

AFRICA : 18 AVRIL 2020 : [BURUNDI / CHINE : Le CNDD-FDD BUBANZA visite les coopératives SANGWE spécialisées riz - MADE IN BURUNDI - | SUDAN / EGYPT / ETHIOPIA Sudan rejects polarisation attempts in Renaissance Dam crisis | RDC : Arrestation de Kamerhe / Nouveau cas positif d'Ebola | CENTRAFIRQUE / RUSSIE : l'alignement du président Touadera sur Poutine | ALGERIA: Chief of intelligence arrested | GUINEABISSAU : Tender for solar power plants projects]

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IMAGES : INTUMWA , EDUARDO SOTERAS / AFP , CGTN , OKAPI, DIGITALCONGO , MONDEAFRIQUE.COM, newzimbabwe.com , constructionreviewonline , aa.com.tr

BURUNDI :

Burundi / Chine : Le CNDD-FDD BUBANZA visite les coopératives SANGWE spécialisées riz

[<http://burundi-agnews.org/diplomatie/burundi-chine-le-cndd-fdd-bubanza-visite-les-cooperatives-sangwe-specialisees-riz/>]

POLITIQUE, ELECTIONS 2020, DIPLOMATIE, ECONOMIE – BUBANZA (Commune MPANDA), Mercredi 15 avril 2020 – G.M. NDAYISHIMIYE Evariste, Secrétaire Général du CNDD-FDD, est le candidat aux Présidentielles 2020 pour sa formation politique.

Il s'était donné rendez-vous à BUBANZA avec la section provinciale du CNDD-FDD dans la plaine de Gifurwe. En plein milieu d'un champ de plus de 180 hectares ... Ensemble, ils ont accueilli S.E. LI CHANGLIN, Ambassadeur de CHINE au Burundi, pour lancement de la moisson du riz. Puis ils ont fait la visite de quelques coopératives SANGWE, spécialisées dans la culture du RIZ à BUBANZA.

Aujourd'hui, suite à la coopération bilatérale avec la CHINE, ces coopératives SANGWE produisent du riz, "made in Burundi". Ainsi, grâce à l'initiative de la Coopération d'Investissement Agro-pastorale (CIAP), 93 coopératives SANGWE provenant de 93 collines de Bubanza sont devenus de véritables producteurs de riz.

Le CNDD-FDD est la première formation politique du Burundi. Depuis 2005, ce parti politique burundais a entrepris : 1/ de décentraliser le pays, suite à la dictature militaire vécue entre 1965-66 à 2005 ; et 2/ de moderniser le système socio-économique des Burundi dont 2a) en modernisant le système éducatif; 2b) en encourageant le développement de l'esprit d'initiative (et l'utilisation des microcrédits) ; et 2c) en modernisant la gestion du territoire.

Aujourd'hui, l'heure est au bilan. Et le CNDD-FDD est encouragé à poursuivre le développement de son projet : <http://burundi-agnews.org/philosophie.htm>

Entre 2020 à 2030, le Burundi va vivre une révolution industrielle électrique.

Le Burundi s'apprête à organiser ses 4èmes élections démocratiques consécutives depuis 2005. Cela est le signe d'une très grande stabilité politique et institutionnelle dans cette région des grands lacs africains.

Le Candidat CNDD-FDD à la succession de S.E. NKURUNZIZA Pierre, le très populaire Président Africain du Burundi [<http://burundi-agnews.org/TDC> ; <http://burundi-agnews.org/inaugurations>] est G.M. NDAYISHIMIYE Evariste.

DAM, NY, AGNEWS, <http://burundi-agnews.org>, Vendredi 17 avril 2020 | Photo : CNDD-FDD Bubanza , INTUMWA

Burundi / COVID-19 : 1 cas POSITIF et 4 patients guéris – 17 avril 2020

[<http://burundi-agnews.org/globalisation-mondialisation/burundi-covid-19-1-cas-positif-et-4-patients-gueris-17-avril-2020/#more-56472>]

GLOBALISATION, SANTE, SECURITE – BUJUMBURA, Vendredi 17 avril 2020 – Le Ministère burundais de la Santé Publique vient de sortir un communiqué de presse.

Il y informe : 1/ la négativation du COVID – 19 pour les 4 anciens patients COVID-19 du Burundi. Ainsi, ils ne sont plus -POSITIFS- au COVID-19 ; et 2/ Sur 75 personnes testées le mercredi 15 avril 2020, 1 est sortie confirmée POSITIVE. La recherche des cas contact avec ce dernier est en cours.

Voici le communiqué du Ministère burundais de la Santé Publique : [

http://burundi-agnews.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/bdi_burundi_communique_sante_covid19_17042020_govbi.pdf]

En conclusion, le Burundi ne connaît plus qu'1 cas COVID-19 Positif. Et 4 sont guéris.

TANZANIA :

Magufuli declares 3 days of prayer to defeat COVID-19 in Tanzania

[<https://observer.ug/news/headlines/64327-magufuli-declares-3-days-of-prayer-to-defeat-covid-19-in-tanzania>]

Tanzania began observing three-days of national prayers Friday as COVID-19 infections increased. President John Magufuli made the declaration for nationwide prayer Thursday, urging Tanzanians to pray for God's protection and healing as 53 more people tested positive for the virus, raising the number of infections to 143 and one death Friday.

So far, five people have died from the coronavirus in Tanzania, where social gatherings have been suspended and schools closed, but places of worship remain open and people still move about without restrictions.

The appeal for prayers comes as Tanzania canceled this year's April 26 national holiday commemorating the 1964 merger of Tanganyika and Zanzibar to become Tanzania because of the virus outbreak.

Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa said Magufuli is redirecting the \$217,000 set aside for the holiday celebrations to go toward fighting the coronavirus in the country.

Tanzania allows learning for teen mothers

[<https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/ea/Tanzania-allows-learning-for-teen-mothers/4552908-5520914-dpa7h7/index.html>]

Tuesday April 14 2020 Tanzania has buckled under pressure from human rights groups, activists and the US will henceforth permit pregnant girls to resume formal education as prescribed by the Secondary Education Quality Improvement Project (Sequip) financed by the World Bank.

The \$500 million worth Sequip project targets to reach more than 6.5 million secondary school students across the country without discrimination, including girls who have dropped out of school for various reasons but especially pregnancy.

Following the WB's Sequip approval on March 31, the Ministry of Education has clarified to stakeholders and the public "to clear the confusion" regarding the Sequip project.

In a statement by Joyce Ndalichako, the minister of Education, Science and Technology clarified that the government will commit to ensure they continue with their education as recommended.

“The government is committed to ensure that they continue with their education as prescribed in the project,” reads the statement.

In 2017, President John Magufuli asked public schools to ban under age mothers from attending school, and in the past year, a number of Tanzanian pregnant girls have been expelled from schools. Speaking in Chalinze town, more than two years ago, President Magufuli said that girls would be too distracted to concentrate on their studies if they had a child, and their presence would be a bad influence on other girls.

Formal engagement

According to the minister, the government will remain committed to implementing the Sequip project by rendering to its designs and the agreements made with the World Bank.

“We reiterate our position that stakeholders will always be formally engaged at various stages and be informed on the implementation progress as the per agreed plan of action,” said Ms Ndalichako, “We also remain committed to provide inclusive and safe education for all students in Tanzania,” said the minister.

Ms Ndalichako added that children who pass the national examination will also be provided with the same opportunity to continue with their education in public schools, colleges and universities regardless of the institutions they attended.

However, currently the government of Tanzania has ordered closure of schools, due to coronavirus in the country.

RWANDA :

IMF Executive Board Approves a US\$109.4 Million Disbursement to Rwanda to address the COVID-19 Pandemic

[<https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2020/04/02/pr-20130-rwanda-imf-executive-board-approves-disbursement-to-address-covid19>]

April 2, 2020

The IMF approved the disbursement of US\$109.4 million to be drawn under the Rapid Credit Facility.

The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is rapidly unfolding, with the near-term outlook deteriorating quickly.

The authorities have acted fast by putting in place measures to help contain and mitigate the spread of the disease.

The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) today approved the disbursement of SDR80.1 million (about US\$109.4 million) to be drawn under the Rapid Credit Facility (RCF). This will serve to meet Rwanda’s urgent balance of payment needs stemming from the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is rapidly unfolding, with the near-term outlook deteriorating quickly. This has given a rise to significant fiscal and external financing needs. The

authorities have acted fast by putting in place measures to help contain and mitigate the spread of the disease.

The RCF funds will support the authorities' efforts by backstopping the decline in international reserves and providing financing to the budget for increased spending aimed at containing the epidemic and mitigating its economic impact. This additional IMF financing also ought to help catalyze further assistance from the international community, preferably in the form of grants.

The IMF continues to monitor Rwanda's situation closely and stands ready to provide policy advice and further support as needed.

Following the Executive Board's discussion of Rwanda, Mr. Tao Zhang, Deputy Managing Director and Acting Chair, issued the following statement:

Rwanda extends lockdown to April 30 as COVID-19 cases hit 143

<https://africa.cgtn.com/2020/04/18/rwanda-extends-lockdown-to-april-30-as-covid-19-cases-hit-143/>

The Rwanda government has extended the country's lockdown to April 30, as the number of confirmed coronavirus cases continue to rise.

Following a cabinet meeting held on Friday, the government agreed to extend the lockdown for a second time by 11 days.

The lockdown was expected to end on April 19.

"Unnecessary movements and visits outside the home are not permitted, except for essential services such as healthcare, food shopping, financial services and for the personnel performing such services as well as other key national projects," reads part of the communique.

Under the lockdown, people are obliged not to make unnecessary movements outside of their homes.

Businesses across the country are also closed except for those dealing in essential commodities like fuel, food items and medicine.

Services like banks and telecommunication companies are also considered essential and remain in operation.

The lockdown extension came as the Ministry of Health announced five new COVID-19 cases on Friday, raising the country's confirmed cases to 143.

The ministry also announced that within 24 hours, there had been five new recoveries that brought the number of patients discharged from designated treatment facilities to 65.

No death has been registered since the first case was confirmed in the country over a month ago.

During the lockdown, Rwanda's borders are also closed except for goods and cargo as well as returning citizens and legal residents who will be subject to a mandatory 14-day quarantine at designated locations.

“Shops and markets will remain closed, except those selling food, medicine (pharmacies), hygiene and cleaning products, fuel, and other essential items,” the cabinet memo reads.

President Paul Kagame is said to have thanked Rwandans for continued solidarity and for observing measures in place to slow the spread of COVID-19, according to a statement signed by Prime Minister Edouard Ngirente.

Rwanda : Request for Disbursement Under the Rapid Credit Facility-Press Release; Staff Report; and Statement by the Executive Director for Rwanda

<https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/CR/Issues/2020/04/16/Rwanda-Request-for-Disbursement-Under-the-Rapid-Credit-Facility-Press-Release-Staff-Report-49343>

Rwanda is suffering from the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The economic impact was being felt even before the first confirmed case was reported on March 14. The authorities’ policy response to the pandemic has been timely, scaling up health care spending and putting in place measures to help contain and mitigate the spread of the disease. This is compounding the difficulties from disaster management outlays already underway to address the damage caused by the heavy rains in the beginning of the year. The pandemic is also dampening domestic revenue mobilization and putting significant pressures on foreign exchange reserves.

Rwanda's stock market maintains stable amid coronavirus pandemic

[http://www.china.org.cn/world/Off_the_Wire/2020-04/18/content_75948990.htm]
Xinhua, April 18, 2020

KIGALI, April 18 (Xinhua) -- Rwanda's stock exchange market remained stable compared to the same period last year, as it closed the first quarter with slightly higher traded volumes, the Rwanda Stock Exchange has said.

Compared with the first quarter in 2019, the all share index (ALSI) increased by 10.7 percent and the Rwanda stock index (RSI) reduced by 1.2 percent, Chief Executive Officer of Rwanda's only stock exchange told Xinhua in a written interview on Friday.

Rwanda reported its first COVID-19 case on March 14, the number rose to 143 on Friday. Since March 21, it has placed a lockdown to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus, which was extended until April 30.

The issuance programs have continued as expected on the fixed income side, for example after the COVID-19 outbreak in Rwanda, the exchange concluded two issuances, a 3-year and a 7-year reopening of T+ Bonds, he said.

"The subscription levels were quite good, registering a level of 143 percent, 57 percent local investors and 43 percent foreign. At this time we shall keep monitoring what happens in the coming weeks," he added.

The stock exchange has taken precautionary physical distancing measures, and orders are sent online by stock brokers and are processed without them coming to the exchange, according to him.

Investors and other clients can send inquiries electronically or by phone but "trading has continued without interruptions", he said.

Last year, Rwanda Stock Exchange recorded a total turnover of 25.42 billion Rwandan francs (about 82 U.S. dollars) traded in the secondary market, and this year it projects an increase of at least 20 percent in trading volumes, according to the official.

Currently, Rwanda Stock Exchange has around 20,800 active investment accounts. Enditem

UGANDA :

10 S.Sudanese nationals arrested for entering Uganda illegally

[<https://observer.ug/news/headlines/64323-10-s-sudanese-nationals-arrested-for-entering-uganda-illegally>]

Amuru police are holding 10 South Sudanese nationals for illegally entering into Uganda. The suspects are locked up at Elegu police station on charges of illegal entry. Patrick Jimmy Okema, the Aswa Region Police spokesperson, says the suspects entered Uganda over the past two days using porous borders.

He says the suspects created new entry points after the old ones were blocked by security. He identifies the suspects as Daniel Amis, Samuel Okot, Paul Aliko, David Ojok, and Robert Okot, all residents of Abila village Nimule and Pagirinya and Kololi camps respectively. They reportedly crossed to Uganda from South Sudan on April 15, 2020.

The others are Regina Abi, Cecilia Anyang, Maria Apere, Regina Adwaru and Garang Angweng. He says the suspects crossed into Uganda with the help of fishermen who carried them on their backs across River Unyama purportedly to pick their food ration because they are refugees.

According to Okema, the suspects crossed to South Sudan before the COVID-19 lock-down and returned to Uganda to get food as they have nothing to feed in their country, South Sudan. Michael Lakony, the Amuru district LC V chairperson, says he has severally raised concern on the issue of the porous borders compromising public health in the district.

He says there's an urgent need by the government to operationalise the quarantine center so that suspects are kept there so as to reduce the risk of spreading the virus.

No new coronavirus cases recorded in Uganda

[<https://observer.ug/news/headlines/64304-no-new-coronavirus-cases-recorded-in-uganda>]
April 16, 2020 / Written by OUR REPORTER

All 1,032 suspected coronavirus samples tested negative on Wednesday at the Uganda Virus Research Institute, ministry of Health has announced. That means Uganda's confirmed coronavirus cases remain at 55 with 12 recoveries and 0 deaths.

According to the ministry, out of the 1,032 samples tested, 551 were samples from cargo truck drivers while 481 were from individuals under quarantine and their contacts across the country. Uganda banned public transport and non-essential private transport until May 5. Cargo trucks with a total of 3 crew, including the driver, are still allowed to cross borders with government intensifying testing at border entries.

On Wednesday Mulago national referral hospital discharged 4 patients who have fully recovered from the coronavirus disease. According to the officials, the discharged patients have tested negative twice and are now clinically free of the virus.

They were part of the 23 patients that the hospital has been managing with officials saying they might discharge another 6 patients today Thursday pending their results from the Uganda Virus Research Institute.

This week, Adjumani hospital discharged its single patient and Entebbe Grade B hospital discharged 7 patients a few days ago. But as Uganda reported no new cases on Wednesday, there was a spike to 88 in Tanzania after 35 new cases and one death were registered on the same day. Tanzania remains one of the few countries in the world that have resisted the World Health Organization's (WHO) recommendations of total lockdown so as to prevent the spread of the virus. Meanwhile, the USA registered a record of 2,457 deaths in 24 hours on Thursday to take its total deaths to 28,504 - the highest in the world. France registered 1,438 deaths on Wednesday. Globally there were 7,772 new deaths recorded and 79,844 new cases. A total of 2,077,750 cases have been confirmed around the world.

KENYA :

Kenya to evacuate citizens in China at own cost

[<https://www.nation.co.ke/news/Kenya-ready-to-evacuate-citizens-in-China/1056-5527872-15rkjlbz/index.html>]

Saturday April 18 2020 By AGGREY MUTAMBO

The Kenyan government has asked its nationals living in China and willing to be evacuated at own cost to file their contact details as soon as possible.

Officials at the Kenyan Embassy in Beijing issued a notice on Friday asking anyone ready to buy a ticket out of China to send their information via an online platform to be helped out of the country, via Guangzhou, the commercial city in the southern Guangdong province.

One of the conditions issued said only Kenyans will be evacuated as long as they can pay their own ticket. In addition, those Kenyans will have to prove they are free of the novel coronavirus disease (Covid-19), which means they will have to be certified by Chinese medical authorities.

Once they are flown out of the country, they will also be forced into quarantine for 14 days, upon landing in Nairobi.

“If you are ready to travel under these conditions, fill the above QR code so that the bio data reaches the Embassy immediately,” said a notice sent out to the Kenyan community in China.

“Please note that the departure will be from Guangzhou on a date to be determined immediately the above information is available (sic). Kenyans with questions were told to inquire from Mr Kimani Waweru, the deputy head of Mission in Beijing on +86600690463.

Kenya reports 12 new cases of Covid-19, total rises to 246

[<https://www.nation.co.ke/news/Covid-19--Kenya-confirms-12-new-cases/1056-5526772-a5ndx/index.html>]

Friday April 17 2020

The government has received yet another consignment of personal protective equipment and testing items from China as the Ministry of Health reported 12 more cases of Covid-19.

Speaking Friday at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, where he received the goods, Health Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe said that the 12, who were picked from 450 samples, bring the number of positive cases to 246.

Mr Kagwe, who was accompanied by Cabinet secretaries Fred Matiang’i and James Macharia, listed what he got from Kenya Airways: 500,000 three-ply masks, 200,000 testing and sampling tubes, 4,000 shoe covers for health workers, 300 static shoes used in theatres and 76,000 N95 masks.

This is welcome given that the masks that were being made at the four textile companies had not passed quality tests as of early this week.

STRATEGY

Kenya’s strategy has included aggressive contact tracing and testing, but this has been dampened by — among many other things — the interruption of the global procurement chain, and demand from all over the world...

