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BURUNDI :

Burundi : une association dénonce les violences faites aux hommes

(Xinhua)/19.11.2012

A l'occasion de la Journée Internationale des Hommes, célébrée le 19 novembre, l'Association pour la Protection des Hommes et de l'Homme en détresse au Burundi (APHD-Burundi) a tenu à dénoncer les violences que les hommes subissent de la part de leurs épouses et a demandé ce dimanche à la police de diligenter une enquête y relative.

"Au Burundi, les hommes sont tués, maltraités, chassés, abandonnés avec leurs enfants dans leurs ménages par leurs propres épouses ou emprisonnés sur un simple soupçon (...). C'est pourquoi, l'APDH-Burundi demande une enquête nationale sur les types et origines des violences, les causes, les conséquences et leurs gravités qui constituent la violation des droits de l'homme", a indiqué dimanche Bukuru Vincent, président de cette association.

Pour lui, les causes exogènes de cette situation, serait la volonté du genre féminin de vouloir s'affirmer dans la société par tous les moyens dans un contexte politique mondial de promotion de la femme et du mouvement féminin, qui prend une ascendance extraordinaire au sein de la société burundaise.

Selon lui, les violences faites aux hommes par les femmes sont de plusieurs formes et se produisent dans tous les milieux de la vie.

Les violences sont accentuées pendant la période de crise, notamment quand le mari perd de l'emploi, pendant les périodes de fin d'année, pendant les périodes de réjouissance de la Journée Internationale de la Femme, a-t-il affirmé.

Dans sa déclaration, l'APHD invite le gouvernement burundais à reconnaître que même les hommes subissent les violences basées sur le genre.

La Journée Internationale des Hommes a été célébrée pour la première fois en 1992 à Trinité-et-Tobago et est observée aujourd' hui dans plus de 80 pays après qu'elle fut reconnue par l'ONU. Cette année, la Journée Internationale des Hommes a pour thème " Aider les hommes et les garçons à vivre plus longtemps, plus heureux et en meilleure santé".

RWANDA :

Rwanda-backed M23 rebels advance in Congo, provoking UN intervention

Sunday November 18, 2012 / Melanie Gouby The Associated Press

GOMA, CONGO—A rebel group believed to be backed by Rwanda advanced to within three kilometres of Goma, a crucial provincial capital in eastern Congo, marking the first time that rebels have come this close since 2008.

Congolese army spokesman Col. Olivier Hamuli said the fighting has been going on since 6 a.m. Sunday and the front line has moved to just a few kilometres outside the city. After more than nine hours of violent clashes, the two sides took a break just after 3 p.m., with M23 rebels establishing a checkpoint just 100 metres away from one held by the military in the village of Munigi, exactly three kilometres outside the Goma city line.

M23 spokesman Col. Vianney Kazarama initially said the rebels would spend the night in Goma, the capital of North Kivu province. In the afternoon after the fighting stopped, he said, “We can take Goma easily now, we have pushed the Congolese army back over 10 kilometres in one day.”

“We are confident that we can take Goma and then our next step will be to take Bukavu,” he said, referring to the capital of the next province to the south.

The M23 rebel group is made up of soldiers from a now-defunct rebel army, the National Congress for the Defence of the People, or CNDP, a group made-up primarily of fighters from the Tutsi ethnic group, the ethnicity that was targeted in Rwanda’s 1994 genocide. In 2008, the CNDP led by Rwandan commando Gen. Laurent Nkunda marched his soldiers to the doorstep of Goma, abruptly stopping just before taking the city.

In the negotiations that followed and which culminated in a March 23, 2009, peace deal, the CNDP agreed to disband and their fighters joined the national army of Congo. They did not pick up their arms again until this spring, when hundreds of ex-CNDP fighters defected from the army in April, claiming that the Congolese government had failed to uphold their end of the 2009 agreement.

Reports, including one by the United Nations Group of Experts, have shown that M23 is actively being backed by Rwanda, which is providing financial support and arms as well as fighters. The reports indicate that the new rebellion is likely linked to the ongoing fight to control Congo’s rich mineral wealth.

On Saturday, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon called Rwandan President Paul Kagame “to request that he use his influence on the M23 to help calm the situation and restrain M23 from continuing their attack,” according to peacekeeping chief Hervé Ladsous who spoke at UN headquarters in New York on Saturday.

The latest clashes broke out Thursday and led to the deaths of at least 151 rebels and two soldiers. On Saturday UN attack helicopters targeted M23 positions in eastern Congo.

North Kivu governor Julien Paluku said Saturday that the Congolese army had earlier retreated from Kibumba, which is 30 kilometres north of Goma, after thousands of Rwandans, who he says were backing the rebels, attacked early Saturday.

“Rwandan forces bombarded our positions in Kibumba since early this morning and an estimated 3,500 crossed the border to attack us,” he said Saturday.

In downtown Goma, panicked residents came out to try to get more information on what was

happening. A 45-year-old mother of five said that she has nowhere to go.

“I don’t really know what is happening, I’ve seen soldiers and tanks in the streets and that scares me,” said Imaculee Kahindo. Asked if she planned to leave the city, she said: “What can we do? I will probably hide in my house with my children.”

Hamuli, the spokesman for the Congolese army, denied reports that soldiers were fleeing.

In 2008 as Nkunda’s CNDP rebels amassed at the gates of Goma, reporters inside the city were able to see Congolese soldiers running in the opposite direction, after having abandoned their posts. The Congolese army is notoriously dysfunctional with soldiers paid only small amounts, making it difficult to secure their loyalty during heavy fighting.

In their march toward Goma, the M23 rebels caused an entire refugee camp holding an estimated population of 60,000 to bolt. An Associated Press reporter who travelled Sunday to the front line saw the remains of the refugee camp in Kanyaruchinya, a village along the road to Goma.

The camp was created in July, housing villagers fleeing the first wave of M23 clashes. All that remained in the camp on Sunday afternoon were personal belongings scattered around skeletons of tents made of eucalyptus branches, stripped of their plastic sheets.

