

[Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma begins a four-year tenure as the head of the African Union's executive arm . Under Dr Ping, the AU made some progress especially in Somalia, Cote d'Ivoire and in the Sudan's protracted peace negotiations. Former South African Home Affairs minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma will on Monday begin a four-year tenure as the head of the African Union's executive arm. Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma arrived in Addis Ababa over the weekend. A hand-over ceremony is set for the AU's headquarters where she will take over from Gabonese Jean Ping, whom she ousted in July after a bruising six months of battle that exposed internal bloc rifts.]

BURUNDI :

Burundi: les autorités ont entamé des négociations avec les pétroliers sur le prix de l'essence

Par RFI/lundi 15 octobre 2012

Le Burundi fait face depuis la mi-septembre à une grave pénurie d'essence, dont les conséquences sont fâcheuses sur l'économie encore fragile de ce pays. Un pays qui peine à se relever de 13 ans de guerre civile et est enclavé dans la région des Grands-Lacs africains. Les longues queues devant des stations d'essence approvisionnées au compte-goutte font désormais partie du paysage, mais une solution semble en vue.

Depuis trois semaines, la vie des automobilistes burundais se résume pratiquement à faire la chasse à la perle rare, une station service qui sert de l'essence. « C'est inimaginable ! On est vraiment paralysé parce qu'on est obligé de faire des queues pour juste avoir quelques litres ? », témoigne un automobiliste. « C'est la calamité. Il n'y a pas d'essence, tout le travail pour le moment est bloqué, le transport public est affecté, toutes les marchandises sont touchées donc la vie s'est arrêtée ! », Dit un autre.

Jusqu'ici, les autorités burundaises s'étaient contentées d'invoquer, sans abuser personne, un problème de rupture de stock pour justifier cette sévère pénurie d'essence. Mais changement de ton jeudi avec le deuxième vice-président burundais Gervais Rufyikiri, qui a reconnu devant l'Assemblée nationale, que des négociations étaient en cours avec les pétroliers sur le prix de l'essence, à cause de la flambée du prix du baril de pétrole sur le marché international et du manque de devises sur le marché local.

« Tous ces problèmes ont affecté le prix de l'essence, et ont entraîné une polémique entre le ministère du commerce et les pétroliers. Le fruit de ces discussions sera rendu public », a-t-il déclaré.

Samedi 13 octobre, le gouvernement burundais a annoncé une augmentation de 3% du prix de l'essence. De quoi contenter pour quelque temps seulement, les pétroliers burundais.

Burundi - Hausse des prix des produits pétroliers

15 Octobre 2012/Xinhua

La ministre burundaise du Commerce, de l'Industrie, des Postes et du Tourisme, Mme Victoire Ndikumana, a signé samedi une nouvelle structure des prix des produits pétroliers qui revoit en hausse ces prix.

Ainsi, le prix à la pompe de l'essence super passe de 2.080 Fbu (1,37 dollar) à 2.150 Fbu (1,42

dollar), celui du gasoil de 2.050 (1,35 dollar) à 2.150 Fbu (1,42 dollar) et celui du pétrole rampant de 1.920 Fbu (1,271 dollar) à 2.020 Fbu (1,33 dollar), soit une hausse respective de 70 Fbu (0,04 dollar) et de 100 Fbu (0,06 dollar) pour les deux derniers produits.

"Le prix à la pompe a varié à la hausse à cause de la flambée des prix sur le marché international et de la dévaluation du franc burundais", a expliqué la ministre Victoire Ndikumana.

Pour l'essence, alors que le prix au 11 septembre 2012 (date de la dernière structure) était de 881,38 dollars le mètre cube, il est pour le moment de 923,46 dollars, soit une variation de 42,08 dollars, cette variation étant de 48,79 dollars et de 50,41 dollars respectivement pour le gasoil et le pétrole rampant pour la même période.

En plus des éléments de la structure des prix de ces produits, le taux de change du franc burundais par rapport au dollar est passé de 1 485 Fbu à 1 510 Fbu.

La ministre a indiqué que le gouvernement a consenti de subventionner ces produits pour un montant de 2.528.284.173 Fbu (plus d'1,6 million de dollar) pour une période d'un mois en renonçant aux droits d'accise et à la TVA.

"N'eut été cet effort, le prix à la pompe serait de 2.580 Fbu (1,70 dollar) pour l'essence, de 2 565 Fbu (1,69 dollar) pour le gasoil et de 2.220 Fbu (1,47 dollar) pour le pétrole", a-t-elle ajouté.

Depuis le 24 septembre 2012, on remarque un manque criant de l' essence et d'aucuns pensent que cette nouvelle structure des prix pourra remédier à la situation.

RWANDA :

Rwanda: The Challenge of Nation Building

By Oscar Kimanuka/The New Times/15 October 2012

opinion

The wanton slaughter and destruction that took place in Rwanda in April to mid-July 1994 represents one of history's greatest human catastrophes.

It was estimated that more than one million people were massacred under gruesome conditions of barbarity - half of them were children under the age of 16. Millions fled their homes for the refugee camps where cholera and hunger killed thousands everyday. An estimated 150,000 children lost their parents. Many witnessed their mothers and fathers butchered before their eyes. Others were separated from their parents in the chaotic melee to escape the violence. These are facts of our recent history that cannot be forgotten.

In barely two and a half months it was estimated that half of the country's original population of nearly 7.5million had either been slain or turned into refugees. Western Governments and International agencies had proven unable or unwilling to effectively aid the victims, much less prevent the disaster in the first place. Thanks to the resilience and determination of the Rwandan Patriotic Front that stopped the Genocide against the Tutsi and embarked later at the end of July 1994 on establishing a government of national unity. RPF will be celebrating 25 years in December this year since its inception in 1987.

Eighteen years down the road, few can believe how Rwanda has emerged from the horrors of her recent history to claim position among the community of nations.

On the hills of Rwanda's countryside, children in uniform are attending school while women's Cooperatives are engaged in farming activities, their produce destined for export to overseas markets. In the villages, a peaceful atmosphere prevails. These and many more scenes across the countryside attest to the prevailing peace and security that has come to characterize Rwanda over the last eighteen years.

These scenes from ordinary life Rwanda are not what strangers to this country of a thousand hills expect to find because when the subject of Rwanda is mentioned, people familiar with this nation's recent developments think of ethnic rivalry, bloodshed, displacement of millions of people and of course genocide.

Rwanda has defied the odds and prophets of doom. It has already exhibited the structure and organization for which it was once well known long before the advent of colonialism, when it was among the most organized in the interlacustrine region. It may be recalled that Rwanda was one of the few African countries that resisted the infamous slave trade that ravaged most of sub-Saharan Africa. No single Rwandan was sold to slavery during the 19th century.

It was the colonial-backed and trained new leadership who institutionalized the divisions and repetitive cycles of violence which created the culture of impunity, exclusion, systematic killings and massive displacements of the Rwandan populations from the late 1950s right through to the mid 1990s. Ethnic divisions deepened and mistrust grew over decades and 1994 marked the height of socio-political disintegration of the country.

It is with extra-ordinary feat that eighteen years down the rough road to nation building that this country is well known for her rapid socio-economic reforms that have attracted international accolades. For the first time since independence, the Rwandan leadership is shared by different political, ethnic and even religious backgrounds. The thrust of government is on reconciliation and national unity. For example, all Rwandans are now seen as equal before the law and discriminatory policies and practices that had marked the past regimes have been discarded. The bulk of the problems of genocide have been handled through the Gacaca Jurisdictions, a communal justice system, whose aim is to reconcile while establishing the bitter truth about what happened in 1994. The Gacaca courts have successfully concluded their work.

One of the hallmarks of the post-genocide government has and continues to be the maintenance of law and order. Security within the Rwandan borders has been restored and today Rwanda is one of the safest places within the Great Lakes Region.

Rwanda faces serious challenges to her development. Among the key constraints facing the country is the high incidence of HIV/AIDS and poverty. HIV/AIDS pandemic has serious ramifications to a nation recovering from the devastation of the Genocide. Approximately 3 per cent of Rwanda's population is infected and affected with the virus, including more than 65,000 children under the age of 15 years.

Women, who constitute almost 54 per cent of the population, account for more than 50 per cent of Rwanda's total HIV infections. It is also estimated that 70 per cent of the approximately 250,000 women who were raped during the Genocide were infected with HIV.

Efforts to sensitise the population on the dangers of the pandemic, coupled with measures to

provide anti-retroviral drugs, continue.

Besides HIV/AIDS facing the country, there is an equally serious threat to Rwanda's socio-economic well being - the problem of poverty alleviation.

Despite the significant economic and social progress made in the recent past, Rwanda still faces heavy challenges, mainly related to its geography, economic structure, which include high population growth and density, narrow export base and vulnerability to external price shocks, high energy costs, just to mention but a few.

No doubt, a lot has been done but a lot more remains to be done if the country is to recover fully from the horrors of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, which has left an indelible mark on the Rwandan society.

RDC CONGO :

François Hollande à Kinshasa, l'art délicat d'éviter les embarras

Le Monde.fr/ Par Thomas Wieder/ 15.10.2012

Pour certains, c'était inopportun. Pour d'autres, c'était risqué. A Kinshasa, samedi 13 octobre, François Hollande devait convaincre sur deux fronts. Aux "idéalistes", il lui fallait montrer que l'on peut promouvoir les droits de l'homme à l'intérieur même d'un pays, la République démocratique du Congo (RDC), qui les bafoue. Aux "réalistes", il avait à prouver que l'on peut critiquer la politique d'un Etat quelques jours avant de s'y rendre, sans pour autant créer un incident diplomatique.

De son arrivée vers 8 heures du matin à son départ vers 23 heures, son emploi du temps comme ses prises de parole ont été soigneusement calibrés pour satisfaire les uns et rassurer les autres.

