, dès lors, invité à Kinshasa le Grand Rabin Albert Guigui « pour le raffermissment de de nos relations spirituelles » et a, enfin, promis de se rendre en Israël, au courant de cette année, dans l'objectif de renforcer les relations bilatérales..

Le président Tshisekedi a aussi déclaré qu'il était favorable à la politique américaine du président Trump de rapprochement d'Israël avec la Palestine.

Pour rappel, l'American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) est un lobby juif américain puissant qui exerce une influence déterminante sur les décisions gouvernementales de politique étrangère à Washington.

Fort de 100 000 membres, AIPAC organise chaque année une conférence qui se veut être un rassemblement pro-Israélien tenant lieu de baromètre des relations entre la communauté juive américaine et Israël.

Si la communauté juive et une solide majorité d'américains de tous bords adhèrent à la vision de l'AIPAC, cette rencontre annuelle est un « must be » pour les politiques et décideurs de certains pays du monde.

Top Congo / Zoom Eco / MCP, via mediacongo.

RDC: Soutien au plan de Trump pour le Proche-Orient, Tshisekedi en désaccord avec l'UA
<https://www.politico.cd/en-clair/2020/03/02/rdc-soutien-au-plan-de-trump-pour-le-proche-orient-felix-tshisekedi-en-desaccord-avec-lua.html/55014/>

1er vice-président de l'Union africaine, le président Félix Tshisekedi a pourtant pris une décision allant totalement à l'encontre de la position de l'organisation africaine en soutenant le plan controversé du président américain Donald Trump pour le Proche-Orient.

By La Rédaction / 2 mars 2020

Dans son mot à l'occasion du forum AIPAC ce dimanche 01 Mars à Washington aux USA, le président Tshisekedi a dit soutenir le plan de paix du Président Trump pour résoudre le conflit en Israël et Palestine.

“Nous remercions, du haut de ce forum, les Etats-Unis d'Amérique, qui a toujours été une bénédiction pour Israël. À cet égard, nous soutenons le plan du président Donald Trump, en faveur du retour à une paix durable et la coexistence pacifique entre les deux Etats, Israël et la Palestine”, a dit le président de la République.

Félix Tshisekedi a officiellement été désigné par ses pairs comme 1er vice-président de l'Union africaine. Or, les chefs d'Etat africains réunis le 9 février 2020 à l'occasion du sommet de l'Union africaine à Addis Abeba, en Ethiopie, ont rejeté le projet du président américain Donald Trump pour mettre un terme au conflit israélo-palestinien. Ils ont estimé estimant que ce plan représente “une énième violation des multiples résolutions” des Nations unies et de l'UA.

Le nouveau président de l'UA, le chef de l'Etat sud-africain Cyril Ramaphosa, a même comparé le plan américain au régime d'apartheid. “Cela m'a rappelé la terrible histoire que nous avons traversée en Afrique du Sud”, a déclaré M. Ramaphosa, qui a succédé dimanche à la tête de l'organisation au président égyptien Abdel Fattah al-Sissi.

“La cause palestinienne sera toujours dans les coeurs et dans les esprits du peuple d'Afrique”, a déclaré M. Sissi à l'ouverture du sommet de l'UA à Addis Abeba.

Il sied de noter que depuis son accession à la présidence en RDC, Félix Tshisekedi a noué un partenariat privilégié avec l'administration Trump, alliée traditionnelle du régime Israélien. Notons par ailleurs que le plan du président Donald Trump pour un règlement du conflit israélo-palestinien, dévoilé le 28 janvier, a été fustigé par les Palestiniens, qui accusent Washington d'avoir accouché d'un projet trop favorable à l'Etat hébreu.

Ce plan promet à Israël la souveraineté totale sur Jérusalem, y compris Jérusalem-Est occupé et annexé, ainsi que sur une grande partie de la Cisjordanie, également occupée par l'Etat hébreu depuis 1967, dont la vallée du Jourdain, qui deviendrait ainsi sa nouvelle frontière orientale.

Le projet, qui prévoit aussi la création d'un Etat palestinien démilitarisé sur seulement une partie de la Cisjordanie et dans la bande de Gaza, est une "énième violation des multiples résolutions des Nations unies et de l'Union africaine", a soutenu le président de la Commission de l'UA, Moussa Faki. M. Faki a fustigé un plan a été "élaboré en dehors de toute consultation internationale".

Selon l'Orient le Jour, le président palestinien Mahmoud Abbas, régulièrement invité aux sommets de l'UA, ne s'est pas déplacé à Addis Abeba dimanche, quelques jour avant une visite prévue à l'ONU dans l'espoir d'y contrer le plan de M. Trump.

M. Abbas était toutefois représenté par son Premier ministre Mohammad Chtayyeh, qui avait dénoncé un "plan unilatéral" et "sans légitimité", note le magazine l'Orient, le Jour.

Thierry Mfundu

**** L'AFRIQUE DU SUD ****

SOUTH AFRICA :

Ramaphosa delivers sobering message on South Africa's finances

Ryan Brothwell 2 March 2020

<https://businesstech.co.za/news/business/378297/ramaphosa-delivers-sobering-message-on-south-africas-finances/>

Ramaphosa delivers sobering message on South Africa's finances

Ryan Brothwell 2 March 2020

Finance minister Tito Mboweni's budget presents a sobering assessment of the state of South Africa's economy, says president Cyril Ramaphosa.

Writing in his weekly open letter to the public, Ramaphosa said that the figures make it plain that unless the country acts to turn things around, there will be even more difficult times ahead.

"Put simply, we are spending far more than we are earning.

"As a result, we are borrowing more and more, and the cost of servicing that debt is rising. In fact, debt service costs are now the fastest-growing area of expenditure. We spend more on debt repayments than we do on health; only education and social development get more.

"This position is precarious and unsustainable. We need to make significant changes and we need to make them now," the president said.

Why South Africa is in trouble

Ramaphosa said that there are several reasons for the country's current position.

“Our economy has not grown much over the last decade, mainly due to the 2008 global financial crisis and a decline in demand for the minerals that we export.

“As a result, revenue collection has been weak and we have had to borrow more to sustain spending on development, infrastructure and wages. At the same time, state capture and corruption has affected governance, operational effectiveness and financial sustainability at several public institutions, including state-owned enterprises (SOEs).”

He added that efforts over the last two years to revive the economy and rebuild institutions have now been undermined by the electricity crisis, further constraining growth and placing an additional burden on public finances.

“Our priorities in this budget therefore are to put the economy back on a path of growth, constrain public spending and stabilise our debt,” he said.

Wage bill

Ramaphosa said that over the next three years, the government expects to achieve savings of around R261 billion by cutting the budgets of several departments and reducing the rate at which the public service wage bill increases.

At the same time, Ramaphosa said the government will need to spend more to support the restructuring of SOEs like Eskom and SAA.

A large part of the savings will come from reducing the rate at which our wage bill grows, he said.

“Our approach is not to dramatically cut the size of the public service, but to examine the rate at which wages grow. Public service wages have on average increased at a much higher rate than inflation over many years, and we need to fix this if we are to get public finances under control.

“This also applies to the management of people’s personal finances, where if any expenditure item that rises at a rate more than inflation – be it electricity tariffs, mobile tariffs or food – will always put any individual person’s budget and finances under strain and out of kilter.”

Ramaphosa noted that the wage bill remains the largest component of spending by economic classification.

“Growth in the wage bill has begun crowding out spending on capital projects for future growth and items that are critical for service delivery.

“The public service wage bill is by no means the only area where we are cutting costs. I have decided that there will be no increase in the salaries of senior public office bearers this year.

“This follows a reduction in benefits stemming from changes to the Ministerial Handbook. We will publish a new law this year introducing a remuneration framework for public entities and state owned companies to prevent excessive pay for board members and executives,” he said.

BOTSWANA :

Botswana, Zimbabwe relations on wildlife conversations blossom - Minister Ndlovu
by Stephen Jakes
02 Mar 2020
<https://bulawayo24.com/index-id-news-sc-national-byo-180448.html>

Minister of Environment Climate, Tourism and Hospitality Mangaliso Nqobizitha Ndlovu has hailed the Bi National Commission engagement between Botswana and Zimbabwe which saw the two countries elevate discussions on key issues to a higher level.

He said as neighbours they have been encouraged by the brotherly (sisterly) approach to even some potentially contentious issues.

"Coming from Plumtree, I'm aware of the agonies of most farmers there whose cattle are sometimes shot should they stray to the neighbor's side; granted they have EU beef markets to maintain hence their strict monitoring of FMD and anthrax diseases but also for our farmers these cattle are life savings so a balance had to be struck and the level of collaboration agreed to be followed is encouraging," Ndlovu said.

"A key issue that I'd like to hear views from across the divide has to do with Wildlife conservation. As a country we have invested so much in wildlife, indeed we have put aside huge tracks of land, some of it arable, for wildlife. With an estimated total land area of 39 million hectares, approximately 25% of this is set aside for wildlife between National Parks and private players."

Ndlovu said it therefore isn't right in my view that as SADC, home to almost 85% of the big 5 world population.

"we have not escalated the discussions around wildlife economy. God forbid we have not evaluated the value of our wildlife nor taken steps to do Natural Capital/Asset Accounting for us to appreciate what we have," he said.

"I have observed how the Blue Economy concept is gradually gaining momentum while us as landlocked countries fail to tap into this key resource. As I exchanged views with my Botswana counterpart on these issues we are agreed that more needs to be done for communities particularly those living with and adjacent to wildlife so that they can directly benefit from their natural resources. It therefore gives rise to yet another contentious issue; that of hunting as a sustainable conservation method. I appreciate the divergent views on this but I also encourage us all to research more and establish facts before emotions direct an otherwise objective discussion topic."

