



(Ugandan government and ruling party officials are intimidating and threatening journalists and activists in an effort to limit criticism of the government, Human Rights Watch said in a report released today. Uganda will hold presidential and parliamentary elections on February 18, 2016.)

BURUNDI :

RWANDA :

Bad News: Last Journalists in a Dictatorship review – Rwanda’s ‘Big Brother’
theguardian.com/Monday 11 January 2016

The text arrived one evening: “My life is in danger. I think I may die tonight.” It came from Gibson, a talented young Rwandan journalist who was used to living in fear given his job. He avoided seeing his family to protect them, sent a neighbouring boy for his shopping to ensure he was seen as little as possible in public. But then he started a magazine that in its first edition provided information to mothers struggling to feed malnourished children – and this undermined an official narrative that the nation’s president had banished hunger.

Yet he was not killed, unlike others brave enough to pursue proper journalism in Rwanda. Instead, he was broken in different ways – beaten by police, intimidated by people he thought were friends, forced to flee the country, threatened even in Uganda. Eventually this idealistic man was driven to self-destruction, terrified even to see a doctor for fear they were secret agents. “The government had not needed to kill him,” writes Anjan Sundaram. “They just made him useless, ruined his mind with paranoia by turning on him those he loved and trusted most.”

The tragedy of Gibson runs like a thread through this slim book by Sundaram, a reporter who spent almost five years in Rwanda after freelancing in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo. He was the author’s favourite student on a journalism training project funded by Britain and the European Union, which gave him a ringside seat on the creeping repression of Paul Kagame’s government. The result is a superb exposé of a dictatorship as he observes how the tentacles of totalitarianism squeeze the life from a society.

Bad News is an important book that should shatter any lingering faith people might hold in Kagame’s hideous regime. Sundaram details how his students end up crushed by the system, either promoting its Orwellian messages or behind bars if they refuse to conform. One becomes the president’s propagandist. Another, who befriends him, turns out to be a government stooge. A third ends up paraded before the press in prison garb, her head shaved and child effectively orphaned; she was sentenced to 17 years in jail after state prosecutors said she implied Rwandans were unhappy with their rulers.

The doomed futility of his work is seen when his class discusses an article about Victoire Ingabire, the opposition politician who returned from Holland to run against Kagame in 2010, only to be accused of “genocidal ideology” and thrown in jail. Newspapers called her a criminal before her trial, while reporters smeared her with false sex claims. “How do you expect otherwise?” asks one journalist. “If we don’t call her a criminal the authorities think we are on her side. They have even threatened my children. But if we say she is guilty they leave us alone. So we call her a villain, genocidal.”

Such damning details offer unusual insight into a police state that became an aid darling in the west. It opens with the writer investigating an explosion, only to be told by a security official that he was imagining things. He explains how Kagame exerts control through a benign-sounding system of villages, the nation broken down into small blocks of families, each with a head, security officer and informer. On the one hand, this led to the sudden eradication of plastic bags – but on the other, it strips away privacy and ensures constant monitoring.

Sundaram travels deep into the country during the rainy season to discover scenes he compares to war, the landscape littered with huts destroyed and traditional grass roofs burnt off. Children are sick, old people shake with malaria, families are squashed together in makeshift shelters or living with animals. Yet he is mystified since there are no signs of conflict. Finally, villagers admit they destroyed their own homes after a government order, leaving him pondering the humiliation of a woman who tells him Kagame is a visionary for such signs of progress. “She said the president was a kind man for thinking of the poor.”

This is a desolate work, taut prose describing the stifling atmosphere of a nation trapped in fear. Yet equally depressing are the delusions of western donors, played so skilfully by Kagame as they funnel huge sums into his state then serve as cheerleaders for this bloodstained war criminal. He has just shown again how he manipulates “democracy” with a referendum to ensure he can stay in power until 2034; as Sundaram says, who dares vote against such a government when it orders people to mark ballots with thumbprints?

The author admits even his small programme was mandated not to challenge the government, sticking only to sanctioned subjects such as “poverty reduction”. One embassy official warns if they mention repression they will be expelled. When concerns over freedom of expression emerge, a committee is set up to investigate, with journalists represented by a former police officer. Donors invest in a parliamentary radio station, equip the electoral body with technology, train a media council – then entrust such projects to the government, ensuring they are used to tighten its grip.