En homme pour qui l'action ne se conçoit pas sans une forte dose de prudence, François Hollande a ainsi tout fait pour éviter les images embarrassantes et les situations gênantes. Le matin, par exemple, il a rencontré Joseph Kabila. Mais l'entretien entre les deux présidents n'a pas été suivi d'une conférence de presse commune, contrairement à ce qui s'était passé la veille à Dakar, avec Macky Sall.

Ce faisant, François Hollande s'est épargné les amabilités, inévitables en de telles circonstances, avec le dirigeant d'un Etat où la démocratie et les droits de l'homme sont, comme il l'avait dit quatre jours plus tôt à Paris, dans une "situation tout à fait inacceptable".

ENVOYER DES MESSAGES

Il en a été de même à la mi-journée, lors de l'ouverture du sommet de la francophonie : en prenant place à côté du président de la RDC, François Hollande a fait preuve d'une froideur ostensible à son égard. Mais, à la tribune, il a pris soin de ne pas le froisser, en bannissant toute allusion précise aux atteintes aux droits de l'homme commises par le régime de Kinshasa. Une fois de plus, c'était habile de sa part : à l'image, il avait gommé tout signe de complicité ; dans les mots, il avait écarté toute parole d'hostilité.

En rencontrant Joseph Kabila dès sa descente d'avion le matin et en le ménageant au sommet de la francophonie le midi, François Hollande évitait le faux pas diplomatique. Mais il prenait le risque

de décevoir ceux pour qui les valeurs comptent davantage que la realpolitik. A ceux-là, il fallait donc envoyer des messages : les conseillers du président s'y collèrent, en "débriant" auprès des journalistes son tête-à-tête avec le président congolais, ses rencontres avec des opposants politiques et ses entretiens avec des dirigeants d'ONG.

Mais les messages ne suffisent pas. Une image symbolique s'imposait également : pour cela, le choix s'est porté sur une plaque, à l'entrée de la nouvelle médiathèque de l'institut français, en mémoire de Floribert Chebeya, un militant congolais des droits de l'homme assassiné avec son chauffeur en 2010. En la dévoilant avec les proches du disparu à ses côtés et en pressant la justice congolaise d'agir pour condamner les assassins, le président trouvait une cause pour incarner un discours qui, autrement, serait resté très abstrait.

COMMUNICATION MAÎTRISÉE

Reste que, dans ses habits de héraut des droits de l'homme, François Hollande a maîtrisé sa communication aussi savamment que dans ceux de chef de la diplomatie. Ainsi, pas plus qu'il n'avait tenu, le matin, à s'afficher aux côtés de Joseph Kabila, le président n'a voulu, le soir, tenir une conférence de presse commune avec Etienne Tshisekedi, l'opposant historique de celui-ci.

En fin de journée, c'est donc tout seul que le chef de l'Etat a répondu aux journalistes conviés à la résidence de l'ambassadeur de France, et ce n'est qu'à l'issue de cet échange qu'il a reçu M. Tshisekedi dans la pièce voisine. Là encore, ce fut très habile : le président terminait son séjour en RDC en rencontrant la figure emblématique de l'opposition à Kabila, mais en évitant une fois de plus à avoir à répondre à des questions dérangeantes aux côtés d'un homme au demeurant très contesté.

Le Premier ministre canadien déplore le choix de la RDC pour le sommet de la francophonie
15 octobre 2012/(AFP)

Stephen Harper a estimé qu'il faudrait à l'avenir organiser ce rassemblement «dans des pays démocratiques».

Le Premier ministre canadien Stephen Harper souhaite que les prochains sommets de la Francophonie se tiennent «uniquement dans des pays démocratiques», a-t-il déclaré dimanche à la télévision canadienne depuis la République démocratique du Congo. «J'espère qu'à l'avenir la Francophonie et les autres grandes organisations décideront de ne tenir leurs sommets que dans des pays démocratiques», a déclaré Stephen Harper depuis le sommet à Kinshasa.

Le dirigeant canadien admet être allé à Kinshasa «avec quelques réticences» mais sans regretter son choix. «Mais je pense que ça valait la peine parce que ça nous a donné l'occasion de rencontrer des gens qui travaillent activement au changement ici», a-t-il ajouté.

De son côté, Pauline Marois, la Première ministre du Québec, ne réclame pas aussi nettement que Stephen Harper la tenue de sommets dans des pays démocratiques. «Probablement que ce serait souhaitable», a-t-elle déclaré à la télévision canadienne depuis le sommet, «mais en même temps, nous, en étant là, on envoie un message au peuple congolais de dire "écoutez on sera à vos côtés dans cette recherche de la démocratie". Quand on le dit directement chez eux, c'est plus gênant je crois que de le dire quand on est loin. On se sent moins concerné», a lancé Pauline Marois.

Stephen Harper et Pauline Marois ont chacun rencontré dimanche le premier ministre de la RDC, Augustin Matata Ponyo, peu avant la clôture du sommet, affirmant tous les deux avoir à nouveau

évoqué le sujet de la démocratie et des droits de l'homme dans le pays. Pauline Marois avait refusé de rencontrer le président Joseph Kabila tandis que Stephen Harper avait indiqué ne pas avoir sollicité de tête-à-tête avec le chef d'État congolais. Ce sommet était également l'occasion d'une première rencontre officielle entre la Première ministre du Québec et le Premier ministre du Canada depuis l'élection de Pauline Marois le 4 septembre.

La décision de tenir le 14e sommet de la Francophonie en République Démocratique du Congo a été prise avant l'élection de décembre 2011, entachée de forts soupçons de fraude et de violences lors de la réélection de Joseph Kabila.

Dimanche, le président Kabila a déclaré que son pays n'était «pas du tout complexé» par son «niveau de démocratie», après déjà des critiques émises par le président français François Hollande, qui l'avait jugé «tout à fait inacceptable».

Clôture du sommet de la francophonie : des motifs de satisfaction pour M. Kabila

Le Monde.fr /Par Martine Jacot (Kinshasa, envoyée spéciale)/ 14.10.2012

"Puissiez-vous poser sincèrement les problèmes et esquisser des amorces de solutions", avait souhaité Abdou Diouf, secrétaire général de l'Organisation internationale de la francophonie (OIF) devant ses 56 pays membres, réunis en sommet à Kinshasa, la capitale de la République démocratique du Congo. Force est de constater, à la clôture de ce sommet, dimanche 14 octobre, que son vœu a été en partie exaucé.

Le président François Hollande a parlé clair, comme il l'avait promis, évoquant d'emblée "le soutien de la France au peuple congolais qui aspire à la paix, à la sécurité, à la démocratie" devant l'hôte de ce sommet, le président Joseph Kabila, et les autres dirigeants susceptibles de se sentir concernés. D'autres ont fait chorus, comme Stephen Harper, premier ministre du Canada, le deuxième plus gros contributeur de l'OIF. "Tous les gouvernements sans exception doivent garantir à leurs ressortissants une bonne gouvernance, l'Etat de droit et le respect des libertés individuelles", a indiqué M. Harper.

Bien qu'il se soit déclaré "pas du tout complexé" sur tous ces chapitres, le président Kabila, réélu en novembre 2011 à l'issue d'un scrutin entaché d'irrégularités, a dû donner quelques gages à des autorités françaises fort insistantes. Une commission électorale plus indépendante que celle qui avait entériné les résultats des élections présidentielle et législatives de l'an passé est en bonne voie d'être mise sur pied et, juste avant le sommet, une commission nationale des droits de l'homme a été instaurée. François Hollande, qui a rencontré à Kinshasa des représentants de l'opposition et de la société civile, a par ailleurs délivré un message direct en inaugurant samedi à Kinshasa une médiathèque française portant le nom du militant congolais des droits de l'homme unanimement respecté, Floribert Chebeya. A quelques jours du sommet francophone, le procès en appel des policiers accusés de son assassinat en 2010 avait été reporté.

Sur d'autres plans, le président Kabila a capitalisé auprès de la francophonie. Le sommet a adopté une résolution réaffirmant l'intangibilité des frontières de la RDC, condamnant "les violations massives des droits de l'homme dans l'Est du pays" (Nord et Sud Kivu) et tenant pour responsables de ces violations aussi bien le FDLR, groupe de rebelles hutus rwandais, que le M23. Ce dernier mouvement est né en avril d'une mutinerie d'officiers tutsis soutenus par le Rwanda voisin, comme l'a dénoncé en juillet un rapport d'experts des Nations unies. Kigali a refusé de s'associer à deux paragraphes de cette même résolution : l'appel adressé au Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies à adopter des sanctions ciblées contre les responsables d'exaction dans les Kivu et l'invitation "à poursuivre en justice les auteurs des crimes de guerre et des crimes contre l'humanité commis en RDC". Une allusion entre autres au chef du M23, Bosco Ntaganda, recherché depuis 2006 par la Cour pénale internationale.

Le président François Hollande s'est engagé à obtenir que le mandat de la force des Nations unies (Minusco) déployée en RDC soit précisé et élargi, de manière à faire cesser les exactions contre les civils dans l'Est du pays. Peu professionnelle et désorganisée, l'armée congolaise est impuissante à pacifier ces zones.

Autre sujet de satisfaction pour M. Kabila : la francophonie a soutenu les initiatives internationales visant le pillage des minéraux par des groupes armés. Kinshasa accuse Kigali d'être complice de ce commerce illégal dans les Kivu notamment.

Le prochain sommet de la francophonie se tiendra à Dakar, capitale du Sénégal, pays considéré comme un bon élève de la démocratie. A Kinshasa, l'OIF a admis en son sein, à titre de "membre associé" le riche Qatar qui l'est moins. Cet émirat n'est pas non plus connu pour pratiquer le français mais il a promis de s'y atteler.