"That said, we will be reviewing the structure of CAMPFIRE with a view of fully empowering communities so that they can determine how the proceeds are deployed and where; we will also take steps to initiate the process of evaluating our natural assets, which will of course include our forests; with the potential of establishing our carbon sequestration rate and thus credits that are tradable. "

"Easier said than done some may say, but as long as it is doable it has to be done...."

ZIMBABWE :

Zimbabwe's Mnangagwa 'offered safe exit passage' – Report

<https://www.thezimbabweemail.com/main/zimbabwe-mnangagwa-offered-safe-exit-passage/>
March 1, 2020

HARARE – President Emmerson Mnangagwa's allies are considering finding a safe haven for him in Western Asian countries when he exits the Presidential seat, Professor Jonathan Moyo says.

Writing on Twitter on Sunday Moyo said the President's allies were not satisfied with the safety of the Mnangagwa when he resigns after he has been pressured by the military to do so.

Said Moyo, "As the #KwekweAgreement takes root with the focus shifting on the manner and timing of Mnangagwa's exit, his influential clansmen and cartelists now fear that their godfather might not be safe in Zimbabwe and are hard pressed to find a Singapore for him with eyes on Qatar and Abu Dhabi!"

Recently Prof Moyo revealed that Mnangagwa was warming up to the proposal by the army that he resigns but demanded a Presidential peck to accompany his resignation.

Moyo's statements come almost a year after a prominent clergyman Apostle Dr James Madzimore issued a chilling warning that a Southern African leader will be forced to resign because of the economic turmoil that is taking place in that country.

In a veiled a prophecy delivered in riddles but that clearly describes Zimbabwe Madzimore said, "This is a night dream given to me by the Lord on 24 April 2019 at 0048hrs. This is a very sensitive Prophecy and I will share it with you because I want you to parable concerning to Prophecy. I will say it in a parable because of its sensitivity.

"I had a vision where I saw those who live in the fortresses successfully pushing for the removal of a King of a particular Kingdom in Southern Africa. The King did not contest his peaceful removal after a second attempt on his life via an explosive.

"But as he stepped down, he suggested that the speaker of parliament oversee the transition for the sake of stability in that Kingdom.

"I even saw the opposition leader in that nation taking that King who had been removed from the scene taking him to sit far away because he had failed to manage the affairs of the Kingdom.

"But what I saw immediately after the King has peacefully vacated his throne there was serious misunderstanding on who was supposed to take over. I saw people now gathering in small groups discussing the way forward and each group had their own leader that they wanted to take over.

"Then as this was happening God became to reveal to me that the situation became chaotic and a civil war was already simmering in the Kingdom.

"I began to run away from the chaos and pending civil war. When we were trying to cross over to the other side we realised that those who live in the fortified cities had already taken over the borders and were confiscating travel documents from every citizen."

Source – Byo24

ZAMBIA :

Zambia Awards China Railway \$825 Million Deal for Line Upgrades

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-03-03/zambia-awards-china-railway-825-million-deal-for-line-upgrades>

Zambia signed an \$825 million contract with a China Railway Construction Corp. unit to upgrade tracks in the south of the country, the company

MALAWI :

Cannabis could become Malawi's main source of foreign exchange

<http://venturesafrica.com/cannabis-could-become-malawis-main-source-of-foreign-exchange/>

On Thursday the 27th of February 2020, the Malawian parliament passed a bill into law that legalised the cultivation of cannabis in the country for medical and industrial use. This means that cannabis, also called Marijuana, would be legally cultivated for the production of medicines and hemp fibres in the industry.

Responding to an interview, Chauncy Jere, Director of Ikaros Africa and spokesman for Hemp Association of Malawi said: "there's no denying that cannabis would be a lucrative industry and its demand is huge." He further stated that the event forms "right steps to move the country's economy forward."

The bill was sponsored in the parliament by Kondwani Nankhumwa, the Minister of Agriculture. With this new passage, the Southern African country joins a league of other African countries that have taken conscious steps to tap into the economic potentials of the plant. Some of these countries have either relaxed the laws that criminalise the use of the plant or have completely legalised the cultivation of the plant. They include Lesotho, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and Morocco.

This decision is also important because it will help the Malawian economy to bounce back from the contraction experienced in tobacco export – its main foreign earner – between 2017 to 2019. The tobacco industry had experienced a decline in demands as major players like British Tobacco and Altria gave up about 20 percent of their market value. This new law would be placing the plant as a key foreign earner for Malawi.

Cannabis plants have been grown since at least the 3rd millennium BCE. It is mostly used for recreation or as a medicinal drug. In 2013, it was estimated that about 2.7 percent to 4.9 percent of the global population (128 and 232 million people between the ages of 15 and 60) consumed.

Recognised by its consumers and tourists as the Malawian Gold, Cannabis grows more often on its own. It also serves as a source of employment for a large percentage of women and children who cultivate in rural areas, in addition to the men who handle the marketing of the crop.

Malawi is one of the largest producers of cannabis in Southern Africa. The Country has some of the best species of cannabis in the world which makes it out-play marijuana grown in other countries in terms of sales and relevance. Malawian cannabis has now flooded the marijuana markets in Kenya, Tanzania, and many other locales.

Cannabis is also used for spiritual purposes in Malawi. For years now, Malawi's large Rastafarian community has been calling for the legalisation of the cultivation, supply and possession of marijuana. This is because smoking the plant is seen as a key tenet of the Rastafari movement. However, this new law does not state whether it can accommodate their demands.

NAMIBIA :

Namibia improves slightly as attractive mining destination

<https://neweralive.na/posts/namibia-improves-slightly-as-attractive-mining-destination>

The just-released 2019 Fraser Institute survey of Mining Companies indicates a slight improvement in Namibia as an attractive mining jurisdiction. However, a poor survey response rate calls into question the validity of the latest rating, which may have skewed perceptions due to the low number of respondents.

A statement from the Chamber of Mines of Namibia explains that in measuring the overall attractiveness of a country, the Fraser Institute report makes use of three indicators. The first is the Investment Attractiveness Index. This index is an overall measure of a country's competitiveness and combines the Policy Perception Index and the Best Practices Index. The former accounts for the opinions of mining managers and CEOs on all facets of the policy environment with which they are familiar.

This includes regulations, licencing, political stability, geological database, infrastructure, mining tax regime, among others. The Best Practices Index accounts for perceptions of a country's mineral potential, assuming a world-class regulatory environment.

Namibia's score on the Investment Attractiveness Index improved from 56.6 in 2018 to 58.22 in 2019. This improvement was boosted by the Policy Perception Index that improved from 80.71 in 2018 to 87.22 in 2019, ranking as the most favourable jurisdiction in Africa on this index. The report cites an improvement in the availability of labour and skills; decreased concern with regard to socio-economic and community development conditions, regulatory duplication and inconsistencies, as well as the functioning of the legal system. The Policy Perception Index and the Best Practice Mineral Index carry a weighting of 40% and 60%, respectively. Investors generally consider a country/jurisdiction's resource potential to be more important than the policy environment hence the higher weighting for the latter.

Despite the perceived improvement in the above policy elements, it is worth noting the number of participants and the contextual realities of the policy environment. Firstly, survey responses received from Namibia were between 5 and 9. The poor response rate calls into question the validity of these scores as there were only a handful of companies that participated, which may have skewed perceptions. The validity is of further concern, generally noting poor policy environment in 2019.

This was created by the highly unfavourable tax proposal to disallow the deductibility of royalties for non-diamond mining companies, the introduction of consumption levies that are increasing the costs of doing business, among a general feeling of uncertainty with regard to major policy proposals. While these issues are close to being resolved, Namibia is likely to have scored lower on the Policy Perception Index if there were a greater number of participants.

Namibia's Best Practice Mineral Potential Index dropped from 40.63 in 2018 to 38.89 in 2019, which has gradually been declining over the years. While this is not confirmed, it is likely that this is due to the perceived improvement in mineral potential of other jurisdictions relative to Namibia.

UGANDA :

Gen. Tumukunde declares presidential ambition

By Admin / Added 3rd March 2020 05:14 PM

https://www.newvision.co.ug/new_vision/news/1515905/tumukunde-vying-presidency

So far, only Robert Kyagulanyi has indicated that he will be contesting for presidency, which puts the number of Presidential contestants to two.

Reports this evening indicate that former security minister Lt. Gen. Henry Tumukunde has gone to the electoral commission to make arrangements to start consultations ahead of the general elections.

Gen. Tumukunde is reportedly planning to contest for the presidency. According to family members, Tumukunde has been making preparations to content for the presidency in the forthcoming general elections.

So far, only Robert Kyagulanyi has indicated that he will be contesting for the presidency, which puts the number of Presidential contestants to two.

However, it is not yet known if Tumukunde is going to vie under NRM or as an independent. The NRM has already picked President Yoweri Museveni as their sole candidate, although Museveni has not indicated whether he will contest or not.

A constitutional amendment in 2018 gave Museveni a leeway to contest for the presidency at whatever age.

Who is Gen. Henry Tumukunde?

He had kept a low profile since his sacking, only to turn up recently and announce that he was seeking the mayoral seat in Kampala.

Henry Tumukunde is a retired senior military officer of the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF). He was the Minister of National Security in the Cabinet of Uganda.