“We are fighting three kilometres from Goma, just past the airport. And our troops are strong enough to resist the rebels,” said Hamuli. “We won’t let the M23 march into our town,” he said. Asked if his troops were fleeing, he added: “These are false rumours. We are not going anywhere.”

UN peacekeeping chief Ladsous said that the rebels were very well equipped, including with night vision equipment allowing them to fight at night.

Reports by United Nations experts have accused Rwanda, as well as Uganda, of supporting the rebels. Both countries strongly deny any involvement and Uganda said if the charges continue it will pull its peacekeeping troops out of Somalia, where they are playing an important role in pushing out the Islamist extremist rebels.

The UN Security Council called for an immediate stop to the violence following a two-hour, closed-door emergency meeting on Saturday. The council said it would add sanctions against M23 rebel leaders and demanded that rebels immediately stop their advance toward Goma.

“We must stop the M23” because Goma’s fall “would inevitably turn into a humanitarian crisis,” said France’s UN Ambassador, Gerard Araud. He added that UN officials would decide in the coming days which M23 leaders to target for additional sanctions.

Rwanda: Clean and Peaceful - but Rwanda Bores Tourists

By Kenneth Agutamba/Rwanda Focus (Kigali)/19 November 2012

Rwanda's image of being peaceful and clean attracted nearly a million tourists last year, but most could not stay longer than a day or two as they found the country extremely boring.

"Getting tourists stay longer is still our biggest challenge," said Rica Rwigamba, the director of tourism and conservation at the Rwanda Development Board (RDB). This calls for more investment in recreational facilities.

In 2011, Rwanda was visited by about 900,000 people and the country earned \$250 million. According to Joel Rudasingwa, a researcher at RDB, Rwanda is already on course to surpass last year's number of visitors because as of September, 800,000 tourists had already visited the country, 14% higher than the number of visitors during the same period last year.

"Visitors spend most of their money on accommodations and food/beverages with 63% of tourism revenues being generated within hotels and restaurant," Rudasingwa said during a meeting with hotel and restaurant owners.

In collaboration with investors in the hospitality sector, the RDB tourism department now wants to ensure that tourists spend more while in Rwanda by finding ways of enticing them to stay longer whenever they visit.

Officials say there is need to support the leisure industry to entice visit to stay longer and spend more as a sure way of increasing revenue from the sector.

Currently, entertainment expenditure by tourists accounts for only 5%, transport 10% and shopping 22% of visitors' budget.

Accommodation and restaurants between them take the lion's share with 42 and 21% of tourists' expenditure.

"It's not that tourists deliberately don't want to spend on entertainment, there are simply no proper avenues for entertainment and even government departments have not promoted this element," said Denis Karera, the chairman of the of the hotel and restaurant owners association.

While hotels in Rwanda have of late benefited from international and regional conferences that have been hosted by Kigali, Karere blames the failure by relevant government departments to fix leisure moments for visitors to enjoy Kigali's night life and other entertainment avenues.

"They do the same when we travel abroad and we spend. Why can't our government departments do the same...include dancing, shopping and other recreation programs to make visitors spend more?"

It's estimated that of the roughly eight days that an average tourist to the EAC spends in the region, two days are spent in Kigali while the rest in either Kenya or Uganda, thought to have a more lively entertainment industry.

Studying tourists' country of origin could help the Rwanda Chamber of Tourism make Rwanda a less boring place for tourists through initiating a behavioral research.

Current figures indicate that majority of visitors to Rwanda are from within the EAC region and DRC while only 17% are from beyond with America and Europe dominating.

Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania have fast growing entertainment industries with musicians making a lot of money. As of September 2012, Uganda had hosted almost ten international artists to Rwanda's two. Night clubs in Uganda work week through while in Rwanda they are subjected to strict city rules and limited hours of operations factors that have discouraged heavy investment in that sub-sector.

"Fact is Rwanda is a small country that one can travel and cover within just less than 24 hours which means there have to be extra special facilities to give reason to a visitor to stay longer," explained Christine Calouro, an American who has visited Rwanda before.

Rwanda would like tourism to contribute 15% of its GDP by 2020 but this will mean finding more avenues to get the tourists stay longer and spend more beyond the ride to Virunga to catch a glimpse of the mountain gorillas.

The 15% portion of GDP would require the sector to grow 15% annually to beat another target of 22% of private investment in the tourism sector. Current figures show that the country is on track to achieve that.

"In 2012, we have already registered investments worth \$241.6 million surpassing the target of \$165 millions by 46%," revealed Rica Rwigamba.

This will increase the number of hotel rooms which has registered an up-ward growth in recent years.

New statistics from RDB indicate that there are 6,700 rooms in the country from just 680 rooms back in 2003. The target is 10,000 rooms by 2019. Many hoteliers in Rwanda still lament the high costs involved in meeting new EAC hotel standards finalized in 2010 upon which regional hotels will be analyzed to determine how many stars they qualify for.

Reports indicate that in Kigali city and Rubavu town, on the border with DRC for instance many facilities going by the name 'hotel' are actually private houses turned into commercial accommodation facilities to tap into the booming hospitality sector.

Besides that, another study indicates that more than 50% of hotel managers in the country are without formal education calling for an urgent need to improve their capacity.

RDC CONGO :

RDC: la rébellion aux portes de Goma

le 19-11-2012/tempsreel.nouvelobs.com

GOMA (RDCongo) (AFP) - Les rebelles du M23 ont mené ce week-end une offensive majeure jusqu'aux portes de Goma, la capitale régionale du Nord-Kivu, dans l'est de la République démocratique du Congo (RDC), provoquant la fuite de chefs militaires et de civils congolais dimanche ainsi que l'exode de réfugiés d'un camp voisin.

Les rebelles congolais, qui mènent leur plus forte offensive depuis leur mutinerie en mai dernier dans le Kivu, une région minière limitrophe du Rwanda, ont arrêté leur progression à environ cinq kilomètres du centre de la ville mais ils ont menacé de "prendre" la ville s'ils étaient attaqués par l'armée.