Martine Jacot (Kinshasa, envoyée spéciale)

UGANDA :

Uganda's development unstoppable: what's your role?

Publish Date: Oct 14, 2012/By Dora Byamukama/newvision.co.ug

The long awaited independence jubilee celebration came and went in a flash! How time flies when one is having fun...

Just like in the case of a football game or any other incident, spectators tell different stories about the same football premised on their mood, location and expectations. My mood was already exuberant, my location was prime and I was open-minded, I was ready for any action...

The evening before the event got a lovely surprise of a splendid array of fireworks from I believe Sheraton.

I happened to be driving through town at around 8.30pm purposively to see first hand the splendid make-over that the Kampala City Authority had accomplished in record time.

As I drove on Kampala road, I paused a little to take in the breathtaking view of Mapera House and a traffic lit city, its as if I had seen what 2062 may look like! If someone took a photo of the same place two years ago and then took another yesterday - it would be hard to be convinced that its indeed the same location. This points to how much can be changed when the environment is right – vision, focus and concerted effort.

The rest of the night of October was surprising quiet, I had expected ululations and fireworks at midnight but in vain or did I miss the action? The morning of October 9 was beautiful, the sun shone brightly and maybe too brightly at around 10am which signalled that it could rain later that afternoon.

By 10.30am I had my way to Kololo after a brisk walk with some friends and colleagues from Hotel Africana. Part of the fun was seeing colleagues I had not seen for awhile.

It was a privilege to be at Kololo considering that so many who may have wanted to be there could

not make it. Entertainment by Juliana, the Police band and Pablo was well received. The arrival of president after president caused a lot of excitement for I guess various reasons.

The arrival of the host President Yoweri Museveni was exceptional, the crowd was ecstatic and a thunderous welcome awaited him every time he was sighted. The fly-over of the fighter planes and those that exuded the black, yellow and red streaks in the strikes

were a marvel. Every time they flew over Kololo one could feel them in the depths of their souls – it as if the grounds was literally shaking.

An expected group of musicians who had accompanied President of Egypt requested and was granted leave to entertain the guests.

Their Arabic music mixed with an oriental tinge made the celebrations even more Unique.

The march past by security agencies in their smart attire and show put on by several entities and innovations especially the Kiira EV car manufactured Makerere

University students were phenomenal to say the least. The presence of Prince Edward who handed over instruments of power at Independence on October 9, 1962 to the then Prime Minister Apollo Milton was nostalgic.

It must have evoked many memories for those who were present then. The fact that he celebrated his 77th birthday on the same day points to the fact that anyone who is 27 years has the potential to celebrate the Uganda's independence centenary!

To crown it all, President Museveni made one of the briefest speeches ever, brief as it may have been, it was pregnant with facts and figures on achievements and a clear vision on where Uganda will be in 20 years and in 50 years time.

He noted that – with the anticipated revenues from the oil sector, Uganda's development in the next century will be unstoppable. The President predicted that "Uganda will become a middle income country in the next 20 years and a first world country in 50 years time."

This conviction is based on the firm foundation of development of agriculture, hydro power, tourism and the services sector which will be catalyzed by the discovery of oil.

Evidence of work executed in these areas is excellent, Uganda was declared of the Number One Tourist destination for 2012. The construction of Bujagali dam has catapulted Uganda's capacity to generate power from 180 megawatts in 1954 to 810 megawatts in 2012. Our target is 20,000 megawatts.

Generation of power will in turn promote industrialisation and demand for skilled labour which will address the challenge of unemployment.

After the president's speech more entertainment ensued – Alex Mukulu's troupe did a master piece show casing Uganda's excellent talents. One particular aspect of the entertainment that has stayed with me is that there were several themes of religious themes interwoven in the entertainment.

This was captured in the lyrics of the song 'Amazing Grace' ; 'The Lord is my Shepherd I shall not want'

and another that based on Ecclesiastes 3 – ‘A time for everything’ clearly captured our motto - ‘For God and my country’. On reflection, a question that stays with me is - what is my role as a Ugandan and an East African?

How can you and I facilitate realisation of our noble vision?

China sends youth volunteers to Uganda

Publish Date: Oct 15, 2012/By Vision Reporter and Agencies

The first batch of 15 Chinese youth volunteers have arrived in Uganda in another move to boost cooperation between China and Uganda, reports China's Xinhua news agency.

Speaking at a welcoming ceremony held at the Chinese Embassy here late Friday, Zhao Yali, the Chinese ambassador to the East African country said the volunteers will lay a foundation which will strengthen the existing relationship between the two countries.

"This is the first 15 Chinese youth volunteers to Uganda, I firmly believe through their hard work, there will be more understanding among our people which will lay down a good foundation for the comprehensive cooperation between China and Uganda in the future," he told the audience which among others included senior Ugandan government officials.

He said sending volunteers to Africa is one of the measure by the Chinese government and people to further strengthen the cooperation with African governments and people.

SOUTH AFRICA :

South Africa: Five Minutes - South Africa

15 October 2012/Daily Maverick

A round-up of the weekend's news from South Africa.

SA'S GROWTH FORECASTS TO BE 'REVISITED'

South Africa's deputy Reserve Bank governor has told an investor seminar that the country's growth forecasts will likely need to be revisited.

"Growth forecasts will most likely need to be revisited," Daniel Mminele told the JP Morgan seminar in Tokyo, attributing the move to the impact of widespread labour unrest in the country. Mminele said that growth was expected to average 2.1% for the 2008-12 period, significantly lower than the 4.8% that South Africa averaged over the previous five years.

"As for the recent actions by rating agencies, these were obviously unfortunate and disappointing developments," Mminele said. "It has to be acknowledged, however, that some of the challenges they are pointing out ... are known to us and are in fact valid."

SA'S ECONOMIC PLANS 'REALISTIC AND ACHIEVABLE'

South Africa's spending plans are "realistic and achievable", says the Treasury in response to ratings

agency Standard & Poor after it dropped the country's credit rating by one notch to BBB with a negative outlook.

S&P said it expected South Africa's "underlying social tensions to increase government spending pressure and reduce its fiscal flexibility" and that the negative outlook "reflects our view that the medium-term political, economic and fiscal ramifications of SA's social tensions could deteriorate beyond our current expectations". But Treasury said the country's "young democracy has seen several elections within the ruling party and government. None of these have impacted policy and budgeting in the manner that S&P suggests", it said in a statement.

STUN GRENADES, RUBBER BULLETS AND ARRESTS

More than 70 miners have been arrested after a sit-in at a police station saw police fired stun grenades and rubber bullets at protestors who refused to move. Over 600 miners, from the nearby Gold Fields mine, arrived at Westonaria police station to demand the release of 13 miners who had been arrested earlier. When they refused to disperse, police fired rubber bullets and stun grenades that saw protestors break windows and damage property in response. Police arrested 72 miners. In a separate incident, police fired tear gas and rubber bullets at protestors hurling petrol bombs after a march on Anglo American Platinum mine in Rustenburg turned violent late on Friday.

TWO KILLED IN HOUT BAY BOAT TRAGEDY

Two people were killed when a charter boat capsized off the coast of Hout Bay near Cape Town. One was a British tourist, Peter Phillip Hyett, aged 64, and the other was a member of the crew, John Roberts, whose body was found 21 metres below the surface on Sunday morning. The twin-hulled catamaran, Miroshga, capsized near Duiker Island, three kilometres from the Hout Bay harbour. The National Sea Rescue Institute (NSRI) said about 34 people were rescued and taken to its sea rescue station before being taken to hospitals in the area. The SA Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA) has deployed a tugboat to recover the charter boat and begin an investigation into the cause of the accident.

NATIONALISATION CAUSES JITTERS, SAYS SHABANGU

South Africa's mineral resources minister has warned government that repeated calls for the nationalisation of mines are impacting on investor confidence in the country. City Press reports that Susan Shabangu has been on a mission around the world to try and restore faith in the embattled sector following the Marikana massacre and on-going violent unrest. She told the newspaper investors were "jittery" over the prospect of nationalisation. "We are confident that when we come out of Mangaung we will be able to put this matter aside and it will bring and instil much more investor confidence," she said. She said violent strikes were of concern as they weren't a "once off" but are "spiralling in the mining industry."

TOURISM NUMBERS UP IN SOUTH AFRICA

Tourism grew by 10.5% in the first six months of this year, says South Africa's tourism minister. Marthinus van Schalkwyk said despite the global recession, marketing efforts had paid off, as had "a carefully formulated tourism growth strategy". Van Schalkwyk said good returns were being realised in markets that identified as sources of strong tourism potential for South Africa. These included China, India and Brazil. A total of 60,272 Chinese visitors came to South Africa in the first half of 2012, which represented a massive 68.4% increase. South Africa recorded 21.1% growth in arrivals from India for the first six months of this year, and a phenomenal 68.4% growth in arrivals from Brazil.

KNIVES OUT FOR PUBLIC PROTECTOR

Parliament is preparing to investigate the Public Protector after high-level ANC politicians accused her of being biased against the party. The Sunday Times reported that Blade Nzimande and chief whip Mathole Motshekga were among the politicians furious over a series of rulings that embarrassed government. Madonsela's deputy, Mamiki Shai, claims she changed findings on a report into the DA-led Midvaal Municipality, and withheld the release of the report until after last year's municipal elections. Madonsela denies the claims, saying the accusation was "baseless and misleading". She had, in fact, ensured a more thorough investigation had been undertaken. Sapa reports Madonsela spoke to Parliament in July, asking it to investigate, as anonymous letters were destabilising her office.