SOUTH SUDAN :

Bans, closures of business begin to bite South Sudan

[<https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/ea/Bans-closures-of-business-begin-to-bite-South-Sudan/4552908-5527766-15nqab/index.html>]

Saturday April 18 2020 / By GARANG A. MALAK

The restrictions imposed by the South Sudanese government to contain the spread of Covid-19 have begun biting its people.

South Sudan was among the last countries in sub-Saharan Africa to report a case of the coronavirus. To date, the country has reported four cases since a 29-year-old UN employee, who had travelled from the Netherlands through Addis Ababa to Juba tested positive for the virus.

It took that one case for President Salva Kiir to ban public gatherings and ask all non-essential businesses to close. However, the directives did not go down well with some.

Awer David Garang, who operates a mobile money shop, said he used to make \$200 in profits a day, but now describes the pandemic as an extreme horrible season.

“Due to the closure of businesses, I now receive less than 15 customers in a day, compared with before when I used to served more than 60 customers in a day.”

Taban Sulieman, the chief executive of JJ and Sons Hardware, says since the closure of non-essential businesses, he has not opened for work and the future of his business seems dark, if there will be no government policies to assist them.

SUDAN :

Dozens rally in Sudan to support ex-president Bashir

[https://www.newvision.co.ug/new_vision/news/1518029/dozens-rally-sudan-support-president-bashir]

By AFP / Added 17th April 2020 09:58 PM

"Dozens of Bashir's supporters gathered in the city centre after Friday prayers, holding banners... and chanting 'down with Hamdok'," said eyewitness Abdelrahman Ahmed.

SUDAN CONFLICT

Dozens demonstrated in eastern Sudan on Friday in support of toppled president Omar al-Bashir, eyewitnesses said, a year after the longtime dictator was ousted amid mass protests.

Friday's demonstrations in the eastern city of Kassala demanded the overthrow of a transitional government led by Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok since September.

"Dozens of Bashir's supporters gathered in the city centre after Friday prayers, holding banners... and chanting 'down with Hamdok'," said eyewitness Abdelrahman Ahmed.

The protests, fuelled by growing economic hardships, were held defiance of a government ban on large gatherings amid the novel coronavirus pandemic.

Another eyewitness, Hamed Mohamed Shahed, told AFP that protesters had set out from several streets and rallied at a marketplace in the city, close to the border with Eritrea.

There were no immediate reports of the police intervening, but Sudan's security forces dispersed similar small protests on Thursday outside Khartoum's army headquarters, site of a weeks-long sit-in last year.

Later, the army had sealed roads leading to the building with concrete blocks and barbed wire, saying they would remain blocked until further notice to "maintain security and stability".

Bashir was ousted by the army on April 11, 2019 following months of nationwide protests triggered by bread price hikes.

Hamdok took power as head of a transitional government which was sworn in last September, but Sudan's economy remains in deep crisis.

The secession of oil-rich South Sudan in 2011 hit state revenues.

Despite Washington lifting some sanctions in 2017, Khartoum remains on a US blacklist as a state sponsor of terrorism, stifling investment.

Earlier this month, Sudanese authorities announced another increase in bread prices, with a Sudanese pound now buying only a 50-gramme loaf, down from 70 grammes.

In response to the novel coronavirus pandemic, the government has also announced a 24-hour curfew for three weeks starting Saturday across Khartoum state, including the capital and its twin city Omdurman.

Confirmed COVID-19 cases in Sudan have so far reached 32, including five fatalities.

Households continue to suffer from frequent power cuts and most Sudanese still queue up for hours to buy staple foods or to fill their cars with petrol.

Sudan rejects polarisation attempts in Renaissance Dam crisis

[<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20200417-sudan-rejects-polarisation-attempts-in-renaissance-dam-crisis/>]

April 17, 2020 at 5:03 am | Published in: Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, News, Sudan

Sudan's State Minister for Foreign Affairs Omer Gamar Eldin announced on Wednesday that Khartoum rejects polarisation attempts by the two sides of the Ethiopian Renaissance Dam crisis.

The Sudanese newspaper Al-Tayar quoted Gamar Eldin as stating: "We are not a chorus dancing to Egyptian or Ethiopian music."

Egyptians resent what they call Sudanese support for Ethiopia in the dam file, while Khartoum claims it is protecting its interests without affecting Cairo's interests. "We are partners in the management of the dam, and Sudan's position stems primarily from the findings of the specialists and experts, who determined the gains and losses from the dam. According to the specialists, the gains are greater. We are partners even in the management of the dam, and from our position, it is our duty to guarantee Egypt's share," explained Gamar Eldin.

Cairo fears the potential negative impact of the dam on its annual flow of water from the Nile River, while Addis Ababa asserts that it does not aim to affect Egypt's interests, and that the building of the dam is mainly aimed to generate electricity.

Ethiopia on Renaissance Dam: 'We will not suffer for the sake of Egypt's prosperity'

Gamar Eldin stressed that there is no division in the position of the Sudanese government, headed by Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok, on the dam.

On Tuesday, Hamdok discussed in a meeting with the Sudanese negotiating team the position of negotiations on the filling and operation of the dam.

The meeting included the minister of foreign affairs, Asma Mohamed Abdalla, the minister of irrigation and water resources, Yasser Abbas, and the members of the Negotiation Committee.

According to a statement by the Sudanese cabinet, Hamdok ensured: "Sudan's negotiating position and the arrangements adopted by the committee in terms of the information provided by the committees to support the negotiation."

Egypt signed the initials, at the end of February, on an agreement to fill and operate the dam, which was sponsored by the US with the participation of the World Bank, considering it "fair", but Ethiopia rejected the agreement, while Sudan still has reservations about it.

"Khartoum will be a mediator between Egypt and Ethiopia with the aim of reaching an agreement on the Renaissance Dam," confirmed Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, deputy head of the Transitional Military Council, during a visit to Cairo in mid-March. At that time, Egypt's foreign minister, Sameh Shoukry, announced in TV statements that: "The negotiations with the Ethiopian side are completely stalled at the moment."

ETHIOPIE :

News: Twelve member Chinese medical team arrive in Ethiopia to help contain COVID19

[<https://addisstandard.com/news-twelve-member-chinese-medical-team-arrive-in-ethiopia-to-help-contain-covid19/>]

addisstandard / April 16, 2020 /

Addis Abeba, April 16/2020 – A 12 member Chinese medical expert team, invited by the Ethiopian government and dispatched by the Chinese government, are expected to arrive in Ethiopia today. The team consists of experts on respiratory diseases, public health, nursing & Traditional Chinese Medicine and will help their Ethiopian counterparts to help contain the spread of COVID-19 in Ethiopia. They are selected by the provincial health committee of Sichuan, the Embassy of China in Ethiopia said in a statement sent to state affiliated FBC. "It is a full demonstration of solidarity, with the vision of building a community with a shared future for mankind, put forward by Chinese President Xi Jinping, and an epitome of the Comprehensive Strategic Cooperation Partnership between China and Ethiopia," the statement said.

China and Ethiopia, Part 4: Mekelle Industrial Park

[<https://thediplomat.com/2020/04/china-and-ethiopia-part-4-mekelle-industrial-park/>]

Ethiopia, with dreams of being a textile and apparel manufacturing hub, is following China's blueprint for industrial parks.

By Istvan Tarrosy, Zoltán Vörös, and Seife Hailu Gebreslassie / April 16, 2020

In 2018 and 2019 we published three articles about transportation projects in Ethiopia, a key manifestation of China's Africa policy in the country: the first modern light railway (tram) system of sub-Saharan Africa in the capital, Addis Ababa, and the Addis–Djibouti railway connecting the landlocked country to the maritime trade routes of the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea. In January 2020, we followed this up by investigating another possible catalyst of economic growth: Mekelle Industrial Park in Ethiopia's Tigray National Regional State.

As numerous scholars and experts have pointed out, industrial parks can act as catalysts of economic growth. In a 2019 paper, Ermias Wedajo Azmach underlines that most of the industrial parks “aim to improve competitiveness to facilitate the economic transformation of their host countries faster or more effectively than would be possible without them.” Ethiopia's developmental state features the construction of large-scale projects — including railways, highways, as well as hydroelectric dams — along the lines of an ideology of development executed by a strong-handed central government, following certain successful East Asian patterns. According to a 2018 UNIDO case study report on industrial park development in Ethiopia, we can witness that “the industrial park economy has become a global trend.” It was therefore a pragmatic decision by Ethiopia in 2014 to establish the Ethiopian Industrial Parks Development Corporation (IPDC) to draw plans and strategies about how to utilize industrial zones for long-term national interests. The government has been making efforts to attract foreign investors from different corners of the world, and diversification of foreign affairs has become a key priority for the Abiy administration. Although the trade and investment relationship with China has stayed robust, the Gulf States, Russia, and Western countries have also appeared recently as major competitors for Ethiopian deals.

The city of Mekelle is located in the northern part of Ethiopia, in the Tigray National Regional State of the federal republic, with roughly 300,000 inhabitants. Already at the end of 2009 most of its 30,000 micro and small enterprises, as reported by Bryant Cannon, were in the informal sector. With an increasing flow of inbound investment since 2002, Mekelle has become a center of attention in terms of infrastructural and industrial development. As Tigray has long enjoyed an intensive collaboration with the People's Republic of China (PRC), it is no surprise that one of the industrial parks having come into being in the last six years is closely knitted into Mekelle's network of connectivity. Established in 2017, Mekelle Industrial Park is located only about 5 kilometers from the main city, covering an area of 100 hectares, and is closely connected with the major economic and trade routes across the region. The city is also a hub of intellectual and research capacities thanks mainly to the presence of Mekelle University, one of the most prestigious institutions of higher education in Ethiopia...

Ethiopia records nine new COVID-19 cases raising the total to 105

[<https://africa.cgtn.com/2020/04/18/ethiopia-records-nine-new-covid-19-cases-raising-the-total-to-105/>]

By Nyawira Mwangi

Ethiopia's confirmed coronavirus cases have reached a total of 105 after nine more people were confirmed positive for the virus.

From the total of 659 medical tests that were conducted within the last 24 hours, nine tested positive while the total number of those receiving treatment stands at 84 and one person recovered.

Out of all the nine individuals, eight were Ethiopian nationals and one from Equatorial Guinea - three females and six males.

The ages of the nine individuals are between 20 and 38 years old.

Ethiopia, Africa's second-most populous nation with about 107 million people, confirmed its first case of COVID-19 on March 13.

The Ethiopian government has instituted a wide range of measures to contain the spread of COVID-19.

Ethiopia turns to upstream countries amid Nile Dam dispute with Egypt

[<https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2020/04/egypt-ethiopia-nile-dam-dispute-upstream-countries-support.html>]

Ayah Aman April 17, 2020

CAIRO — The last round of talks held in Washington in late February on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) faltered to yield a comprehensive agreement on the filling and operation of the dam after Ethiopia withdrew from the negotiations.

A State Department readout of a call between US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on April 13 made no reference to the dam dispute. This comes at a time when the Trump administration, along with the World Bank, has been arbitrating discussions among Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan.

Addis Ababa has since turned to the Nile Basin countries to shore up support in a bid to confront Egypt's international moves to block Ethiopia's unilateral decision to start filling the dam without any agreement with Egypt and Sudan — thus imposing a policy fait accompli.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed announced April 1 the start of the filling of the dam by the next rain season that starts in June. Meanwhile, Ethiopia's President Sahle-Work Zewde paid visits to Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda, which are member states in the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI), a regional organization tasked with managing cooperation between the Nile Basin countries.

Zewde called for the need of the Nile Basin countries to adhere to just and equitable use of water, and reject any agreements that were not concluded in peaceful means, a jab at the historical water agreements signed during the British colonial era.

After the visits, several official Ethiopian media reports accused Cairo of obstructing the dam talks and trying to impose a colonial-like agreement, while clinging to the 1959 water-sharing agreement, whereby Egypt receives an annual release of 55.5 billion cubic meters of water from the Nile.

Sudan and Egypt had signed the agreement to organize water management in the downstream countries.

On April 3, the official Ethiopian News Agency quoted members of the government's negotiating delegation, who accused Egypt of wanting to "impose its colonial desires," and calling upon "the Nile Basin countries to ensure that they have a fair and reasonable share of the Nile waters."

Although Ethiopian officials have been evoking what they called "colonial agreements," Egypt and Ethiopia share several other historical agreements on the Nile when Ethiopia was not part of any colony, such as the 1902 agreement signed by Emperor of Ethiopia Menelik II. According to this agreement, Ethiopia pledged not to build any facilities on the banks of the Nile without prior consultation with Egypt.

Under a 1993 agreement, Ethiopia also undertook not to construct facilities that would cause significant damage to Egypt's share of the Nile waters.

Commenting on Ethiopia's claims that Egypt was seeking to thwart the negotiations over the historical shares of the Nile waters, a technology official in the Egyptian negotiating delegation told Al-Monitor, "Since the signing of the 2015 Declaration of Principles, Egypt has been committed politically, legally and technically to its [the declaration's] terms and provisions to reach a comprehensive and fair agreement regarding the filling and operation of the GERD."

The source, who refused to be named, added, "Egypt has attended all tripartite meetings between Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan, and meetings under the auspices of the United States and the World Bank, which shows Cairo's seriousness and flexibility amid the intransigent and dodging positions of the Ethiopian side. This led to the faltering of the Washington talks. [Ethiopia] has been trying to evade its obligations and [the terms of the Declaration of Principles] and to start the unilateral filling of the dam disregarding all legal norms."

Commenting on Ethiopia's attempt to mobilize the Nile upstream countries against Egypt and threatening to reinvoke the Cooperative Framework Agreement of the Nile Basin countries, the source said, "This agreement is dead and it was not accepted or signed by all of the Nile Basin countries. Ethiopia's attempt to shuffle the cards will not be in the interest of any party."

"Egypt maintains good relations with the Nile Basin countries as there has been cooperation at the technical and political levels regarding the issue of water management. All attempts to push upstream countries to sway Egypt's position will be to no avail," the source said.

The Cooperative Framework Agreement was signed by six of the upstream countries in 2010, with the exception of Egypt and Sudan, which rejected several contentious terms, including one that deprived Egypt from its Nile water share and another that gave the upstream countries the right to build dams on the Nile without any arrangement with the downstream countries (Egypt and Sudan).

Shortly after the agreement was signed, Egypt withdrew from the NBI and froze all cooperation activities with the Nile Basin countries conducted under the initiative's umbrella.

Mohamed Nasr Eldin Allam, a former Egyptian minister of water resources and irrigation, told Al-Monitor, "Ethiopia's propaganda, whereby it accuses Egypt of clinging to its historical shares in the Nile water — albeit Egypt's legitimate right — is an attempt to get out of the terms of the 1997 UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lake and the Helsinki Rules on the Uses of the Waters of International River. These agreements

stipulate prior notice and the submission of ecological studies that any [construction] project would not cause any environment, social and economic damage to the dam safety and structure.”

Allam, who was in office when the Cooperative Framework Agreement was signed, added, “Ethiopia resorting to the upstream countries is going to get it nowhere, as Addis Ababa is not linked to these countries in the Equatorial Lakes.”

Geographically, the Blue Nile, one of the main tributaries of the Nile, flows from its source in the Ethiopian Highlands and merges with the White Nile in Sudan, the longer tributary that streams from the Equatorial Lakes all the way to Egypt.

“During the negotiations on the Cooperative Framework Agreement talks, Ethiopia was leading blocks from the Nile upstream countries against Egypt, claiming that Cairo was taking the lion’s share of the Nile water,” Allam noted.

Ethiopia’s efforts to incite upstream countries against Egypt depend on its ability to forge real interests with these countries 10 years after Egypt suspended its membership in the NBI. During this time, Ethiopia did not achieve any tangible progress in the framework of regional cooperation to enhance the utilization of the Nile water in favor of the basin countries.

Read more: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2020/04/egypt-ethiopia-nile-dam-dispute-upstream-countries-support.html#ixzz6JxhnLDHE>

SOMALIE :

Turkey sends coronavirus aid to Somalia

[<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/latest-on-coronavirus-outbreak/turkey-sends-coronavirus-aid-to-somalia/1808609>]

Aircraft carrying medical supplies to land in Mogadishu
Isa Toprak | 17.04.2020 ANKARA

Turkey dispatched a planeload of medical supplies on Friday to Somalia in order to aid its fight against the novel coronavirus.

The aircraft will land in Somalia’s capital Mogadishu.

In line with its policy of helping countries in need, Turkey has dispatched aid to Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Kosovo, as well as Libya, Italy, and Spain, among others.

[Turkey sends medical aid to Somalia]

Turkey sends medical aid to Somalia

After originating in Wuhan, China last December, COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus, has spread to at least 185 countries and regions across the world.

The pandemic has killed over 146,000 people and infected some 2.17 million, while over 553,000 have recovered from the disease, according to figures compiled by the U.S.-based Johns Hopkins University.

***** CENTRAL AFRICA COMMUNITY *****

RDC CONGO :

Beni: le nouveau cas positif d'Ebola est décédé

[<https://www.digitalcongo.net/article/5e91ca87397ec000048f2135>]

Kinshasa 11-04-2020 Sante - Le Comité multisectoriel de lutte contre la maladie à virus Ebola est sur la piste des 117 cas suspects au Nord-Kivu et en Ituri.

Il avait 26 ans, il était électricien et a été testé positif d'Ebola vendredi 10 avril à Beni, à deux jours seulement de la déclaration de la fin définitive de la pandémie. Ce cas positif a malheureusement trouvé la mort le même jour, selon les informations livrées par le Comité multisectoriel de lutte contre la maladie à virus Ebola. Le même comité dit poursuivre actuellement 117 cas suspects, dont deux probables localisés à Mandima en Ituri.

L'épidémie d'Ebola sevit depuis 2018 dans l'Est du pays et a fait plus de 2. 000 morts. Le dernier malade est sorti de l'hôpital il y a une quarantaine de jours sans aucun autre cas ne soit déclaré positif.

En plus d'Ebola, la RDC fait face à la pandémie du coronavirus et surtout, depuis plus de deux ans, à l'épidémie de la rougeole.

Socrate Nsimba

Après des combats, la Zambie récupère une localité congolaise disputée

[<https://www.digitalcongo.net/article/5e76051ea654f800041912db/>]

Kinshasa 21-03-2020 Politique - Des combats ont opposés des soldats zambiens à l'armée congolaise depuis plus de deux jours. Hier, vendredi 20 mars, Kibanwa – une localité congolaise disputée avec la Zambie – aurait été récupérée par l'armée zambienne. Zoé Kabila entrevoit une solution diplomatique.