Sundaram says the result, with even United Nations bodies banned or bullied, has created “a mirage of a country”. Papers open as journalism is destroyed. Parties appear as political space disappears. Criticism of Kagame’s brutal actions during the genocide is silenced. At one stage, the author questions a foreign diplomat about pouring money into the regime’s pocket. “I have no problem with giving money to a dictator,” the smug diplomat replies. “I’m proud to be giving him money... we will influence the government in the right direction.”

Such shameful stupidity shows how western governments end up as accomplices to terror and apologists for despotism. The book ends with a list of journalists assaulted, deported, forced to flee, jailed, kidnapped, killed or going missing after criticising Kagame’s government. It takes 12 pages to detail all the cases yet Sundaram admits it is not exhaustive.

RDC CONGO :

RDC : l'opposant Etienne Tshisekedi annonce son prochain retour à Kinshasa
Xinhua/11.01.2016

L'opposant congolais Etienne Tshisekedi, président de l'Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social (UDPS), a annoncé son prochain retour en République démocratique du Congo (RDC), dans un court message vidéo diffusé par son parti à l'occasion des vœux de nouvel an.

"Bientôt je serais parmi vous pour que nous puissions lier nos efforts pour gagner", a déclaré M. Tshisekedi, âgé de 82 ans, ajoutant que "l'année 2015 vient de s'achever sans que le peuple puisse espérer obtenir les résultats qu'il aurait pu obtenir en comptant sur les immenses richesses du pays".

M. Tshisekedi, qui se trouve à Bruxelles depuis 2012 pour des soins de santé, a appelé les partis politiques d'opposition à participer au dialogue convoqué par le président de la République Joseph Kabila afin trouver les solutions adéquates aux problèmes.

"Quelle que soit l'hostilité, on finit toujours par le dialogue, et c'est ainsi que je fais appel à tous ceux qui veulent le changement, qu'ils soient ensemble afin de trouver la solution adéquate à ces problèmes", a-t-il poursuivi.

En décembre 2011, le président sortant Joseph Kabila avait été réélu président de la RDC avec 48,95% des voix, contre 32,33% pour Étienne Tshisekedi. Ce dernier a rejeté ces résultats et s'est autoproclamé président de la République.

UGANDA :

Uganda: Intimidation of Media, Civic Groups

January 10, 2016/hrw.org

Free Expression, Association Crucial to Free, Fair Election

(Kampala) – Ugandan government and ruling party officials are intimidating and threatening journalists and activists in an effort to limit criticism of the government, Human Rights Watch said in a report released today. Uganda will hold presidential and parliamentary elections on February 18, 2016.

The 48-page report, “‘Keep the People Uninformed’: Pre-Election Threats to Free Expression and Association in Uganda,” documents how some journalists and activists are facing increased threats as the elections loom. While print journalists working in English have some relative freedom, radio journalists – particularly those working in local languages whose listeners are based in rural areas – face harassment and threats from an array of government and party officials. These include the police; resident district commissioners, who represent the president; internal security officials; and the Ugandan Communications Commission, the government broadcasting regulator.

“Fair elections require a level playing field in which all candidates can freely campaign and voters can make informed decisions,” said Maria Burnett, senior Africa researcher at Human Rights Watch. “How can Uganda hold fair elections if the media and independent groups can’t criticize the ruling party or government leaders without fear?”

Human Rights Watch interviewed more than 170 journalists, activists, members of political parties, government officials, and witnesses to specific events across Uganda for the report.

President Yoweri Museveni, who has been in power since 1986, is running for president for his ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) party. Dr. Kizza Besigye, who has challenged Museveni in the last three elections, is running for the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC). Amama Mbabazi, Museveni’s longtime ally and former prime minister, has left the ruling party and is running under his party, Go Forward.

Journalists have been suspended under government pressure, and radio stations threatened for hosting opposition members as guests or when panelists expressed views critical of the ruling party. Radio show hosts in Jinja, eastern Uganda, in July 2015, and in Hoima, western Uganda, in April 2014, were suspended after Besigye appeared on their shows.

When guests or radio hosts have made statements deemed critical of the government, journalists have received phone calls or visits from government representatives, threatening them with firing or suspension, and closure of their media organizations. Radio journalists told Human Rights Watch that party representatives offered them money, trips, and training, in exchange for favorable coverage of the ruling party.

Journalists also said that the government’s response to political reporting is having a “chilling effect” on their coverage and analysis of political news and is preventing voters from receiving information.