FOURTH ARREST IN MBOMBELA STADIUM CORRUPTION CASE

A warrant of arrest for a fourth man involved in alleged corruption in the building of the Mbombela stadium has been issued. African Eye News Service reports that a warrant has been issued against controversial former Mbombela municipal manager Jacob Dladla. Three other men – soccer boss Bobby Motaung, Herbert Theledi and Chris Grib – were arrested in August and are out on bail. Dladla was municipal manager when Lefika Emerging Equity, Motaung's company, won the consultants contract for the building of the R1.2 billion stadium. All four are expected to appear in the Nelspruit magistrate's court on Monday.

The Daily Maverick is a unique blend of news, information, analysis and opinion delivered from our newsroom in Johannesburg, South Africa.

South Africa: Don't Ask, Don't Tell - the ANC's Own Sound Barrier

By Ranjeni Munusamy/Daily Maverick/15 October 2012

analysis

Deputy President and prospective presidential candidate Kgalema Motlanthe says he shared his life story with South Africa through a new biography to "generate debate and discussion". But in what context what does Motlanthe want such debate? Is the deputy president suggesting that the public should be privy to what goes on in the secret chambers of Luthuli House? It is yet another crucial issue dependent on the outcome of Mangaung.

During the liberation struggle, when the ANC was banned and its leaders were in exile or in prison, the organisation had to come up with many innovative methods to communicate. The undetected flow of information was essential to sustaining the fight against Apartheid and the transmission of news and intelligence required immense skill and ingenuity.

The method in which Mac Maharaj, now presidential spokesman, smuggled a miniaturised manuscript of Nelson Mandela's memoir out of Robben Island still beggars belief. ANC members remember fondly how broadcasts of Radio Freedom, the party's radio propaganda arm during the anti-Apartheid struggle, inspired them during times of deep oppression.

Many party leaders were detained and imprisoned for possession and distribution of propaganda material.

Post liberation, the ANC has struggled with how to deal with the flow of information in an open

society. After the honeymoon Mandela years, the ANC leadership has had a deteriorating relationship with the media as scrutiny of its inner workings and the party's performance in government intensified.

From issues like the arms deal and the Thabo Mbeki-Jacob Zuma political battles, the ANC has attempted to keep a lid on the controversies besetting the party, and has become convinced that the media has a hostile agenda. The relationship reached its lowest ebb after the Polokwane conference after sections of the ANC began to push for the implementation of a media appeals tribunal and the tabling of the Protection of State Information Bill in Parliament.

While access to information is constitutionally and legally entrenched, there are many people, even at the highest levels of the party, who believe that what the ANC does is its own business and that the media, and by extension the public, have no right to know what the ruling party is up to.

Over the past 10 years, the ANC has increasingly retreated behind a veil of secrecy to keep its internal discussions away from the public. There are increasing efforts to keep whatever happens behind the walls of the ANC's headquarters, Luthuli House, on a need-to-know basis, despite the fact that decisions taken there impact on the running of the country.

The party's national executive and national working committee meetings are now strictly guarded, with the media even prohibited from the vicinity. ANC leaders are required to check in their phones during the meetings in order to prevent information leaking out.

Severe security controls and limited media access were enforced at the Polokwane conference, the ANC's national general council in Durban in 2010 and the policy conference in June this year.

There is talk that during closed sessions, the media may be kept off the university campus where the Mangaung conference will take place in December, and that cellphone signals may be scrambled. These measures have yet to be verified, but it is clear that the ANC wants to plug all possible holes which would allow the media to gain information from delegates and other sources.

The ANC's retreat from the promotion of a free flow of information during the early years of democracy seems to be proportional to the escalation of factional battles in the party. Only the ANC's authorised spokesmen or senior officials are allowed to communicate with the media on what happens in the closed meetings. Over time it has become evident that what they convey is not always an accurate reflection of proceedings.

But the shutting down of meetings and gags against members speaking to the media has not reduced controversies or encouraged the reportage of more positive information about the ANC. If anything, it has increased the propensity of selective information leaking to advance partisan agendas.

A similar process is evident in the state where government is regularly embarrassed by damning exposes of corruption and maladministration.

Instead of using such revelations to improve governance and root out bad apples sabotaging or exploiting the state, there is a tendency to close ranks, deny the scandals or fail to act on them.

The factional wars in the run-up to Mangaung have seen information consistently flowing out of closed ANC meetings. The national policy conference was a fiasco of note, with the media kept far away from the meeting hall and journalists' accreditation confiscated when they ventured beyond the restricted area. Yet the disputes were still widely reported on, despite repeated denials by the party that any such had taken place.

The ANC is still trying to keep up the pretence that there is no divisive succession battle in the party now, and that there are merely different preferences over leadership. They also maintain that factional battles between those supporting Zuma's second term and those advocating for leadership change are a media creation. Until the nominations process began this month, the NEC had embargoed talk on succession despite the fact that the country has been preoccupied with the issue for months.

The ANC insists that all issues to do with the election of its leaders are the preserve of the branches of the party and the delegates who will vote at Mangaung. The fact that the leaders elected and decisions taken at the conference will decide the future of the country has not swayed the party to make its processes more transparent.

Motlanthe, it would seem, now wants to encourage more debate and discussion – though he does not say about what.

Like the book by former presidency director general Frank Chikane *Eight Days in September*, which told the story of Mbeki's recall from office from the perspective of one of his closest aides, Kgalema Motlanthe: *A Political Biography* has created fevered public interest. The reason for this is that there is a great hunger for information about what happens in the ANC and who its leaders are.

In the case of Motlanthe, he has been shrouded in mystery for most of public life, and the possibility of him contending for the ANC presidency has only piqued curiosity about him. There was similar curiosity over Mark Gevisser's book *Thabo Mbeki: The Dream Deferred*, released in the midst of the epic political battle between the subject and Zuma. Mbeki, like Motlanthe, managed to reach the top of the pile in the ANC, but was still an enigma.

Speaking at the launch of his biography last week, Motlanthe said he agreed that Ebrahim Harvey, who had in the past been fiercely critical of the ANC, could write the book, because he did not want just an account of his life history or a hagiography.

"I did not want a book that is only about positive issues because I think if there is any value from the book, it is if it succeeds in generating debates, undermining our fixed positions, undermining us and everyone else, and to question the underpinnings of our institutions.

Because if not, we won't serve as a raising agent for change," Motlanthe said.

The book, for the first time, reveals that Motlanthe differs with others in the leadership of the ANC on a range of issues, even raging controversies such as the expulsion of former ANC Youth League president Julius Malema. The fact that Motlanthe wants these issues to be known by the public has not won him favour from his fellow leaders, either.

Speaking at the same event, ANC secretary general Gwede Mantashe criticised Motlanthe's view in the book that a political solution could have been found on the Malema issue. He said ill discipline and outright disrespect were not a function of political education, but about the upbringing of an individual. He said ANC leaders should be loyal to the decisions of the collective, intimating that Motlanthe should not have broken ranks.

In the midst of the Mangaung battle, it is not known whether Motlanthe genuinely wants to pry open the doors of the ANC's processes to the public or whether this is campaign speak. Whether this is an issue he will take forward within the ANC also remains to be seen.

Ironically, Motlanthe can put his money where his mouth is by being more vocal about his candidacy for the ANC presidency. But if he does, he risks being punished by the party for displaying ambition.

Whether the ANC can be more dynamic and transparent can therefore realistically only be tackled after Mangaung, and is wholly dependent on the leaders who are elected.

The Daily Maverick is a unique blend of news, information, analysis and opinion delivered from our newsroom in Johannesburg,

South Africa Yields Rise as Rand Falls on S&P, Growth Concerns

By Robert Brand and Stephen Gunnion /businessweek.com/October 15, 2012

South African yields rose and the rand declined for a second day after Standard & Poor's cut South Africa's credit rating, citing concern that a wave of strikes in the mining industry is placing pressure on government spending.

Yields on 6.75 percent bonds due 2021 jumped four basis points to 6.77 percent at 10:55 a.m. in Johannesburg. The rand fell as much as 1 percent and traded 0.1 percent weaker at 8.7383 per dollar, after sliding 0.8 percent on Oct. 12 when the S&P announcement was made.

S&P lowered the rating of the continent's biggest economy one level to BBB with a negative outlook. Continuing strikes in the mining industry are having a "significant" impact on an economy already struggling to cope with Europe's debt crisis, President Jacob Zuma said last week. Moody's Investors Service last month reduced South Africa's debt rating for the first time since apartheid to Baa1, one level above S&P's latest rating.

"It is clear that a lack of fiscal room is at the center of the concerns the ratings agencies have," Quinten Bertenshaw, a Johannesburg-based analyst at ETM Analytics, said in a note e-mailed to clients. "Bonds are under tremendous pressure" and "the vulnerability of the rand is now higher than it has been in the past 12 months," he added.

Foreign investors sold a net 1.5 billion rand (\$171 million) of South African bonds last week, paring purchases this year to 82.4 billion rand. South Africa needs monthly portfolio inflows of about 16 billion rand to sustain its current account deficit, which widened to 6.4 percent of gross domestic product in the second quarter, according to Standard Bank Group Ltd.

Growth Forecasts

The premium investors demand to hold South Africa's dollar debt rather than U.S. Treasuries climbed six basis points today to 191, compared with a two-point drop to 147 for Brazil and one-point decline to 155 for Mexico.

The South African Reserve Bank will review its growth forecasts after the S&P downgrade, Deputy Governor Daniel Mminele said yesterday. The central bank cut the nation's growth forecast to 2.6 percent on Sept. 20 from 2.7 percent and Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan said he will do the same on Oct. 25 when he presents the mid-term budget to Parliament in Cape Town. GDP expanded 3.1 percent last year.