« Les incidents entre l'armée zambienne et congolaise ont eu lieu à Kibanwa près de Moliro, zone frontière entre les deux pays, toujours sous contrôle zambien. Des tractations sont toujours en cours entre autorités provinciales congolaises et la Zambie. », a rapporté une source.

Depuis une semaine, des combats opposent des soldats de Zambie et de la RDC à la frontière des deux pays, confirme RFI. Au centre du conflit, le village de Kibanwa, que revendique la Zambie. Plusieurs autres sources annoncent que des soldats zambiens ont fait incursion sur ce village situé à

300 kilomètres de Moba-centre, dans la province du Tanganyika, et ont implanté le drapeau zambien en emportant les couleurs nationales congolaises qui s'y trouvaient.

La diplomatie congolaise est mise en branle pour élucider les causes de ce conflit. La ministre congolaise des Affaires étrangères, Marie Ntumba Nzeza, a fait un aller-retour à Lusaka jeudi, 19 mars 2020. Le gouverneur du Tanganyika, Zoé Kabila, s'est lui rendu le même jour à Kibanwa, le village disputé. Pour le gouverneur de cette province, la solution à ce problème pourra être trouvée par des voies diplomatiques.

Selon des sources concordantes contactées par RFI, les militaires zambiens étaient à la poursuite de pêcheurs congolais qui avaient violé les eaux territoriales zambiennes, faisant usage de filets prohibés. Vendredi, le village de Kibanwa était encore sous contrôle des troupes zambiennes. Ce village récupéré se trouve près de la frontière entre les deux pays.

Dido Nsapu

Pour André-Alain Atundu, l'arrestation de Kamerhe « est une chose normale en démocratie... »

[<https://www.digitalcongo.net/article/5e919b34397ec000048f2133/>]

Kinshasa 11-04-2020 Politique - Après un silence, le Front commun pour le Congo (FCC) de l'ex-président Joseph Kabila sort du bois. Par l'entremise du communicant Atundu, cette plateforme politique estime que la coalition FCC – CACH n'est pas un syndicat de crime pour se protéger mutuellement...

Après avoir pris un moment de silence depuis l'arrestation de Vital Kamerhe, directeur de cabinet du président congolais, Félix Tshisekedi, le FCC – plateforme membre de la coalition au pouvoir – a donné de la voix. « La coalition FCC–CACH n'est pas un syndicat de crime pour se protéger mutuellement des méfaits commis », a-t-il déclaré vendredi 10 avril à Kinshasa, au cours d'un point de presse.

D'après André-Alain Atundu, « l'arrestation de Vital Kamerhe est heureusement ou malheureusement une chose normale en démocratie. » Avant de préciser que « mais celle-ci n'enlève pas la présomption d'innocence. » Il appartient, selon lui, à la justice d'expliquer la pertinence de mettre [Vital Kamerhe] en détention à la Prison centrale de Makala. « C'est au magistrat de nous dire pourquoi il a jugé opportun de mettre à Makala une personnalité aussi importante, qui est toujours directeur de cabinet », a-t-il répondu à une question d'un journaliste.

Pour rappel, le directeur de cabinet de Félix Tshisekedi a été arrêté, le mercredi 8 avril dernier, après 6 heures d'audition liée au détournement présumé de fonds destinés aux travaux de 100 jours initiés par le président congolais. Vital Kamerhe avait d'abord boycotté la première invitation du parquet près la Cour d'Appel de Kinshasa/Matete le lundi 6 avril, fustigeant la « légèreté » avec laquelle l'invitation lui avait été adressée. Une deuxième invitation, en bonne et due forme, lui avait rapidement parvenu le même lundi, cette fois-là, pour un rendez-vous de mercredi 8 avril. Ce qui s'est soldé par une arrestation provisoire.

Dido Nsapu

Inondations au Sud-Kivu : Tshisekedi exprime sa solidarité aux familles touchées

[<https://www.digitalcongo.net/article/5e9aae637379a30004d61a9c/>]

Kinshasa 18-04-2020 Politique - Après les pluies diluviennes ayant occasionné des crues meurtrières dans plusieurs provinces, principalement au Sud-Kivu, le président congolais Félix Tshisekedi a, au cours du conseil des ministres tenu en vidéo-conférence vendredi 17 avril 2020, exprimé sa compassion aux familles touchées par cette catastrophe naturelle.

Le chef de l'Etat congolais a exprimé, au sujet des inondations survenues dans les provinces de Sud-Kivu, Haut-Lomami, Maniema et Tanganyika, "sa compassion et sa solidarité à l'égard des familles éprouvées."

Il a demandé au Gouvernement "de tout mettre en œuvre pour venir en aide aux populations affectées, cela en dégageant les moyens nécessaires.", rapporte dans un compte-rendu, Jolino Makelele, ministre de la communication et porte-parole du gouvernement.

Félix Tshisekedi a aussi demandé au Gouvernement "l'envoi d'une forte délégation gouvernementale plurisectorielle sur les lieux, afin de mieux appréhender les différentes implications de ce drame et d'établir un rapport aussi exhaustif que possible".

Mais de son côté, le Premier Ministre a informé le Président de la République et les membres du Gouvernement, des instructions qu'il a déjà données au ministre en charge des Affaires humanitaires en rapport avec l'état des besoins que celui-ci lui a présenté, note le compte-rendu de cette réunion. "Les moyens financiers conséquents seront débloqués à cette occasion.", ajoute le document.

Ce drame a suscité des réactions du côté de la classe politique et de la société civile. Le député national Delly Sesanga, élu de Luiza dans la province du Kasai central, a estimé qu'une action urgente du gouvernement est

nécessaire. "Les images qui nous parviennent d'Uvira sont apocalyptiques. Nous compatissons avec nos compatriotes pour lesquels une action urgente et énergique du gouvernement est nécessaire", a déclaré Sesanga. Depuis sa cellule de la prison de Makala où il est détenu, Vital Kamerhe, directeur de cabinet du président de la République s'est dit "consterné" par ce drame.

Dans la province du Sud-Kivu, le gouverneur Théo Ngwabidje, rapporte que les pluies diluviennes ont fait au moins 24 morts et détruit plus de 3.500 maisons, touchant plus de 77.000 personnes. Dido Nsapu

CONGO :

Confinement au Congo: des magasins pillés à Brazzaville en plein couvre-feu

<https://beninwebtv.com/2020/04/confinement-au-congo-des-magasins-pilles-a-brazzaville-en-plein-couvre-feu/>

Par Marturin S. ATCHA le 17 Avr 2020 à 13:50

Au Congo Brazzaville, des boutiques et magasins sont pillés nuitamment, alors que le pays vit sous couvre-feu depuis quelques semaines. Un état de chose qui préoccupe le gouvernement engagé dans la lutte contre le coronavirus.

Le phénomène de pillage des boutiques et grands magasins prend plus d'ampleur à Brazzaville. Selon les témoignages des victimes à RFI, des produits sont souvent dérobés nuitamment à un moment où les populations sont obligées à rester chez elles. En effet, des individus malintentionnés profitent des mesures gouvernementales décrétées dans le cadre de la lutte contre le coronavirus pour éventrer et dépouiller les boutiques.

Angola and Congo-Brazzaville set to reach maritime boundary accord

[<https://www.upstreamonline.com/exploration/angola-and-congo-brazzaville-set-to-reach-maritime-boundary-accord/2-1-782222>]

Congo-Brazzaville and Angola have committed to resolving their long-standing marine boundary dispute. The African neighbours, citing an African Union Resolution urging all member states to agree their maritime borders "in peace and security", are aiming to resolve the dispute by the

CAMEROUN :

Chinese help for virus gets wary reception in France

[<https://www.journalducameroun.com/en/chinese-help-for-virus-gets-wary-reception-in-france/>]

Published on 18.04.2020 at 06h54 by AFP

An operation by France's Chinese community to help the diaspora during the coronavirus outbreak by distributing masks, disinfectant and gloves has prompted questions and legal problems for some of its backers.

Sceptical of the French government's response to the epidemic, the Chinese embassy, business leaders and ex-pat associations have handed out so-called "COVID kits", masks and other protective equipment to their compatriots.

But this landed some in trouble with the law.

Among the masks given out were the highly sought-after FFP2 type, which in times of critical supply shortages have been reserved for medical personnel on the frontlines of France's coronavirus battle.

Early in the outbreak, France had requisitioned all face mask stocks and production for distribution to doctors, nurses and caregivers.

Yet on April 5, police in Paris detained two representatives of Chinese associations for possession of some 15,000 masks.

Two days later, three students were arrested while handing out Chinese embassy-sponsored "COVID kits" in the Paris suburbs, an operation which caused people to amass in contravention of France's strict social distancing regulations to stem the virus spread...

Cameroun: les Forces de défense et de sécurité fabriquent ...

[<https://www.journalducameroun.com/cameroun-les-forces-de-defense-et-de-securite-fabriquent-leurs-propres-masques-contre-le-covid-19/>]

Journal du Cameroun-

Cameroun: les Forces de défense et de sécurité fabriquent leurs propres masques contre le Covid-19.

CENTRAFRIQUE :

Le Maroc envoie un avion chargé d'aide en Centrafrique

[<https://www.bladi.net/maroc-avion-aide-centrafrique,67627.html>]

18 avril 2020 - 07h30 - Monde

Désormais une référence au Moyen-Orient et en Afrique en ce qui concerne les mesures pour enrayer le covid-19, le Maroc a décidé de porter assistance à quelques pays africains, dont la République centrafricaine.

Un Boeing 767 cargo de Royal air Maroc a atterri ce jeudi 16 avril, à l'aéroport de Bangui, capitale de la République centrafricaine, avec de l'aide d'urgence marocaine pour soutenir les efforts de la RCA dans la gestion de la pandémie du nouveau coronavirus, a indiqué dans un tweet, Global Impact Intelligence.

Si des précisions sont données sur la provenance et l'objectif de cet appui, aucun détail n'a été fait sur la nature de l'aide convoyée en RCA par le Maroc pour soutenir ce pays face à l'urgence de l'heure.

En début de semaine, le roi Mohammed VI avait proposé dans un entretien téléphonique avec les présidents de la Côte d'Ivoire et du Sénégal, une initiative commune aux chefs d'État africains afin d'endiguer la pandémie.

En attendant la mise sur pied de cette initiative, d'ailleurs saluée par plusieurs médias européens, le royaume a une nouvelle fois fait preuve de solidarité pour aider la RCA, déjà affaiblie par un conflit-intercommunautaire.

Centrafrique, l'alignement du président Touadera sur Poutine

By Aza Boukhris - 13 avril 2020 <https://mondafrique.com/centrafrique-lalignement-du-president-touadera-sur-poutine/>

L'alignement du régime du président Touadera sur Moscou se fait désormais au grand jour, comme en témoigne la non-participation au consensus de l'Assemblée Générale de l'ONU pour lutter contre le Covid-19.

Par 188 voix sur 193 Etats, l'Assemblée Générale de l'ONU a adopté la Résolution du 2 avril 2020 intitulée « La solidarité mondiale pour lutter contre la maladie du Covid-19 ». Ce texte recommande l'intensification de « la coopération internationale », « le recours au multilatéralisme » et insiste sur « la place centrale du système des Nations Unies » dans la lutte contre la pandémie du Covid-19.

Pourtant ce texte, n'ayant pas la valeur contraignante d'une Résolution du Conseil de sécurité, n'a pas reçu l'approbation de la Russie, de Cuba, du Nicaragua, du Venezuela et de la République centrafricaine. Ces cinq États ont proposé une Déclaration de substitution, incluant la levée des sanctions internationales affectant notamment la Russie, qui a été immédiatement rejetée. Les Etats-Unis pris à contrepied

La place de la République centrafricaine aux côtés des trois États latino-américains, ennemis déclarés de Donald Trump et sous asphyxie des Etats-Unis d'Amérique, pourrait refroidir les soutiens au président Touadera.

Outre l'ONU et notamment son Secrétaire général, Antonio Guterres, l'Union européenne et notamment la France, ce sont les Etats-Unis d'Amérique qui pourraient s'émouvoir de l'alignement de la République centrafricaine sur Moscou et de pays mis au ban de nombreuses organisations internationales.

On a encore en mémoire la déclaration de soutien au président Touadera, faite à Bangui le 20 janvier 2020, du Sous-Secrétaire d'État aux affaires africaines, Tibor Nagy, ainsi que celle du

Secrétaire d'État, Michael Pompeo, à Washington en avril 2019. Les présidents Diaz-Canel, successeur de Raul Castro à Cuba, Daniel Ortega au Nicaragua et Nicolas Maduro au Venezuela sont loin de bénéficier d'une telle mansuétude, accordée au président Touadera.

Un alignement diplomatique complet

Le retour sur investissement de la Fédération de Russie en Centrafrique, ne concerne pas uniquement les sociétés russes, sous paravent centrafricain, qui exploitent les ressources minérales et végétales, souvent en dehors des lois et règlements en vigueur. Le groupe Wagner, faux-nez du Kremlin, joue également son habituelle partition en pays amis. Plus stratégique et important au niveau diplomatique, la Russie compte désormais sur la Centrafrique dans les débats internationaux.

Le régime de Faustin-Archange Touadera ne cache même plus son alignement sur Moscou. Ses conseillers russes, la ministre des Affaires étrangères, Sylvie Baïpo-Temon kremlinophile de longue date, et ses entremetteurs étrangers influents, ont finalisé cette soumission aux intérêts de la Russie.

Déjà, la République centrafricaine avait révoqué sa reconnaissance de l'indépendance du Kosovo, en juillet 2019, et essayé maladroitement, en octobre 2019, de reconnaître la république autoproclamée d'Abkhazie en rupture de la Géorgie, comme l'avaient fait le Nicaragua, la Syrie et le Venezuela.

Vers un report des Présidentielles?

Les cinq États récalcitrants qui ont refusé de s'associer à la Résolution du 2 avril 2020 invoquent la nécessité de lever les sanctions internationales pour obtenir un consensus dans la lutte contre le Covid-19. Est-ce que cette requête, effectivement d'actualité, était dans l'objet de la Résolution et du ressort de l'Assemblée générale de l'ONU ? En revanche, on peut remarquer que la Résolution du 2 avril 2020 soulignait « la nécessité de respecter pleinement les droits humains » et qu'elle dénonçait « toute forme de discrimination, de racisme et de xénophobie dans la réponse à la pandémie ».

Ce rappel de principes démocratiques universels n'est peut-être pas étranger au refus d'adhérer à la Résolution du 2 avril.

Depuis plusieurs semaines, le régime du président Touadera s'est engagé dans une voie qui s'éloigne dangereusement des grands principes de la démocratie et du respect des droits humains. La compagnie de Cuba, du Nicaragua et du Venezuela n'est guère rassurante. Elle est un signe de cette dérive, dénoncée à Bangui par l'opposition, et devrait inquiéter davantage la communauté internationale, notamment avec le probable report de l'élection présidentielle, initialement prévue fin décembre 2020.

Alors que l'ONU a mis en place la Minusca, avec ses 12 000 Casques bleus, que les soutiens financiers des institutions de Bretton Woods, de l'Union européenne et des partenaires occidentaux sont essentiels, que les visites du président Touadera à New York sont pluriannuelles et que la pandémie du Covid-19 en Centrafrique nécessite une aide très importante, on peut se demander si les décisions de la République centrafricaine sont encore motivées par son intérêt national.

TCHAD :

Nigeria reacts to Chad's threat to pull out of war with terrorists On April 18, 20206:47 amIn News

[<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2020/04/nigeria-reacts-to-chads-threat-to-pull-out-of-war-with-terrorists/>]

Says Chad can't question Nigeria's amnesty to Boko Haram ...Insists Chad is part of Lake Chad Basin and cannot pull out By Kingsley Omonobi, Abuja. Chadian military has continued to frown and condemn their Nigerian counterparts for the policy of reintegrating repentant Boko Haram members. The Nigerian Military has, therefore, advised its Chadian counterparts to channel any misgivings they have about Operation Safe Corridor with the policy of accepting, deradicalizing and reintegrating repentant Boko Haram terrorists back into society, through government to government processes.

Coordinator, Directorate of Media Operations, Major General John Enenche who stated this during a media briefing in Abuja noted that contrary to some belief, high risk Boko Haram terrorists even when they surrender are taken to high risk camp in Kainji, tried in court and sent to jail while it is only the soft target terrorists who were coerced through physical torture that are admitted to operation safe Corridor...

Chad will stop fighting Boko Haram outside its borders

<https://www.theafricareport.com/26215/chad-will-stop-fighting-boko-haram-outside-its-borders/>
By "Tofe Ayeni / Posted on Tuesday, 14 April 2020 16:46

Chadian troops will stop participating in military operations outside the country's borders announced President Idriss Déby, following a report that 1,000 Boko Haram fighters were killed during a counter-offensive by Chad's army on 31 March.

52 Chadian soldiers were also killed in the attack that was in response to a deadly raid by the Nigerian-based terrorist group Boko Haram on a base at Bohoma, in the marshlands of Lake Chad, on 23 March. 98 Chadian soldiers were killed during that attack...

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

SOUTH AFRICA :

South Africa repatriates 300 citizens from coronavirus-hit US

[<https://www.thesouthafrican.com/news/south-africa-repatriates-300-citizens-from-coronavirus-hit-usa/>]

Government says its working to repatriate more South Africans from the COVID-19 hotspot. Siviwe Breakfast by Siviwe Breakfast The increasing spread of the COVID-19 pandemic has seen many South Africans scrambling to return home from abroad and, earlier in the week, government announced that it has repatriated 300 from the novel virus' new epicentre, the United States.

Over two million worldwide have been infected with the coronavirus, prompting a lot of countries to limit flights coming in and out of their borders.

South Africans return home from the US

The United States is the heaviest-hit country in the world in terms of COVID-19 cases, accounting for over 700 000 of known infections and a death toll sitting north of 35 000...

COVID-19 update: Cases increase to 2 783, deaths reach 50 mark

[<https://www.thesouthafrican.com/news/latest-covid-19-coronavirus-cases-and-death-toll-17-april-2020/>]

Cases increased to 2 783 on Friday evening, and deaths have gone up by two since Thursday 16 April, Mkhize announced

Dan Meyer by Dan Meyer / 2020-04-17 20:05 Minister of Health Dr Zweli Mkhize announced on Friday evening that the number of positive cases of COVID-19 in South Africa had risen to 2 783. He reported that there had been two more deaths, bringing the total number of related fatalities to 50. The latest figures represent a sharp jump of 178 since Thursday's numbers were released, with the growing number of daily cases reported owed to enhanced testing and screening procedures. Over 100 000 tests have now been conducted in South Africa, with the recovery rate standing at 903...