He was appointed to that position on 6 June 2016. On 4 March 2018, he was relieved of his duties in a cabinet reshuffle.

A lawyer, Tumukunde also served as the army's chief of personnel and administration, chief of military intelligence as well as serving as the commanding officer of the UPDF Fourth Division, based in Gulu in northern Uganda.

He also served as the director-general of the Internal Security Organisation and a Member of Parliament representing the Army in the Sixth and Seventh Parliament (1996 to 2005).

Born on February 28, 1959, in Rukungiri district, western Uganda, Tumukunde studied at Bishop Stuart College Demonstration School for his primary studies before going to Kigezi College Butobere and Kibuli Secondary School for his O-Level and A-Levels, respectively.

He graduated with a Bachelor of Laws from Makerere University in 1981 before he joined the bush war that ushered in the National Resistance Movement government five years later.

He also holds a Master's degree in Oil and Gas Management, awarded by the Graduate Institute of Geneva in 2013.

Joining The NRA guerillas

During his time at Makerere, Tumukunde was involved in anti-government politics, which subsequently led to his joining of the rebels who had started fighting in Luwero along with Major General Mugisha Muntu and Colonel Jet Mwebaze.

Obote's security services at the time caught wind of their impending departure for the bush and mounted an attack on the NRA's transit house, a shop in the country's capital city, Kampala.

It is said that Tumukunde alongside Muntu posed as shopkeepers, surviving what would have been sure torture and death.

In the early stages of the war, Tumukunde was a machine gunner and eventually went on to become one of the senior officers in the rebel army. His army number is RA 0111.

In 1985, during one of the bigger battles with the Uganda National Liberation Front in Luweero, Tumukunde was shot multiple times in his legs. The wounds were so major that it was thought he would not survive.

He was, however, smuggled out of the country to Nairobi and eventually to London where he was operated on.

On capturing power, Tumukunde was promoted to the rank of major and appointed first secretary and a military attache at the Ugandan Embassy in the United Kingdom.

He was later sent to a Command and Staff Course at the Armed Forces Command and Staff College, Jaji, in Kaduna, Nigeria from where he emerged as one of the best students. He returned to Uganda where he became the Army's director of planning.

In 1994, Tumukunde was elected to represent Rubabo in the Constituent Assembly, which drafted the 1995 Constitution of Uganda.

Tumukunde was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel and appointed the chief of personnel and administration, before another promotion in 1998, that made him a colonel and was appointed the chief of military intelligence.

Tumukunde was then promoted to brigadier general and transferred to command the UPDF Fourth Division based in Gulu. At the time, the war with the LRA was ongoing.

After a short stint in Gulu, Tumukunde was appointed director-general of the ISO, Uganda's civil intelligence body.

At a political retreat in 2003, Tumukunde, in the presence of the president and his cabinet, argued against the impending removal of term limits that would give President Museveni the opportunity to stand for re-election on an infinite basis.

Tumukunde stated that this would be in direct contravention of the rights that they fought to establish and that he was not willing to take part in what he considered to be grossly unconstitutional behaviour. This did not go well with the leadership of the country.

Tumukunde was charged with the offences of abuse of office and spreading harmful propaganda. The abuse of office charges were eventually dropped. He was on 28 May 2005 forced to resign from Parliament and later arrested.

On 18 April 2013, the UPDF General Court Martial sat to bring an end to the process that had lasted 8 years and summed up its deliberations.

The charge of spreading harmful propaganda was dropped while the joint charge of military misconduct was upheld and Tumukunde was subsequently sentenced to a severe reprimand.

On 1 September 2015, he promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General and retired from the army and nearly a year later, he was on June 6, 2016, appointed to the Cabinet as the Minister of Security, a position he held up to the evening of Sunday, 4 March 2018, when he together with General Kale Kayihura, the former Inspector General of Police, was fired.

KENYA :

Let Kenyans seize the moment

<https://www.nation.co.ke/oped/opinion/Let-Kenyans-seize-the-moment/440808-5475804-k6y0w3z/index.html>

By MICHAEL RANNEBERGER / NAZARI-KANGARLOU / BRYSON HULL
Tuesday March 3 2020

United States President Donald Trump and Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta made quiet history earlier this month with the announcement that the US Trade Representative will negotiate a new trade agreement with Kenya that will serve as the model for the rest of Africa.

This moment is long overdue and demonstrates what happens when two leaders set their minds on making a difference for their countries. The announcement on February 6 — along with President Kenyatta's speech at the US Chamber of Commerce — was the culmination of more than a year of lobbying by the Kenyan government.

GREATER TRUTH

President Trump's affinity for attention-getting comments and seeming disregard for "the Washington way" of operating obscure a greater truth about his administration — it gets things done!

Besides the US-Kenya trade deal, the Prosper Africa initiative announced last year is moving forward, and rapidly so, according to recent discussions we've had with our contacts working on this multi-agency effort to double US-Africa trade.

While our nation has its share of politically connected individuals who understand how to work with government to their benefit, the American system strives to give everyone the right to speak directly to their government.

Although it is unfamiliar to many outside our capital, one of the great reflections of the democratic principles built into our system is that any federal rule-making requires public input. That's why the US trade rep will seek comments to shape "the direction, focus and content" of the negotiations, which are expected to play out over the next year.

STAKEHOLDERS

Any Kenyan entrepreneur, CEO or business person who wants to make this deal work for them should make their voice heard. The US public input process seeks and welcomes input from all citizens and stakeholders, wherever they are.

The Kenyan private sector and interested individuals have a historic opportunity to take part in shaping an agreement that will lock in future prosperity between the US and Kenya for decades with the goal of doubling the \$1 billion a year trade.

Other African businesspeople should track this process closely and speak up if they want input into a deal that will serve as the model for their country. Taken together with the ratification of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, and the East African Community's promise, there has never been a more auspicious moment for US-Kenya, indeed, US-Africa, trade.

PROSPEROUS FUTURE

With the continent perched on the verge of becoming the world's largest workforce and home of the world's youngest population, it is in all of our interests to build a more prosperous future of economic opportunity for everyone.

Many times over the years, we have discussed how the US lagged behind the British, Europeans and Chinese when it came to investing in Kenya's seemingly endless bounties.

It frustrated us that our fellow Americans didn't see what we saw every day: A nation of entrepreneurial people striving to create opportunity and biashara everywhere.

We are thrilled to see our government officially recognise that spirit, embodied by President Kenyatta's leadership in lobbying for Kenya to strike the first US-African trade deal under President Trump.

Washington has opened the doors of friendship and economic partnership to Kenyans. A prosperous future awaits those bold enough to seize this historic moment and make their voices heard in Washington.

SOUTH SUDAN :

S. Sudan overdraft appetite from oil wealth raising eyebrows

<https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/ea/South-Sudan-overdraft-appetite-from-oil-wealth/4552908-5476632-rc33laz/index.html>

Tuesday March 3 2020

By AGGREY MUTAMBO

More by this Author

Even before the ink has dried on South Sudan's new transitional government of unity deal, there are allegations that Juba may have been spending oil revenue in advance against the advice and warnings of lenders such as the International Monetary Fund.

Lenders say such a move could worsen the country's debt situation.

South Sudan could now be forced to open up its books on oil revenue following that little had changed.

Emilio Manfredi, the co-ordinator of the UN Panel of Experts on South Sudan, in a February briefing to the UN, claimed that there was no transparency in use of money from petroleum sales or the financial probity in planning for it, making officials largely unaccountable.

The panel had tabled an interim report on the country's sanctions status.

"The Ministry of Petroleum has not ended the practice of pre-sale financing arrangements for South Sudanese oil, despite the recommendations of the IMF," the report drafted in November, but made public this week, shows.

"The Panel was unable to verify the financial liabilities of the government related to oil advances, cargoes and repayment terms because the government has not released current data on oil sales or published its marketing report, in accordance with the stipulations in the [Peace] Agreement on transparency and accountability."

Promoting openness

A statement from the Petroleum Ministry, however, indicated that the government has released its seventh annual report detailed financial situation on oil production, which it argued will promote openness and transparency.

"We are trying to increase transparency in the country's oil and gas sector, specifically concerning the financial aspects.

"The Ministry of Petroleum has produced this journal which will provide all the information about our production, sales, and even the environment. We include all the opportunities in South Sudan regarding refineries, pipelines and other facilities. All this information is now available, and everyone will have access to it," the statement said.

The report says South Sudan authorities are now in charge of all oil operations. "The Ministry of Petroleum is dedicated to forming an institutional structure and establishing business relationships in an open and transparent manner."

Inquiry findings

“Transparency in marketing is the cornerstone to growing a new international customer base mandated to conform to the highest ethical standards, and to ensure oil revenue cash flows are conducted through proper channels.”

The Ministry said it will in future be providing press releases recent sales and production volumes, crude oil revenues, tariff and assistance fee payments to Sudan as well as other relevant marketing data.

Claims of oil revenue diversion aren't new though. Last year, President Salva Kiir opened an inquiry into the crude oil pre-sale arrangements after he fired then Oil Minister Ezekiel Lol Gatkuoth, replacing him with Awow Daniel Chuang. Those findings were yet to be made public.

Incomplete Cabinet

“The previous government has been selling oil in advance and there has been huge corruption in the oil sector as a whole,” said James Oryema, representative of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-In Opposition (SPLM-IO) which forms part of the new administration.

“We want the oil revenues to be made transparent and the sale of oil in advance to stop. We would also like to see an environmental audit carried out because the sector has serious pollution issues.”