The rand extended its decline as commodity prices fell on concern the global economy is weakening. Emerging nations including China, Brazil and India will grow at 5.8 percent in the half-decade through 2016, almost two percentage points less than the five years before the 2009 slump,

according to the International Monetary Fund.
'Risk Aversion'

The S&P GSCI Index of raw materials fell 0.4 percent today. Metals and other commodities account for 45 percent of South Africa's exports, according to government data.

"Concerns over the outlook for global growth increased risk aversion and added to the headwinds the local unit is facing," John Cairns and Josina Solomons, currency strategists at Rand Merchant Bank in Johannesburg, said in e-mailed comments. "Commodities remain under pressure amid a deteriorating global outlook."

The rand's one-month implied volatility against the dollar rose 50 basis points today to 17.05 percent, indicating that options traders see wider swings in the currency in coming weeks.

The cost of insuring the nation's dollar debt against default using credit default swaps rose three basis points to 160, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. The contracts pay the buyer face value in exchange for the underlying securities or the cash equivalent if the government fails to adhere to its agreements.

South Africa: Public Protector Advocate Thuli Madonsela Welcomes Parliament's Positive Response to Her July Request for Investigation Into Various Anonymous Allegations Against Her and Her Office

14 October 2012/South African Government (Pretoria)/allafrica.com

press release

Public Protector Advocate Thuli Madonsela has welcomed Parliament's decision to assign the Justice Portfolio Committee to look into various allegations against her and her office made in an anonymous letter received by her in July 2012 and sent by her to Parliament in July 2012 together with her response to the allegations and request for a conclusive investigation into the matter.

On Saturday 13 October 2012, the Public Protector learnt officially from the Deputy Public Protector (DPP) with much surprise that the DPP had been one of those sending letters to Parliament. She found this surprising given that the DPP and all staff were aware that an undertaking had been made to Parliament and the people of South Africa that a response was being prepared for submission to Parliament, following the Public Protector's receipt of an anonymous letter meant for the Chairperson of the Select Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) Committee the anonymous letter.

The Public Protector is grateful to the Sunday Times for giving her the right of reply before publishing the story and for integrating some of the written responses her office sent, in the final story published on Sunday 14 October 2012. To set the record straight and help the people of South Africa understand the full context, the Public Protector has decided on a full statement on the matter.

a) It is not true that the Public Protector changed findings on the Midvaal report willy-nilly. The statement that the report was delayed until after the local government elections is misleading and malicious. The truth is the Public Protector entered the scene at a stage where a draft report dismissing all allegations had been prepared. It was under the Public Protector's supervision that a more thorough investigation was done and many allegations substantiated. The need for a thorough investigation led to the delay in issuing the report. In terms of the Constitution and the law, any

investigation report from the Public Protector South Africa is that of the Public Protector. The Public Protector was then within her powers to quality-assure the report before releasing it to the public.

b) The statement that the Public Protector did not act against a senior executive who was facing a fraud charge for allegedly forging the Deputy Public Protector's signature is false. The Deputy Public Protector has never before denied signing the document at the centre of this allegation. In addition, the Public Protector, acting on the advice of the internal Human Resources Branch enlisted the services of the Inspector General of Intelligence, Advocate Faith Radebe, to investigate the matter. In August 2012, Advocate Radebe cleared the executive in question of any wrongdoing. In fact it was the Public Protector's intervention that made the payment an issue and the Public Protector who insisted on the money being paid back, which was done by 31 March 2012. It is therefore dishonest to claim that the Public Protector did not take action against the said executive.

c) The Public Protector never changed the recommendations of the Good Governance and Integrity Committee (GGIC). The Deputy Public Protector gave the Public Protector a document purporting to be from an Ad hoc Good Governance Committee, a structure that does not exist, purporting to be submitting a report that was never commissioned by the Public Protector or the Executive Committee (EXCO) of the Public Protector. The Public Protector never changed the recommendations of the DPP in the said document, which were simply that the Public Protector should ask Parliament to investigate herself and the CEO. The Public Protector's view was that Parliament was already seized with the matter and all that was required from the Public Protector was a response by the Public Protector as promised to the Deputy Speaker in January 2012 and further announced at a media briefing in March 2012.

d) In December 2011/January 2012 the Public Protector received a letter purporting to be from anonymous and sent to her by one Dominee Walters, who had accidentally received it through the post, and which was addressed to the Hon Themba Godi, Chairperson of SCOPA. On receipt of the letter, which contained various allegations against her and her office, the Public Protector immediately caused the appointment of a Task Team to verify the allegations. She also informally advised the Deputy Speaker of Parliament about receipt of the letter and the action she had taken to prepare a response which she undertook to submit to the Speaker's Office shortly.

e) By the time the contents of the anonymous letter were published by a daily newspaper in March 2012, the Task Team had already prepared a preliminary report, whose contents were partially shared by the Public Protector at a media briefing called by her in Muldersdrifton the date the article was released, to address the anonymous allegations. At the same media briefing she advised that she had informally advised the Deputy Speaker of Parliament about the anonymous letter and the process she had initiated to find answers. She further undertook to finalise the report of the Task Team and submit same to Parliament even though Parliament had not asked for it.

f) The Task Team submitted the report to the Public Protector on 18 April 2012. The report had gaps on matters the Task Team could not address. The Public Protector forwarded the draft report to the Deputy Public Protector and her Chief of Staff, asking that the gaps be filled and that the report be referred to a Sub-Committee of the Good Governance and Integrity Committee (GGIC) with a view to submit to Parliament by 28 April 2012. After that the Public Protector reported on this action to her office's Executive Committee (EXCO) and EXCO endorsed the arrangement. At the Public Protector's recommendation, there was a specific requirement that the Audit Committee Member of the GGIC forms part of the GGIC Sub-Committee. The idea was to quality assure the report before submission to Parliament.

g) Around 21 June following many reminders regarding the need for a completed report for

submission to Parliament, the Public Protector received a document from the Deputy Public Protector purporting to be the Report of an Ad-hoc Good Governance and Integrity Committee. The report was not a quality assured version of the Task Team's report as expected in the light of the Public Protector's request of 18 April, which had been endorsed by EXCO. Instead, the purported Ad-hoc Committee had prepared its own new document which simply divided the allegations in the anonymous letter into two categories, those against the Public Protector and those against the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), even though many of the anonymous complaints had not been directed against any specific individual. Some of the provisions of the document differed from the original allegations it purported to analyse. The document also asked the Public Protector to ask Parliament to investigate herself and the CEO on the basis of the allegations.

h) The Public Protector expressed concern that this process had undermined her ability to timeously provide the answers she had promised to Parliament and the People of South Africa as she was not able to do so as the Draft report of the Task Team remained incomplete and not quality assured by a Subcommittee of the GGIC as per hers and EXCO's directive. She raised her concerns with the Deputy Public Protector, including concerns over the structure that purportedly prepared the report, instead of a subcommittee of the Good Governance and Integrity Committee as she had directed, with EXCO later concurring. This was the source of the dispute regarding what really had been the EXCO decision on this matter, leading to EXCO deciding at the request of the Public Protector that the audio record and transcript of the proceedings of the disputed EXCO decision be circulated among EXCO members. All EXCO members at the time agreed with the Public Protector's version. When this was done, audio recording and transcription- confirmed the Public Protector's version, which had until then been shared by EXCO members.

i) In July 2012, the Public Protector sent a comprehensive response addressing the allegations from the anonymous letter to the Speaker's Office in Parliament asking that the response be shared with the Chairperson of SCOPA, Mr Themba Godi. The covering letter specifically requested Parliament to investigate the matter conclusively as these continuous anonymous letters were destabilising and distracting my office. Attached, as annexures to the response, were (a) the Anonymous letter addressed to the Chairperson of SCOPA and received by the Public Protector from Dominee Walters, (b) the Document submitted by the Deputy Public Protector, purporting to be a report of an Ad Hoc Committee of the GGIC. It needs be noted that this was not a document of the GGIC or that of a subcommittee of the GGIC. It must be further noted that the members were not GGIC Committee members with the exception of the Deputy Public Protector and that although the name of the external member of the GGIC appeared in the document, the Deputy Public Protector later confirmed that this person, who is also a member of the Audit Committee was never involved.

Regarding specific allegations in the article:

j) It is not true that the Public Protector takes up cases that fall outside her remit. As indicated to the Justice and Constitutional Development Portfolio Committee during the presentation of the Public Protector's Annual Report on 12 October 2012, the Public Protector has a thorough assessment process which is informed by section 182 of the Constitution read with legislation regulating the work of the PP and conferring additional powers, with the Public Protector Act and the Executive Ethics Act being key among relevant legislation. Should anyone know of a case the Public Protector took that is outside her jurisdiction, the PP eagerly awaits such information. All incoming complaints are subjected to an internal assessment process, which ascertains jurisdiction and whether there is any merit to the allegations contained in the complaints. The Public Protector would welcome any evidence to the contrary.

k) The decision to contract out certain investigations towards the end of the 2011/12 with a view to addressing a heavy investigation backlog was taken via EXCO, the memo system and in

consultation with Treasury. All of the key decisions alluded to in the anonymous letter were also taken via the EXCO and memo governance mechanisms and Parliament has been furnished with evidence. The Public Protector would appreciate any evidence of any unilateral decision she is supposed to have made.

l) Regarding the alleged "Hollywood style" approach to investigations, the Public Protector releases all of my reports publicly regardless of subject matter or parties involved. The law requires all Public Protector reports to be released to the public unless there are compelling circumstances for keeping the report secret. The Public Protector has only been able to find such compelling circumstances in a Witness Protection report. That accordingly is the only report what has not been disseminated to the Public. Again if there is any report that someone believes should have been kept secret, the PP would be happy to entertain that feedback. Investigations on the other hand are conducted on the basis of confidentiality. The Public Protector only confirms receipt and contents of allegations when complainants have informed the media about their lodging of a complaint and the media asks for such confirmation. Media dialogue on Public Protector investigations and reports is essential for the moral suasion critical for Public Protector to make the necessary impact as a non-judicial enforcement mechanism regarding the fairness and propriety of administrative actions of the state.

m) The Public Protector is not aware of any constructive criticism she was dismissive of. The only matter she disagreed with the approach is the formation of a purported Ad Hoc Committee outside the governance arrangements of the Public Protector SA and the failure to complete a simple task of filling in the gaps in and quality assuring a report that had to be urgently submitted to Parliament in pursuit of her undertaking to the Deputy Speaker in January 2012 and the media in March 2012.