BOTSWANA :

Botswana university develops software tools on COVID-19 data, monitoring

[<https://africa.cgtn.com/2020/04/17/botswana-university-develops-software-tools-on-covid-19-data-monitoring/>]

By CGTN Africa - April 17, 2020 Researchers with the University of Botswana (UB) have developed computer software tools to help deal with the southern African country's COVID-19 situation, authorities have announced.

The software tools include a dashboard of novel coronavirus infection cases, as well as applications for remotely monitoring the status of patients in quarantine.

University Vice Chancellor David Norris said on Thursday that the three software tools were worked out by researchers from the departments of engineering and technology, computer science and medicine.

"The faculty of engineering and technology has developed a web map visualization and live tracking dashboard that records data and shows real time trends of information on COVID-19 cases in Botswana," said Norris.

He said the dashboard was developed in collaboration with the Botswana Institute of Geomatics (BIG) and is manned by university personnel.

The two self-assessment applications are for remote monitoring of those in and out of quarantine and also for frontline health workers.

"The self-assessment applications will drive data received from the Ministry of Health and Wellness Department of Monitoring and Evaluation for assessment and analysis to assist in real time decision making," said Norris.

The developed systems have been set up to interface with the health ministry's information system, Norris added.

Botswana dismisses deportation reports on Zimbabweans

[<https://www.newzimbabwe.com/botswana-dismisses-deportation-reports-on-zimbabweans/>]

18th April 2020 News Headlines By Staff Reporter

THE Botswana government has dismissed media reports it has embarked on deportations involving over 500 Zimbabweans from its territory as part of Gaborone's efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19.

In a press release sent through its International Affairs and Cooperation ministry, the Mokgweetsi Masisi government said the recent repatriation exercise was undertaken jointly with Harare. Botswana said this was after requests were made by Zimbabwean nationals who wanted to be assisted to return home when the neighbours imposed lockdown measures in their respective territories.

ZIMBABWE :

Zimbabwe celebrates 40 years of independence

<https://www.newzimbabwe.com/zimbabwe-celebrates-40-years-of-independence/>

17th April 2020 News Headlines DW

Zimbabwe celebrates 40 years of independence from British rule amid mixed feelings. Some believe the country has come of age while others accuse former liberators of turning into oppressors.

Tens of thousands of people traditionally flock to independence day festivities around the country on April 18 to honor the struggle that freed Zimbabwe from colonial rule in 1980. At the main ceremony, the so-called eternal flame of independence is lit each year for good wishes for the nation's future.

This year, because of the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic, Zimbabwe has canceled what would have been its 40th celebration. The coronavirus crisis aside, a growing number of Zimbabweans don't believe they have that much to celebrate on the day.

From early hope to hopelessness

The majority of Zimbabweans had high hopes when their country declared independence from the British, who ruled Zimbabwe, then called Rhodesia, from 1890 to 1979.

The early years of independence were positive, seeing a vibrant economy, political tolerance, participatory democracy, justice, peace and reconciliation.

Under the early rule of Robert Mugabe, Zimbabwe's first prime minister and a liberation hero who would later become its long-running president, the country built an excellent education and health care system that were the envy of the continent. Its fertile lands were called "the breadbasket of Africa."

But over the decades, this has drastically changed.

Zimbabwe's economy is now run down, and its citizens are struggling to make ends meet, despite the country possessing abundant natural resources including gold, diamonds and iron ore.

"There has not been a sense of agency by government to rectify certain errors. You cannot talk about independence that does not go beyond a national anthem and flag," political analyst Alexander Rusero told DW.

"There are no equal opportunities in accessing national resources. For someone waking up every day without fuel, electricity, water and the basics, the independence gimmick becomes meaningless," Rusero said.

But the ruling ZANU PF party, which has been in power for the past 40 years, believes freedom from white minority rule is reason enough to celebrate.

“There has been a fair share of internal problems but it is the triumph that we have registered against both internal and external threats which has made this 40th anniversary a milestone,” said ZANU PF’s director of information, Tafadzwa Mugwadi, in an interview with DW.

Crisis of generations

A conflict of generations has emerged over the past 40 years.

Zimbabwe’s liberation war heroes, like elsewhere on the continent, often have an entrenched sense of entitlement, which has led to an authoritarian political culture, critics say. In addition, the post-liberation generation feels Zimbabwe’s development is being hindered by an older generation clinging to power in the same way that the colonizers did.

Emmerson Mnangagwa (in title photo), who succeeded Mugabe as President in 2018, is also a veteran of Zimbabwe’s liberation guerrilla war. War veterans also hold key positions in the army, the police, the air force, key government institutions and the ruling party.

“You have a crisis of the older generation who feel a form of superiority and heroism about what they did to emancipate the country,” political analyst Rusero said. “You have someone who was born in 1980 and has turned 40 with all the expectations of modern life but their dreams are being failed.”

The country’s main opposition leader, Nelson Chamisa, tweeted that Zimbabwe’s 40th independence day celebrates a “shattered” dream.

“Life begins at 40. On 18 April Zimbabwe turns 40. It’s a milestone with a dream shattered by the hurt and pain from tyranny, violence, corruption and stolen elections,” Chamisa wrote.

Looking ahead

Reconciliation and addressing past hurts and injustices could help Zimbabwe move forward and achieve the dreams of the younger generations.

“The country needs to heal and enforce unity. There is a lot of polarization that has worked against nationhood. There is need to think hard about future generations and put away selfishness,” said 30-year-old digital content creator Alexander Gusha in Harare.

“The liberation struggle was anchored on the fight for free, fair and credible elections. A generation of young techno-savvy people can transform the development of the nation,” political activist Ostallos Siziba, youth secretary for the main opposition party, told DW in Harare. “We do appreciate the role those who liberated us played, but one cannot be a hero in two struggles.”

ZAMBIA :

Mopani CEO detained at Lusaka airport as Zambia’s feud with Glencore takes sinister turn

[<https://www.miningmx.com/trending/41315-mopani-ceo-detained-at-lusaka-airport-as-zambias-feud-with-glencore-takes-sinister-turn/>]

By David McKay - April 16, 202 ZAMBIA'S feud with Glencore took a sinister turn after the head of the company's local copper company was prevented from leaving the country, said Bloomberg News.

Citing Zambia's state-owned ZNBC TV, the newswire said Nathan Bullock, CEO of Mopani Copper Mines, was stopped at the airport in Lusaka.

According to the report, Bullock was detained on suspicion that he was fleeing the country without informing the government.

Bloomberg News cited Glencore as saying the CEO was heading back to his home in Australia to spend time with his family.

He was detained in connection with the company's decision to place its mines on care and maintenance last week and has since been released, said Bloomberg quoting from a statement issued by Glencore.

Tensions between Glencore and the Zambian government have escalated rapidly after the company announced on April 7 that it would place the assets owned by Mopani Copper on care and maintenance. It said COVID-19 restrictions had added one pressure too many for the assets to bear – a view Zambia's mines minister, Richard Musukwa, said was unjustified.

"They've been given seven days to show why their license should not be cancelled or revoked," Zambia's mines ministry permanent secretary, Barnaby Mulenga, told Bloomberg News in a telephonic interview.

Glencore said workers affected by its plan to put Mopani Copper mines on care and maintenance would get basic pay and contractors would receive an ex gratia payment "... over and above what is required by our contractual agreements". Glencore is the controlling shareholder in Mopani Copper. Glencore guided to production of between 50,000 to 70,000 tons of copper from Mopani Copper in the 2020 financial year. Glencore still expected to produce about 270,000 tons from its Katanga Copper Mines this year, the other constituent of its African Copper division.

MALAWI :

Nundwe appointed Malawi's High Commissioner to India

[<https://malawi24.com/2020/04/17/nundwe-appointed-malawis-high-commissioner-to-india/>]
Apr 17, 2020 Lindiwe Sambalikagwa

A month after he was fired as Commander of the Malawi Defence Force, General Vincent Nundwe (Rtd) has been appointed as Malawi's High Commissioner to the Republic of India.

The Chief Secretary to the Government Lloyd Muhara has announced the appointment which President Peter Mutharika has made.

To take up the post, Nundwe will first have to be confirmed by the Public Appointments Committee of Parliament.

Mutharika fired Nundwe as MDF Commander last month and replaced him with Major General Peter Andrew Lapken Namathanga.

Nundwe was removed at a time he was being hailed for the way MDF soldiers handled post-election protests last year and earlier this year.

"I served Malawians to the best of my knowledge," he told the local media after leaving the MDF.

"They were allowed to do their thing while soldiers maximum peace and advised how some situations be handled."

NAMIBIA :

Air Namibia ready to repatriate stranded Namibians from South Africa

[<https://www.namibian.com.na/90297/read/Air-Namibia-ready-to-repatriate-stranded-Namibians-from-South-Africa>]

News - National | 2020-04-16 by Ester Mbathera

AIR Namibia says it is prepared and ready to charter a plane to bring Namibians stranded in South Africa home should they be requested to do so.

“The ministry of industrialisation and trade issued to us a certificate to operate during the lockdown period, delivering essential services as per the Government Proclamation No. 9, classified as transportation, logistics and storage,” said the airline's head of corporate communication, Paul Nakawa.

According to the airline, two aircraft with the capacity to carry from 37 to 112 passengers at a time is on standby and ready to fly from any airport in South Africa that is classified as an international airport and is for commercial use.

Nakawa could not confirm the price for tickets, saying that “a fare is to be determined upon request”.

Yesterday, The Namibian reported that the Namibian high commission in Pretoria is facilitating the repatriation of about twenty Namibians who want to return home.

Bank of Namibia copies SA repo cut

<https://www.namibian.com.na/90305/read/Bank-of-Namibia-copies-SA-repo-cut>

Business | 2020-04-17 THE Bank of Namibia has attributed headwinds presented to the local economy by the Covid-19 pandemic as the main reason why it has reduced the repo rate this week. The banker's bank is cutting the rate by one percentage point, the same as announced by South Africa's on Tuesday.

Deputy governor Ebson Uanguta announced on Wednesday that the central bank had reduced the cost of money by 100 basis points from 5,25% to 4,25%.

Uanguta said: “The decision was taken following a review of global, regional and domestic economic and financial developments, taking due notice of the headwinds presented to both global and domestic economies on account of the Covid-19 outbreak and response.”

He added that making loans cheap, especially at this new level, would provide some relief in the short term to borrowers.

South Africa on Tuesday also cut their repo from 5,25% to 4,25%, saying this would ease financial conditions and improve the resilience of households and firms to the economic implications of Covid-19.

In Namibia, concerns linger on the cut's ability to support weak domestic activity. The repo rate cut would make loans cheaper.

It is however unclear which borrowers are motivated to seek loans and how they will use such money amid the lockdown.

It is also not clear how the cut would improve the supply side of the country, which has for years been feeding on South Africa's production.

With fear now looming that people might borrow to strengthen their constrained disposable income and consume more, this is set to put pressure on the supply side which entirely comes from South Africa.

Responding to the cut, Bank Windhoek announced a reduction in the prime lending rate also by 1% from 9% to 8% and the mortgage lending rate will also decrease from 10% to 9%.

The bank said these changes will be effective from Tuesday, 21 April.

Diederik Kruger, the head of funding and liquidity management at Bank Windhoek, said the monetary action is necessary to support households and businesses operating during these challenging and uncertain times.

He added that the economic impact on our small economy needs to be mitigated, and this is just one intervention from the regulator to assist the banks in helping clients. During times of great uncertainty, bold moves are necessary to help protect our vulnerable households and industries.

“This is certainly a worldwide economic crisis that has not been witnessed before. With interest rates at historical lows, Bank Windhoek encourages clients to honour their financial obligations to cushion the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on their budgets,” Kruger said.

Simonis Storm managing director Bruce Hansen said the move by the central bank said this might be the last cut for the country for the year, even though South Africa might follow with another 50 basis cut for 2020.

Risk management lecturer at the University of Namibia, Samuel Nuugulu, said when the economy is facing unanticipated events such as Covid-19, it is unlikely to have the normal dynamics of demand and supply.

He is rather calling for other measures to explain volatilities in the market apart from just the normal theories and basic concepts. Email: bottomline@namibian.com.na

ANGOLA :

Angola joins call for a moratorium on debt

[<https://macauhub.com.mo/2020/04/16/pt-angola-adere-ao-apelo-para-uma-moratoria-da-divida/>]
16 April 2020 | Angola | Portugal

The President of Angola joined the group of African and European leaders who signed a document calling for a moratorium on debt and the granting of programmes of economic and health assistance, due to the new coronavirus pandemic.

João Lourenço endorsed the document, signed by 17 other world leaders, which is the result of a decision, recently drawn up by African Heads of State and Government.

The signatories underline the need for an immediate moratorium on all payments of bilateral and multilateral debt, both public and private, until all outbreaks of the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic are under control.

The leaders appealed to governments, multilateral institutions, philanthropic organisations and non-governmental organisations, as well as private companies, to respond immediately to the call of the G20 and to unite efforts, without precedent, to consolidate the defences of the health care system in Africa.

The Angolan President is the 18th head of state to sign the document, of which Portugal, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Netherlands, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Mali, Kenya, South Africa, Senegal, Egypt and the Democratic Republic of Congo are also signatories, and the African Union, the European Commission and the European Council have also given their support. (macauhub)

Trade between China and Portuguese-speaking countries falls 9.37% in first two months of the year

[<https://macauhub.com.mo/2020/04/17/pt-comercio-entre-a-china-e-paises-de-lingua-regista-quebra-de-937-em-janeiro-fevereiro/>]
17 April 2020 | Angola

The value of trade between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries posted a drop of 9.37% year-on-year in January and February to US\$21.374 billion, according to official Chinese figures released by Forum Macau.

In the first two months of the year China sold goods to the eight Portuguese-speaking countries worth US\$5.651 billion (down 7.04% on year) and from those same countries imported goods worth US\$15.723 billion (10.18% less), generating a trade deficit of US\$10.072 billion.

Brazil was responsible for 78.3% of the trade recorded between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries with a total of US\$16.754 billion (-3,46%), as China exported goods in the amount of US\$4.664 billion (-3,55%) and imported products worth US\$12.089 billion (-3.42%).

Angola, as usual, came in second place with two-way trade of US\$3.404 billion (-28.37%), with Chinese companies selling goods to Angola in the amount of US\$219 million (-17.75%) and purchasing goods from Angola to the value of US\$3.185 billion (-29.00%).

China's trade with Portugal in the period totalled US\$872 million (-12.77%), with China exporting goods worth US\$532 million (-17.02%) and importing goods worth US\$340 million (-5.18%).

The value of China's trade with Mozambique reached US\$317 million (-28.15%), with Chinese companies exporting goods valued at US\$209 million (-31.12%) and importing Mozambican goods totalling US\$108 million (-21.59%).

Trade between China and the other Portuguese-speaking countries – Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe and Timor-Leste – reached US\$25.88 million in January/February period. (macauhub)

MOZAMBIQUE :

Mozambique collects information on national industrial base

<https://macauhub.com.mo/2020/04/16/pt-mocambique-recolhe-informacoes-sobre-parque-industrial-nacional/>

16 April 2020 | Mozambique

The survey of Mozambique's industrial base, which is intended to identify areas that require investment or support, is at the conclusion stage, the minister of Industry and Trade said recently in Maputo.

Carlos Mesquita said that this process will boost the industrial potential of the country, with a focus on some border areas, which many grains produced locally pass through on their way to market in neighbouring countries like Malawi.

“There are producers who cannot place their products on the domestic market, and we have been talking with the major national industries that use these products as raw material, so they can buy them,” he said.

The Government has recently completed a study to set up industrial parks in three provinces of the country, as an incentive to production and an opportunity to restructure the local economic sector.

The parks will be located in the districts of Moatize, in Tete, Dondo, in Sofala and Báruè, in Manica province, where industrial units will be established.

Feasibility studies for the establishment and development of other industrial parks in other parts of the country have yet to be conducted, such as in Mocuba, in Zambezia province. (macauhub)

****** AFRIQUE DU NORD ******

EGYPTE :

Egypt records 171 new coronavirus cases, raising total to 2,844

[<https://www.egypttoday.com/Article/1/84826/Egypt-records-171-new-coronavirus-cases-raising-total-to-2>]

By: Egypt Today staff Fri, Apr. 17, 2020

CAIRO – 17 April 2020: Egypt’s Ministry of Health announced Friday recording 171 new coronavirus cases, while nine people died from the virus.

This upped the total number of confirmed cases in Egypt to 2,844 and deaths to 205, Health Ministry Spokesman Khaled Megahed said in a statement.

He added that the number of coronavirus cases whose tests turned from positive to negative increased to 891, including 646 people who recovered from the virus.

All positive cases are placed under quarantine at isolation hospitals, the spokesman said.

He added that 50 of those infected with coronavirus, were discharged from hospitals after receiving the necessary medical care.

This takes the total number of recoveries so far to 646, he noted.

Earlier on Friday, Egypt started treating 50 patients of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) with the Japanese antiviral drug Avigan, announced Mohamed Tag El-Deen, the Advisor for Health Affairs to President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi.

“Today, we started testing it on 50 patients in a number of medical centers, to see whether it is effective or not,” he was quoted as saying by Masrawy newspaper. Tag El-Deen’s comments came during an online symposium organized by the Arab Administrative Development Organization (ARADO).

He added that there is no drug for the COVID-19, but Avigan drug helps patients recover fast.

Last week, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Khaled Abdel Ghaffar said the ministry has managed to communicate with the Japanese manufacturer of the antiviral drug Avigan to treat patients with coronavirus (COVID-19).

Egyptian Armed Forces carry out sterilization works in 3 port cities

[<https://www.egypttoday.com/Article/1/84836/Egyptian-Armed-Forces-carry-out-sterilization-works-in-3-port>]

By: Egypt Today staff Sat, Apr. 18, 2020

CAIRO – 18 April 2020: The Egyptian Armed Forces carried out sterilization works in Damietta bordering the Mediterranean, Port Said and Ismailia bordering the Suez Canal, and Cairo during the partial curfew hours, the spokesperson stated on Friday.