“I think government intends to keep the people uninformed,” one journalist told Human Rights Watch. “You see, uninformed people are easy to manipulate. Cases of intimidation are prevalent.... As journalists, we are forced to cover up. In the reporting you don’t hit the nail on top. You have to communicate carefully. In election season we see this very clearly.”

The government has likewise clamped down on domestic organizations, particularly those working on human rights, including voter education and oil sector transparency. Staff members of these groups said that, like media organizations, they faced visits from the police, summons by resident district commissioners, and, in some instances, closure of their public meetings. These actions violate free association rights and obstruct access to information.

“What happens here is that organizations are in a state of self-censorship,” one activist said. “They know things are wrong but people don’t want to get onto bad terms with government.... They are afraid to question things.”

On November 26, 2015, the Electoral Commission wrote to the Citizens Coalition for Electoral Democracy Uganda (CCEDU) to inform them that their information campaign, called Topowa, Honor Your Vote, was “biased, contrary to law.” The electoral commission chairman and the spokesman accused the Topowa campaign of being partisan and pushing for “change,” though the campaign was eventually permitted to resume.

In June 2015, the Special Investigations Unit of police arrested an information and security analyst with USAID in Kampala, the capital, for allegedly posting criticism of the president on social media. Charges against him of promoting sectarianism and offensive communication are pending.

In December, the Uganda Communications Commission issued ad-hoc orders to media organizations not to host the president’s former press secretary, who had allegedly insulted the president and members of his family. This type of blanket banning – without any clear means to challenge the orders – violates guarantees of freedom of expression and rights of due process, Human Rights Watch said.

The new Non-Governmental Organisations Act, recently passed by parliament but not yet signed by the president, threatens to further shrink the space for independent organizations. It contains vague and ill-defined criminal offenses for staff members, such as engagement “in any act, which is prejudicial to the interests of Uganda and the dignity of the people of Uganda.” The act fails to define what “interests” or “dignity” mean.

“Government and ruling party officials have a legal obligation to allow the expression of a variety of viewpoints on issues of public concern as the country prepares for the election,” Burnett said. “Muzzling free expression and prompting fear, especially outside Kampala where there is so little international scrutiny, doesn’t bode well for Uganda’s ability to hold free and fair elections in February.”

SOUTH AFRICA :

South Africa and China: Behind the smoke and mirrors

11 Jan 2016/mg.co.za

The People’s Republic of China’s relationship with South Africa has deepened significantly in recent years, as shown by a raft of economic and political proclamations.

The year 2014 was dubbed “the year of South Africa in China”. It was followed last year by the “Year of China in South Africa”. Now South Africa has been upgraded to China’s lofty “Strategic Comprehensive Partner”.

And the governing African National Congress (ANC) has made no bones about how it feels. Its 2015 National General Council discussion document identifies a new “Cold War” in which “the exemplary role of the collective leadership of the Communist Party of China in this regard should be a guiding lodestar of our own struggle.”

Such statements have left observers wondering whether the ANC-led government is making a geopolitical turn toward China. Such sentiments have been emboldened by bureaucratic obfuscation that’s prevented the Dalai Lama from visiting South Africa on three different occasions and the Chinese government funding an ANC training school.

China’s economic relationship with South Africa has added further fuel to the fire. China has been South Africa’s largest trading partner since 2010, with a total trade volume of R270 billion in 2013. The announcement during the China-Africa summit that China will be committing a further R90 billion to South Africa, will only confirm sceptics’ fears of growing subjugation.

Knowing which side your bread is buttered

Reactions to China’s engagement tend to overlook one important fact. While, at least ideologically, the South African government may be thumbing its nose at traditional western partners, economically, multiple international engagement is the order of the day.

Europe and the US continue to be significant trading partners. Foreign direct investment from these regions far surpasses what comes in from China. In fact, India is the only BRICS country - Brazil, Russia, India and China - in the top five sources of foreign direct investment in South Africa.

Additionally, the US, UK and Germany are still the top overseas visitors to the country.

Those of an economically pragmatic bent may be scratching their heads as to why the South African government needs to engage with China at the expense of engagements with western partners.

This is, in fact, by no means the case. South Africa may be taking sides at an ideological level. But at the level of international economic engagement, it is business as usual. In an instance of what Patrick Bond refers to as the “talk left, walk right” approach, the South African government uses the language of anti-Western imperial hegemony while simultaneously being deeply engaged in the logic of global markets.