President Salva Kiir is yet to name his full Cabinet, and all the former ministers relinquished their posts last week. But being the world's most oil-dependent country (according to the World Bank), revenues from petro sales could account for a large portion of its budget. The transitional government needs at least \$100 million to start running.

ANGOLA :

Africell Holding expected to be the fourth telecommunications operator in Angola
<https://macauhub.com.mo/2020/03/03/pt-africell-holding-devera-ser-o-quarto-operador-de-telecomunicacoes-de-angola/>
3 March 2020

Africell Holding has passed to the next stage of the tender for the fourth telecommunications operator in Angola and in the next few days is expected to submit its technical and financial bid, said on Wednesday in Luanda the Interministerial Working Group.

The applications process started on 30 September 2019 and ended on 22 January 2020, and three companies – South Africa's MTN, Africell Holding of Lebanon and Angola's BAI Investimentos, purchased the tender documents, with Africell submitting its proposal via the electronic platform of the National Service for Public Procurement.

The Evaluation Committee, after formal examination of the application documents submitted by Africell Holding, decided unanimously on its qualification and was invited by the public entity contractor to submit its proposal.

Africell is an international operator, with 18 years of activity in the telecommunications sector, and is present in four African countries: Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone and Uganda.

In the next stage, the qualified candidate will be given a reasonable time to submit its technical and financial bid, which will be analysed and assessed by the Evaluation Committee, taking into account the award criteria laid down in the tender documents and in the terms of reference.

The granting of a 4th Unified Global Title for the provision of Public Service Communications will bring greater competition to the telecommunications sector in Angola, improve the quality of products, services and prices, thus making relevant contributions to economic growth and improving the well-being of citizens. (macauhub)

MOZAMBIQUE

Financial difficulties of Petróleos de Mozambique resolved in 2021

<https://macauhub.com.mo/2020/03/03/pt-dificuldades-financeiras-da-petroleos-de-mocambique-resolvidos-em-2021/>

3 March 2020 / | Mozambique

Mozambican oil company Petróleos de Mozambique (Petromoc) could climb out of its “financial struggles” in 2021, and its operational results may already improve in 2020, said a source from the Institute of State Shareholding Management (Igepe).

The source also told daily newspaper Notícias that the company’s liabilities had already been “successfully” restructured with the banks, adding that, “we are gradually improving the financial situation and therefore, if all goes well, we will solve the problem in 2021.”

The chairman of Petromoc, Hélder Chambisse, confirmed to the newspaper that several measures had been implemented to carry out the internal restructuring of the company, ranging from cost reduction, increased sales and finding new customers in order to improve the performance of the state company.

In February the Council of Ministers discussed and on Tuesday adopted two resolutions that ratify the terms of guarantees issued by the government to banks that operate in the country so that Petromoc can have access to financing for importing fuel.

The spokesman for the Council of Ministers, Filimão Swazi, said that the guarantees were issued in favour of the Millennium bim and Banco Comercial de Investimentos banks although he did not disclose the amounts involved.

The board of Petromoc said in August 2019 it needed “several million dollars” to be able to normalise the company’s activities on the Mozambican market.

Petróleos de Moçambique, a public company founded in 1977, two years after the country's independence, has as its shareholders the Mozambican state, with 60%, IGEPE with 20%, while the remaining 20% is in the hands of technicians and workers of the company. (macauhub)

**** AFRIQUE DU NORD ****

EGYPTE :

Egypt sentences 37 to death including top ISIL leader

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/03/egypt-sentences-37-death-including-top-isil-leader-200303084048653.html>

Rights group decries mass sentencing of defendants, who the court says belonged to a local affiliate of the ISIL group.

An Egyptian court has sentenced 37 people to death, including one the country's most high-profile fighters, on terrorism-related charges.

The Cairo Criminal Court said on Monday the defendants were charged with belonging to a local affiliate of the ISIL (ISIS) armed group spearheading a rebellion in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula. Human rights observers have repeatedly criticised such mass sentencings in Egypt and called on authorities to ensure fair trials.

In response to the sentencing, Amnesty International urged the Egyptian authorities to retry the defendants in compliance with international human rights law.

"There is no doubt that those sentenced to death today have been convicted of serious crimes, including deadly attacks. However, the death penalty can never deliver justice, all the more so when it has been issued after a trial in which dozens of defendants say they were subjected to enforced disappearance and torture," Philip Luther, Amnesty International's research and advocacy director for the Middle East and North Africa, said.

"We are calling on the Egyptian authorities to retry the defendants in proceedings that comply with international human rights law and fair trial standards, without recourse to the death penalty."

Those sentenced were among more than 200 defendants accused of carrying out more than 50 attacks that included killing high-ranking police officers and bombings that targeted the Egyptian capital's police headquarters.

The charges include a 2013 assassination attempt on the Egyptian interior minister.

Egypt arrests, tortures human rights advocate: Rights group

Among those sentenced to death was Hisham el-Ashmawi, a former army officer who was captured in Libya in late 2018 by forces loyal to Libyan renegade commander Khalifa Haftar, a close ally of Egypt.

A military court had separately sentenced el-Ashmawi to death in November for his participation in various attacks on government targets.

For years, Egypt has been taking on armed fighters in the restive northern Sinai area and the vast Western Desert.

The court also sentenced 61 defendants to life in prison and 85 others got sentences ranging from five to 15 years. Monday's verdict can be appealed before a higher court.

For years, Egypt's security forces considered el-Ashmawi one of the country's most wanted fighters for his intelligence value.

Egyptian authorities linked el-Ashmawi, who is in his 40s, to several major attacks, including devastating assaults on security forces near Egypt's porous desert border with Libya.

ALGERIE :

Algeria confirms 3 new cases of COVID-19

Source: Xinhua| 2020-03-04 04:39:17|Editor: huaxia

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-03/04/c_138840602.htm

ALGIERS, March 3 (Xinhua) -- Algerian Health Ministry announced on Tuesday that three new cases of COVID-19 were confirmed, bringing the total number in the country to eight.

The official APS news agency quoted an announcement of the ministry as saying that the three new cases were recorded in the family circle of the previous four cases in the province of Blida, some 50 km south of the capital Algiers.

The ministry said the epidemiological investigation continues to identify all the people who were in contact with these diagnosed patients.

On Feb. 25, Algeria announced the first COVID-19 case of an Italian national who arrived in Algeria on Feb. 17. Four more cases of coronavirus from a family were recorded later in the province of Blida who were infected by two family members from France. Enditem

MAROC :

Nasser Bourita réaffirme la souveraineté du Maroc dans la délimitation de ses frontières

<https://www.bladi.net/maroc-delimitation-frontieres,65499.html>

3 mars 2020 - Le ministre des Affaires étrangères, Nasser Bourita s'est longuement exprimé sur les relations entre le Maroc et l'Espagne, bâties sur « des liens stratégiques, stables et en évolution ».

Les relations entre le Maroc et l'Espagne sont au beau fixe. Le ministre des Affaires étrangères a rappelé les relations séculaires qui lient les deux royaumes frères. Selon Nasser Bourita, les liens entre les deux royaumes sont stratégiques, stables et en évolution.

D'après le chef de la diplomatie marocaine, ces liens portent sur des domaines vastes et variés, comme le commerce, la lutte contre le crime organisé et le terrorisme. « En plus des liens humains qui nous unissent, sur bien des aspects, ces relations entre deux pays voisins sont exemplaires », justifie l'invité de l'émission Grand Format.

Au sujet de la décision du Royaume de tracer ses frontières maritimes, le ministre a été on ne peut plus clair : le Maroc est en plein droit, et c'est là un choix souverain et non-négociable, de tracer son espace maritime, en toute liberté et sans recourir à aucune forme d'autorisation ou de consultation. Par contre, et ce sont les lois et les conventions internationales en la matière qui le disent, ces démarches peuvent buter sur des enchevêtrements entre des plateaux maritimes communs à deux pays. De par le monde, cela se règle au travers de négociations, auxquelles le Maroc comme l'Espagne sont totalement ouverts.

À ce titre, le ministre rassure en relevant que les deux pays travaillent à la mise en place d'un cadre pour ce dialogue. L'idée est de sortir du simple concept pour mettre en voie des mécanismes. Trois priorités président à ce cadre : les moyens, les personnes qui vont en faire partie et l'agenda des travaux.

Un ministre algérien boycotte une réunion au Maroc

<https://www.bladi.net/ministre-algerien-boycott-reunion-maroc,65514.html>

Marrakech a abrité, ce lundi 2 mars, le 8^e sommet du dialogue interministériel 5+5, consacré à la discussion des problèmes d'immigration et de développement par les ministres des Affaires étrangères des pays de la Méditerranée. 5 pays maghrébins et 5 européens devaient se concerter afin de renforcer le dialogue entre les nations des deux rives.

La réunion de haut niveau, honorée par la présence des représentants diplomatiques des pays concernés, et d'organisations régionales et internationales, a été marquée cette fois, par l'absence flagrante du ministre algérien des Affaires étrangères, Sabri Boukadoum, qui a préféré être représenté par une petite délégation diplomatique.

En tant que président d'honneur de ce sommet annuel, le Maroc a été représenté par son ministre des Affaires étrangères, Nasser Bourita qui, lui, s'était déplacé à Alger en janvier 2018.

Alors que les ministres des Affaires étrangères du Portugal et de Malte sont arrivés, dimanche 1^{er} mars au Maroc, les délégations des autres nations étaient attendues, lundi, pour participer à ce sommet qui traite de thématiques d'une importance capitale pour les pays de la Méditerranée.