In the capital, the Egyptian Armed Forces sterilized Zahraa Madinet Nasr bus station located in the 10th Neighborhood, Ezbet Al Hagana station, El Geish Bridge, and surrounding streets that experience intensive presence of citizens on weekdays.

That is in addition to sanitizing the buildings of a number of public establishments and facilities, parks, and main streets.

In Ismailiyah, sterilization works took place in the railway station, fever hospital, respiratory diseases hospital, and the university hospital. In Port Said, the general and fever hospitals were sanitized. As for Damietta, the respiratory diseases and fever hospitals were sterilized.

The Egyptian Armed Forces had carried out sterilization works in main areas in Cairo and Alexandria.

ALGERIE :

Algeria: Chief of intelligence arrested immediately after dismissal

[<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20200416-algeria-chief-of-intelligence-arrested-immediately-after-dismissal/>]

Algerian media reported that Brigadier General Wassini Bouazza was arrested and placed in custody pending his trial, immediately after he was dismissed from his position as head of intelligence by order of the President of the Republic Abdelmajid Tebboune.

The reports explained that Bouazza, who had been involved in several cases, was discharged to end internal conflicts within the decision-making circle, that lasted for over four months.

Al-Watan newspaper stated that Bouazza was transferred to the military prison immediately after his arrest by the security forces.

The newspaper also confirmed that Tebboune issued the decision to remove Bouazza and appoint Abdelghani Rashidi as his successor, which falls within the president's jurisdiction. The newspaper also stressed that the dismissed head of internal security used to be described by his opponents as the "armed arm" of the former army chief of staff, Lieutenant-General Ahmed Gaid Salah.

The newspaper indicated that the appointment of Brigadier Rashidi, first as Bouazza's deputy and granting him broad powers at a swearing-in ceremony, which was overseen by Acting Chief of Staff Al-Saeed Shingriqa and highlighted by media in an unprecedented way, marked the beginning of Bouazza's influence. Thus, Bouazza, who was banned from attending the inauguration ceremony, received orders to keep a low profile until the issuance of further decisions.

READ: Algeria president donates his salary to combat coronavirus

Al-Watan stated that Bouazza was not on good terms with Rashidi, which was manifested through the issuance of “decisions” and “counter decisions” at the time, in addition to the emergence of “resistance” and “parallel opposition” between both parties.

The newspaper conveyed that Bouazza had been involved in many cases on charges related to the way he handled several state security files, noting that the General Directorate of National Security had launched an investigation, a long time ago, regarding the way Bouazza managed a number of issues, as well as his influence on politics and the media in Algeria.

Al-Watan added that Bouazza’s removal came as a logical outcome of the changes made by Tebboune at the level of sensitive positions within the army.

The newspaper reported that on Monday, Major General Shingriqa supervised the inauguration of General Rashidi, and announced to the present officers: “I command all of you to work under his authority, obey his orders and implement his instructions, in a way that serves the general interests of the country, within the framework of the applicable military rules and regulations and the laws of the republic, to honour the sacrifices of our righteous martyrs and to preserve the values of our glorious revolution.”

The newspaper equally considered that Shingriqa’s words carried significance in relation to the current circumstances, and indicated the beginning of a new era.

Algeria receives 3rd delivery of medical materials from China against COVID-19

[http://www.china.org.cn/world/Off_the_Wire/2020-04/18/content_75947955.htm]

ALGIERS, April 17 (Xinhua) -- Two Algerian military planes on Friday landed on Algiers International Airport carrying a third delivery of medical equipment from China to help the North African nation contain the spread of the COVID-19.

APS news agency reported that the two military planes did a 38-hour round trip to Beijing to bring 36 tons of cargo consisting of protective medical outfits and screening kits.

The goods "will be sent to the Central Pharmacy of Hospitals (PCH) and from there to health establishments throughout the national territory," Minister of Health Abderrahmane Benbouzid told reporters.

Vice Minister for Pharmaceutical Industry Lotfi Djamel Benbahmed said that the third order consists of "5.7 million flaps, 200,000 FFP 2 medical masks and more than 85,000 COVID-19 screening kits." Enditem

MAROC :

Morocco Approves Legal Framework to Support Formal Sector Employers

[<https://www.morocoworldnews.com/2020/04/299936/morocco-approves-legal-framework-to-support-formal-sector-employers/>]

Rabat – The Moroccan government council has approved a draft law enacting exceptional measures in favor of employers who are affiliated with the National Social Security Fund (CNSS) and whose employees lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 crisis.

The government council, chaired by Head of Government Saad Eddine El Othmani, held a video conference meeting on Friday, April 17.

Draft law 25-20 gives a legal framework to the measures implemented by the Economic Monitoring Committee for businesses and employees in the formal sector.

The law sets the conditions for granting a MAD 2,000 (\$200) monthly stipend to employees with suspended activity.

Companies should prove that their monthly turnover dropped by at least 50% compared to the same period in 2019 for their employees to benefit from the monthly stipend.

The legal text also sets a limit on the number of employees that each company can declare suspended due to the pandemic. Only a maximum of 500 employees per company can benefit from the financial aid.

Companies with a 30% to 50% monthly turnover decline will undergo a case-by-case review by a committee that includes representatives from the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Labor, along with members from the ministerial departments of the sectors to which the companies belong.

The law also specifies that the stipend for the month of March only concerns employees who stopped work before March 15. Employees who worked part of the second half of March are not eligible for the stipend.

As such, businesses that declared employee suspensions despite maintaining activity after March 15 need to reimburse the indemnities issued to employees.

After deliberation, the government council deferred the draft law to the House of Representatives for approval within the next week, revealed Minister of Education and Government Spokesperson Saaid Amzazi following the meeting.

Once approved by the parliament and published in the country's Official Bulletin, Law 25-20 will become official.

UAE Wants Morocco to Repatriate Citizens, Threatens to Impose Restrictions

[<https://www.morocoworldnews.com/2020/04/299784/uae-wants-morocco-to-repatriate-citizens-threatens-to-impose-restrictions/>]

By Nejra Kravic - Apr 16, 2020

Rabat – While Rabat looks to further prevent COVID-19's proliferation, Abu Dhabi has been threatening to impose restrictions on a list of countries that cannot repatriate their stranded tourists and non-resident nationals amid closed borders and suspensions of air travel.

Amid the concerning COVID-19 circumstances, UAE's Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation (MoHRE) expressed frustration with nations that are not attempting to repatriate their citizens, adding that there are now plans to restructure cooperation and labor relations with these countries.

Measures would include introducing a quota system in recruitment policies and suspending memoranda of understanding signed by the UAE and the countries concerned. This would make it increasingly harder for citizens from these countries to seek employment in the UAE's private sector.

The ministry emphasized that the governments of said countries are responsible for bringing their nationals back home, not the UAE.

While the UAE insists on pressuring the North African country, the Moroccan government's lockdown and border closures do not seek to create frustration among stranded tourists. Moroccan authorities have shown relentless determination to contain the spread of the virus to protect its nationals, foreign residents, and tourists.

Morocco has been in lockdown since March 20, after suspending all air and maritime travel on March 15. Despite its confinement decision, the country made it possible to repatriate thousands of tourists in collaboration with foreign authorities who asked Morocco for help.

Belgium was the latest of several countries to express satisfaction and appreciation over Morocco's assistance in repatriating binationals and citizens from the country.

The country also helped the UAE repatriate 180 citizens who found themselves stranded in Morocco after the North African country suspended all international travel. Following the repatriation flight earlier this week, 74 Emirati citizens remain in Morocco.

Morocco emphasized that COVID-19 confinement measures also affect more than 18,000 Moroccans stranded abroad.

While Morocco has already facilitated special repatriation flights for foreign nationals, it has also vowed to repatriate its own citizens.

TUNISIE :

Tunisia announces failure of a 'terrorist plot' to spread coronavirus

[<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20200417-tunisia-announces-failure-of-a-terrorist-plot-to-spread-coronavirus/>]

April 17, 2020 at 10:05 am | Published in: Africa, Coronavirus, News, Tunisia

Tunisian authorities yesterday announced the failure of a "terrorist plot" to spread the coronavirus among security forces.

The Ministry of the Interior said, in a statement, that "the terrorist element, who was recently released after his involvement in a case of terrorist nature, took advantage of his moral authority over the rest of the Takfiri elements in the region, especially those who have symptoms of the emerging coronavirus and who are under administrative control in order to incite them to intentionally sneeze and cough and spread spit everywhere, while they are inside the security centre."

One of the terrorist elements admitted that he had received these instructions and that he was unable to implement them, given the preventive measures in the security unit prevented him from entering the headquarters, where the security elements were.

The Public Prosecution Office authorised that the second member of the terror cell be held in quarantine pending analysis to determine whether he is infected with the coronavirus.

Some 780 people have been found to have been infected with the virus in Tunisia, 35 of whom died. Globally nearly 2.2 million people have contracted the disease, of whom almost 150,000 have died, according to Worldometer.

LYBIA :

Libyan government forces attack Haftar militia

[<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/libyan-government-forces-attack-haftar-militia/1809316>]

Government forces target locations of militias in western Tripoli

Hamdi Yildiz | 18.04.2020

TRIPOLI, Libya

Libyan government forces on Friday attacked locations of militias loyal to warlord Khalifa Haftar in western Tripoli.

The UN-backed Government of National Accord (GNA) military spokesman Mohammed Kanunu issued a statement on developments of Operation Volcano Rage and said there was an air raid on the Al-Watiya airbase controlled by the militia.

Haftar's locations were attacked after militias carried out strikes on civilian settlements using rockets that killed five and injured 18.

The Health Ministry spokesperson said a university dormitory allocated to the settlement of migrants in Libya was targeted by Haftar militias.

The GNA has been under attack by Haftar's forces since last April, with more than 1,000 killed in the violence. It launched Operation Peace Storm on March 26 to counter attacks on the capital.

Since the ouster of longtime ruler Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, two seats of power have emerged in Libya: Haftar in eastern Libya, supported by Egypt and the United Arab Emirates, and the GNA in Tripoli, which enjoys UN and international recognition.

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

GUINEE-BISSAU :

Tender for solar power plants projects launched in Guinea Bissau

[<https://constructionreviewonline.com/2020/04/tender-for-solar-power-plants-projects-launched-in-guinea-bissau/>]

By Anita Anyango - Modified date: Apr 7, 2020

A call for tenders for the construction of a solar power plant and two mini hybrid power plants has been launched in Guinea Bissau by African Biofuel and Renewable Energy Co (ABREC).

The project aims to increase the country's electricity production. It will involve construction of a 20MW and two 1MW solar power plants. The largest facility (20 MW) will be located 8 km from Bissau, the capital.

China to continue to support Guinea-Bissau in fight against COVID-19

By xinhuanet.com - Apr 17, 2020

Chinese Ambassador to Guinea-Bissau Jin Hongjun said Thursday that his country "will continue to support Guinea-Bissau in its fight against the COVID-19 pandemic."

In an interview with Guinea-Bissau National Radio (GNR), Jin recalled "the good historical cooperation that has linked the two countries for years." "China and Guinea-Bissau have always walked together and maintained relations of trust and brotherhood," he said.

"China has already supplied medical equipment to Guinea-Bissau through the Jack Ma and Alibaba foundations, in order to effectively combat the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic," the ambassador told GNR.

According to Jin, Guinea-Bissau will receive another batch of medical supplies from China, which will contain various materials that the country currently needs.

"China will share its anti-pandemic expertise and experience with the people of Guinea-Bissau," Jin said, adding that his country will remain alongside Guinea-Bissau to fight COVID-19 together until the end of the pandemic. He noted that "China will continue its projects in Guinea-Bissau" after the health crisis.

GUINEA :

Guinea's controversial referendum marred by violence

[<http://www.rfi.fr/en/africa/20200323-guinea-s-controversial-referendum-marred-by-violence>]

Issued on: 23/03/2020 - 12:55 Modified: 23/03/2020

At least 10 people lost their lives during violence on Sunday surrounding Guinea's controversial referendum, according to the opposition. The vote is widely seen as an attempt by President Alpha Conde to change the constitution and clear the way for a third term in office.

Four people died on Sunday, according to the ministry of security, who contested the death toll as stated by the opposition National Front for the Defence of the Constitution (FNDC). A statement by the ministry of security seen by RFI said two people were killed in violence with two others dead, one in an accident and one following a heart attack.

Guinea's elections had a clear winner. But its contest for power isn't over.

[<https://africanarguments.org/2020/04/16/guinea-elections-clear-winner-contest-for-power-isnt-over/>]

By Kabinet Fofana and Joschka Philipps April 16, 2020

President Alpha Condé and the ruling party got the results they wanted. What now?

The final results from Guinea's highly contested double ballot on 22 March are in. In the referendum on a new constitution, 91.6% voted in favour. In the legislative elections, the ruling Rassemblement du Peuple de Guinée (RPG) won 79 of the 114 seats in the National Assembly. The former vote paves the way for President Alpha Condé, in power since 2010, to remain in power beyond 2020. The latter victory provides him and his allies with a comfortable two-thirds majority in parliament, protecting them from any legislative deadlock.

None of this, however, means Guinea is about to experience a smooth and peaceful period of governance.

Unrest across the country

Since October 2019, the proposed referendum has further polarised Guineans between pro- and anti-Alpha camps. Those opposing the president have largely organised under the banner of the National Front for the Defense of the Constitution (FNDC). In protests leading up to the vote, at least 31 civilians and one gendarme are reported to have been killed. The political opposition announced it would boycott the elections.

On 22 March itself, at least ten more people died as demonstrators and militants attacked and blocked polling sites, burned voting material and ransacked various public offices. With the exception of the ruling party's stronghold of Upper Guinea, the unrest was widespread. "It is heating up a little everywhere in the interior of the country," a government official told AFP. Discontent was particularly vehement in areas where residents tend to vote for the opposition. In the capital Conakry, hot spots concentrated along the Route Le Prince. In Middle Guinea, violent incidents have been reported from Pita, Labé, and Mamou. Even Lower and Forested Guinea, where government officials like to claim legitimacy, saw points of conflict, the most severe case being in Forested Guinea's regional capital N'zérékoré. Only a few weeks before, that city's prefect had announced he would cut any citizen's throat if ordered by the president. He was subsequently chased out of office by local youth and replaced.

In Guinea, the referendum has resuscitated an amalgam of political, inter-ethnic and religious conflicts. These can be contained, but initially appear worryingly similar to the communitarian violence that shook the region in 2013. In both cases, the number of fatalities remains unknown. As local authorities allegedly buried the bodies of victims on 25 March in a secret mass grave, estimates continue to fluctuate between ten and sixty fatalities.

Guinea Govt Arrests All Chinese Until Guineans Return from China safely (video)

[<http://gnnliberia.com/2020/04/18/guinea-govt-arrests-all-chinese-until-guineans-return-from-china-safely-video/>]

April 18, 2020 Cholo Brooks

Following the Maltreatment of Blacks in China by Chinese officials, A video Trending online purportedly shows the Moment Guinea Government arrested all Chinese Nationals in their country until all Guineans in China return safely.

Recall that Chinese officials threw Blacks out of their homes. Also Read: You cannot tell me what to do in my state – Wike blasts Buhari (video) A social media user shared the video online, wrote; "Guinea government took a decisive measure, seized all Chinese national till all her citizens return safely. "It is only a government who does not collect bribe can stand on their feet for such action".

CÔTE D'IVOIRE :

Coronavirus – Ivory Coast: International Monetary Fund (IMF) Executive Board approves a US\$886.2 million disbursement to Côte d'Ivoire to address the COVID-19 Pandemic

<https://www.cnbcfrance.com/africa-press-office/2020/04/18/coronavirus-ivory-coast-international-monetary-fund-imf-executive-board-approves-a-us886-2-million-disbursement-to-cote-divoire-to-address-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

By Africa Press Office / April 18, 2020 The IMF approves the disbursement of US\$886.2 million to Côte d'Ivoire to be drawn under the Rapid Credit Facility and the Rapid Financing Instrument; the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to be substantial, with the near-term outlook deteriorating quickly; the authorities' policy response to the pandemic has been swift, drawing on a health emergency plan and an ambitious economic package to provide targeted support to vulnerable populations and firms affected by the pandemic.

COVID-19: Drogba donates hospital worth \$1 million for screening in Ivory Coast 4 days ago

956 views by K. Effah Former Chelsea striker, Didier Drogba has made a donation worth \$1 million to his country Ivory Coast as his contribution to the fight against the COVID-19.

<https://yen.com.gh/153315-covid-19-drogba-donates-hospital-worth-1-million-screening-ivory-coast.html>

SENEGAL :

Senegal reports 8 new confirmed COVID-19 cases, 350 in total

[http://www.china.org.cn/world/Off_the_Wire/2020-04/18/content_75949008.htm]

Xinhua, April 18, 2020

DAKAR, April 18 (Xinhua) -- Senegal reported 8 new confirmed COVID-19 cases, bringing the total to 350 in the west African country, Senegalese Ministry of Health and Social Action announced on Saturday.

During the daily COVID-19 briefing, Marie Khemesse Ngom Ndiaye, Director General of Public Health and President of the National Committee for the Management of Epidemics, said 8 of the 226 virological examinations carried out within the past 24 hours came back positive.

The new cases are 3 follow-up contact cases and five cases of community transmission. A total of 211 patients out of the 350 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Senegal are cured, she said.

So far, Senegal has reported 350 confirmed cases of COVID-19 since March 2, the start of the pandemic in Senegal. Among those confirmed cases, 85 are imported ones.

Facing the increasing number of community transmission cases, Senegalese Minister of Health and Social Action Abdoulaye Diouf Sarr strongly recommended the population to wear masks at public places, including markets and public transports.

Senegalese President Macky Sall said Friday evening the daily curfew could be extended by three hours in a bid to contain the rise of community transmission cases.

Sall extended the current state of emergency in a presidential decree on April 4, along with the dusk-to-dawn curfew for 30 days, till May 4. Enditem

IMF Executive Board Approves for Senegal a US\$442 Million Disbursement Under the Rapid Credit Facility and Purchase Under the Rapid Financing Instrument

[<https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2020/04/13/pr20152-senegal-imf-exec-board-approves-us-442-million-disbursement-under-rcf-and-purchase-under-rfi>]

April 13, 2020

The IMF Executive Board approves the tenth request for emergency financial assistance to help its member countries address the challenges posed by COVID-19.