In fact, when it comes to international political economy, no one “talks left and walks right” more than the Chinese themselves. The country’s integration into the global market system, the rise of a consumer-orientated middle class, and its outward-bound commodity forays to support both domestic and international consumption make China a dominant player in global capitalism. Significantly its currency, the renminbi, has just been accepted by the IMF as a world currency.

China’s engagement in Africa is an extension of this process, a fact which many in the Euro-American world, and even Africa, seem unable to digest.

Nothing highlights this more clearly than the recent announcement of the Chinese-driven Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. The new bank includes most major global players, including South Africa. Notable absentees are Japan and the US. It has eclipsed the BRICS New Development Bank, presenting itself as a champion of the global South.

South African and Chinese aspirations have much in common if we look at China from the perspective of a formidable global market player, rather than simply as an authoritarian single-party

state. Both are deeply integrated within global markets while at the same time being engaged in domestic ideologies which are inherently antagonistic to these markets. In this respect, they are part of a broader post- Cold War economic pragmatism in which domestic and even foreign policies - be they left, right or centre - are subordinate to the market imperative.

Number of complaints to HRC suggest South Africa is becoming more racist

MATTHEW SAVIDES/timeslive.co.za/11 janvier, 2016

South Africa is becoming more racist if the number of complaints to the Human Rights Commission is anything to go by.

The commission has received an average of 30 complaints of "unfair discrimination based on race" a month for nearly a year.

The apparent increase in racism comes as moves are under way to criminalise racism.

Spokesman Dieketseng Diale says the average is expected to increase substantially in the wake of recent controversial Facebook and Twitter posts by retired estate agent Penny Sparrow, fitness instructor Justin van Vuuren, Gauteng sports department employee Velaphi Khumalo, economist Chris Hart and others.

She said from April to the end of last year, the commission had received 470 equality-related complaints, and almost 270 of them were about racist statements.

Two years ago, of the 493 complaints over the entire year, 291 were race-related.

"Race-related complaints comprise 58% of all equality-related complaints in the current year - and that excludes complaints received in January."

She said complaints lodged last week would push up the total.

Gauteng people submitted the most complaints at 121, followed by KwaZulu-Natal at 41, Western Cape 29 and Free State 25.

Overall, the commission received 3590 complaints from April to December last year, the majority (13%) being equality-related.

Mienke Steytler, SA Institute of Race Relations spokesman, said: "It does appear that there are more incidents of racism and racial outbursts in South Africa.

"One can always ask if it is because ... people are more aware that they can report, but that is more difficult to quantify."

She said many outbursts could be blamed on the economic situation.

"If we had policies that encouraged economic growth and access to the labour market ... people would be less bothered with one another as they would be happier."

Sello Hatang, Nelson Mandela Foundation CEO, said it was unclear if there were fewer racial outbursts in the past.

"Are we seeing a South Africa that is becoming more racist? Was it ever non-racist, this is the question we should be asking.

"Black people continue to have this thing they go through every day. Black people are reaching a point where this is too much now."

Steytler welcomed calls for the criminalisation of racism and glorification of apartheid.

"We cannot accept this in our country and people must realise they will be subject to the rule of law. The constitution is very clear on freedom of expression and its limitations," she said.

Lunga Peter, KwaZulu-Natal Law Society president, welcomed calls for the law to be tightened.

"Notwithstanding that South Africa has the most liberal constitution in the world which underpins the values of democracy, equality and freedom, including the freedom of expression, it is clear that our laws are not sufficient to address and curb the pockets of overt racist conduct manifested in [Sparrow's] post. We would accordingly urge the state urgently to pass specific legislation to criminalise such conduct."

But Hatang said Chapter 9 institutions needed more power to deal with racism.

TANZANIA :

Burundi talks in Arusha

Monday, 11 January 2016/independent.co.ug

Can Tanzania's new maverick President Pombe Magufuli make progress after Kampala failure?

On Jan.4, just two days before peace talks on Burundi were slated to open in the Tanzanian city of Arusha, a series of explosions shook Bujumbura. At least four blasts went off in the city centre, followed by several rounds of gunfire prompting increased deployment of security along several roads.

One of the shells landed a few meters from the offices of Bujumbura's mayor, injuring three people, including a woman.

The blasts were the latest in a series of violent acts in Burundi since President Pierre Nkurunziza announced plans to run for a controversial third term in office, and his subsequent election win in July.

So far the UN estimates that 400 people have died in the violence and it is feared that Burundi could slip into civil war, with the army splitting along ethnic lines.