En juillet dernier ils étaient arrivés à 30 kilomètres affirmant ne pas vouloir aller plus loin.

Selon une source militaire occidentale, un accord serait intervenu pour que les rebelles s'arrêtent à 5 km du centre-ville sur les hauteurs.

Des hélicoptères de l'ONU qui appuient l'armée gouvernementale ont tiré dimanche des roquettes et obus pour tenter d'endiguer l'avancée rebelle vers l'aéroport de Goma, a indiqué un porte-parole des

Nations unies à New York.

Les militaires mandatés par l'ONU ont "notamment utilisé quatre hélicoptères de combat", a déclaré à l'AFP Kieran Dwyer, ce porte-parole. Des milliers de civils ont fui la zone des combats, a ajouté M. Dwyer.

Le responsable militaire du Mouvement du 23 mars dans ce secteur, le colonel Innocent Kayina, interrogé par un correspondant de l'AFP, a déclaré s'arrêter près de Munigi, au nord près de l'aéroport. Mais, "si les FARDC (Forces armées de la RD Congo) nous attaquent, on prendra la ville", a-t-il ajouté.

Aucun corps ni aucune trace de combat n'était visible à proximité de Munigi, qui jouxte une base de l'ONU occupée par un bataillon sud-africain.

Le porte-parole de l'armée à Goma, interrogé au téléphone, a démenti le contrôle par le M23 de Munigi et affirmé que les FARDC étaient en position dans cet endroit et aux abords de la ville.

Dans la ville même, la situation était calme dans l'après-midi. Aucun tir n'était entendu et "aucun incident majeur" n'a été signalé, a assuré à l'AFP le vice-gouverneur provincial, Feller Lutaichirwa.

Selon lui, les militaires se sont retirés afin "d'éviter un bain de sang" dans Goma, "ville de déplacés, prise en étau", entre le lac Kivu et la zone occupée jusqu'à présent par le M23.

"Nous sommes en panique générale", a cependant déclaré un chauffeur de taxi.

Les responsables civils sont partis par bateaux sur le lac Kivu vers Bukavu, la capitale du Sud-Kivu distante d'environ 80 kilomètres au sud où ils sont arrivés en fin d'après-midi. Les chefs militaires se seraient regroupés à Sake (20 km à l'est de Goma).

Le camp de réfugiés de Kanyarucinya, à une dizaine de kilomètres de Goma, qui comptait avant la reprise des combats 30.000 personnes, s'est vidé dès le passage de la colonne du M23. Ses occupants ont repris la route vers le sud sans s'arrêter à Goma.

"Débandade"

Le porte-parole de la province du Nord-Kivu, Célestin Sibomana avait évoqué au téléphone avec l'AFP "une débandade" et dénoncé l'inaction des Casques bleus.

Les Casques bleus étaient déjà intervenus samedi avec des hélicoptères de combat. Mais le M23 a exigé, dimanche matin, que la Monusco "montre" sa neutralité sur le terrain (...) S'ils continuent à nous bombarder, nous allons réagir", a déclaré un porte-parole du mouvement.

Les forces de l'ONU resteront dans Goma (est), a assuré dimanche le secrétaire général de l'ONU, Ban Ki-moon, ajoutant qu'aucune action visant les forces de l'ONU "ne sera tolérée".

L'ONU dispose de 6.700 hommes dans le Nord-Kivu.

Le Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU a demandé samedi l'arrêt de l'avance de la rébellion vers Goma et que "tout soutien extérieur et toute fourniture d'équipement au M23 cessent immédiatement".

Kinshasa et l'ONU accusent le Rwanda de soutenir les rebelles, ce que Kigali dément.

La représentante de la diplomatie européenne, Catherine Ashton, a demandé dimanche aux rebelles de "cesser immédiatement leur offensive militaire" sur Goma. "Tout soutien au M23, en violation du régime de sanctions et de l'embargo sur les armes doit cesser", a-t-elle réclamé.

Paris a de son côté "mis en garde quiconque contribuerait, de façon directe ou indirecte, à une nouvelle aggravation de la situation". Londres a également appelé le M23 à cesser "immédiatement" toute violence.

Le M23 a été créé début mai dans le Nord-Kivu par des militaires qui avaient pour la plupart combattu au sein de la rébellion pro-rwandaise du Congrès national pour la défense du peuple. Ils ont officiellement intégré l'armée en 2009 après un accord avec le gouvernement, mais se sont mutinés en avril dernier, arguant que Kinshasa n'avait pas respecté ses engagements.

Ils réclament notamment le maintien de tous les officiers dans leurs grades et refusent le "brassage" que veut leur imposer Kinshasa ce qui les éloignerait de leur zone d'influence dans l'est.

Matata Ponyo (RDC) : Opération séduction à Paris

lundi, 19 novembre 2012/Afrikarabia

En visite en France pendant 3 jours, le Premier ministre de République démocratique du Congo a dressé un premier bilan économique de son gouvernement et demande "un peu de temps" pour mesurer les effets de sa politique.

Le président Joseph Kabila n'avait jamais connu un si bon VRP. Un curriculum vitae irréprochable, le ton calme, les propos mesurés, "l'économiste" Matata Ponyo a tout pour rassurer. Spécialiste de politique monétaire et budgétaire, le Premier ministre est venu pour vanter les "progrès" réalisés par la République démocratique du Congo, mais aussi pour faire oublier les tensions du Sommet de la Francophonie. Missions délicates.

Indicateurs économiques au beau fixe

Sur le plan macro-économique, Matata Ponyo affiche de bons résultats : un taux d'inflation "en dessous de 3%", un Franc congolais "stable" avec l'euro et un taux de croissance en progression pour l'année 2012 (7,2%)... Seul souci, ces bons chiffres ne semblent toujours pas bénéficier à la population congolaise dont presque 70% vit encore sous le seuil de pauvreté (- de 2\$ par jour). Pour inverser la tendance, Matata Ponyo compte sur le secteur privé pour être "le moteur de l'économie" congolaise et sur les investisseurs étrangers pour venir faire des affaires en RDC. Là encore, il y a deux problèmes récurrents : la corruption quasi endémique, que l'opération "tolérance zéro" n'a pas endigué, et le retour de la guerre à l'Est du pays qui auraient plutôt tendance à faire fuir les projets d'investissement.