TUNISIE :

Tunisia's health ministry announces 1st confirmed COVID-19 case

Source: Xinhua| 2020-03-03 00:08:07|Editor: huaxia

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-03/03/c_138836698.htm

TUNIS, March 2 (Xinhua) -- Tunisian Minister of Health Abdellatif Mekki on Monday confirmed the first case infected with the novel coronavirus in Tunisia.

During a press briefing in the capital Tunis, Mekki said the infected patient is a Tunisian in his forties, who returned from Italy by sea on Feb. 27.

"The first symptoms surfaced on Feb. 29, two days after his arrival," added the minister.

The health minister stressed that his department "will take care of the patient's family, his close entourage as well as anyone on board the boat in question." Enditem

LYBIA :

Suspension of Libyan oil exports costs 2.5 bln USD

Source: Xinhua| 2020-03-04 05:41:58|Editor: huaxia

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-03/04/c_138840664.htm

TRIPOLI, March 3 (Xinhua) -- The state-owned National Oil Corporation (NOC) on Tuesday said the suspension of oil exports due to closure of oil fields and ports has caused a loss of more than 2.5 billion U.S. dollars so far.

"Oil and gas production in Libya have been consistently dropping as a result of the illegal blockade of oil facilities," NOC said in a statement.

"The current levels of production are 123,240 barrels per day, as of March 2, 2020. Forced restriction of production has resulted in financial losses exceeding 2,590,946,109 U.S. dollars since Jan. 17, 2020," the statement said.

NOC expressed concern regarding possible fuel shortage in the next few days in the wake of the forced reduction of local production, local refinery shutdown, and the lack of funding to import sufficient fuel to meet the needs of Libyans.

On Jan. 18, tribal leaders in eastern Libya closed oil ports and fields, accusing the UN-backed government of using oil revenues to support armed groups against the east-based army.

The east-based army has been leading a military campaign since April 2019 in and around the capital Tripoli, attempting to take over the city and topple the UN-backed government. Enditem

**** AFRIQUE DE L'OUEST ****

CÔTE D'IVOIRE :

IronRidge acquires full ownership of Côte d'Ivoire gold licenses

<https://www.miningreview.com/gold/ironridge-acquires-full-ownership-of-cote-divoire-gold-licenses/>

Mar 2, 2020

IronRidge Resources has entered an agreement with Major Star to acquire 100% of the Bodite and Bianouan gold licenses which gives IronRidge full ownership of a highly prospective gold exploration portfolio in Côte d'Ivoire.

Commenting on the company's latest progress, Vincent Mascolo, CEO of IronRidge, says:

"Identifying acquisition opportunities that are attractive for the company and its shareholders remains a key priority for our business.

"We are therefore delighted to have completed these significant acquisitions ahead of schedule, and for an issue of scrip priced at a significant premium to the prevailing market.

"The Bodite and Bianouan gold licenses complement our flagship Zaranou gold license and represent a highly prospective ground holding with high priority air core drilling intersections and significant soil anomalies.

Watch: A compelling 18 month road map ahead for IronRidge

"The acquisitions are in line with our strategic growth plan of creating and developing valuable synergies within the Company's existing portfolio in the region, with the ultimate ambition of driving and sustaining shareholder value through the discovery and development of world class assets.

"We are very pleased with the work programmes completed to date and look forward to keeping shareholders and investors updated as more news becomes available."

SENEGAL :

Venu assister à son procès en appel, Kemi Seba expulsé du Sénégal à sa sortie de l'avion 26 févr. 2020, 21:17

En savoir plus sur RT France : <https://francais.rt.com/international/71638-proces-appel-kemi-seba-expulser-senegal-sortie-avion>

L'activiste panafricaniste Kemi Seba venait d'atterrir à Dakar pour assister à son procès en appel, que lui a intenté en 2017 la Banque centrale des Etats d'Afrique de l'Ouest pour avoir brûlé un billet de 5 000 francs CFA. L'activiste Kemi Seba, qui mène depuis des années un combat contre le franc CFA, a été expulsé du Sénégal vers la Belgique dans la soirée du 24 février. Il avait atterri la veille à Dakar, avec la ferme intention de comparaître lors de la procédure en appel du procès que

lui intente la Banque centrale des Etats d’Afrique de l’Ouest (BCEAO). En vain : il a immédiatement été interpellé par les forces de l’ordre à sa sortie de l’avion, avant de passer près de 30 heures dans une salle de la zone de transit, puis d’être expulsé. «Je suis resté dans la prison de l’aéroport sans manger. Les policiers m’ont dit que vous allez partir de gré ou de force. Ces forces de l’ordre étaient commandées par le ministre de l’Intérieur, et ce ministre de l’Intérieur était commandé par le président Macky Sall. Je ne perturbais pas l’avion», a-t-il déclaré sur sa page Facebook.

Senegal confirms second case of coronavirus

Juliette Jabkhiro, Aaron Ross

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-senegal/senegal-confirms-second-case-of-coronavirus-idUSKBN20Q2RS>

DAKAR (Reuters) - Senegal’s health ministry said a second person who flew to the West African country from France last week tested positive for coronavirus on Tuesday, taking the total number of cases in sub-Saharan Africa to three.

The latest patient, an 80-year-old man from the Sarcelles suburb of Paris, arrived in Senegal on Feb. 29 and presented himself at a hospital in the capital Dakar on March 2.

“His clinical status is stable and all efforts have been taken to identify those he was in contact with,” the ministry said in statement, without giving further details.

Senegal confirmed its first case on Monday and another case of coronavirus was confirmed in Nigeria last week.

The Senegalese health ministry has said it is tracking down the first patient’s fellow passengers on the Air Senegal flight from Marseilles to Dakar that landed on Feb. 26 and is monitoring his wife and two children.

Ousmane Faye, the head virologist at Dakar’s Pasteur Institute, said 10 to 15 other cases tested yesterday had all come back negative.

Faye said the first patient, quarantined in the capital’s Fann Hospital, had a benign form of the virus and he was confident he would survive.

The rapid spread of the new coronavirus worldwide has increased fears of a pandemic, prompting governments to step up control measures.

As of Tuesday, there were more than 90,000 cases globally, with more than 80,000 in China, and infections in 77 other countries and territories, according to a Reuters tally.

Senegalese President Macky Sall announced a \$2 million emergency response plan late on Monday, according to local media. The health ministry said it was working with religious leaders to promote hygiene measures ahead of a series of domestic pilgrimages scheduled in March.

On Tuesday morning, people went about their usual business in the oceanside capital of over 2 million, though stocks of hand sanitizer and masks were running low in some pharmacies. One was rationing face masks to five per customer.

Many people had purchased masks a week earlier when strong northerly winds from the Sahara Desert created a dust cloud over the city.

Ibrahima Tobe, an IT manager, said he noticed some subtle changes.

“Everybody is talking about it and the basic preventative measures are being put in place,” Tobe said. “I came to my office this morning, no one wanted to shake hands with me.”

BURKINA FASO :

10 police officers killed in Burkina Faso attack

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/10-police-officers-killed-in-burkina-faso-attack/1750895>

Assailants block various entrances to northern Sebba city, damage property

James Tasamba | 01.03.2020

Ten police officers were killed and three others injured in Burkina Faso when militants attacked the northern Sebba city, the local media reported on Sunday.

The attack happened on Saturday, the heaviest loss recorded by the Burkinabe police in a single attack, local media reported quoting security sources.

“The assailants disguised in Burkina Faso Armed Forces uniform initially sabotaged communications facilities. They attacked a police station and military post simultaneously. But it was the central police station that was the main target of the attack,” a police source told local media.

According to the source, the assailants blocked various entrances to the city and damaged significant property.

The militants took away military equipment, including an armored vehicle, the media report said.

BENIN :

Western forces in 'race against time' to prepare West African states for advance of jihadists

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/global-health/terror-and-security/western-forces-race-against-time-prepare-west-african-states/>

Security officials in the Gulf of Guinea say Ghana, Ivory Coast, Benin and Togo are under an increasing threat from insurgents

By Adrian Blomfield in Thiès, Senegal and Simon Townsley Photographer

Jihadists who have brought bloodshed to the Sahel are advancing rapidly on four previously unaffected states in West Africa, threatening to open a new front in their insurgency.

Security officials in the Gulf of Guinea say that under-resourced, under-manned and often ill-prepared armies in Ghana, Ivory Coast, Benin and Togo are involved “in a race against time” to protect their frontiers.

All four states border Burkina Faso, where groups affiliated to al Qaeda and Islamic State have launched a bloody and stunningly effective campaign that has swept throughout a country regarded until recently as among the most stable in West Africa.

In recent weeks, the jihadists have begun to test the country’s borders with its southern neighbours, raising fears in Western capitals that an already serious crisis is about to evolve into a far broader regional conflagration.

Last month suspected militants based in Burkina Faso raided a police station just inside Benin, while a security source in Ghana said that Islamist groups were now carrying out attacks within three miles of Ghanaian territory.

NIGERIA :

Nigeria confirms first coronavirus case in sub-Saharan Africa

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/feb/28/coronavirus-found-in-sub-saharan-africa-as-who-says-spread-could-get-out-of-control>

Nigeria has reported the first confirmed case of coronavirus in sub-Saharan Africa, as investor alarm over a potential global pandemic deepened stock market losses around the world.

Nigerian officials said the case involved an Italian citizen who entered the country on 24 February on a Turkish Airlines flight from Milan via Istanbul.

The virus has proliferated around the globe over the past week, emerging in every continent except Antarctica, prompting many governments and businesses to try to stop people travelling or gathering in crowded places.