The Arusha talks follow a failed initial meeting in Uganda under AU-appointed mediator President Yoweri Museveni.

The December 28 Kampala talks failed after the Nkurunziza government took a hardline position regarding the attendees; especially against the representatives of the opposition alliance called the National Council for the Restoration of Arusha Agreement and Rule of Law.

The government refused to engage in talks with the group which is known by its French acronym “CNARED” and also rejected a request by the African Union to deploy 5,000 peacekeepers to protect civilians.

Burundi’s Foreign Minister, Alain Aimé Nyamitwe, who was heading the government delegation to the talks, was categorical when he spoke to journalists in Kampala.

“If the people we have evidence against for participating in the coup show up in the room, we get out. It’s as simple as that.

“Why should we be talking about immunity for some, while others are facing justice in Bujumbura?

Nyamitwe was responding directly to President Museveni who had earlier argued for an amnesty for members of CNARED who are accused of involvement in a coup attempt against Nkurunziza in May 2015 led by Gen. Godefroid Niyombare.

The president quashed the coup and, two months later in July, won the elections. He then set about persecuting his opponents who in turn stepped up their resistance.

In December, 79 opposition fighters and eight government soldiers died during coordinated rebel attacks on three Burundian military bases, an army spokesman said. The week before, scores of people died in clashes at military installations.

International pressure

The Arusha talks, therefore, come at a time when Nkurunziza is receiving sustained criticism.

According to Carina Tertsakian, a Human Rights Watch senior researcher on Burundi, sustained regional and international pressure is essential to persuade the government, as well as the opposition, to adopt measures to end the killings in Burundi.

“The Burundian government’s responses so far are disappointing, but those facilitating the talks should not give up,” she told IRIN ahead of the Arusha talks.

Jean Minani, the chair of the opposition negotiators, was equally determined.

He told IRIN: “We shall negotiate with the enemy. But he Nkurunziza can’t say, ‘Give me five years’ ... He must go.”

Nkurunziza’s opponents argue that his third-term bid was prohibited by the constitution and also violated the 2000 Arusha peace accord that ended Burundi’s long civil war.

“A political solution is not impossible, but looks very, very difficult given that the main opposition demand is for Nkurunziza to step down, something the government will never accede to,” Alex Fielding, senior analyst at Max Security Solutions, a geopolitical risk consulting firm, told IRIN. “Nkurunziza still remains popular in rural areas and he has shown little willingness to compromise. He said CNARED is, of course, the main opposition platform that needs to come on board for any lasting political solution and that by rejecting them as `criminals or terrorists, the Nkurunziza government is dooming any peace talks to failure.

According to Fielding, Nkurunziza’s hardline stance is partly driven by his quite strong power base

in the security forces and upper levels of the military since he purged it of those perceived to be disloyal after the failed coup.

When on December 17, 2015, the AU invoked for the first time a clause allowing it to intervene in a member state without its permission, Nkurunziza quickly warned that such an “invasion force” would be resisted. “I anticipate that the Burundi government will continue to attempt to delay and obfuscate the negotiations and the deployment of a peacekeeping force as strenuously as they can,” Joseph Siegle, director of research at the Africa Center for Strategic Studies at National Defense University, Washington, told IRIN. “While they will justify this on the grounds of sovereignty, the real focus for them is control and to deflect attention from their lack of legitimacy.

“Throughout the crisis, the government has calculated that there would be insufficient political will on the part of regional and international authorities to intervene,” said Siegle.

Fielding says the AU’s insistence of a peacekeeping force was more of a political move to pressure Nkurunziza into entering into dialogue rather than a genuine desire to send the East African Standby Force into such a volatile and complex mission.

“The reality is that the East African Standby Force is nowhere near ready to intervene. Key players Rwanda and Tanzania have already said they will not contribute troops, and any deployment would require UN Security Council approval given Burundi’s objections,” he said.

He says obstacles might not be overcome easily unless there’s a serious escalation in violence, which would delegitimise the Nkurunziza government as the protector of its own people and add a greater sense of urgency for intervention.

Another observer, Devon Curtis who is a political scientist and Africa expert at Cambridge University in Britain, made the same conclusion to a journalist.

“At the moment, it isn’t fair to describe events as genocide,” she said, “It’s political violence, and it’s violence concentrated in particular neighborhoods. I think it would be a mistake to call this genocide, in that people are not being targeted for their ethnic affiliation at the moment.