The Public Protector wishes to place on record the fact that all key decisions in the Public Protector SA are made through a memo system that originates from a relevant technical unit and goes through the Chief Financial Officer, the CEO and the DPP. This applies to many of the decisions that are contested in the anonymous letter. Other decisions are made through EXCO and later confirmed through an internal memo. The Public Protector will welcome any evidence of unilateral decisions.

The Public Protector welcomes the Parliamentary process and will cooperate with the investigation. Already a comprehensive report with supporting documents, including memoranda, was submitted to Parliament in July. The Deputy Public Protector's Ad hoc Committee document was also submitted with the same package which included a request that Parliament investigates the matter conclusively so that there may be closure and her office focuses on the work it was established to do.

TANZANIA :

Border row: Malawi sends Tanzanian envoy home

By RAY NALUYAGA in Nairobi/nation.co.ke/Posted Monday, October 15 2012

In Summary

According to reports from the Malawian State House, Mr Tsere has been declared persona non grata and has been required to leave the country

In the standoff, Tanzania is claiming half of the Lake which is called Lake Nyasa in Tanzania

The Malawi Government has given 48 hours to Tanzanian High Commissioner Patrick Tsere to

leave the country amid escalating border dispute between the two neighbours.

According to reports from the Malawian State House, Mr Tsere has been declared persona non grata and has been required to leave the country.

The development comes barely a week after Malawi asked UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to mediate the decades-long border dispute with Tanzania over Lake Malawi.

The lake is believed to have oil and gas deposits.

In the standoff, Tanzania is claiming half of the Lake which is called Lake Nyasa in Tanzania. But Malawi claims the entire water mass, basing on 1890 Anglo-German pact, also known as the Heligoland Treaty.

The treaty was later reaffirmed by the Organisation of Africa Unity, [now African Union], when the Malawi gained its independence in 1964.

But Tanzania rejects the colonial era agreements and argues international law including (1982 maritime treaty) supports sharing common water bodies by bordering nations.

On her return from the UN conference in the US last week, Malawi President Joyce Banda announced that her country had pulled out of talks with Tanzania on the matter, following reports that the latter had launched a new map that shows the border line in the middle of the disputed lake.

Same sex marriage 'is repulsive'

Published on Monday, 15 October 2012/ Written by ORTON/ KIISHWEKO in Singida /dailynews.co.tz

THE issue of same sex marriage has been rejected by citizens contributing their views in the on-going collection exercise by the Constitution Review Commission here.

Speaking at various meetings in Kiloboi, Uleno, Kaselya in Iramba district and in Nduguti, Gumanga, Kinampanda and Mwangeza in Mkalama district over the weekend, the subject of same sex marriage received the wrath from contributors who said that the next constitution should put it clear that same sex marriage is a crime.

First on line was Jackson Sifaeli, a 43-year-old pastor at Kaselya Village, in Iramba District, who said that the constitution should be explicit about same sex marriage as a top crime should be clear about that without ambiguities. "It is true we want a more democratic constitution, but we can't live in a democracy that does not fit in our cultural values," he said, adding: "Let the government be careful about this.

The foundations of our cultural values should be enshrined in the constitution." He said he was not making the constitution captive to his own religious beliefs, but according to the cultural framework where Tanzanians generally come from. Tatu Juma Senge, a 50-year-old farmer at Kaselya, said the next constitution should be against same sex marriages, because they are not a part of what it means to be Tanzanian.

"We shall not like what the next generation shall turn out to be if we do not clearly state that those acts are criminal. This is not apart of us and should be criminal in the constitution," he said. Another farmer at Gumanga Vil lage in Mkalama district, Godwin Mkumbo, 57 also said that same sex

marriage should be highlighted by the constitution as one of the worst crimes, because the act would turn around moral values of the Tanzanian society if not highlighted as criminal right from the constitution.

For Juma Issa, 73, a farmer in Kaselya village, said their community was against same sex marriage and therefore, the Constitution should criminalize this. Edward Silas, a 45-year-old farmer at Kinampanda, was concerned about the next generation, noting that same sex marriages should not be allowed in their communities and raised an alarm that the fresh generation was under threat by such acts.

The unity in rejecting the practice went on with 82-year-old Iga Mpozi, a farmer at Kinampanda in Iramba District, who said that same sex marriages should be rejected. Fanuel Kumla, a 54-year-old farmer at Nkungu Village in Gumanga Ward, said that it is not part of Tanzanian culture to embrace same sex marriages and that the constitution should be critical on the practice.

Tanzania investigating circulation of fake HIV drugs, stops local ARV production

Published on October 15, 2012 /news-medical.net

BBC News reports on an investigation into the circulation of fake HIV drugs in Tanzania, writing, "Analysts say there is concern about the quality of locally made drugs given widespread corruption in political circles in the East Africa nation." Health Minister Hussein Mwinyi "has suspended three top officials and stopped local production of the antiretrovirals (ARVs) while the probe takes place," the news service notes, adding, "Mwinyi said the health ministry was alerted in August to problems with a batch of ARV drugs at the Tarime District Hospital."

"The batch, produced by the Tanzania Pharmaceutical Industry (TPI), was immediately recalled and subjected to further testing, which revealed that it was sub-standard," according to BBC. "The officials who were suspended on Wednesday work at the Medical Stores Department (MSD) and the production of all drugs by TPI has been halted while investigations are under way, the government-owned paper Tanzania Daily News reports," BBC notes. The news service adds, "The minister said out of 12,000 bottles in the fake ARV batch, 9,570 had so far been successfully recalled" (10/11).

Tanzanian president to arrive today

Oman News Agency/15102012

MUSCAT President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete of Tanzania is due to pay a several-day visit to the Sultanate starting from Monday.

A statement issued by the Diwan of Royal Court said:

"In crowning the friendship relations and the historic cooperation binding the Sultanate and the United Republic of Tanzania and in reply to invitation of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said, President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete of Tanzania will pay a several-day visit to the Sultanate starting from Monday October 15."

All matters that would push fields of the existing bilateral cooperation to serve the interests of the Omani and Tanzanian peoples will be discussed during the visit.

Kikwete will be accompanied by an official delegation comprising Bernard Membe, Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Minister, Sospeter Muhongo, Energy and Minerals Minister,

Abdallah Kigoda, Industry and Trade Minister, William Mgimwa, Finance Minister, Haroun Ali Sulaiman, Minister of Labour, Peoples Economic Empowerment and Cooperatives in Zanzibar and HE Ali Ahmed Saleh, Ambassador of the United Republic of Tanzania to the Sultanate.

Oman News Agency

KENYA :

Kenyan official killed in 'secessionist violence'

15 October 2012/bbc.co.uk

A local Kenyan official has been killed in what police suspect is a retaliatory attack for the arrest of a secessionist leader in Coast province.

Salim Changu was hacked to death in the coastal town of Kwale, police say.

His death comes shortly after Mombasa Republican Council (MRC) Oscar Mwamnuadzi was arrested during a gunfight at his home in the town, in which two people were killed.

Tension has been rising in Kenya ahead of general elections due in March 2013.

More than 100 people have been killed in ethnic clashes in the south-east Tana River area since August, in the bloodiest violence since the disputed 2007 presidential election.
'Bodyguards shot'

Police spokesman Aggrey Adoli said Mr Changu, the assistant chief for the Kombani area, was probably killed by MRC members who viewed him as a traitor, Kenya's Daily Nation newspaper reports.

Earlier, police launched an operation against the MRC following accusations that it planned to disrupt school examinations.

Two of Mr Mwamnuadzi's bodyguards were killed during the raid on his home in Kwale and 38 people were arrested, the Daily Nation reported.

In July, Kenya's High Court lifted a ban on the MRC, which the government had outlawed in 2010 after accusing it of being a criminal gang.

The MRC accuses the government of marginalising the ethnic groups living along the coast, which is the centre of the country's tourism sector.

Calls for the secession of the coastal region tend to intensify in the run-up to general elections, analysts say.

Kenya: Agony for Motorists As Fuel Prices Rises, Again

By Victoria Rubadiri/Capital FM (Nairobi)/ 14 October 2012

Nairobi — Motorists will have to dig deeper into their pockets over the next four weeks, with Super

petrol going up by Sh6.31 in Nairobi to Sh115.26 a litre and regular petrol now at Sh105.76 a litre.

Following the latest fuel price review by the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), diesel is now up by Sh5.04 to retail at Sh106.11 a litre, while kerosene increases by Sh6.36 to Sh86.01 a litre.

"The commission has observed an inconsistent trend in the price of refined petroleum products in the international market over the last one month, making it difficult to predict the effect on pump prices in subsequent price reviews," Director General of the commission Eng Kaburu Mwirichia said.

Last month the ERC attributed the increase in pump prices to an upward trend in the price of crude and refined petroleum products in the international market over the last three months.

This saw super petrol in Nairobi go up by Sh2.47 to retail at 108.95 a litre, diesel by Sh3.99 to Sh101.07. Kerosene has been retailing at Sh79.65 having gone up Sh5.68 last month.

The new prices announced on Sunday will take effect from Monday, 15th October until the 14th of November.

In Mombasa, super petrol will retail at Sh112.00, diesel at Sh102.87 while kerosene will be selling at Sh83.22.