Switzerland became the latest country to announce drastic measures on Friday, saying all events with more than 1,000 participants would be suspended until 15 March. The ban forced the cancellation of next week’s Geneva international motor show – a major fixture on the global car industry calendar.

The Nigerian case is just the third to be confirmed in Africa, something that has puzzled health specialists given the continent’s close ties to China.

According to Nigerian officials, the Italian man stayed in a hotel near the airport on the evening of 24 February, then continued to his place of work in neighbouring Ogun state. He was treated on 26 February at his company’s medical facility before health practitioners there called government biosecurity officers, who transferred him on 27 February to a containment facility in Yaba, Lagos. He was clinically stable with no serious symptoms, authorities said.

This month the World Health Organization warned that porous borders, a continuing flow of travellers and poorly resourced healthcare systems meant the risk of an outbreak across Africa was “very, very high” and raised significant concerns about the ability of “fragile health systems” to cope.

In recent weeks testing regimes and isolation facilities have been reinforced and there has been work on public messaging.

“Nigeria has dramatically improved its ability to manage the outbreak of a major pandemic since the Ebola scare in west Africa in 2014,” Folasade Ogunsola, the professor of clinical microbiology at the University of Lagos, wrote on the Conversation website. “Any of the lessons from keeping the country free of Ebola have informed the steps taken since the news of the coronavirus epidemic first broke.”

There is anxiety in many countries, despite reinforced protective measures. In Kenya there has been a backlash against authorities who allowed the first direct flight from China in two weeks. The high court ordered flights from China to be temporarily suspended. ETC.

Italian man confirmed as Nigeria’s first case of COVID-19: health minister
<https://globalnews.ca/news/6607481/nigeria-first-case-covid-19/>
By Alexis Akwagyiram Reuters

Israel to deepen military cooperation with Nigerian army
<https://guardian.ng/news/israel-to-deepen-military-cooperation-with-nigerian-army/>

The Israeli Ambassador to Nigeria, Mr Shimon Ben-Shoshan, has expressed the willingness of Israeli government to deepen cooperation with Nigeria in the fight against terrorism.

Ben-Shoshan disclosed this when he paid a courtesy call on the Chief of Army Staff, Lt.-Gen. Tukur Buratai, on Tuesday in Abuja.

He said that Israel and Nigeria had maintained cordial diplomatic relationship for 60 years, adding that Israel would celebrate its 73rd anniversary in 2020.

According to him, everything has been going smoothly between the two countries in terms of bilateral cooperation.

“We are willing to cooperate in any field. As you already know, there have been fantastic cooperation during the previous administration in fighting Boko Haram terrorists.

“I can assure you that you are in good hands,” he said.

The ambassador commended the Nigerian army for its efforts toward addressing security challenges in the country.

He said that Israel had fought many wars over the years, adding that the country was desirous of achieving peace with all its neighbours.

According to him, the State of Israel has peace treaty with Egypt, Jordan and the people are hoping to have peace with all other nations and of course, first and foremost with Palestinians.

“For the rest of us the Israelites, we are praying three times a day, we are asking for peace. I think it is better if we can solve the problem without using force which is the best thing to be done to save lives,” he said.

Ben-Shoshan also expressed the desire of Israeli top government functionaries to visit Nigeria during the year, adding that no top official of government had paid official visit in a long time.

According to him, we do hope that we can break the ice this year with a high level delegation coming and of course we are willing to see President Muhammadu Buhari to visit the state of Israel.

GHANA :

Ghana : Affaire coup d'Etat, supposé plan des présumés auteurs et réactions

https://www.koaci.com/article/2020/03/03/ghana/politique/ghana-affaire-coup-detat-suppose-plan-des-presumes-auteurs-et-reactions_139052.html

Les procureurs de l'Etat ghanéen ont accusé les présumés auteurs du coup d'Etat dont l'affaire est pendante devant la justice d'avoir planifié d'arrêter le Président, le vice-président, le président du parlement et le chef d'Etat-major de la défense.

Outre cette accusation portée contre les suspects, et d'après le procureur principal de l'Etat, Mme Hilda Craig, les meneurs du coup ont discuté d'une éventualité d'enlever le Président mais aussi le forcer à annoncer son renversement.

Les suspects sont par ailleurs accusés d'avoir prévu de brouiller les signaux de communication de l'Autorité Nationale des Communications (NCA) en rendant la tâche difficile à toutes les stations de radiodiffusion, à l'exception de la radio d'État.

Ces accusations ont fait surface ce mardi lors de la procédure d'incarcération des accusés au tribunal de Kaneshie à Accra.

Ghana : le Parlement approuve un accord de prêt de 97 millions d'euros pour des travaux d'adduction d'eau à Keta

<https://www.agenceecofin.com/investissements-publics/0303-74426-ghana-le-parlement-approuve-un-accord-de-pret-de-97-millions-d-euros-pour-des-travaux-d-adduction-d-eau-a-keta>

(Agence Ecofin) - Le Parlement du Ghana a approuvé, 28 février 2020, un accord de prêt d'un montant de 97,184 millions d'euros conclu avec Deutsche Bank et l'Agence italienne de crédit à l'export (SACE) pour le financement de la réhabilitation et l'expansion du système d'approvisionnement en eau de Keta, ville située sur la côte à l'extrême est du pays.

Les principales composantes de ce projet comprennent notamment une installation d'admission d'une capacité de 9,3 millions de gallons par jour, la construction d'une usine de traitement d'eau conventionnelle de 7,7 millions de gallons, la construction d'un pipeline de transmission de 62 km, ainsi que la construction de réservoirs de stockage.

Le projet permettra également la réhabilitation et l'extension du réseau de distribution d'eau sur environ 80 km de canalisation, la fourniture de compteurs domestiques, ainsi que la réhabilitation de la station d'épuration déjà existante.

Selon les autorités ghanéennes, la mise en œuvre de ces travaux s'avérerait nécessaire dans la mesure où le système d'approvisionnement en eau de Keta est complètement dépassé face à la demande actuelle en eau d'environ 190 000 personnes dans sa zone de captage.

GAMBIE:

Gambie : l'Arabie saoudite débloque 12 millions USD pour la modernisation de l'aéroport international de Banjul

<https://www.agenceecofin.com/transports/2802-74322-gambie-l-arabie-saoudite-debloque-12-millions-usd-pour-la-modernisation-de-laeroport-international-de-banjul>

(Agence Ecofin) - L'aéroport international Yundum de Banjul sera bientôt mis aux normes internationales. En effet, l'État gambien a signé, lundi 24 février 2020, un accord de financement de 12 millions de dollars avec le royaume d'Arabie saoudite, pour la réhabilitation et la modernisation du seul aéroport international du pays.

Les documents ont été paraphés à la présidence de la République, par Mamboury Njie, le ministre gambien des Finances et des Affaires économiques, et Yousef Al Bassam, chef de la délégation saoudienne, conseiller du directeur général du Fonds saoudien pour le développement (SFD) et, par ailleurs, président de la Banque arabe pour le développement économique en Afrique (Badea). C'était en présence du président gambien, Adama Barrow.

Cet accord de financement est le second signé entre la Gambie et l'Arabie saoudite pour la rénovation de l'aéroport de Banjul. Le 25 juin 2019, le pays africain avait déjà signé un accord similaire avec le Fonds saoudien pour le développement. D'un montant de 92,5 millions de dollars, il était destiné à plusieurs projets d'infrastructures, dont la construction d'un nouveau salon VIP à l'aéroport de Banjul.

La modernisation de la plateforme s'inscrit, en effet, dans le cahier des charges des projets prioritaires que le gouvernement gambien prévoit d'exécuter en prélude au sommet de l'Organisation de la coopération islamique (OCI) que le pays abritera en 2022.

Romuald Ngueyap

ETHIOPIE :

Tensions rise again as US-Egypt agreement on Nile dam excludes Ethiopia

<http://www.globalconstructionreview.com/news/tensions-rise-again-us-egypt-agreement-nile-dam-ex/>

2 March 2020

Ethiopia issued a protest on Saturday over claims by the US that an agreement had been finalised on the filling and operation of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) at meetings in Washington, without Ethiopia being present.

Ethiopia last week pulled out of the talks at the last minute, saying it needed more internal consultations.

But Egypt and Sudan attended the meetings over 27-28 February, hosted by US treasury secretary Steven Mnuchin and World Bank president David Malpass, that were meant to finalise the agreement.

At the conclusion of the talks Friday, the Treasury Department issued a statement saying that had been achieved.

“The United States believes that the work completed over the last four months has resulted in an agreement that addresses all issues in a balanced and equitable manner, taking into account the interests of the three countries,” the statement said.

“This process has built on the prior seven years of technical studies and consultations between the three countries, and the resulting agreement, in our view, provides for the resolution of all outstanding issues on the filling and operation of the GERD.”

It said Egypt had signed the agreement, and called on Ethiopia to do the same “as soon as possible”.

Tensions have been simmering since 2011 over the 6GW GERD, set to be Africa’s largest hydroelectric dam on the Blue Nile, a Nile tributary, because it pits Ethiopia’s desire for energy security against Egypt’s fears over water security.

Egypt relies on the Nile for nearly all its water and has been alarmed at Ethiopia’s planned schedule for filling the reservoir.

The US got involved in the dispute in November last year after Egypt requested mediation, and has hosted several rounds of talks.

On Saturday, Ethiopia hit out at the latest development, insisting no agreement had been reached.