Un peu de patience...

Les bonnes intentions sont là, mais la route paraît bien tortueuse pour le Premier ministre congolais. L'année écoulée a vu reculer la RDC dans le classement Doing Business 2013. Le Congo se retrouve classé à la 181ème place sur... 185. Mais Matata Ponyo a rappelé qu'en avril dernier, la RDC avait adhéré à l'OHADA, l'Organisation pour l'Harmonisation en Afrique du Droit des Affaires et que des progrès étaient en cours, comme la mise en place (un peu chaotique) de la TVA, le nouveau code des douanes ou le renforcement de la sécurité juridique et judiciaire pour les entreprises. Le Premier ministre espère bien que ces réformes porteront leurs fruits dès 2013. Matata Ponyo demande donc un peu de temps et de patience pour mesurer les effets positifs de sa

politique. Son gouvernement est en effet au commande depuis depuis seulement 6 mois. Mais avec un budget lilliputien de 8 milliards de dollars, la marge de manoeuvre de Matata Ponyo apparaît très limitée.

Aucun contrat de signé

Au cours de sa visite de 3 jours en France, le Premier ministre congolais a rencontré Jean-Marc Ayrault, son homologue français, Laurent Fabius, ministre des Affaires étrangères, Pierre Moscovici, ministre de l'Economie, Pierre Canfin et Yamina Benguigui chargés du Développement et de la Francophonie, mais aussi les patrons du MEDEF. Matata Ponyo a affirmé "qu'aucun contrat n'était en cours", mais a confirmé l'intérêt de la société Total dans le secteur des hydrocarbures à l'Est de la RDC. Un bémol cependant, la situation sécuritaire se dégrade de jour en jour dans la région, avec la reprise des combats entre les rebelles du M23, soutenus par le Rwanda, et l'armée régulière autour de la ville de Goma.

Clin d'oeil à la diaspora

Comme souvent dans ce genre de déplacement à l'étranger, le Premier ministre congolais a souhaité s'adresser à la diaspora congolaise, très présente en France. Matata Ponyo a donc insisté pour que ces Congolais investissent de nouveau au pays. Pour le Premier ministre, les Congolais de l'extérieur ne doivent plus hésiter à venir "faire des affaires en RDC". Pas sûr qu'un tel message soit complètement entendu par la diaspora congolaise de France, majoritairement hostile au régime de Joseph Kabila.

Droits de l'homme et démocratie

Les deux points noirs de la situation en République démocratique du Congo restent le conflit qui agite l'Est du pays depuis plus de 15 ans et la situation des droits de l'homme et de la démocratie. Sur ces sujets, le Premier ministre est moins convaincant (ou moins convaincu, lui-même par la politique qu'il doit défendre). Sur le processus de démocratisation, qui "doit se poursuivre", selon lui, le Premier ministre reconnaît "des erreurs" pendant les élections très controversées de 2011. Mais la Commission électorale (CENI) à la base des fraudes est toujours en place et peine à se réformer. Comme preuves des progrès démocratiques de la RDC, Matata Ponyo note la présence de "150 députés de l'opposition à l'Assemblée nationale"... un argument un peu faible pour justifier les nombreuses irrégularités des dernières élections. "Quelques soient les erreurs et les insuffisances, l'expression démocratique s'est affirmée", insiste le Premier ministre. Pas un mot sur les arrestations arbitraires d'opposants politiques ou sur l'affaire Chebeya, qui tourne à la parodie de justice, depuis que l'on sait que le principal suspect, John Numbi, ne sera pas jugé.

Concernant la situation sécuritaire au Nord-Kivu, le Premier ministre a confirmé que le rapport final des experts de l'ONU mettait en cause des "officiels rwandais" dans le soutien du Rwanda aux rebelles du M23. Matata Ponyo a indiqué avoir reçu "une oreille attentive" des autorités françaises sur le sujet et souhaite voir renforcer le mandat des casques bleus de la Monusco

Si Matata Ponyo reste le meilleur atout de Joseph Kabila pour rassurer la communauté internationale et les nombreux bailleurs du Congo, sa seule présence ne suffit pas à faire oublier les nombreux errements du régime. Depuis les élections chaotiques de novembre 2011 qui ont fortement affaibli l'autorité de Joseph Kabila et le retour des combats au Nord-Kivu, la RDC entre de nouveau dans une zone de forte turbulence. Si Matata Ponyo demande un peu de patience aux Congolais pour voir la situation s'améliorer... le temps presse.

UGANDA :

Uganda exports set to grow by 50% after COMESA ratification

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Uganda is set to enjoy a 50% increase in export revenues after Cabinet yesterday approved a recommendation by the minister of trade for Uganda to join the COMESA free trade area (FTA).

The decision effectively makes Uganda the 15th COMESA FTA member and opens up the opportunity for increased trade competitiveness mainly through increased earnings from exports.

Trade minister Amelia Kyambadde last week said that with the ascension to the 19 member trade bloc FTA, exports are expected to grow by an average of 50% annually.

"In the COMESA region, DRC is Uganda's second largest market after southern Sudan at over \$350m larger than Kenya (about \$250m) and they are working on their assention (which means if DRC joins, more trade for Uganda)," said Silver Ojakol, commissioner for external trade in the ministry of trade, industry and cooperatives.

Uganda had delayed to join the FTA because of revenue considerations like taxes levied on imports but experts said the benefits from the accessing a free trade area under COMESA are huge.

"Besides we are now moving towards consolidating domestic taxes," said a senior trade official.

The 15 COMESA FTA states are Uganda, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, Mauritius, Comoros, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Djibouti, Madagascar, Mauritius and Malawi.

Joining the FTA means the tariff imposed on majority of imports and exports between Uganda and other COMESA states will drop to 0% from 2% compared to what is levied (10%) on goods from states like China.