The approval of the request from Senegal will make available US\$442 million to be drawn under the Rapid Credit Facility and the Rapid Financing Instrument and will provide much-needed liquidity to support the authorities' response to the crisis.

The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is rapidly unfolding, with the near-term outlook deteriorating quickly.

The authorities have acted fast by putting in place strong measures to help contain the spread of the disease and mitigate the pandemic's impact on the economy.

The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) today approved the purchase under the Rapid Financing Instrument (RFI) equivalent to SDR 215.7 million (about US\$294.7 million, 67 percent of quota) and a disbursement under the Rapid Credit Facility (RCF) equivalent to SDR 107.9 million (US\$147.4 million, 33 percent of quota) to help Senegal meet the urgent balance of payment needs stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Covid-19 pandemic is hitting Senegal hard. The sharp global economic downturn and domestic containment measures have led to a substantial reduction in economic activity, with sectors such as tourism, transport, construction, and retail particularly hard-hit, and the pandemic in Europe is also translating into lower remittances. As a result, the short-term economic outlook has deteriorated significantly, with large uncertainties surrounding the duration and spread of the pandemic.

BURKINA FASO :

IMF Executive Board Approves a US\$115.3 Million Disbursement to Burkina Faso to Address the COVID-19 Pandemic

[<https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2020/04/14/pr20156-burkina-faso-imf-executive-board-approves-us-115-3m-disburse-address-covid19-pandemic>]

April 14, 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a major toll on Burkina Faso economy, with the near-term outlook deteriorating quickly.

To address the urgent balance-of-payments needs, the IMF approved US\$115.3 million emergency assistance for Burkina Faso under the Rapid Credit Facility. The country will also benefit from IMF debt service relief under the Catastrophe Containment and Relief Trust.

The immediate challenge is to contain the spread of COVID-19, strengthen medical care, implement the social distancing and other containment measures, and mitigate the socio-economic impact of the pandemic, especially on the most vulnerable.

Washington, DC – The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) today approved a disbursement of SDR 84.28 million (about US\$115.3 million or 70 percent of its SDR quota) for Burkina Faso under the Rapid Credit Facility (RCF). The financing provided under the RCF will help finance the health, social protection and macroeconomic stabilization measures, meet the urgent balance of payments needs arising from the COVID-19 outbreak and catalyze additional support from the international community.

BENIN :

Benin records first COVID-19 death

[<https://africa.cgtn.com/2020/04/06/benin-records-first-covid-19-death/>]

By Jerry Omondi - April 6, 2020

Benin record its first COVID-19 death on Sunday, the country's health minister Benjamin Hounkpatin announced on Monday.

Hounkpatin made the announcement in a press conference in Porto-Novo, noting that the patient was a 43-year-old woman who had been suffering from sickle cell disease.

The woman returned to the West African country from a COVID-19-affected country and had spent several days in a private clinic in Cotonou, the economic capital of the country.

Benin is one of over 50 African states that have recorded cases of COVID-19. The country has reported 22 confirmed cases according to the John Hopkins University.

Africa's confirmed COVID-19 cases have surpassed 9,000, with over 400 deaths. Over 800 patients have recovered.

NIGERIA :

'Unacceptable': Nigeria condemns treatment of citizens in China

[<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/04/nigeria-condemns-treatment-citizens-china-200414172052630.html>]

Foreign minister says Chinese authorities must act after footage emerged of Nigerians discriminated against. 14 Apr 2020

Nigeria has condemned the "extremely distressing" and "unacceptable" footage appearing to show its citizens in China maltreated because of the coronavirus pandemic.

In a meeting with Chinese Ambassador Zhou Pingjian in his office in Abuja on Tuesday, Nigeria's Foreign Minister Geoffrey Onyeama said: "There were videos circulating on social media of very disturbing scenes and incidents involving Nigerians in the city of Guangzhou."

Onyeama said it appeared that Nigerians were being discriminated against at hotels and restaurants and being stigmatised as supposed carriers of COVID-19, the disease caused by the new coronavirus.

"We saw images of Nigerians in the streets with their possessions and this was, of course, extremely distressing for us at home," he said.

He said the situation was "unacceptable" to the Nigerian government and its people, and needed "immediate action" from the Chinese authorities.

The Chinese ambassador said Beijing was taking the issues the minister raised "very seriously" and said China would continue to foster cordial ties with Nigeria.

The conversation followed accusations of discrimination in the southern city of Guangzhou linked to the coronavirus pandemic.

Having brought under control the original outbreak centred on the city of Wuhan, Beijing is now concerned about imported cases and is stepping up scrutiny of foreigners coming into the country and tightening border controls.

And while Beijing has denied discrimination, Africans in China say they have become targets of suspicion and subjected to forced evictions, arbitrary quarantines and mass coronavirus testing. Earlier on Tuesday, US fast-food chain McDonald's apologised for a sign in one of its restaurants in Guangzhou telling black people they were banned from entering.

On Saturday, the African Union expressed "extreme concern" about the situation in Guangzhou and called on the Chinese government to take immediate corrective measures.

Nigeria security forces have killed 18 people while enforcing ...

[<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8225583/Nigeria-security-forces-killed-18-people-enforcing-coronavirus-lockdown.html>]

Daily Mail-16 Apr 2020

The Nigerian Army was behind two of them while the Ebonyi State Task Force in the region of that name was responsible for one, it is alleged.

Nigeria records 53 new cases of coronavirus, total now 493

[<https://guardian.ng/news/nigeria-records-53-new-cases-of-coronavirus-total-now-493/>]

Nigeria Centre for Disease Control on Friday confirmed 51 new cases of coronavirus.

NCDC said the new cases were discovered in eight states across the country.

"Fifty-one new cases of #COVID19 have been reported; 32 in Lagos, 6 in Kano, 5 in Kwara, 2 in FCT, 2 in Oyo, 2 in Katsina, 1 in Ogun, 1 in Ekiti," NCDC said.

GHANA :

300,000 public sector workers in Ghana to work from home

[<https://www.pulse.com.gh/bi/strategy/300000-public-sector-workers-in-ghana-to-work-from-home/1rcvndv>]

Magdalene Teiko Larnyoh Yesterday at 10:33 AM

The Ghanaian government has started work to create virtual offices for 300,000 public sector employees.

The platform is dubbed "smart workplace project".

The Minister of Communication, Ursula Owusu-Ekufu, said this is to ensure that government business goes on without any glitch even though the COVID-19 pandemic has halted a number of businesses.

She was speaking at a press briefing on the coronavirus update in Ghana in Accra. The Minister said her ministry is collaborating with the Finance Ministry adding that the virtual platform will soon be made available to all Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) across the country.

COVID 19: Ghana's case count now 834

[<https://newsghana.com.gh/covid-19-ghanas-case-count-now-834/>]

By citinewsroom.com - Apr 18, 2020

Ghana's Coronavirus case count has increased to 834.

This comes after 193 new cases were recorded from various parts of the country. This is the highest jump in the recording of new cases by the Ghana Health Service.

In its routine updates, the Ghana Health Service (GHS) said the new development was mainly due to the enhanced contact-tracing and testing process which is ongoing.

The exercise has resulted in some 57,000 samples taken and undergoing testing. From that number, there was a backlog about 12,000 samples.

The various testing centres reported 193 new positive cases from the first batch of the backlog.

"The Ghana Health Service is supervising the completion of a backlog of laboratory samples which have been picked for testing as part of the COVID-19 testing exercise.

This is after some 57,000 samples have already been successfully tested as at April 15th 2020. In the first batch of this backlog, an additional 198 have been found to be positive. This will bring Ghana's total case count to 834 at the moment.

The general public is however advised that this does not represent new infections that are occurring. It represents results from tests of a backlog of samples," the Ghana Health Service indicated.

GAMBIE:

IMF Executive Board Approves a US\$21.3 Million Disbursement to The Gambia to Address the COVID-19 Pandemic

[<https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2020/04/15/pr20164-gambia-imf-exec-board-approves-us-21-3m-disbursement-the-gambia-address-covid19-pandemic>]

April 15, 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic is projected to lower growth of The Gambian economy to 2.5 percent in 2020

To address the urgent balance-of-payments need, the IMF Executive Board has approved financial assistance for The Gambia in the amount of US\$21.3 million under the Rapid Credit Facility. The country will also benefit from IMF debt service relief under the Catastrophe Containment and Relief Trust.

The immediate challenge is to contain the spread of COVID-19, strengthen medical care, implement the social distancing and other containment measures, and mitigate the economic impact of the pandemic, especially on the most vulnerable.

Washington, DC – The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) today approved a disbursement of SDR 15.55 million (about US\$21.3 million or 25 percent of its SDR quota) for The Gambia under the Rapid Credit Facility (RCF). The financing provided under the RCF will help the country meet its urgent balance-of-payments (BOP) need as well as support the authorities' efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19 and limit its adverse economic and social impacts.

UNION AFRICAINE :

African Union slams Trump decision to stop WHO funding

[<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/african-union-slams-trump-decision-to-stop-who-funding/1805900>]

US decision is 'deeply regrettable', need to help WHO has never been more urgent, says African Union chairperson

Felix Tih | 15.04.2020 ANKARA

The head of the African Union Commission on Wednesday condemned U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to suspend funding to the World Health Organization (WHO).

Moussa Faki Mahamat termed the decision "deeply regrettable" and said the world had a "collective responsibility" to help WHO during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The US govt decision to suspend funding to WHO is deeply regrettable. Today more than ever, the world depends on WHO's leadership to steer the global Covid-19 pandemic response," he said in a Twitter post.

"Our collective responsibility to ensure WHO can fully carry out its mandate, has never been more urgent."

The U.S. president announced Tuesday that he was suspending funding for the WHO, accusing the organization of "severely mismanaging and covering up" the spread of the coronavirus.

He said American taxpayers provide between \$400-\$500 million per year to WHO, while China gives about \$40 million.

"As the organization's leading sponsor, the United States has a duty to insist on full accountability," said Trump.

The decision has also been criticized by Germany, with Foreign Minister Heiko Maas saying the accusations against the WHO were "not helpful" at a time when closer international cooperation was a need of the hour.

"The virus knows no borders. We have to closely work together against COVID-19," he said in a tweet on Wednesday.

Germany's top diplomat said it was essential to provide more support to the WHO, especially for the development and distribution of a vaccine.

The novel coronavirus has spread to at least 185 countries and regions since emerging in China last December, with the U.S. and Europe now the hardest-hit areas.

Nearly two million cases have been reported worldwide, with the death toll almost at 128,000 and close to 501,000 recoveries, according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University in the U.S.

African Union seeks debt relief for Nigeria

Magdalene Teiko Larnyoh / Yesterday at 4:54 PM

[<https://www.pulse.com.gh/bi/finance/african-union-seeks-debt-relief-for-nigeria/261vnpd>]

The African Union Economic, Social and Cultural Council, Nigeria office, is seeking debt relief or allow a two-year moratorium on repayments

These countries are China, France, Japan, and India.

This was contained in a statement signed by the AU agency's Nigeria Representative, Oba Olasunkanmi.

The statement commended the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for granting relief to 25 nations under its Catastrophe Containment and Relief Trust to mitigate the effect of the novel coronavirus. The AU agency's Nigeria Representative, Oba Olasunkanmi, in a statement in Abuja on Thursday, explained that as major lenders, they should also grant a reprieve to the Federal Government to contain the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Certainly, this will further assist the benefiting countries to significantly cushion the impact of the dreaded disease on their economies. Nigeria, at this time, needs support to enable it to recover from the financial impact."

The AU added that it would not be easy for Nigeria to service the debts due to the economic realities caused by COVID-19 "as the United Nations had projected that the world would need \$1 trillion for continual existence."

"Nigeria needs China's support at this trying time, with the long and fruitful bilateral relationship between both countries which has led to Nigerian government owing China the debt of about \$3.2 billion."

"We are being faithful in payment of service charges. In 2019, Nigeria paid \$138.8 million (N53.7billion) to EXIM Bank of China in settlement, the highest amount paid to any bilateral institution for the year," the statement added. Source: Pulse Ghana

African Union appoints special envoys to mobilize economic support for fight against coronavirus

[<https://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202004/15/WS5e96bbf9a3105d50a3d166f1.html>]

By Otiato Opali in Nairobi, Kenya | chinadaily.com.cn | Updated: 2020-04-15 15:47

Cyril Ramaphosa, South Africa's president and the chairperson of the African Union, on April 12 appointed a team of four specialists as special envoys of the African Union. The four -- namely Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Donald Kaberuka, Tidjane Thiam and Trevor Manuel -- have been tasked with mobilizing international support for Africa's efforts to address the economic challenges African countries will face as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Ramaphosa said that the special envoys will be tasked with soliciting and following up on rapid and concrete support which has been pledged by the G20, the European Union and other international financial institutions.

"The impact of the coronavirus pandemic has been global in both scale and reach, and this necessitates coordinated international action to facilitate all countries to respond effectively, but most particularly developing countries that continue to shoulder a historical burden of poverty, inequality and underdevelopment," Ramaphosa said.

"In the light of the devastating socioeconomic and political impact of the pandemic on African countries, international institutions need to support African economies that are facing serious economic challenges with a comprehensive stimulus package for Africa, including deferred debt and interest payments," Ramaphosa added.

According to the South African president, the appointment of the special envoys would bring to speed the process of securing economic support to enable countries on the continent to respond swiftly to the global pandemic. Ramaphosa said the appointed envoys brought with them a wealth of experience and enjoyed longstanding relationships in the international financial community.

"The African Union is immensely encouraged by the support that has been extended by the international community thus far. It is an affirmation that as nations of the world, we are all in this together. We must now focus on efforts to marshal every resource at our disposal to ensure that this pandemic is contained, and does not result in the collapse of already ailing economies and financial systems on the continent," Ramaphosa said.

Okonjo-Iweala is an internationally respected economist and development expert, Kaberuka is an economist and has served as a former finance minister of Rwanda, Manuel was the longest-serving

minister of finance in South Africa, and Thiam is a banker and businessman with a background in management consulting.

According to the Africa Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Africa has 15,249 confirmed cases, 816 deaths and 2,895 recoveries on Tuesday with South Africa leading with 2,272 confirmed cases.

CHINE :

As US pulls back, China builds influence at UN

[<https://www.journalducameroun.com/en/as-us-pulls-back-china-builds-influence-at-un/>]

Published on 17.04.2020 at 19h54 by AFP

As President Donald Trump announces a halt in World Health Organization funding, accusing it of kowtowing to China over the coronavirus outbreak, Beijing is building on a well-established strategy of leveraging its global standing wherever the US lets go of the wheel.

For years, Chinese nationals have been taking up positions at the head of and lower down UN agencies as the Asian powerhouse ploughs considerable resources into building on its international financial and military relationships.

China's long game on global influence is particularly apparent in Africa, where 10 years ago the continent's debt to the world's number two economy was minimal.

Today, a UN official said, it stands at some \$140 billion as Beijing ramps up investments through the Belt and Road Initiative, President Xi Jinping's signature global infrastructure project.

Beijing's overtures have placed it in a powerful position to leverage African support on various issues and at international agencies.

Led by Ethiopian Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the WHO is accused by Washington of uncritically accepting China's early assertions that the virus was not spread between humans and of wrongly praising Beijing's "transparency" over the magnitude of the crisis.

"What we have seen for more than 10 years, and especially since 2012 with Xi Jinping, is a real push from Chinese diplomacy to restructure global governance," Alice Ekman, the senior analyst in charge of the Asia portfolio at the European Union Institute for Security Studies, told AFP.

"It's a lofty ambition since China is talking about 'piloting' this restructuring."

The same phenomenon — the US withdrawing and China making its mark, but never directly — is notable at several UN agencies.

Along with its availability for an increasing number of peacekeeping missions, Beijing has become the second largest financial contributor to the UN, overtaking Japan but behind the US.

Away from the UN's activities directed from its New York headquarters, China has wielded its financial clout in the organization's many agencies worldwide, including UNESCO in Paris.

Washington's retreat since 2019 from the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, over alleged bias against Israel, came as China was increasing its influence to become the agency's largest compulsory net contributor.

Beijing has a strong presence in programs for the education of women and girls, and the second highest official at UNESCO, Xing Qu, is Chinese.

"They have succeeded in finding a balance — being very present without imposing," an official told AFP, on condition of anonymity so that they could speak frankly.

– Void –

For many UN officials across the world, the void left by the withdrawal of some of the most influential players on the international stage spells danger ahead for the organization.

"With the US not leading internationally, with Europe disappearing into itself and China pursuing its own interests, we really are in trouble," Catia Batista, associate professor of economy at Nova University in Lisbon, told The Washington Post.

Chinese has also flexed its muscle at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Rome and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) based in Montreal.

In 2019 Qu Dongyu, a former Chinese minister, became the head of the FAO, while ICAO has been co-managed since 2015 by another Chinese official, Fang Liu.

Beijing's influence is "real and growing" at ICAO, which governs global air transport, a specialist close to the agency said.

The source said Beijing is now the second-highest financial contributor to ICAO after Washington. Since last year Washington has suspended financial contributions to ICAO in an attempt to accelerate reform.

But while US officials use their contributions for leverage, the tactic is not part of a broader attempt to abandon the UN as a whole, the source says.

At UNESCO a similar leverage of US cash for influence has not led to revolutionary reform — but it remains to be seen how Trump's suspension of funding will affect the WHO.

In Vienna, major Western powers have shown little interest in the UN Industrial Development Organization, a small agency which aims to promote inclusive and sustainable industrial development.

Eyeing an opportunity, China has used this apathy to use UNIDO as a stepping stone for its ascent in other UN agencies.

Another former Chinese minister, Li Yong, has been UNIDO's director general since its establishment 2013.

As for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Washington is the lead financial contributor, ahead of China.

The US says it has not lost influence despite the pullout by Trump from the 2015 accord reached between major powers and Iran over its nuclear program.

In reality, China is now in the driving seat, with Russia and the Europeans also taking up positions of influence.

"After the election of Donald Trump, China strengthened its position as a guarantor of multilateralism," Ekman said, adding that the COVID-19 pandemic was another chance for Beijing to "invest in global governance in all directions."

Ekman described China's approach as a "pragmatic and global" strategy in which the WHO is "just one institution among many."

"In the long run, China would like to see the advent of post-Western global governance, in which China would play a central role," she added.