“The ‘text’ reportedly initialed by the Arab Republic of Egypt in Washington D.C. is not the outcome of the negotiation or the technical and legal discussion of the three countries,” Ethiopia’s foreign ministry said in a statement on Saturday published on Facebook.

“Ethiopia does not accept the characterization that the negotiation on the Guidelines and Rules on the First Filling and Annual Operation of the GERD (Guidelines and Rules) is completed,” it said,

adding that it would start filling the GERD as construction proceeds in accordance with principles set out in a 2015 Agreement on Declaration of Principles.

Egypt's foreign ministry responded, saying: "What has been reached in the recent round of Washington meetings came due to Ethiopia's deliberate absence and is fully consistent with the international law."

Image: Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed during a Russia-Africa Summit, October 2019 (The Kremlin/CC BY 4.0)

**** AFRIQUE CENTRAL ****

CAMEROUNE :

Cameroun : le Commonwealth ICT & Telecommunications Forum 2020 se déroulera à Yaoundé, en octobre

<https://www.agenceecofin.com/telecom/0303-74416-cameroun-le-commonwealth-ict-telecommunications-forum-2020-se-deroulera-a-yaounde-en-octobre>

Date de création: 03 mars 2020

(Agence Ecofin) - Les membres de la Commonwealth Telecommunications Organization (CTO) ont rendez-vous à Yaoundé, la capitale camerounaise, au mois d'octobre 2020, à l'occasion du Commonwealth ICT & Telecommunications Forum 2020. L'évènement organisé chaque année par la CTO, le sera cette année en partenariat avec l'Agence de régulation des télécommunications (ART) du Cameroun.

L'information a été révélée le 27 février 2020 à Londres, la capitale britannique, où s'est déroulée, du 24 au 28 février, la réunion du Comité exécutif de la CTO. La 59e assise de cette instance se déroulera d'ailleurs au Cameroun en octobre 2020, en marge du Forum susmentionné.

Selon les responsables de l'ART, le Cameroun a été choisi pour l'organisation de ce double évènement à cause de sa position stratégique en Afrique centrale, en matière d'infrastructures de télécommunications.

UNION AFRICAINE :

Afrique-UE : beaucoup de divergences à surmonter

02-03-2020 13:33 <http://www.adiac-congo.com/content/afrique-ue-beaucoup-de-divergences-surmonter-113577>

Pour sa seconde visite officielle à Addis-Abeba, en Ethiopie, le 27 février, où elle a rencontré son homologue de l'Union africaine (UA), la nouvelle présidente de la Commission européenne (CE), Ursula Von Der Leyen, a reconnu le dynamisme économique de l'Afrique. Cependant, Moussa Faki

Mahamat est convaincu qu'une coopération entre l'UE et l'Afrique est possible malgré les divergences

C'était sa deuxième visite en l'espace de trois mois, en tant que présidente de la CE. Ursula Von Der Leyen a rappelé que les économies les plus dynamiques sont plutôt en Afrique, et l'intégration est en marche. Elle est également convaincue que les Africains sont mieux placés pour combattre le terrorisme.

Ursula Von Der Leyen a aussi indiqué que l'Europe entend aider l'Afrique à protéger son potentiel économique contre les forces terroristes." Il est d'une importance capitale, que nous renforçons l'Union africaine et ses Etats membres pour défendre leurs territoires contre le terrorisme. Car ils sont mieux placés pour identifier l'ennemi, d'où il vient et ils connaissent mieux les spécificités de certains de ces territoires", a-t-elle déclaré. Mais le développement de l'Europe est lié à celui de l'Afrique selon elle.

Pour Moussa Faki Mahamat, une coopération entre l'UE et l'UA est possible, malgré quelques points de divergence plutôt normale, liée aux " diversités culturelles, sociologiques, voire spirituelles" visibles sur des sujets comme "la justice pénale internationale, l'orientation et l'identité sexuelle, la peine de mort, la centralité de l'Union africaine dans certaines crises", convaincu que "seules la reconnaissance et l'acceptation de ces différences, le langage de la franchise" pourraient aider les deux partenaires à lever les obstacles qui risquent d'entraver leur coopération. Noël Ndong

La CEDEAO et l'UA devraient être plus visibles dans la lutte contre le terrorisme dans le Sahel, selon un acteur de la société civile sénégalaise

Par : LIANG Chen | Mots clés : CEDEAO-UA-Sahel
French.china.org.cn | Mis à jour le 03-03-2020

http://french.china.org.cn/foreign/txt/2020-03/03/content_75766208.htm

La Communauté économique des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CEDEAO) et l'Union africaine (UA) auraient dû être plus visibles et plus décisives dans la lutte contre les groupes armés qui mènent régulièrement des attaques terroristes meurtrières au Mali, au Niger et au Burkina Faso, a estimé ce lundi à Dakar, le coordonnateur du Forum social sénégalais, Mamadou Mignane Diouf.

"La CEDEAO et l'UA auraient dû être plus visibles et plus décisives dans la lutte contre le terrorisme dans le Sahel. Les forces militaires des pays de ces deux instances ne sont pas au-devant des opérations sur le terrain. Ce sont plutôt les Nations Unies, la France et les USA qui semblent mener les opérations", a-t-il indiqué au cours d'une interview accordée à Xinhua.

M. Diouf a rappelé que depuis près de 10 ans, le Sahel fait face à une situation d'insécurité avec des attaques de groupes armés, devenues presque quotidiennes dans certains pays comme le Mali, le Burkina, et le Niger. Ces attaques meurtrières ont fait des milliers de victimes et de déplacés dans les zones ciblées.

Il a aussi rappelé que la zone du Sahel est à la fois, une région très immense, riche et convoitée. La position géostratégique de cette partie de l'Afrique, avec des limites frontalières qui la lie à de nombreux pays comme le Maroc, l'Algérie et la Libye, fait donc d'elle une zone très importante et utile pour des positions militaires.

"Cette partie, a-t-il expliqué, détient des richesses en ressources naturelles et minières qui sont très recherchées par les grandes puissances en compétition", a-t-il souligné.

Selon lui, c'est suite à l'assassinat de l'ancien dirigeant de la Libye, Mouammar Khadafi, que des armes de l'armée libyenne, ont été évacuées en grande partie, dans ces trois pays (Mali, Niger et Burkina Faso).

"Le Mali est presque divisé en deux, le Burkina Faso sous des attaques au quotidien, et le Niger, avec les zones de migration autour des frontières libyennes et algériennes va aussi vivre des moments difficiles", a-t-il soutenu.

"Nous ne condamnons pas la CEDEAO et l'UA, mais cela montre encore une fois, les limites des capacités de l'Afrique sur la scène internationale. Imaginez un peu si la CEDEAO et l'UA avaient des forces militaires armées, équipées, et en nombre suffisants, ce qu'elles auraient pu faire en mobilisant des troupes commandées par des officiers supérieurs africains", a expliqué M. Diouf.

Pour lui, il s'agit d'une crise géopolitique, "sous fond d'envie de contrôle des ressources naturelles des riches pays qui sont dans la zone et dont les armées et les capacités de résistance militaires sont encore très limitées. Pour nous la CEDEAO et l'UA devraient jouer les rôles de premier plan dans cette crise. Ce qui n'est pas (pour le moment) le cas".

Selon lui, si cette situation d'attaques terroristes perdure encore des années, on va vers le désastre total et sans doute un déplacement de ces mouvements terroristes vers les pays de la côte maritime atlantique.

"Bien évidemment, c'est une question politique qui sera traitée d'une façon politique, dans un contexte de géopolitique très militaire et une mondialisation d'accaparement, d'exclusion et de séparatisme", a-t-il conclu.

RDC: tête-à-tête Joseph Kabila et Smaïl Chergui (UA) à Kingakati
Mercredi 26 février 2020 <https://actualite.cd/2020/02/26/rdc-tete-tete-joseph-kabila-et-smail-chergui-ua-kingakati>

Smaïl Chergui, Commissaire de la Commission de l'Union africaine pour la paix et la sécurité, a été reçu ce lundi par Joseph Kabila à Kingakati. Les deux hommes ont parlé de l'évolution de la situation en RDC et dans la région des grands lacs. Il était question aussi d'évoquer la situation sécuritaire dans un contexte marqué par l'offensive lancée fin 2019 contre les groupes armés, les initiatives de dialogue lancées par Félix Tshisekedi dans la sous-région.

Selon les sources de ACTUALITE.CD, l'émissaire de l'Union africaine et l'ancien président de la République ont échangé aussi sur la santé de la coalition que le Front Commun pour le Congo (FCC) et Cap pour le Changement (CACH). Joseph Kabila, détendu, a réitéré face à son hôte sa détermination à faire réussir les initiatives menées dans cette coalition pour la paix, la sécurité et le développement.

Joseph Kabila se montre davantage ouvert à la communauté internationale, contrairement aux deux dernières années quand il était à la tête du pays.

L'ancien chef de l'Etat avait reçu à Kinshasa, mi-février, Paul Arkwright. Avec l'ambassadeur intérimaire de Grande Bretagne, ils avaient échangé une fois de plus de la coalition que le Front Commun pour le Congo (FCC) et Cap pour le Changement (CACH) forment.

A la même période, Peter Pham avait également échangé avec Joseph Kabila. Les deux hommes avaient discuté notamment sur « les obstacles qui entravent la paix, la prospérité et l'état de droit ». L'envoyé spécial des Etats unis dans la région des grands lacs, avait alors évoqué « une discussion franche et approfondie avec l'ancien chef de l'Etat ».