In Northern Kenya towns like Mandera, residents will buy the commodity at the highest prices with a litre of super petrol going for Sh127.78 a litre, diesel at Sh118.63 and kerosene at Sh98.53.

Nakuru residents will buy a litre of super of petrol at Sh115.83 a litre, diesel at Sh106.92 and kerosene at Sh86.77 while in Kisumu super petrol will retail at Sh117.00 a litre, diesel at Sh108.09 and kerosene at Sh87.79.

Eldoret residents will part with slightly less than their Kisumu counterparts for a litre of super petrol retailing at Sh116.94, diesel at Sh108.03 and kerosene at Sh87.80.

The increase in energy prices has been widely criticized, with the Consumer Federation of Kenya (COFEK) saying such a move would erode the gains already made on inflation and result in higher electricity, transport and food prices.

The lobby group took the ERC and several oil marketers to court over high fuel costs, which have negatively affected the cost of living. The case will be heard on 31st October.

ANGOLA :

AU/AFRICA :

Africa: Dear Nkosazana - Beware of Great Expectations

By Simon Allison/Daily Maverick/15 October 2012

analysis

Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma will be sworn in as chair of the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa on Monday. It's been a bruising battle to get her there, and now that she's finally in charge she's got a lot of work to do, and not all that much power to do it with.

So, Nkosazana: you finally made it to Addis Ababa. I'll admit there were times in the last year when I thought that your mission to take over as chairwoman of the African Union Commission was doomed, that our bull-headed diplomats had forever scuppered your hopes of sorting out Africa the way you did Home Affairs. There were even more times when I wondered if you really wanted to go: who can forget the look of regret in your eyes when you told us how further your department still had to go? Well, most people did forget, but I was watching, and I never really bought your pro-forma protestations that you were just a loyal cadre who was content to be deployed wherever the party saw fit; wherever your ex-husband saw fit.

Forget that party loyalty now. Once you're sworn in on Monday, you work for the African Union Commission, not the party. It's a subtle distinction, to be sure. AUC, not ANC; easy to confuse the two after a few drinks at the pool bar of the Addis Sheraton, or when that ex-husband picks up the phone (on this note: please, please do something about the African Union's phone lines as a matter of urgency. I have 17 different numbers, none of which has yet been answered in 18 months of trying).

Uncomfortably present at Monday's inauguration will be Jean Ping, the incumbent AUC chairperson who you replaced in the bitter, divisive elections which dominated the agendas of both AU summits this year. Try not to be too smug: he's still not sure what exactly he did wrong to earn such enmity from southern Africa. Neither are we. In fact, there are a lot of people bewildered at why SADC – led by South Africa – fought so aggressively to get you into this position, along the way shattering the gentlemen's agreement which rather sensibly left your new job to candidates from the smaller, less powerful countries.

Some say it's a plot for South Africa to take over the continent; others say it is part of a bigger plan to get a UN Security Council seat. Still others suggest it's all about domestic politics and Zuma's need to put some distance between himself and you, an enormously popular politician of proven competence who is a lot more dangerous in Pretoria than Addis.

Whatever the reason, now that Angola's wallet and South Africa's diplomatic bullying have got you where they want you, your first major task is to heal the wounds caused by all that politicking. Do I need to remind you of the powerful forces that were ranged against your candidacy? Kenya, Ethiopia, Nigeria, France, China; these were just a few of your many opponents.

Of course, we all know that no one was really opposed to you personally.

In fact, even as Nigeria was doing everything in its power to lobby for Jean Ping, Nigerian diplomats were privately admitting that they thought you would be a great candidate at an individual level. Your reputation for efficiency precedes you, bolstered by your time as Thabo Mbeki's foreign affairs minister; unlike Zuma, Mbeki was and is well-loved in the rest of Africa. Once the dust has settled, and you begin to lead with your trademark humility, these relationships will repair themselves.

More difficult will be to repair the AUC, which is in an abysmal state.

At the last audit, nearly half of its positions were found to be unfilled; the budget was not even close

to adding up; and, as previously noted, no one answers the phones. It's a ponderous bureaucracy that struggles to attract talented people, and struggles even more to fulfil its basic functions. This will all sound reassuringly familiar to you; Home Affairs was in much the same condition when you took over. Although it won't be easy, a little bit of your managerial magic will go a long way in making the AUC a functional, responsive institution that is effectively able to properly advise the AU and implement its decisions.

This is, however, the limit of your power; and, I worry, your eventual downfall. I can already tell that people have great expectations of what you'll be able to achieve. Surely, they say, with Nkosazana in charge, there won't be any more debacles like Cote D'Ivoire or Libya, where Africa was humiliated once again by international duplicity and our own schizophrenic responses? Surely, with Nkosazana in charge, Africa will start to prioritise the development and infrastructure projects which are so necessary, and tackle corruption, and punish those countries that still have no respect for human rights? Surely she can fix Africa the way she fixed Home Affairs?

You know, of course, that this is impossible (you also know that even Home Affairs isn't fixed yet). You are only too aware of the limitations on your power; specifically, the 54 limitations that assemble twice a year at the AU's heads of state meeting. You know the AUC is not the AU, that it doesn't make the decisions, and that the AU has never been the united, visionary organisation it likes to sell itself as. You know that you might be able to influence things for the better, but it is not in your power to really change things.

I'm not sure, however, that other people know these things. Too many Africans, and South Africans in particular, think that you'll be their saviour. No matter how good you are, you can't be that.

The Daily Maverick is a unique blend of news, information, analysis and opinion delivered from our newsroom in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Africa: Governance Slips in Four African Powerhouses

By Cape Town/allAfrica.com/ 15 October 2012

Although the average African country is being governed better than it was a decade ago, the quality of governance in the four leading nations of Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa is slipping.

This is shown in the latest results of the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, published in London on Monday.

The survey which produced the index shows that, measured on a scale of one to 100, the quality of governance across the continent has improved steadily, apart from a slight drop in 2008, rising from a score of 47 in 2000 to 51.2 in 2011.

South Africa has retained its place as one of the five best-governed nations on the continent, and is better governed now than it was in 2000, but its score has dropped to 70.7 from a high of 71.8 in 2006.

Egypt is also better governed now than in 2000, but its score has fallen from a high of 61.4 in 2009 to 57.7. In the final years of the Mubarak regime, it was among Africa's 10 best-governed countries, but has now fallen back to 14th place.

Kenya has seen a similar pattern. It is marginally better governed now than in 2000, but its score fell from a high of 55 in 2002 to 52.7 now.

From being the 18th best-governed country in 2000, it has fallen to 25th place.

Nigeria has dropped for the first time into the 10 worst-governed nations on the continent - although the results are skewed this year by the omission of Sudan and South Sudan; the formerly united country of Sudan has regularly fallen into the bottom 10.

Nigeria's governance did improve between 2004, when it scored a low of 39.2 on an index of 100, and 2010, when it reached a high of 43.2. But it fell back to 42 in 2011, and to 43rd place on the list of best-governed countries. It has never risen above 36th place.

This year's Ibrahim Index is the fifth to be published by Mo Ibrahim Foundation, which was set up by the Sudanese-born telecommunications pioneer of the same name.

In a news release issued with the index, the foundation noted that the performance of Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa had all declined in survey categories including safety and the rule of law and participation and human rights.

It quoted Abdoulie Janneh, former executive secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa, as expressing concern at the results for the four nations. "Each of these countries plays a key role in the economic and political landscape of the continent," he said. "To continue to optimally play this role requires a sustained commitment to balanced and equitable governance."

Of note, however, is that three of the four countries improved their scores in the category of "human development" - marginally in South Africa and significantly in Kenya and Nigeria.

The index confirms past results of the best- and worst-governed countries on the continent. As before, the top five are Mauritius, Cape Verde, Botswana, Seychelles and South Africa. Entering the top 10 this year is Tanzania.

This year's bottom five are, from the worst-governed country up, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad, Eritrea and the Central African Republic.

Significant changes in the index also confirm previous results.

Madagascar has fallen in the rankings since its 2009 coup, with its score down to 46.1 from 58.9 in 2006.

Liberia scores 46.6 compared to 34.6 in 2006, underlining an upward trend since the accession to power of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

Sierra Leone's return to democratic rule is also reflected in an improvement from 39.2 to 48.1 since 2006.

Angola's score has risen to 44.1 from 34.8 in 2006. The index shows a remarkable rise from 30.2 to 42 in the category, "participation and human rights," flying in the face of criticism of government nepotism and its human rights record.

The foundation describes the index as "the most comprehensive collection of quantitative data that provides an annual assessment of governance performance in African countries." It says the index is based on 88 indicators, grouped into 14 sub-categories and four overarching categories, "to measure the effective delivery of public goods and services to African citizens".

West Africa: Riot Stops Play as Côte d'Ivoire Beats Senegal in Can Qualifier

14 October 2012/RFI

A riot erupted at Dakar's football stadium on Saturday as Senegal was eliminated from the Africa Cup of Nations, losing two-nil to Côte d'Ivoire. Fires were started, stones thrown and the pitch invaded just before the match was due to end.

"Ten minutes before the end of the match, as soon as the result seemed to be decided, masses of spectators started to leave the stadium," reports RFI's Farid Achache. "Senegalese flags were burnt in the stands and, as a security measure, the referee stopped the game."

Supporters responded by throwing projectiles and a fire broke out. Côte d'Ivoire fans had to take refuge on the pitch to escape the home fans.

Police used tear gas and drove a vehicle onto the pitch to rescue officials.

The violence was sparked by a second goal by Ivorian attacker Didier Drogba, which left Senegal two-nil down.

Senegal is likely to be punished for the behaviour of its fans and, in any case, will not be going to the Cup of Nations in South Africa from 19 January to 10 February, but the African Football Confederation's headquarters in Cairo was closed on Sunday.