But on December 23, 2015, a new rebel group that could change that emerged. Known as the Republican Forces of Burundi – known by the French acronym “FOREBU”, it is led by Edward Nshimirimana, a former army colonel.

There is now fear that should FOREBU attract a number of high-ranking Tutsi officers who are disgruntled after being sidelined by the faction of former Hutu armed groups who are close to Nkurunziza, the violence could scale up. The group which claims to include soldiers who had defected from the government has already been blamed for raids on military bases. These could take on a dangerous ethnic dimension and possibly trigger a civil war.

“Nkurunziza has an interest in avoiding this scenario, which would likely lead to international military intervention. But there are worrying signs of ethnic rhetoric being used to stir up support, including by Nshimirimana, who alleges that a genocide of the Tutsis is already under way.”

What’s the way forward?

“The solution must be political, rather than just military, and regional African leaders and others such as China – who retain some degree of influence over Nkurunziza – must pressure the government to engage in an inclusive dialogue which involves CNARED and civil society groups,”

said Fielding. For Tertsakian: “If the AU is ready to offer assistance in preventing further killings, then the Burundian government should be willing to consider that, as well as other options which could help restore respect for the rule of law and fundamental human rights.

“Apart from the deployment of a military force, there are other measures which could help reduce the number of killings, for example the deployment of a regional police force in areas most affected by the violence.”

“There is still a chance to pull Burundi back from the brink,” the senior HRW researcher concluded. But the blasts in Bujumbura were significant as an unwanted backdrop to talks.

Fastjet Tanzania brings battle to KQ’s doorstep

By RICHARD MUNGAI/the-star.co.ke/Jan. 11, 2016

Fastjet Tanzania, will today launch its maiden flight between Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, following clearance by Kenya and Tanzania civil aviation authorities, according to its management.

The low-cost airline said scheduled flights between Nairobi and Kilimanjaro will also commence today, adding fares will be significantly lower than those charged by the airlines currently operating direct flights between the two countries, a move which is expected to stir competition on the route.

Fastjet said fares from Nairobi to Kilimanjaro will start from \$50 (Sh,5017) one-way, while fares from Nairobi to Dar es Salaam will start from \$80 (Sh8,171) one-way, both excluding taxes.

National carrier, Kenya Airways, yesterday said in an advertisement that its charging \$266 (Sh27,169) for an all inclusive one way ticket for a flight from Nairobi to Dar es Salaam.

It lists free refreshment on board, up to two bags free in the hold and free entertainment as some of things that gives it an edge over the los cost airline.

Other competitors such as Ethiopian Airlines, Precision Air and Rwanda Air, are currently charging about \$237 (Sh24,210), \$222 (Sh22,675) and \$236 (Sh24,105), respectively, which include taxes, for a one way flight on the same route.

“The maiden flight from Dar es Salaam to Kenya is expected to land at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport on Monday,” Fastjet general manager for East Africa, Jimmy Kibati, said in a statement on Friday.

“Tickets for flights on the new routes are on sale immediately. Fastjet recommends passengers to book early to take advantage of the lowest priced fares,” he said.

He said they will be using modern Airbus A319 jet aircraft with seating for up to 156 passengers and their low cost model will be targeting first-time flyers who currently travel by road, due to the prohibitively high fares for regional air travel.

Fastjet has been flying internationally through its subsidiaries in South Africa, Zambia, Uganda, Zimbabwe and Malawi.

The airline plans to launch Fastjet Kenya, a separate company within the Fastjet group, targeting flights between Nairobi and Entebbe, Kinshasa, Harare, Kilimanjaro, Juba, Lilongwe, Lusaka and Zanzibar routes.

However, its yet to get the necessary approvals from the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority, which in November announced, in a gazette notice, that FastJet Kenya had not been granted an air service licence to operate flights from the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport.

According to Kibati, Fastjet further expects to launch flights between Zanzibar and Nairobi and Dar es Salaam and Mombasa later in 2016.

“We are very grateful to the authorities in both Kenya and Tanzania for working together to make it possible for us to realise our vision of growing the number of consumers who can access the convenience of affordable air travel,” he said.

KENYA :

ANGOLA :

AU/AFRICA :

Egypte: le nouveau Parlement se réunit, une première depuis 2012
dimanche 10 janvier 2016/rtbf.be

Le nouveau Parlement égyptien, très largement acquis à la cause du puissant président Abdel Fattah al-Sissi, a tenu dimanche sa session inaugurale, une première depuis la dissolution de 2012.