"If we don't join, the competitiveness of our goods will reduce, imports from other COMESA countries will also be at zero tariffs but this is not for everything," said Silver Ojakol, the commissioner for external trade in ministry of trade, industry and cooperatives. Ojakol explained that there remains a separate list of "sensitive goods" like sugar, rice and agriculture products which Uganda will not completely open up to.

Joining the FTA will open up several benefits especially for value added agriculture products.

"We have the lowest cost of production in agriculture, we are also closer to these people (DRC, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan than a manufacturer say from Kenya and this lead time gives us an advantage," said Ojakol.

It will also allow local industries import some industrial imports cheaply as is the case with countries like Kenya who have always sourced industrial inputs under COMESA cheaply, affording them a more competitive edge.

Under the FTA, each country will then apply the rule of reciprocity where it charges anything from

2%, 4% or 6% upwards on imports for mainly intermediate goods-goods used as inputs in the production of other goods.

The bonus to joining the FTA comes alongside side regional trade figures that indicate that Uganda's total exports to COMESA have almost tripled rising from \$248.6m in 2005 to \$712.9m in 2010.

But the positive statistics from Uganda Bureau of Statistics is that in 2007 exports to COMESA were valued at \$998m-higher than imports valued at \$614m. This was a turning point because it was the first time Uganda posted a positive trade balance with the COMESA bloc.

It meant that Uganda's exports to COMESA countries rose from 30.58% in 2005 to 46.53% in 2010.

These statistics released ahead of the COMESA summit that opens in Kampala this week is another strong indicator of how Africa is slowly turning the page amidst a shrinking global economy perched mainly by slow growth in both Europe and America and sometimes the real feeling of a total recession in the west.

The IMF projects that after China (8.2%), sub-Saharan Africa including Uganda will post the highest GDP growth of 5.7% in 2013 which indicates a strong rebound to the about 3.2% 2012 growth.

This GDP growth which captures the total output of all the economic activities of a country indicates a real boom for a global economy that will post as low as 0.2% in Europe and 2.1% in USA. The global average will be 3.6%.

Ssentamu Ahmed, a maize dealer in Kampala who has found new market with the improving infrastructure in Lake Victoria has increased the size of his exports using the refurbished MV Kaawa ship from Port Bell to Mwanza in Tanzania.

Ssentamu's chances are on the rise as Uganda's trade minister Amelia Kyambadde confirmed that one of the biggest opportunities from COMESA is the raising of the tax threshold to \$2,000 for cross border trade. This means small traders and businesses operating along the border can carry goods worth upto \$2,000 tax free across the borders.

The theme of the COMESA summit "Promoting intra COMESA Trade Through Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development" if translated into action will open more doors.

This is because micro businesses account for 70% of total number of businesses, according to UBOS while small businesses account for 20% while large business account for 1%.

"The target really should be formalising and turning these businesses into large, formal tax paying entities," said one analyst.

The benefits will be more if COMESA transitions into a customs union which means more relaxed tax regimes and policies. A customs union creates a preferential market for all the companies and cooperates operating within the bloc which makes trading in the region more attractive.

"The bigger aim is to promote regional industry and cooperations by keeping focused," said Ojakol.

Sad statistics/challenge

The sad statistics is that Uganda's imports from the rest of the world outside COMESA have more than doubled rising from \$2b to \$4.6 billion while imports from COMESA have risen slightly from \$556m to \$586.9m.

This therefore means that Uganda must strengthen its industrial base and value addition of the agriculture sector to satisfy the growing local and global consumption demand but also to fetch higher value.

As the main destination for foreign direct investment in the region, FDI inflows averaged \$167.5m between 2007 and 2009. Major sources of investment are from Kenya and, Mauritius and Rwanda.

Unstable Great Lakes especially Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) also creates uncertainty. The other is the non-tariff barrier of poor transport infrastructure.

SOUTH AFRICA :

South Africa: NPA Fails in Bid to Stop Sunday Times

18 November 2012/SAPA

Johannesburg — The Sunday Times was in shops across the country on Sunday in spite of an eleventh hour attempt by the National Prosecuting Authority to stop distribution of copies leading with a story on the "spy tape" case relating to President Jacob Zuma.

The application by the NPA was made in the High Court in Pretoria on Saturday night but Acting Judge Nomsa Khumalo said since the paper was already in circulation, interdicting the distribution process would serve no purpose.

Several people in the court already had copies of the Sunday edition in court.

After hearing presentations from legal representatives for the Sunday Times and the NPA, Khumalo ruled that the court would not interdict the already ongoing distribution on Saturday night.

"The applicant (NPA) was alerted to the matter on the 15th of November and has failed to prove to this court that the submission now (to halt the distribution) is an urgent matter," said Khumalo.

The NPA's bid was dismissed with costs.

Advocate Jaap Cilliers, for the NPA, had argued that the information in the Sunday Times story was "unlawfully obtained" therefore it should not be allowed to sail into the public domain through the newspapers' reports.

Khumalo asked Cilliers to explain how an interdict on the publication of stories based on information leaked to the newspaper, and the distribution would be enforced.

Cilliers said he "trusted that the editor of the Sunday Times was a reasonable person" and would therefore not persist with the news reports.

Around 100,000 copies had already been distributed in South Africa.

"The Sunday Times obtained this information unlawfully, as we will lead evidence to prove, surely (the court interdict) would limit the damage that will be done. The editor of the Sunday Times knew (about the application of the interdict) but chose to go ahead to printing," said Cilliers.

The Sunday Times story is based on a series -- 300 pages -- of leaked internal communication within the NPA, including emails and memos. The communiqués reveal that top prosecutors believed they had a firm case against Zuma.

For the newspaper, Advocate John Campbell SC submitted that the newspaper solicited for clarity from the NPA on the matter on November 15 without success.

He said an interdict would be a blow to press freedom and the business.

Campbell conceded the information may have been unlawfully obtained but "not by us (the Sunday Times)".