Also on Saturday, Ghana, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, Tunisia and title-holders Zambia qualified.

Dlamini-Zuma takes over AU office

By ARGAW ASHINE/nation.co.ke/Monday, October 15 2012

In Summary

Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma begins a four-year tenure as the head of the African Union's executive arm

Under Dr Ping, the AU made some progress especially in Somalia, Cote d'Ivoire and in the Sudan's protracted peace negotiations

Former South African Home Affairs minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma will on Monday begin a four-year tenure as the head of the African Union's executive arm.

Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma arrived in Addis Ababa over the weekend.

A hand-over ceremony is set for the AU's headquarters where she will take over from Gabonese Jean Ping, whom she ousted in July after a bruising six months of battle that exposed internal bloc rifts.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn and current AU chair Thomas Boni Yayi, who is also Benin President will be in attendance.

Under Dr Ping, the AU made some progress especially in Somalia, Cote d'Ivoire and in the Sudan's protracted peace negotiations.

However, its inertia over the Libyan crisis bought it a lot of flak.

The new chair will have her work cut out with preserving the fragile peace in Somalia, the Mali crisis and the expected deployment of peacekeeping forces in the DR Congo already waiting on her in-tray.

African leaders traditionally meet twice a year to discuss the most pertinent issues on the continent.

The organisation's charter limits the powers of the AU Commission, which implements decisions made by heads of state and government, but it still plays a pivotal role in running its day to day activities.

Zambia: President to Attend Korea-Africa Economic Cooperation Indaba

By MAYA NTANDA/Times of Zambia/ 15 October 2012

Seoul — PRESIDENT Michael Sata is today expected in Seoul, South Korea to attend the third Korea- African Economic Cooperation (KOAFEC) Forum.

The forum which will be held from tomorrow to October 18, is expected to discuss developmental cooperation, trade investment and global security issues and would be co-hosted by South Korea and The African Union (AU).

KOAFEC was launched by former South Korean President Roh moo-hyun during his 2006 African trip and 17 other African countries are expected to attend the forum.

At the close of the forum, members are expected to announce a joint declaration, action plans and South Korean expansion and developmental assistance to African countries.

The host country is also expected to issue a statement on the establishment of a technology centre at the AU headquarters in Ethiopia.

President Sata is expected to arrive at the Incheon International Airport at 17:15 hours local time (10:15 hours Zambian time) on a four day working visit at the invitation of South Korean President Lee Myung-bak.

According to the programme released by the South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr Sata is expected to attend the official opening of the KOAFEC Forum on Wednesday at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Seoul.

President Sata is also scheduled to hold talks with Mr Lee at the Cheong Wa Dae also known as the Blue House, which is the official residence of the South Korean President and attend dinner in honour of all the KOAFEC participants.

On Wednesday, President Sata is further scheduled to have a meeting with South Korean Prime Minister Kim Hwang-Sik on the sidelines of the official opening ceremony for the KOAFEC Forum.

Mr Sata is also expected to visit the KT Olleh Sqaure, an Information Technology company and attend a business seminar with four South Korean major business associates.

He is also expected to have a meeting with the executive director of Samsung Engineering and tour the Samsung Electronics manufacturing company in Suwan City.

The President is further scheduled to meet the president of the IS Dongseo terrace house construction company and later tour the IS Dongseo terrace house construction site before leaving for Zambia on Thursday.

On the sidelines of the KOAFEC, the First Lady Dr Christine Kaseba is scheduled to visit the Baihan Labtech, a medical equipment manufacturing company and visit the Seoul National University Hospital.

Nigeria : une attaque armée fait au moins 24 morts

le lundi 15 octobre 2012/radio-canada.ca

Des hommes armés de fusils d'assaut ont attaqué un village dimanche dans le nord du Nigeria, tuant au moins 24 personnes, dont plusieurs fidèles qui sortaient d'une mosquée, ont annoncé les autorités.

L'incident s'est produit à Dogon Dawa, une localité située dans une région reculée de l'État de Kaduna où la police et l'armée ne sont pas très présentes. Les forces de sécurité ont bloqué l'accès à la zone dimanche, limitant le secours pouvant être apporté par les organismes d'aide.

Un responsable des services d'urgence vivant près du village concerné a raconté à l'Associated Press sous le couvert de l'anonymat que l'attaque s'était produite tôt le matin alors qu'il faisait encore noir.

Il a affirmé qu'une cinquantaine d'assaillants avaient encerclé le village et les fermes environnantes. Selon lui, la majorité des victimes venaient de quitter la principale mosquée de la localité après avoir effectué leurs prières matinales.

Le responsable a ajouté qu'il avait parlé à un homme ayant compté 24 corps après l'incident. Cet homme aurait aussi trouvé sur les lieux plusieurs cartouches vides provenant de fusils d'assaut, ce qui signifierait que les auteurs de la fusillade avaient des armes lourdes en leur possession.

Le commissaire de police de l'État de Kaduna, Olufemi Adenaike, avait déclaré plus tôt que 12 personnes avaient été abattues, mais les forces de l'ordre nigérianes ont tendance à minimiser le nombre de morts.

L'État de Kaduna se trouve à la frontière entre le sud majoritairement chrétien et le nord largement musulman du Nigeria, où beaucoup de tueries et d'actes de violence se sont produits durant la dernière décennie.

Après les élections présidentielles d'avril 2011, les manifestations contre la victoire du chrétien Goodluck Jonathan se sont rapidement transformées en affrontements entre les différents groupes ethniques et religieux, faisant plusieurs centaines de morts dans le seul État de Kaduna.

L'État a aussi été le théâtre d'attentats contre des églises et à la voiture piégée, certains menés par la secte islamiste radicale Boko Haram.

Dimanche, une bombe a également éclaté à Maiduguri, au nord-est du pays, dans un quartier où un lieutenant de l'armée nigériane avait été tué la semaine précédente. Un dirigeant de la ville qui avait participé à l'organisation d'une conférence demandant la fin des attaques de Boko Haram a aussi été

abattu chez lui.

Associated Press

EU /AFRICA :

Le président mauritanien à Percy

Le Figaro.fr avec agences/ le 14/10/2012

Le président mauritanien Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, blessé par balle hier soir lors d'un "incident" impliquant son armée puis évacué en France, a été admis aujourd'hui à l'hôpital de Percy, à Clamart, près de Paris, a indiqué le ministère français de la Défense.

Ould Abdel Aziz avait indiqué avant son départ de Nouakchott devoir aller à Paris pour des "soins complémentaires" après avoir été opéré avec "succès" dans son pays.

Le chef de l'Etat mauritanien, 55 ans, a été "touché légèrement" samedi soir par un "tir" d'une unité de l'armée qui n'aurait pas reconnu le convoi présidentiel, selon un responsable mauritanien. "Je veux rassurer tout le monde sur mon état de santé après cet incident commis par erreur par une unité de l'armée sur une route non pavée près de Touela. Grâce à Dieu, je vais bien", avait-il indiqué en début de journée lors d'une allocution diffusée sur la télévision publique du pays.

En dépit des assurances officielles, l'incident suscitait des questions, d'autant que la Mauritanie a une histoire jalonnée de coups d'Etat militaires et que Aziz a été menacé de mort par Aqmi, qui l'accuse de mener pour la France une "guerre par procuration" contre ses combattants.

Le président blessé est soigné en France

Le Calame /courrierinternational.com/ 15 octobre 2012

Le site de l'hebdomadaire informe heure par heure des dernières nouvelles du président de la Mauritanie Ould Abdel Aziz, qui a été blessé par balle "par erreur" le samedi 13 octobre par un tir émanant de l'armée. Après avoir été opéré à Nouakchott, le chef de l'Etat a été évacué dimanche dans un hôpital parisien. Ould Abdel Aziz, 55 ans, est arrivé au pouvoir par un coup d'Etat en 2008. Elu président en 2009, il a fait de la lutte contre le terrorisme sa priorité. L'organisation Al-Qaida au Maghreb islamique l'a menacé de mort.

EU backs new UN Syria envoy's plan to deploy 3,000 intl peacekeepers

Published: 15 October, 2012/rt.com

The EU has approved a new plan to deploy 3,000 peacekeeping troops in Syria, EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton said. The plan was first introduced by Lakhdar Brahimi, the new UN-Arab League peace envoy to Syria.

The soldiers sent to Syria will possibly include European nationals. Ashton also said that she expected Russian participation in any successful peace plan, RIA Novosti news agency reports.

UK and US soldiers are unlikely to participate in the mission due to their countries' deployments in

Afghanistan, the Daily Telegraph reported. However, the new peace plan may draw on troops currently involved in UNIFIL, the mission founded to guard the Israel-Lebanon border. The 15,000 soldiers stationed there include forces from Ireland, Germany, France, Spain and Italy.

Brahimi previously stressed that the key to resolving the conflict in Syria is dialogue, rather than the use of military force. He also tried to downplay expectations, saying it may be “nearly impossible” for him to succeed.

The plan was revealed on Saturday as Lakhdar Brahmi visited Istanbul in a bid to calm rising tensions between Syria and Turkey ahead of his trip to Damascus to broker a ceasefire.

Hostilities between the two nations spiraled after Turkish F-16 fighter jets forced a Syrian Air passenger plane to land in Ankara over allegations that it was carrying military cargo last week. The plane departed Turkey after a nine-hour inspection. Turkish officials pressed the crew to sign affidavits that no fighter jets were involved in the incident, and that it was an emergency landing, the plane’s engineer said.

On Sunday, Syria closed its airspace to Turkish passenger flights; Ankara responded by closing its airspace to Syrian flights.

EN BREF , CE 15 Octobre 2012 ... AGNEWS/DAM,NY, 15/10/2012