Tags : afp

China backs UN role in anti-virus fight

[<https://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202004/18/WS5e9a4fec3105d50a3d171b6.html>]

By Zhang Jun | China Daily | Updated: 2020-04-18 08:5

The novel coronavirus pandemic poses an enormous threat to life and health and a formidable challenge to global public health security. UN Secretary-General António Guterres pointed out that the pandemic is the gravest test for the United Nations since its foundation. Since the outbreak, China has firmly supported the United Nations playing a leading role and coordinating international cooperation to fight the virus.

President Xi Jinping had intensive telephone conversations recently with Secretary-General Guterres and leaders of other countries. They exchanged views and reached consensus on strengthening international cooperation in combating the pandemic. President Xi emphasized that the world is a community with a shared future. In fighting a disease that threatens the people of all countries, solidarity and cooperation is the most powerful weapon. It is imperative for the international community to strengthen confidence, act with unity, and work in a collective response to win this battle against a highly dangerous virus.

China supports the WHO in anti-epidemic fight

As a UN specialized agency responsible for public health matters, the World Health Organization plays a crucial role in epidemic response. Under the leadership of Director-General Tedros

Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the WHO upholds a science-based, objective and unbiased stance and provides active guidance and assistance to countries around the world.

China enjoys close communication and cooperation with the WHO, and updates the WHO in an open, transparent and responsible manner. After the outbreak of COVID-19, China immediately reported to the WHO, shared with it and the international community the genetic sequence and China's prevention and treatment experience without reservation. China donated \$20 million to the WHO in support of the global anti-epidemic cooperation. At the Extraordinary G20 Leaders' Summit on COVID-19, President Xi called for support to the WHO. A joint statement was issued by the Group of 77 and China, commending the WHO's efforts in responding to the epidemic.

Security Council's response to outbreak

As the organ with the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, the Security Council faces unprecedented challenges with the outbreak. As president of the Security Council in March, China made strenuous efforts in fulfilling its responsibility amid the impact of COVID-19, devised new working modalities for emergencies with other council members, and facilitated positive outcomes of the council's work at a difficult time.

Under the Chinese presidency, the council for the first time had a thematic discussion on countering terrorism and extremism in Africa and adopted a presidential statement. The council adopted for the first time a resolution on the safety and security of peacekeepers, Resolution 2518.

During the last two weeks of March, the council held video teleconferences on the situations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya, Syria, Afghanistan and the Middle East. The council called on relevant parties to recognize the primacy of life and health, push for cessation of hostilities, reduce negative impact on the humanitarian situation and strengthen the safety and security of peacekeepers.

UN General Assembly's efforts receive support

The UN General Assembly represents all member states and is the main deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the UN. Being actively engaged in the work of the General Assembly's General Committee, China gave support to the adoption of decision 74/544 for clarifying the way of decision-making by the General Assembly under the pandemic to ensure its normal performance of duties.

China and other 187 member states submitted the draft resolution "Global Solidarity to Fight COVID-19", which reaffirms the commitment to international cooperation and multilateralism, supports the central role of the UN in responding to the outbreak, calls on all countries to follow the WHO recommendations and enhance experience and information sharing, and stresses no tolerance for discrimination, racism and xenophobia of any form. The resolution was adopted by consensus.

Beijing responds to the initiatives by Guterres

China firmly supports the leadership of the secretary-general in fighting the pandemic and attaches great importance to his Appeal for Global Ceasefire. China calls on the parties to support and act on this initiative to buy time for prevention and containment, open up space for cooperation and create conditions for political solutions. China pushed for attention by the Security Council to the situations of countries in armed conflict and the safety of people in conflict zones, and made utmost efforts to help other countries fight COVID-19.

China has shown support to more than 130 countries, including all those on the agenda of the Security Council. China provided medical supplies, shared experiences, sent expert teams and assisted with commercial procurement. China supports all the other initiatives of the secretary-general, including the appeal on prevention and redress of violence against women during the epidemic, the Global Humanitarian Response Plan and the UN communications response initiative.

Helping mitigate impact of COVID-19 on economy

In the report "Shared Responsibility, Global Solidarity: Responding to the Socio-Economic Impacts of COVID-19", Secretary-General Guterres pointed out that the pandemic has hit hard the world economy, probably causing a global recession and crisis. The world's leading economies should adopt coordinated, decisive, inclusive and innovative policy actions.

The International Monetary Fund has made a similar appeal. China is fully aware of its important responsibility as the second-largest economy and is making every effort to help stabilize and boost the world economy. At the Extraordinary G20 Leaders' Summit, President Xi called on the parties to strengthen macroeconomic policy coordination, jointly maintain the stability of the global industrial chain, supply chain and financial markets and promote trade facilitation, charting the course for the global economy to step out of the shadow of the pandemic.

On Tuesday, at the Special ASEAN Plus Three (10 + 3) Summit on COVID-19, Premier Li Keqiang called for partnership, solidarity and mutual assistance among ASEAN and China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea, to work for economic development and an early victory over the pandemic. While consolidating the positive results of pandemic response at home, China is working hard to get people back to work, reduce the impact on the global industrial chain, and ease the shortage of medical supplies in other countries.

Growth must be priority in fight against pandemic

China subscribes to the view of Secretary-General Guterres that COVID-19 has a far-reaching negative impact on global sustainable development, with stronger impact on vulnerable countries and people, thus the international community needs to better recover from the crisis and fulfill its commitment to implement the 2030 sustainable development agenda, with the goal of building a more inclusive and sustainable future.

China is working hard to battle poverty despite COVID-19 and to ensure that its poverty eradication targets will be met as scheduled. This will set a good example for the international community in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Virus knows no borders or races. No country can wall itself off from its impact. The only way to defeat the virus is to work together. Blame-shifting and scapegoating will not help focus on pandemic response, but only divide the international community and jeopardizes international anti-epidemic cooperation. We firmly oppose such wrong acts as labeling, politicizing and stigmatizing, a position shared by the international community.

Through solidarity and mutual assistance, we will prevail over this outbreak and embrace a brighter future for all.

The author is China's permanent representative to the United Nations. The views don't necessarily represent those of China Daily.

Govt to Evacuate Kenyans in China With Strict Conditions

[<https://www.kenyans.co.ke/news/52212-govt-evacuate-kenyans-china-strict-conditions>]

By John Mbatia on 18 April 2020 - 1:03 pm

The government has offered to evacuate Kenyans in China in the wake of escalating racism and tough living conditions in the Asian nation. This is after the Kenyans spoke out in detail, arguing that they had been evicted from their house and were forced to live in the streets. They also lamented at how they had been subjected to forced Coronavirus (Covid-19) tests.

However, the Embassy listed down that for one to be airlifted back home, they would carter for their own expenses, which include air tickets. They should also file details with the Embassy and must be Coronavirus free.

A Kenyan in China confirmed that the government had reached out to them and plans were underway, adding that they were also trying to find a way to ensure that Kenyans who do not have residence permits were also flown back home.

"I can confirm this and it is being organised by Ambassador Macharia Kamau, the Permanent Secretary Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The main purpose is to assist the aggrieved, these are ones with no residence permits. The government will arrange for them to be given amnesty.

"However, they will incur so much, because remember after paying approximately \$1,000 (Ksh 106,000) as air ticket, they will also have to quarantine for 14 days in Kenya upon landing. Or maybe even 28 days," the source informed Kenyans.co.ke.

Kenyans in China had resorted to planning a demonstration against the government if their outcry would not be taken into consideration. The plan to demonstrate backfired after they were tracked down, with claims that some of them are missing.

"We were set up that we were going to camp in Beijing yet our statuses were not clear. Some of us are missing. They argued that it would be a bad image for the diplomatic relationship between Kenya and China. They have hiked the prices to take advantage of the situation. They know we cannot afford it," another source revealed with one more arguing that they had already spent a lot in quarantine and survival in China.

Their parents in Kenya had also disclosed that the discrimination was at its peak, detailing that money could not have even bought their freedom as they were denied access to every transaction.

"Our relatives are stuck in China. Even if we send them money, they can't transact as they are not even allowed into shops," one parent had earlier on stated. In the wake of the new developments, she stated that she was ready to sacrifice to unite with her family.

"I will organise my daughter to return home. We will also ensure the measures for quarantine are adhered to. She sent me the message and we are looking for a way through," one parent enthusiastically stated while speaking with Kenyans.co.ke.

James Kairu, Global Ambassador Diaspora National Assembly for 254 criticised the move while speaking with Kenyans.co.ke.

"This Chinese issue is going to become a problem. Many cannot afford that air ticket," Kairu lamented.

"We humbly request that these Diaspora Kenyan citizens, be assisted and facilitated to immediately return home by the Government of Kenya, through the utilization of currently available resources from the COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund, which was established by President Uhuru Kenyatta, to handle all arising matters pertaining to the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, for all Kenyans, regardless of where they are in the World.

"Some of these citizens can afford their own travel expenses, thus we request that Air Transport is arranged for them. Once they all arrive in Kenya, they can be put under 30 days mandatory quarantine as per the directions of the Ministry of Health," Kairu had also written to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Thursday, April 16.

Ethiopia commends China's help in anti-virus battle as medical team arrives

By xinhuanet.com - Apr 17, 2020

Chinese medical assistance is vital to Ethiopia's efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19, an Ethiopian official said on Thursday.

Lia Tadesse, Ethiopian Minister of Health, said the country highly values Chinese medical assistance in the anti-virus fight, ranging from the supply of medical supplies to experience sharing about the Asian country's successful measures. Tadesse was speaking at the sidelines of a ceremony held at the Addis Ababa Bole International Airport to welcome a 12-person Chinese medical team. The Chinese medical team includes experts in general surgery, epidemiology, respiratory, infectious diseases, critical care, clinical laboratory. The team also carried urgently needed medical supplies including protective equipment, and traditional Chinese medicine which had been tested effective by clinical practice.

"The Chinese medical team will share their experiences on their country's anti-COVID-19 response and areas of collaboration with Ethiopian medical professionals."

They have brought commodities related to personal protective equipment which can prevent infections and are good for those who are giving critical medical services, Tadesse told Xinhua. Tadesse also said the supply of medical testing kits from China are essential for Ethiopia to know the true magnitude of the COVID-19 outbreak in the east African country. Ethiopia has so far confirmed 92 COVID-19 cases.

The Ethiopian Minister of Health further said the country's medical partnership with China extends to the field of traditional medicine, which becomes all the more urgent in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. "There is an ongoing discussion to learn about Chinese traditional medicine benefits. This collaboration is part of a comprehensive medical partnership between Ethiopia and China," Tadesse told Xinhua.

Earlier this month, Ethiopian high-level officials held a video conference with Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) practitioners and researchers on ways of applying the TCM therapy towards controlling the spread of coronavirus pandemic in the east African country.

South Africa receives medical supplies from China

[<https://www.newtimes.co.rw/africa/south-africa-receives-medical-supplies-china>]

The New Times-16 Apr 2020

The medical supplies donated by China arrive at Or Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg, South Africa, April 14, 2020. South Africa .

USA :

South Africa concerned at USA decision to cut WHO funding

[<https://www.devdiscourse.com/article/health/1010108-south-africa-concerned-at-usa-decision-to-cut-who-funding>]

WHO, as the lead UN Agency, is mandated to promote health and to ensure universal health coverage globally. It is tasked with leading global efforts to suppress the transmission and stop the COVID-19 pandemic.

Devdiscourse News Desk | Cape Town | Updated: 16-04-2020 15:23 IST | Created: 16-04-2020 15:23 IST

Black people dying from coronavirus at much higher rates in cities across the USA

[<https://eu.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2020/04/07/who-dying-coronavirus-more-black-people-die-major-cities/2961323001/>]

Deborah Barfield Berry USA TODAY

Published 8:46 AM EDT Apr 9, 2020

WASHINGTON – Black Americans are dying of coronavirus at much higher rates compared with other Americans in some major cities, but most federal officials and states are not keeping track or releasing racial data on coronavirus victims, raising concerns about care for the nation's most vulnerable populations.

As coronavirus cases and related deaths soar in cities with significant black populations, including New Orleans, Detroit and New York, civil rights groups, Democratic lawmakers and the White House have called on federal health officials to release racial data to ensure resources and information reach every community affected by the outbreak.

President Donald Trump and Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said during a White House briefing Tuesday that African Americans are being hit hard by the coronavirus, representing a "tremendous challenge" for the nation, according to the president.

"We want to find the reason to it," Trump said, adding that national data on race and coronavirus cases should be available this week.

Get daily coronavirus updates in your inbox: Sign up for our newsletter now.

Fauci said health disparities made the outbreak worse for the African American community.

"So we are very concerned about that. It is very sad. There is nothing we can do about it right now except to give them the best possible care to avoid complications," Fauci said.

Only a few states have released the racial information, including Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, New Jersey and North Carolina. Data from these states shows blacks are dying at a disproportionately higher rate compared with whites.

“This is a critical issue for us that we're raising, and we're sounding the alarm,” said Hardie Davis, president of the African American Mayors Association and mayor of Augusta, Georgia.

In Illinois, there were 13,549 coronavirus cases Tuesday and 380 deaths, according to the state’s Department of Public Health. Of the confirmed cases, 28.4% were black, 27.1% white, 10% Hispanic, 3.3% Asian and 25.7% were unknown. Of the deaths, 42.9% were black, 36.1% white, 8.4% Hispanic, 6.8% unknown and 3.7% Asian. Roughly 15% of the state's population is black, while whites make up 77% of the state, according to the Census.

In Michigan, the numbers were also bleak: African Americans account for 14% of the state's population but 33% of COVID-19 cases and 40% of deaths.

In New York City, the coronavirus pandemic is killing Hispanics and African Americans at a disproportionate pace compared with their representation in the city’s population, according to preliminary data issued Wednesday by Mayor Bill de Blasio.

Hispanics accounted for 34% of the deaths in the city hardest hit by the crisis; they represent 29% of the population. African Americans represented 28% of the deaths, higher than their 22% representation in the city’s population, the data showed. In contrast, white New York City residents accounted for 27% of the deaths, lower than their 32% representation in the city population. Asians represented 7% of the deaths, well below their 14% share of the population.

In Louisiana, one of the hardest hit states in the country, 70% of the deaths related to coronavirus were African American and 29% were white, according to the state’s health department. As of Wednesday, there were 17,030 cases across the state and 652 deaths. African Americans make up 32% of the state’s population...

COVID-19 CRISIS: US govt gives Uganda Shs14b to boost Covid-19 fight

[<https://www.pmldaily.com/news/2020/04/covid-19-crisis-us-govt-gives-uganda-shs14b-to-boost-covid-19-fight.html>]

CONRAD AHABWE | PML Daily Senior Correspondent by CONRAD AHABWE | PML Daily Senior Correspondent

April 17, 2020 in NEWS

KAMPALA – The U.S. Government has extended \$3.6 million (about Shs14b) to Uganda to boost the fight against coronavirus pandemic.

The \$3.6m donation, which was announced by the US State Department on Friday, April 17, includes \$2.3 million in health assistance to address the outbreak and nearly \$1.3 million in humanitarian assistance will support refugees and their host communities in Uganda during the pandemic.

“This assistance is provided in addition to the nearly \$8 billion in total U.S. assistance for Uganda over the last 20 years and \$4.7 billion in health assistance alone,” the State department said.

The funding is part of \$508m in emergency health, humanitarian, and economic assistance given to countries around the world to deal with the pandemic.

Total U.S. government assistance in the global fight against COVID-19 provided to date includes nearly \$200 million in emergency health assistance from USAID's Global Health Emergency Reserve Fund for Contagious Infectious-Disease Outbreaks and Global Health Programs account, nearly \$195 million in humanitarian assistance from USAID's International Disaster Assistance (IDA) account, and \$50 million from the Economic Support Funding (ESF), which will help governments and NGOs in more than 100 of the most affected and at-risk countries during this global pandemic. In addition, through the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, which is responsible for the Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA) account, we now have a country-by-country breakout of the previously announced \$64 million in humanitarian assistance for the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to address threats posed by the pandemic in existing humanitarian crisis situations for some of the world's most vulnerable people as part of the UN's Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19.

"This funding will support critical activities to control the spread of this disease, such as rapid public-health information campaigns, water and sanitation, and preventing and controlling infections in health-care facilities," the US department said.

Below is the breakdown of US funding to African countries

Angola: \$570,000 in health assistance is helping provide risk-communications and water and sanitation, and prevent and control infections in key health facilities in Angola. This assistance comes on top of long-term U.S. investments in Angola, which total \$1.48 billion over the past 20 years, including \$613 million in health assistance.

Botswana: \$1.5 million in health assistance to address the outbreak. This new assistance builds on nearly \$1.2 billion in total assistance in Botswana over the last 20 years, \$1.1 billion of which was for health.

Burkina Faso: More than \$6 million in health and humanitarian funding will go toward risk-communications, water and sanitation, preventing and controlling infections in health facilities, public-health messaging, and more. This includes \$2.5 million in health assistance, \$1.5 million in IDA humanitarian assistance, and more than \$2.1 million in MRA humanitarian assistance, which will help protect the health of refugees, internally displaced persons, and their host communities in Burkina Faso during the pandemic. Over the past 20 years, the United States has invested more than more than \$2.4 billion total in Burkina Faso, \$222 million in health alone.

Cameroon: Nearly \$8 million in health and humanitarian assistance will help provide infection-control in key health facilities, strengthen laboratories and surveillance, prepare communities, and bolster local messaging. This includes \$6.1 million in health and IDA humanitarian assistance from USAID, in addition to nearly \$1.9 million in MRA humanitarian assistance to support refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and their host communities. This assistance builds upon more than \$960 million in total U.S. investment in the country over the past 20 years, \$390 million of which was in health.

Central African Republic: \$5.2 million in humanitarian assistance, including \$3.5 million in IDA humanitarian assistance that will go toward risk-communications, preventing and controlling infections in health facilities, and safe water supply, and \$1.7 million in MRA humanitarian assistance that will help protect the health of refugees, internally displaced persons, and their host communities in the Central African Republic during the pandemic. The U.S. Government has provided \$822.6 million in total in the Central African Republic over the last 20 years, including \$4.5 million in emergency health assistance in Fiscal Year (FY) 2019.

Republic of Congo (ROC): \$250,000 in health assistance will address the outbreak. The United States has invested in the Republic of Congo for decades, with more than \$171.2 million in total U.S. assistance for the ROC over the last 20 years, \$36.8 million of which was for health assistance.