In passing her ruling, Khumalo said there were avenues for the NPA to follow in its bid to halt the future publication of the saga in the newspapers.

The judgment was delivered before 10 pm.

The decision in 2009 to drop the charges against Zuma -- taken by then acting National Director of Public Prosecutions Mokotedi Mpshe -- was made a month before he was elected president.

UPDATE 1-S.Africa's Barloworld FY profit slightly beat forecasts

Mon Nov 19, 2012 /Reuters

- * Diluted headline EPS at 675 cents vs 461 cents
- * Consensus: 674 cents -Reuters data
- * Expect lower demand for mining equipment (Adds details, shares)

JOHANNESBURG, Nov 19 (Reuters) - South African industrial group Barloworld reported a 46 percent rise in full-year profit on Monday, slightly beating market estimates, on buoyant demand in southern Africa and Russia.

Barloworld, the biggest dealer of Caterpillar earth-moving equipment in southern Africa, said headline earnings per share totalled 675 cents in the year to end-September, above a 674 estimate in a Reuters poll of 10 analysts. It reported 461 cents a year earlier.

Headline EPS, the main measure of profit in South Africa, strips out certain one-off items.

The company, which also operates in Russia, Iberia and several African countries such as coal and gas-rich Mozambique, said its Russian business delivered a strong performance, although its Iberian unit suffered due to an economic slowdown in Spain.

Demand for industrial equipment has increased in southern Africa countries such as Mozambique, where enough gas to supply Germany, Britain, France and Italy for 13 years was discovered recently.

But the company said a spate of wildcat strikes that slashed production in South African platinum and gold mining industry was likely to hit demand.

"Overall we expect reduced mining deliveries into 2013 although there are some signs of a modest improvement in construction activity and aftermarket revenues should hold up well." the company said. (Reporting by Tiisetso Motsoeneng; editing by David Dolan)

TANZANIA :

KENYA :

Kenya: More Than 30 Eastleigh Blast Victims Hospitalised

By Margaret Wahito/Capital FM (Nairobi)/18 November 2012

More than 30 people have been admitted to the Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) following a minibus explosion in Eastleigh which left seven people dead.

Confirming the number of the casualties taken to the emergency unit, KNH chief executive officer Richard Lesiyampe said most of them were in critical condition but had been stabilised.

He said three of the victims have been taken in for minor surgery due to excess bleeding as a new ward was set up to cater for the new admissions.

"Those who are in critical condition are now going through X-Rays, and scanning to ascertain the extent of their injuries. Those who will require operation this night will be done. Most of the casualties have got burns and we also have a few who have sustained fractures," Lesiyampe told journalists outside at the Accident and Emergency unit at the hospital.

He said the facility received substantial amount of blood from the National Blood Transfusion Centre to help those who were in need.

"We are still doing everything possible to save the lives of those who have arrived at Kenyatta National Hospital. We wish to confirm to the public that we have enough and competent staff. We have enough consumables, and we will do our best to ensure the health of all the injured is restored," the CEO assured.

He said from Monday morning, the hospital would give the exact number of those who remain in hospital and those who will be discharged.

Most of the doctors and nurses who were off duty were to be recalled to help deal with the situation.

Briefing Journalists earlier, the Nairobi emergency operations officer at the Kenya Red Cross Nicholas Thuo said most of the injured were men.

"Most of the casualties we have here are the passengers who were inside the matatu. Out of 29 people we have received here so far, 26 are male and only two female," said Thuo.

Water assistant minister Ferdinand Waititu was among those who visited the wounded and condemned the act calling on the law enforcers to deal with those involved.

He however called on locals not to engage in any violence but to leave the matter to the police and investigators.

Out of the 34 at the hospital, four casualties were those injured after chaos erupted among locals protesting against the act.

"I would urge the relevant agencies to abolish the issue of having public vehicles with tinted windows. We would want everyone to see and know who is in any matatu," Waititu said.

Kenya to Begin Voter Registration Monday

Peter Clotey/voanews.com/ November 18, 2012

Kenya's President Mwai Kibaki is scheduled to officially launch a nationwide voter registration process Monday ahead of the general election scheduled for March 4.

"We are having a national launch at the Kenyatta Center where we are launching the registration of a target of 18 million," said Ambassador Yusuf Nzibo, a commissioner at the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC).

The electoral body is compiling a list to be used for the election.

Commissioner Nzibo says the registration will take 30 days followed by a voter verification exercise lasting about two weeks.

"As a commission we have to improve on the integrity of our registration by introducing countrywide biometric registration of voters, where we would take a voters finger prints plus their photographs to ensure that they are the ones that would turn up for voting," said Nzibo.

"Once we have identified the person," continued Nzibo, "we will work with the Immigration Department's registration person to ensure either the passport that was given or the national identification is a genuine one."

Voter registration will take place at about 30,000 centers which will be opened from 8am to 5pm including Saturdays and Sundays, according to the IEBC.

Nzibo says the electoral body has instituted new measures to ensure a credible voters list to be used for the election

"[This is a fresh voter registration so] we are going to take all your 10 finger prints. We believe that there are over 22 million people who will be eligible to vote, but we are targeting only 18 million, which is 80 percent of eligible registered voters," said Nzibo.

"We are asking all Kenyans to turn up irrespective of whether you have registered [in the past] or not. Turn up early and don't wait until the last minute. We don't intend to have an extension beyond 30 days."

Nzibo assured Kenyans that the registration process is well protected by special security features,

which he said will prevent any manipulation.

He says the IEBC has yet to decide on the registration of Kenyans abroad ahead of the election.

“We have been meeting in Mombasa as a commission, and we will make a final decision on Monday or Tuesday as to whether to begin the registration of Kenyans in the diaspora,” said Nzibo.

Kenya: Army moves in after police massacre

Tristan McConnell / GlobalPost.com /alaskadispatch.com/ Nov 18, 2012

Hundreds of people in Kenya’s remote north are fleeing their homes as the army hunts down cattle rustlers who ambushed and killed as many as 42 police officers last week.