Le président de l'UA appelle l'armée sud-africaine à contribuer à faire taire les armes en Afrique
French.xinhuanet.com|Publié le 2020-02-22
http://french.xinhuanet.com/afrique/2020-02/22/c_138807085.htm

POLOKWANE (Afrique du Sud), 21 février (Xinhua) -- Le président sud-africain et également président de l'Union africaine (UA) pour cette année, Cyril Ramaphosa, a appelé vendredi l'armée à aider le continent à réaliser son rêve de faire taire les armes.

M. Ramaphosa a lancé cet appel en s'adressant aux Forces de défense nationale sud-africaines (SANDF) à l'occasion des commémorations de la Journée des forces armées à Polokwane.

Il a rappelé aux soldats que cette célébration de la Journée des forces armées survenait le jour où l'Afrique du Sud assume la présidence de l'UA.

"L'Afrique du Sud compte sur les SANDF pour nous aider à honorer nos obligations en ce qui concerne le soutien à la paix et à la sécurité sur le continent. Nous nous fions aux SANDF en tant qu'organisation chargée par l'Union africaine (UA) et par les Nations unies (ONU), respectivement, de s'acquitter de responsabilités importantes dans la promotion de la paix", a déclaré M. Ramaphosa.

Le président a souligné que les soldats devraient aider le continent à réaliser les rêves des pères fondateurs africains tels que Kwame Nkrumah au Ghana, Julius Nyerere en Tanzanie, Patrice Lumumba en République démocratique du Congo, et bien d'autres.

L'Afrique a réalisé de grands progrès, toutefois l'instabilité subsiste dans certaines parties du continent et elle nécessite d'y porter attention, a-t-il dit, citant en exemples le Mali, le Burkina Faso, le Niger et le Sahel.

"En tant que continent, nous avons fixé des objectifs pour la réalisation d'un continent meilleur et plus sûr pour tous les africains, mais nos progrès restent mitigés. Les conflits se poursuivent dans plusieurs pays d'Afrique, sapant nos efforts collectifs pour parvenir à la paix et à la sécurité", a déclaré M. Ramaphosa, commandant en chef des SANDF.

L'UA s'est fixé pour objectif de mettre fin aux combats sur le continent cette année et a placé l'année sous le thème "Faire taire les armes".

CHINE :

China-Africa cooperation to yield more results through Belt and Road Initiative

http://www.china.org.cn/world/2020-02/29/content_75758025.htm

Xinhua, February 29, 2020

Against the backdrop of rising unilateralism and protectionism in the world, China and its partners, including African countries, will achieve mutually beneficial growth through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a Chinese envoy to Uganda has said.

"BRI aims to build a community with a shared future for mankind through extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits," Zheng Zhuqiang, the Chinese ambassador to Uganda, said in a public lecture here on Thursday.

"In doing so, the hope is to forge a new form of international relations featuring mutual respect, fairness, justice, and win-win cooperation, and a new platform for globalization that creates new drivers for shared development," he said.

The lecture titled "The Belt and Road Initiative, Creating a Bright Future for the World" was held at Makerere University, Uganda's top university and also one of Africa's major research universities.

The envoy said that although the BRI was proposed by China, it belongs to the world. By the end of March 2019, the Chinese government had signed 173 cooperation agreements with 125 countries and 29 international organizations, including over 40 African countries, he said.

China and African countries will achieve win-win results from the five connectivities in policy, infrastructure, trade, capital flows and understanding among peoples, Zheng said.

Many African countries have embarked on massive infrastructure projects especially in the transport and energy sectors. Zheng said that infrastructure projects, such as railways, highways, bridges, ports and so on, have effectively improved the investment environment of African countries.

Chinese companies especially in the construction sector have offered technology and skills transfers, enabling youths in African countries who were employed on the projects to set up their own workshops.

In Uganda for instance, since 2016, over 2,000 Ugandans have attended China-aided training courses and seminars in China, according to the Chinese embassy. For the last three years, China has sponsored over 216 Ugandan students to study in China.

Moreover, Chinese investments have boosted economic development in Africa. In 2014, China invested 40 billion U.S. dollars in setting up the Silk Road Fund and invested 100 billion dollars in the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank in 2016.

In December 2015, during the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) Johannesburg Summit, China announced that it would further allocate 5 billion dollars to the China-Africa Development Fund and the Special Loan for the Development of African Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, respectively.

During the 2018 Beijing FOCAC summit, China announced that it would set up a 5-billion-dollar special fund for imports from Africa and would encourage Chinese companies to invest at least 10 billion dollars in Africa in the next three years.

According to the Chinese Embassy in Kampala, until this year, the China-Africa Development Fund has invested more than 4.6 billion dollars in more than 90 projects in 36 African countries, covering infrastructure, capacity equipment, agriculture, people's livelihood, energy and resource development and other fields.

Ezra Suruma, chancellor of Makerere University, underlined the importance of Chinese investments, noting that "no strings" are attached to them.

USA :

Nile Dam: Ethiopia calls US view "totally unacceptable"
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-51728405>

Ethiopia has said the US position on the controversial Nile River mega-dam project is "totally unacceptable".

The US is negotiating between Ethiopia and Egypt in the ongoing dispute over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam that some fear could lead to war.

Ethiopia accused the US of overstepping its role as a neutral observer after the US said the dam should not be completed without an agreement.

But its foreign minister said Ethiopia would continue to attend the talks.

Upon completion, the dam will be Africa's biggest hydroelectric power plant and provide Ethiopia and some neighbours with huge amounts of electricity and energy security.

The country wants to start filling the dam in June, but countries downstream are concerned about the impact on their water supply.

The trouble over a giant Nile dam

Egypt has viewed the project as an existential threat since construction began in 2011.

It relies on the Nile for 90% of its water, and a 1932 treaty gives Egypt and Sudan rights to almost all the Nile waters.

It fears the dam would give control of Africa's longest river to Ethiopia, and it wants the filling of the dam to take place over a longer period so the river level does not suddenly drop dramatically.

Tensions have escalated between Ethiopia and Egypt, with both countries vowing to do what is necessary to protect their interests.

The US stepped in to assist in negotiations in 2019 and last week issued a statement saying an agreement had been reached, and urging Ethiopia to formally commit to it.

It said "final testing and filling should not take place" without all parties signing the agreement.

On Tuesday, Ethiopia's Foreign Minister Gedu Andargachew described the US statement as "undiplomatic", adding: "We want Americans to play a constructive role. Any other role is unacceptable."

The US would continue its "tireless efforts" to resolve the dispute, President Donald Trump told Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi in a phone call on Tuesday, Reuters reports.

Mike Pompeo's anti-China Africa trip

<https://www.dw.com/en/mike-pompeos-anti-china-africa-trip/a-52421032>

The United States is sending mixed signals to Africa. It wants to fight terrorism, reduce its troops on the continent, and boost economic ties. At the same time, it has banned some Africans from traveling to America.

ONU / UN :

UN envoy for Libya Ghassan Salame resigns, citing 'stress'

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/03/envoy-libya-ghassan-salame-resigns-citing-stress-200303071218017.html>

The former Lebanese culture minister says he can no longer remain in position because of health reasons.

The UN envoy for Libya has resigned citing health reasons after nearly three years in the post.

Appointed in July 2017, Ghassan Salame had recently been mediating three-tiered talks between Libya's warring sides on economic, political and military tracks.

In a tweet on Monday, Salame cited "this level of stress" as a reason behind his intention to step down as the UN's envoy for the war-wracked country.

"For two years, I tried to re-unite Libyans and restrain foreign interference [...] but for health reasons I can no longer continue with this level of stress," wrote Salame.

"Therefore I asked the [UN] secretary-general to relieve me of my duties."

Libya, a major oil producer, was plunged into chaos following a NATO-backed uprising in 2011 that toppled Muammar Gaddafi, who led the country for more than 40 years.

The inability of successive governments to demobilise and reintegrate fighters that helped remove Gaddafi compromised reconstruction efforts in the war-torn country.

Libya: Are Haftar's forces harbouring 'the new ISIL'? (2:53)

In April 2019, Khalifa Haftar, a renegade military commander based out of eastern Libya, launched an assault on the capital, Tripoli, where the country's internationally recognised government sits. 'Lack of support'

A UN spokesperson, Stephane Dujarric, confirmed that Secretary-General Antonio Guterres received Salame's resignation.

"The secretary-general has always had full confidence in Salame's work and the great efforts he has made to bring peace to Libya," Dujarric said. "[Guterres] will be discussing with Salame the way to ensure a smooth transition so as not to lose any momentum on the gains that have been made."

Salame, a former culture minister in his native Lebanon and an international relations professor, had time and again regretted a lack of cooperation on the part of the international community, especially countries that support one or the other of Libya's warring sides.

"Did I get the kind of support needed...?" Salame mused on Friday. "My answer is no. I need much more support."

An international summit was organised in Berlin in January with hopes of cementing a fragile truce brokered by Turkey and Russia, who support rival camps in the war.

That conference came after Turkey began deploying troops to Libya - including rebel fighters from Syria - and amid reports Russian mercenaries were assisting Haftar's forces outside Tripoli.

A final communique declared that the dozen countries participating in the meeting pledged to end the flow of weapons and armed personnel to Libya

But that promise was broken almost as soon as the document was signed, with media reports the next day indicating the United Arab Emirates, a key Haftar supporter, was flying in military equipment to Haftar's forces in eastern Libya.

DAM, NY, AGNEWS, <http://burundi-agnews.org>, Mardi 3 Mars 2020