Lors des législatives achevées fin 2015, le taux de participation n'avait été que de 28,3%, signe du peu d'enthousiasme suscité par le scrutin qui a accouché, selon les experts, d'une chambre d'enregistrement des futures décisions du chef de l'Etat, en l'absence quasi-totale de candidats de l'opposition.

Car M. Sissi, ex-chef de l'armée qui a destitué en juillet 2013 son prédécesseur islamiste Mohamed Morsi, réprime toute forme d'opposition, dirigeant d'une main de fer par décrets présidentiels le plus peuplé des pays arabes.

Dimanche, lors de la session inaugurale retransmise à la télévision publique, les députés ont prêté serment à tour de rôle, certains tenant à la main un drapeau égyptien.

Ils doivent encore élire le président de la chambre, ainsi que ses deux adjoints.

L'Egypte était sans Parlement depuis juin 2012, lorsque l'Assemblée dominée par la confrérie des Frères musulmans de M. Morsi avait été dissoute par la Cour constitutionnelle en raison d'un vice juridique.

Elle était issue des premières législatives libres et démocratiques du pays, après que le président

Hosni Moubarak a été chassé du pouvoir en 2011 par une révolte populaire dans le sillage du Printemps arabe.

M. Sissi a été élu président en mai 2014 sans coup férier en l'absence d'opposition et contre un candidat considéré par les experts comme un faire-valoir.

Aux législatives de 2015, la coalition "Pour l'amour de l'Egypte", qui affiche un soutien inconditionnel à M. Sissi et comprend un grand nombre d'ex-membres du Parti national démocrate dissous de M. Moubarak, a remporté la totalité des 120 sièges destinés aux partis. Le reste des élus au scrutin uninominal ont, dans leur quasi-totalité, annoncé leur allégeance à M. Sissi.

UN/AFRICA :

US/AFRICA :

CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

EU/AFRICA :

[EU says it's worried about ISIL in Libya
news.xinhuanet.com/2016-01-11](http://news.xinhuanet.com/2016-01-11)

The European Union is urging Libyan politicians to back a unity government in the wake of deadly suicide attacks claimed by ISIL. The EU says it will set aside more than a hundred million US dollars to help combat the terrorist group, but only if stability can return on the political front.

The European Union has watched with alarm as ISIL established a foothold in Libya amid the chaos that followed the overthrow and death of former leader Muammar Gaddafi in 2011.

A change of regime that was assisted by NATO airstrikes involving many European nations. ISIL has full control of Gaddafi's hometown Sirte and is now attempting to press into the oilfields around Ras Lanuf, sparking fears of a jihadist expansion on Europe's doorstep.

Last week ISIL claimed responsibility for two deadly suicide attacks that killed dozens of people. Despite this and the clear intention of ISIL to use Libya as a hub for expanding its activities in

North Africa the European Union has ruled out direct military intervention.

European leaders say Libya's two rival governments must form a unity government and only then can they provide assistance which would begin with 108 million US dollars to help combat ISIL on top of humanitarian assistance that has also been promised by Brussels.

If and when an agreement can be reached analysts say the E.U. is also likely to provide military assistance, though it would probably be restricted to training missions and deployments of Special Forces to assist regular Libyan troops dislodge ISIL.

The terror attacks in France have highlighted the threat that ISIL poses to E.U., which is also focused on slowing the flow of asylum seekers who travel to Europe from Africa, most of who transit through Libya where most of the country remains lawless.

CHINA/AFRICA :

Stocks Fall With Crude Oil, Rand as China Equity Slump Deepens

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Stocks extended last week's global rout, oil dropped and the South African rand led a slump in emerging-market currencies as China's efforts to stabilize the yuan failed to halt losses in equities.

The Shanghai Composite Index tumbled more than 5 percent to the lowest in almost four months, despite rallies in the yuan in onshore and offshore markets. Europe's benchmark stock gauge fell for a fourth day. The rand tumbled 9 percent to a record before paring its slide. Oil sank to its lowest since 2003 and copper futures declined.

Volatility in Chinese markets has sapped risk appetite globally, sending equities worldwide down the most in more than four years last week and hobbling commodities. While data Friday showed U.S. payrolls surged in December, the focus has now returned to China after the country posted a record 46th monthly decline in producer prices. Nobel-prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz said the nation isn't facing a "cataclysmic" slowdown and the turmoil was more about badly designed stock-market circuit breakers.