Turkana tribal warriors have been blamed for the ambush in the rugged Suguta Valley. But fears are growing that Turkana civilians may be targeted in retaliatory attacks by Kenya’s security forces, which are frequently accused torture, murder and other human rights abuses.

“The Turkanas are fleeing from Suguta area with their household goods, goats and cattle,” Peter Legerded, a shopkeeper in Baragoi, close to the ambush site, told Reuters. An elder of the Samburu tribe, which lives alongside the Turkana in the area, said that “3,000” Turkana people had so far fled.

President Mwai Kibaki ordered the army into the region on Tuesday as outrage grew over the unprecedented scale of the police killings and the government’s lethargic response.

“No part of this country can be a safe haven for bandits,” Kibaki said.

Police Commissioner Matthew Iteere said the coming operation would be “serious.”

“We cannot allow such things to happen. I think they were testing the waters and in due cause they will know the depth of the river,” he warned.

In the early hours of Saturday morning as many as 300 Turkana warriors occupying the high ground on either side of a deep ravine opened fire on the police officers below with assault rifles, rocket-propelled grenades and machine guns. Residents of the area say Turkana warriors had long used the location of the ambush as a place to trap and kill enemies.

According to security sources, the assault happened as police units were preparing an operation to reclaim an estimated 450 Samburu livestock stolen by Turkana raiders on Oct. 30.

Tit-for-tat cattle raids between pastoralist communities such as the Turkana and Samburu are a feature of life in northern Kenya. But rarely do they kill so many, and never before so many police officers.

Traditionally, cattle rustling was a rite of passage for young men and a way to win enough cows to pay a dowry. But as AK-47s replaced spears, the raids became a whirlwind of violence, triggering blood feuds lasting years.

Many experts blame the thriving trade in illegal arms and ammunition in northern Kenya, which borders South Sudan and Somalia, two countries awash with weapons after decades of civil war.

All previous attempts to disarm pastoralist communities in the north have failed, often due to a lack of political will.

Political groups jockeying for support at times also perpetuate the violence.

Politics is suspected to have played its part in this latest incident, as Kenya prepares for elections in less than four months time.

“There is every likelihood that politics is at play in this: cattle rustling is used as a tool to disenfranchise communities,” said Michael Tiampati, national coordinator of the advocacy group Pastoralist Development Network of Kenya.

Politicians were suspected of involvement in a series of tribal attacks that killed more than 100 people in the Tana Delta on Kenya’s coast in September.

Tiampati said cattle rustling helps raise campaign funds and spreads fear among political opponents and their communities. The violence also forces people from their homes, disrupting voter registration, which is due to take place in the area next week.

Government officials in the capital Nairobi have always regarded the semi-desert reaches of northern Kenya as a backward place, a bandit country full of uncivilized tribes. Over decades the relationship between the state and the semi-nomadic pastoralists has broken down and come to be defined by marginalization, disdain and mutual distrust.

“Pastoralist communities feel sidelined and marginalized by government to the extent that when they come towards Nairobi they say they are ‘going to Kenya,’” Tiampati said.

He added that when state security forces are deployed in the north, “It is often viewed as an invasion by a rival community on their land, so they retaliate.”

Kenya’s police force is frequently used at the whim of local power brokers and politicians. In this case, a large contingent of Samburu reservists were among the police squad sent to retrieve the stolen livestock, giving it the complexion of a partisan force and therefore a legitimate enemy.

This weekend’s attack has cast doubt on the government’s ability to provide adequate security during elections in March of next year, the first poll since 1,200 people were killed in violence following the December 2007 vote.

With the army moving in violence in the north appears set to escalate. As one person who knows the area well put it: “The Suguta Valley is not somewhere even the army can win.”

ANGOLA :

[Angola hosts 62nd session of WHO's regional committee](http://11/18/12/portalangop.co.ao)
11/18/12/portalangop.co.ao

Brazzaville – The 62nd session of the Regional African Committee of the World Health Organization (WHO) will take place on 19-23 November, in Luanda, Angola.

The event is to be attended by Health ministers of 46 African member countries of the World Health Organization (WHO), reads a press note from the organisers.

The regional director of the WHO for Africa, Luís Sambo, among other officials, will also attend the gathering, which will debate the 2010-2011 activities report of the WHO for Africa, among other issues.

The event is also to organise a panel to discuss the role of Traditional Medicine, as well as hold sessions on vaccines, HIV/Aids, tuberculosis, malaria, and establish partnerships for health issues.

AU/AFRICA :

Israel pounds Gaza as rocket fire wanes; talks in Egypt

By Nidal al-Mughrabi and Dan Williams/Reuters/Mon Nov 19, 2012

GAZA/JERUSALEM

(Reuters) - Israel bombed dozens of suspected guerrilla sites in the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip on Monday and Palestinian rocket fire from the enclave dropped off as international efforts to broker a truce intensified.

Ten civilians and two field commanders from the Islamic Jihad faction were killed and at least 30 other Palestinians were hurt in the new air strikes, hospital officials said, bringing the death toll from six days of clashes in Gaza to 85.

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon was due to arrive in Cairo to weigh in on ceasefire efforts led by Egypt, which borders both Israel and Gaza and whose Islamist-rooted government has been hosting leaders of Hamas.

Israeli media said a delegation from Israel had also been to Cairo for truce talks, though a spokesman for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government declined comment on the matter.

The Gaza flare-up, and Israel's signaling that it could soon escalate from the aerial bombings to a ground sweep of the cramped and impoverished enclave, have stoked the worries of world powers watching an already combustible region.

As Hamas and other Islamist factions spurn permanent peace with the Jewish state, mediated deals for each to hold fire unilaterally have been the only formula for stemming bloodshed in the past. But each side now placed the onus on the other.

Izzat Risheq, aide to Hamas politburo chief Khaled Meshaal, wrote on Facebook that Hamas would enter a truce only after Israel "stops its aggression, ends its policy of targeted assassinations and lifts the blockade of Gaza".

Listing Israel's terms, Vice Prime Minister Moshe Yaalon wrote on Twitter: "If there is quiet in the south and no rockets and missiles are fired at Israel's citizens, nor terrorist attacks engineered from the Gaza Strip, we will not attack."