Chad: More than \$3 million in humanitarian assistance, including \$1 million in IDA for preventing and controlling infections in health facilities, raising community awareness of COVID-19, and improving hygiene, and more than \$2 million in MRA humanitarian assistance to help protect the health of refugees and their host communities in Chad during the pandemic. This new assistance builds upon the foundation of nearly \$2 billion in total U.S. assistance over the last 20 years, including more than \$30 million in health assistance.

Côte d'Ivoire: \$1.6 million in health assistance to address the outbreak. Over the past 20 years, the United States has invested more than \$2.1 billion in long-term development and other assistance in Côte d'Ivoire.

Democratic Republic of the Congo: \$14.4 million, including \$14.0 million in health assistance and IDA humanitarian assistance that will improve the prevention and control of infections in health facilities, and support improved awareness of COVID-19, including by working with religious leaders and journalists on risk-communication messaging. An additional \$400,000 in MRA humanitarian assistance will help protect the health of refugees, internally displaced persons, and their host communities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo during the pandemic. This builds upon more than \$6.3 billion in total U.S. assistance over the past 20 years, including nearly \$37 million in health.

Djibouti: \$500,000 in health assistance to address the outbreak. The United States has already invested more than \$338 million total in Djibouti over the last 20 years.

Eswatini: \$750,000 in health assistance to address the outbreak. Funds will go to bolstering Eswatini's emergency health response, which may include commodity procurement, contact tracing, laboratory diagnostics, and raising public awareness. This assistance builds upon the foundation of U.S. assistance in Eswatini, which totals more than \$529 million in total assistance over the last 20 years, including more than \$490 million in health assistance.

Ethiopia: More than \$9 million in assistance to counter COVID-19, including \$8.3 million in health and IDA humanitarian assistance for risk-communications, the prevention and control of infections in health facilities, disease-surveillance, contact-tracing, and coordination; and \$789,000 in MRA humanitarian assistance for refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and their host communities. This assistance is in addition to the United States' long-term investments in Ethiopia of more than \$13 billion in total assistance, nearly \$4 billion in health alone, over the past 20 years.

Ghana: \$1.6 million in health assistance to address the outbreak. This new assistance builds upon \$3.8 billion in total U.S. assistance to Ghana over the last 20 years, including nearly \$914 million in health assistance.

Guinea: \$500,000 in health assistance to address the outbreak. The United States has invested nearly \$1 billion in total assistance for Guinea over the last 20 years, including \$365.5 million in health assistance.

Kenya: Nearly \$4.5 million in health and humanitarian assistance, including \$3.5 million in health assistance to bolster risk communication, prepare health-communication networks and media for a possible case, and help provide public health messaging for media, health workers, and communities; and \$947,000 in MRA humanitarian assistance for refugees and host communities.

This COVID-19 specific assistance comes on top of long-term U.S. investment in Kenya, which totals \$3.8 billion in total U.S. assistance to Kenya over the last 20 years, including \$6.7 billion in health assistance alone.

Madagascar: \$2.5 million in health assistance to address the outbreak. The United States has invested more than \$1.5 billion in total assistance for Madagascar over the last 20 years, including nearly \$722 million in health assistance alone.

Malawi: \$4.5 million in health assistance to address the outbreak. The United States has provided more than \$3.6 billion in total assistance for Malawi over the past 20 years, including more than \$1.7 billion in health assistance.

Mali: \$5.7 million in assistance for COVID-19 response includes \$4.4 million in health and IDA humanitarian assistance for risk communication, infection prevention and control, and coordination, and nearly \$1.3 million in MRA humanitarian assistance to support refugees, internally displaced persons, and their host communities in Mali during the pandemic. This new assistance builds upon decades of U.S. investments in Mali, which totals more than \$3.2 billion in total assistance over the last 20 years, including more than \$807 million in health assistance.

Mauritania: \$250,000 in health assistance to address the outbreak. The United States has provided more than \$424 million in total assistance over the last 20 years for Mauritania, including more than \$27 million in health, building a strong foundation for their pandemic response.

Mauritius: \$500,000 in health assistance to address the outbreak. This new assistance builds upon the foundation of more than \$13 million in total U.S. assistance over the past 20 years, including \$838,000 in health assistance.

Mozambique: \$5.8 million in health and IDA humanitarian funding will help provide risk communication, water and sanitation, and infection prevention and control in key health facilities in Mozambique. The United States has invested nearly \$6 billion total investment over the past 20 years, including development and other assistance, including more than \$3.8 billion in health assistance.

Lesotho: \$750,000 in health assistance to address the outbreak. This new assistance builds upon decades of U.S. investments in Lesotho, which totals more than \$1 billion in total assistance over the last 20 years, including more than \$834 million in health assistance.

Liberia: \$1 million in health assistance will provide critical aid for all 15 Liberian counties (emergency operation centers, training, contact tracing, hospitals, and community health services), support quarantine efforts, and provide community level support. The United States has helped lay a strong foundation for Liberia's COVID-19 response through more than \$4 billion in total assistance over the past 20 years, including more than \$675 million in health assistance.

Namibia: \$750,000 in health assistance to address the outbreak. This new assistance comes in addition to nearly \$1.5 billion in total U.S. assistance to Namibia over the past 20 years, including more than \$970.5 million in long-term health assistance.

Niger: Nearly \$4 million in assistance includes nearly \$2.8 million in health and IDA humanitarian assistance for risk communication, infection prevention and control, and coordination, and \$1.2 million in MRA humanitarian assistance will support refugees and their host communities in Niger during the pandemic. This assistance comes on top of more than \$2 billion in total U.S. assistance for Niger in the past 20 years, nearly \$233 million in health assistance alone.

Nigeria: Approximately \$21.4 million in assistance includes nearly \$20 million in health and IDA humanitarian funding for risk communication, water and sanitation activities, infection prevention, and coordination, and more than \$1.4 million in MRA humanitarian assistance for refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and their host communities. This assistance joins more than \$8.1 billion in total assistance for Nigeria over the past 20 years, including more than \$5.2 billion in U.S. health assistance.

Rwanda: More than \$2 million in assistance for Rwanda's COVID-19 response includes \$1.7 million in health assistance that will help with surveillance and case management efforts in response to COVID-19, and \$474,000 in MRA humanitarian assistance to support UNHCR's COVID-19 response for refugees and host communities in Rwanda. This comes on top of long-term U.S. investment in Rwanda totaling more than \$2.6 billion in total assistance over the past 20 years, including more than \$1.5 billion in health.

Senegal: \$3.9 million in health assistance to support risk communication, water and sanitation, infection prevention and control, public health messaging, and more. In Senegal, the U.S. has invested nearly \$2.8 billion in total assistance over the past 20 years, nearly \$880 million in health alone.

Sierra Leone: \$400,000 in health assistance to address the outbreak. This assistance joins decades of U.S. investments in Sierra Leone, totaling more than \$5.2 billion in total assistance over the past 20 years, including nearly \$260 million in health assistance.

Somalia: Nearly \$12.5 million in assistance for COVID-19 response includes \$11.6 million in IDA humanitarian assistance to support risk communication, infection prevention and control, and case management, and more, as well as \$892,000 in MRA humanitarian assistance to support UNHCR's COVID-19 response in Somalia. This assistance comes in addition to \$5.3 billion in total assistance for Somalia over the last 20 years, including nearly \$30 million in health alone.

South Africa: Approximately \$8.4 million in health assistance to counter COVID-19 will support risk communication, water and sanitation, infection prevention and control, public health messaging, and more. This assistance joins more than \$8 billion in total assistance by the United States for South Africa in the past 20 years, nearly \$6 billion invested in health alone.

South Sudan: \$13.1 million in assistance for South Sudan's COVID-19 response includes \$11.5 million in IDA humanitarian assistance for case management, infection prevention and control, logistics, coordination efforts, risk communication, and water, sanitation and hygiene programs, and nearly \$1.6 million in MRA humanitarian assistance will support refugees, internally displaced persons, and their host communities in South Sudan during the pandemic. This funding builds upon past U.S. investments in South Sudan totaling \$6.4 billion for South Sudan over the past 20 years, including more than \$405 million in health.

Sudan: Nearly \$13.7 million in assistance includes \$13 million in IDA humanitarian assistance for risk communication, case management, disease surveillance, infection prevention and control, and water, sanitation and hygiene programs, and \$671,000 in MRA humanitarian assistance to support refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and their host communities. The United States has invested more than \$3 million in health and more than \$1.6 billion in total assistance for Sudan over the last 20 years.

Tanzania: \$1.4 million in health assistance supports risk communication, water and sanitation, infection prevention and control, public health messaging, and more. The United States has invested more than \$7.5 billion total for Tanzania over the past 20 years, nearly \$4.9 billion in health alone.

Uganda: \$3.6 million in assistance includes \$2.3 million in health assistance to address the outbreak and nearly \$1.3 million in MRA humanitarian assistance will support refugees and their host communities in Uganda during the pandemic. This assistance is provided in addition to the nearly \$8 billion in total U.S. assistance for Uganda over the last 20 years and \$4.7 billion in health assistance alone.

Zambia: \$3.4 million in health assistance supports risk communication, water and sanitation, infection prevention and control, public health messaging, and more. This new assistance joins \$4.9 billion total U.S. assistance for Zambia over the past 20 years, nearly \$3.9 billion in U.S. health assistance alone.

Zimbabwe: Nearly \$3 million in health and IDA humanitarian assistance will help to prepare laboratories for large-scale testing, support case-finding activities for influenza-like illnesses, implement a public-health emergency plan for points of entry, and more. This new assistance builds on a history of U.S. investments in Zimbabwe – nearly \$3 billion total over the past 20 years, nearly \$1.2 billion in health assistance.

ONU / UN :

L'ONU affirme sa solidarité avec l'Afrique dans la bataille contre le Covid-19

[<https://news.un.org/fr/story/2020/04/1066722>]

5 avril 2020 Développement durable (ODD)

Le Secrétaire général de l'ONU, António Guterres, a promis mercredi que l'Organisation serait solidaire de l'Afrique qui se prépare à affronter la propagation de la pandémie de Covid-19, lors d'une réunion avec les représentants des pays africains membres des Nations Unies

« Tous les efforts doivent viser l'ennemi commun, alors que nous nous préparons à la propagation attendue de la pandémie en Afrique. Ce n'est en aucun cas le fait de l'Afrique. Mais comme pour la crise climatique, le continent africain pourrait finir par subir les plus grands impacts », a dit M. Guterres lors de cette réunion.

Il a félicité les pays africains pour les mesures prises afin de supprimer la transmission et contrôler la propagation du Covid-19, ainsi que pour préparer la population et l'économie à son impact.

Il a ainsi pris pour exemple l'Ouganda qui soutient les entreprises en rééchelonnant les cotisations de sécurité sociale, ou encore la Namibie qui offre une allocation de revenu d'urgence aux travailleurs qui ont perdu leur emploi, et l'Égypte qui a réduit la fiscalité des industries, reporté la taxation des terres agricoles et élargi son programme de filet de sécurité sociale.

Il a aussi salué les initiatives de l'Union africaine (UA) visant à soutenir les Centres africains de contrôle et de prévention des maladies, à créer un Fonds spécial de réponse au Covid-19 et à nommer des envoyés spéciaux pour mobiliser un soutien économique international.

« Le système des Nations Unies fait tout ce qui est en son pouvoir pour aider à renforcer et à compléter les capacités nécessaires pour faire face à la propagation », a déclaré le Secrétaire général.

Missions de paix et politiques de l'ONU mobilisées

Depuis le début de l'épidémie, les missions de maintien de la paix et politiques des Nations Unies ont ainsi mis au point des campagnes de sensibilisation, des formations pour les fonctionnaires et les travailleurs sociaux, des programmes radiophoniques et aidé à l'élaboration et à la mise en œuvre de plans d'intervention locaux face au Covid-19. Le système de développement des Nations Unies et les coordonnateurs résidents sont également pleinement mobilisés.

M. Guterres a pris comme exemple l'équipe de pays des Nations Unies au Nigéria qui a contribué 2 millions de dollars pour acheter des fournitures médicales essentielles. En Afrique du Sud, l'ONU travaille en partenariat avec des organisations locales pour diffuser des messages approuvés par l'OMS sur le Covid-19 et pour créer une plate-forme destinée à soutenir l'apprentissage des enfants pendant la période de fermeture des écoles en raison du confinement.

« Sur l'ensemble du continent, nos coordonnateurs résidents et nos équipes de pays des Nations Unies travaillent avec des donateurs bilatéraux, des institutions financières internationales et le secteur privé pour mobiliser des fonds nationaux pour lutter contre la pandémie », a noté le chef de l'ONU. « L'OMS soutient les gouvernements dans la détection précoce. Alors qu'au début de l'épidémie, seuls deux pays pouvaient tester le Covid-19, 47 pays africains peuvent désormais le

faire. L'OMS fournit également un soutien à distance aux autorités sanitaires nationales sur l'utilisation des données et aide les autorités locales à veiller à ce que le public soit pleinement informé », a-t-il ajouté.

M. Guterres a également noté que la Commission économique des Nations Unies pour l'Afrique (CEA) travaille en étroite collaboration avec les pays du continent africain sur les questions de l'alimentation et de la dette.

Pour aider à faire face aux conséquences économiques et sociales dévastatrices de la pandémie, le Secrétaire général a publié le mois dernier un rapport appelant à une réponse multilatérale globale, représentant pour l'Afrique plus de 200 milliards de dollars pour faire face aux effets immédiats et mieux récupérer.

« Pour cela, nous devons mobiliser tous les partenaires. Nous avons besoin de plus de ressources du Fonds monétaire international (FMI) », a dit le chef de l'ONU, qui a ajouté que l'Organisation continuerait de plaider en faveur d'un allègement de la dette de l'Afrique.

« Je réaffirme l'attachement de l'Organisation des Nations Unies à son partenariat avec l'Afrique en tant qu'élément crucial pour relever ce défi », a-t-il conclu.
Une menace sans précédent pour le développement en Afrique (FMI)

Dans son dernier rapport sur les Perspectives économiques régionales pour l'Afrique subsaharienne, le FMI note que la crise menace d'annuler les progrès accomplis récemment sur le plan du développement et pourrait peser sur la croissance au cours des années à venir.

« Le monde fait face à un défi sans précédent, et l'Afrique subsaharienne ne sera pas épargnée », a déclaré Abebe Aemro Selassie, Directeur du département Afrique du FMI. « La région est confrontée à un effondrement de la croissance économique, à un resserrement des conditions financières, à une forte baisse des prix des principaux produits exportés et à de graves perturbations de l'activité économique dues aux mesures qui ont dû être adoptées pour maîtriser l'épidémie. En conséquence, nous prévoyons maintenant pour la région une contraction de 1,6% cette année, soit le pire résultat jamais enregistré ».

« La baisse des revenus accentuera les vulnérabilités existantes, tandis que les mesures d'endiguement et la distanciation sociale menaceront inévitablement les moyens d'existence d'innombrables personnes. En outre, la pandémie atteint le continent à un moment où beaucoup de pays ont peu de marge de manœuvre budgétaire, ce qui complique la riposte des pouvoirs publics », a-t-il ajouté.

Dans ces conditions. M. Selassie appelle à prendre des mesures décisives pour limiter les coûts humains et économiques de la crise.

Premièrement, la priorité immédiate consiste à tout faire pour accroître les dépenses publiques de santé afin de contenir l'épidémie, quelles que soient les ressources budgétaires des pays.

Deuxièmement, il est crucial d'apporter une aide considérable en temps voulu. Il peut s'agir de transferts monétaires ou d'aides en nature en faveur des ménages vulnérables, y compris les travailleurs du secteur informel, ou d'aides ciblées et temporaires aux secteurs durement touchés. La capacité des pays de mettre en place une riposte adéquate dépendra dans une large mesure de leur accès à des financements concessionnels de la communauté internationale.

Troisièmement, les politiques monétaires et financières peuvent aussi jouer un rôle important pour aider les entreprises et l'emploi.

« Un effort coordonné de tous les partenaires au développement sera essentiel à l'appui de ces mesures prises au niveau national », a dit M. Selassie.

Le FMI va fournir environ 11 milliards de dollars à 32 pays d'Afrique subsaharienne qui ont sollicité une aide au cours des dernières semaines : des décaissements ont déjà été effectués en faveur du Burkina Faso, du Gabon, du Ghana, de Madagascar, du Niger, du Rwanda, du Sénégal, du Tchad et du Togo.

En outre, un allègement de la dette immédiat est accordé aux pays les plus pauvres et les plus vulnérables au titre du fonds fiduciaire d'assistance et de riposte aux catastrophes du FMI. Avec la Banque mondiale, le FMI appelle aussi les créanciers bilatéraux officiels à alléger la dette des pays à faible revenu qui demandent un délai de grâce.

L'ONU, le FMI et la Banque mondiale se mobilisent pour l'Afrique et réclament une solidarité exceptionnelle

[<https://news.un.org/fr/story/2020/04/1066902>]

17 avril 2020 Développement durable (ODD)

Le Secrétaire général de l'ONU, António Guterres, a réclamé vendredi « une solidarité exceptionnelle » avec l'Afrique pour l'aider à affronter la pandémie de Covid-19 et ses conséquences sanitaires, sociales et économiques, lors d'un événement virtuel de haut niveau organisé par la Banque mondiale et le Fonds monétaire international (FMI).

Attacks in DR Congo hamper anti-pandemic efforts: UN

[<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/attacks-in-dr-congo-hamper-anti-pandemic-efforts-un/1809056>]

Attacks hamper humanitarian access, hinder assistance to displaced, says UN agency 17.04.2020 ANKARA

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) on Friday warned that recent armed attacks in the eastern parts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) could cause "terrible consequences" as it pushes for more displacement amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Recent attacks in North Kivu and Ituri provinces are reported to have displaced more than 35,000 people in recent weeks including some 25,000 in villages south of Lubero territory," the UNHCR said.

"In the meantime, security has deteriorated in the Djugu Territory in Ituri province, where a growing number of attacks by unknown assailants have displaced over 12,000 persons so far this month," it added.

"These attacks hamper humanitarian access, hinder assistance to desperate displaced people, and disrupt vital coordination on COVID-19 prevention and sensitization.

"Many areas and sites hosting displaced people are also overcrowded, making it difficult to implement physical and social distancing," the statement concluded.

More than 5 million people have been internally displaced in the country due to violence, according to the UN.

Apart from that, the armed conflicts-torn nation hosts more than half a million refugees, who have fled persecution and unrest in the neighboring countries.

DAM, NY, AGNEWS, <http://burundi-agnews.org>, Samedi 18 Avril 2020