"The market is concerned about China's financial stability," said Matthew Sherwood, head of investment strategy at Perpetual Ltd. in Sydney, which manages about \$21 billion. "People are also quite nervous about the Chinese economic outlook. China is certainly slowing on a very gradual path down. A lot of people are fearing a hard landing is in play, but that's not our central scenario."

Stocks

The MSCI All-Country World Index slid 0.3 percent to a four-month low as of 8:05 a.m. London time, as the Shanghai Composite Index tumbled 5.3 percent and the Hang Seng Index dropped 2.8 percent in Hong Kong. China cut trading short on two days last week as selloffs in equities triggered a new circuit breaker, that was then abolished.

With Japan closed for a holiday, futures on the Nikkei 225 Stock Average retreated 1.4 percent in Singapore, while those on the S&P 500 rose 0.2 percent. The largest U.S. exchange-traded fund tracking Chinese shares tumbled 13 percent last week, exceeding the 10 percent slide in the

Shanghai Composite. The Philippine Stock Exchange Index slumped 4.4 percent to enter a bear market after losing more than 20 percent from its record high in April.

“It’s Halloween in January,” Astro del Castillo, managing director at First Grade Holdings Inc., said in Manila. “The red flags are all there for investors to realign their portfolios.”

Singapore’s Straits Times index lost 2.1 percent, the Jakarta Composite index slumped 1.9 percent and the Kospi index in Seoul dropped 1.2 percent. Australia’s S&P/ASX 200 Index fell 1.2 percent, led by mining stocks and energy producers.

Currencies

The rand was down 1.5 percent at 16.56 per dollar, after rebounding from its steepest intraday slump since October 2008. The decline probably came after “a combination of stops and margin calls caused mass capitulation” by Japanese retail investors, Macquarie Bank Ltd. wrote in a report.

The Chinese yuan climbed 0.2 percent to 6.5795 after the central bank set the reference rate little changed for a second day, following an eight-day run of weakening. The yuan also gained 0.6 percent in Hong Kong at 6.6402 per dollar. The cost of borrowing yuan in Hong Kong jumped by the most on record, reflecting tighter supply of the currency following suspected intervention by the Chinese central bank. The overnight Hong Kong Interbank Offered Rate surged 939 basis points to 13.4 percent.

The won dropped 1 percent after Pyongyang raised the risk of war as South Korea stepped up propaganda broadcasts over the border following last week’s surprise nuclear test from North Korea. The Russian ruble dropped 0.9 percent and the Turkish lira lost 0.2 percent. The euro dropped 0.3 percent to \$1.0886.

Bonds

Australian bonds led gains in Asia, with 10-year yields down two basis points to 2.76 percent, falling for the fifth time in six sessions. Yields on similar-maturity New Zealand debt dropped four basis points to 3.38 percent.

Bond risk in Asia jumped to the highest in more than three months. The Markit iTraxx Asia index of credit-default swaps rose five basis points to 152, according to prices from Nomura Holdings Inc. That leaves it set for the highest close since Oct. 5, according to prices from data provider CMA.

Commodities

China’s slowdown adds to concerns over a global glut in oil. West Texas Intermediate crude fell a sixth straight day, losing 2.2 percent to \$32.45 a barrel, after sliding 10.5 percent last week. Analysts from Nomura Holdings Inc. to UBS Group AG predict oil may fall to near \$30 a barrel.

Copper futures due in March lost 1.9 percent in London, while gold climbed 0.1 percent, rising for the fifth time in six days.

China pledges \$60 billion investment in Africa
africanews.com/2016/01/10

China’s President Xi Jinping has pledged \$60 billion to African states. Most of the announced \$60

billion will come in loans and export credits. While \$5 billion is to arrive as grants and interest-free loans.

Jinping made the announcement recently at the China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) held in Johannesburg.

However, little is known of how the committed \$55 billion will be spent.

The event witnessed the presence of 50 African countries, the Africa Union and China.

FOCAC meeting is a collaboration between China and several African countries to convene and chart out cooperation projects and discuss China-Africa multilateral relations.

China has announced the general outline of its commitments indicating that \$35 billion will go towards preferential loans, export credits, and concessional loans. Another \$5 billion will go to the China-Africa Development Fund, a private equity and venture capital investment arm of the China Development Bank.

Announcements at FOCAC summit usually outline three years worth of money, but no dates were announced.

FOCAC financial goals are often reached before the end of three years and may take longer than three years to allocate all the funding.

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