Yaalon also said Israel wanted an end to Gaza guerrilla activity in the neighboring Egyptian Sinai, a

desert peninsula where lawlessness has spread during Cairo's political crises.

WESTERN SUPPORT

Israel's operation has so far drawn Western support for what U.S. and European leaders have called its right to self-defense in the face of years of cross-border attacks, but there have also been growing appeals for an end to the hostilities.

Sympathy for Israel may wear thin as the Gaza toll mounts. On Sunday, 11 Palestinian civilians were apparently killed during an Israeli attack on a militant which brought a three-storey family home crashing down on them.

"I am deeply saddened by the reported deaths of more than ten members of the Dalu family... (and) by the continuing firing of rockets against Israeli towns, which have killed several Israeli civilians. I strongly urge the parties to cooperate with all efforts led by Egypt to reach an immediate ceasefire," Ban said before leaving for Egypt. He visits Israel on Tuesday.

At least 22 of the Gaza fatalities have been children.

Netanyahu said he had assured world leaders that Israel was doing its utmost to avoid causing civilian casualties in Gaza.

In scenes recalling Israel's 2008-2009 winter invasion of Gaza, tanks, artillery and infantry have massed in field encampments along the sandy, fenced-off border and military convoys moved on roads in the area. Israel has also authorized the call-up of 75,000 military reservists, so far mobilizing around half that number.

A big, bloody rocket strike on Israelis might be enough for Netanyahu to give a green light for a ground offensive.

Three Israelis have been killed and dozens wounded in hundreds of salvos since Wednesday. Some rockets reached as far as Tel Aviv, Israel's commercial capital, but were shot down by the country's air defense system.

As a precaution against the rocket interceptions endangering nearby Ben-Gurion International Airport, civil aviation authorities said on Monday new flight paths were being used. There was no indication takeoffs and landings at Ben-Gurion had been affected.

OVERNIGHT LULL

There was no rocket fire from Gaza between midnight and daybreak on Monday, the Israeli military said. It said a few cross-border launches followed in the early morning but there was no immediate word on casualties in southern Israel, where such salvos usually set off sirens so residents can shelter.

Israel bombed some 80 sites in Gaza overnight, the military said, adding in a statement that targets included "under-ground rocket launching sites, terror tunnels and training bases" as well as "buildings owned by senior terrorist operatives".

Israel's declared goal is to deplete Gaza arsenals and force Hamas to stop rocket fire that has bedeviled Israeli border towns for years. The rockets now have greater range, putting Tel Aviv and Jerusalem within their reach - a strategic weapon for Gaza's otherwise massively outgunned

guerrillas.

The southern resort city of Eilat was apparently added to the list of targets when residents said they heard explosions on Sunday and Monday thought to be rockets, though there was no word on casualties or damage.

Eilat is thought to be well out of the range of any rocket in possession of Hamas or any other Gaza group. But militants have in the recent past fired rockets at Eilat and its surroundings, using Egypt's Sinai desert as a launch site.

Hamas and other groups in Gaza are sworn enemies of the Jewish state which they refuse to recognize and seek to eradicate, claiming all Israeli territory as rightfully theirs.

Hamas won legislative elections in the Palestinian Territories in 2006 but a year later, after the collapse of a unity government under President Mahmoud Abbas the Islamist group seized control of Gaza in a brief and bloody civil war with forces loyal to Abbas.

Abbas then dismissed the Hamas government led by the group's leader Ismail Haniyeh but he refuses to recognize Abbas' authority and runs Gazan affairs.

While it is denounced as a terrorist organization in the West, Hamas enjoys widespread support in the Arab world, where Islamist parties are on the rise.

U.S.-backed Abbas and Fatah hold sway in the Israeli-occupied West Bank from their seat of government in the town of Ramallah. The Palestinians seek to establish an independent state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip with East Jerusalem as its capital.

(Writing by Ori Lewis and Dan Williams; Editing by Catherine Evans)

Israël reprend ses bombardements sur Gaza

Le Point.fr /le 19/11/2012

Dix personnes, dont un enfant, ont été tuées lundi au lendemain de la journée la plus sanglante de l'offensive "Pilier de défense".

L'aviation et la marine israéliennes ont repris tôt lundi leurs bombardements de la bande de Gaza, faisant dix morts, dont un enfant de cinq ans, au lendemain de la journée la plus meurtrière de l'offensive de l'État hébreu qui a tué 31 Palestiniens, selon des sources médicales palestiniennes.

Quatre personnes, dont un enfant de 5 ans et deux femmes de 20 et 23 ans, ont été tuées par un raid dans le quartier de Zeitoun, dans la ville de Gaza. Trois Palestiniens d'une même famille sont ensuite morts dans une frappe sur la voiture dans laquelle ils se trouvaient à Deir al-Balah, dans le centre du territoire palestinien. En outre, un fermier de 50 ans a été retrouvé mort dans la ville de Beit Lahiya, dans le nord du territoire palestinien, selon des sources médicales. Et deux autres fermiers ont été tués dans une frappe sur Qarara, à l'est de Khan Younès, dans le sud de la bande de Gaza.

Depuis le déclenchement mercredi de l'offensive israélienne "Pilier de défense" avec l'assassinat à Gaza du chef des opérations militaires du Hamas, Ahmad Jaabari, 90 personnes ont été tuées : 87 Palestiniens, dont la moitié des civils, et trois civils israéliens. Dimanche a été la journée la plus meurtrière avec 31 Palestiniens tués, en majorité des femmes et des enfants. Outre le raid sur le

quartier de Zeitun, l'aviation israélienne a également totalement détruit un bâtiment de la police de la ville de Gaza pendant la nuit de dimanche à lundi. Des navires de guerre israéliens ont également bombardé la bande de Gaza durant la nuit.

846 roquettes tirées

Parmi les victimes de dimanche, 11 personnes, dont quatre femmes et cinq enfants, et neuf membres d'une même famille ont été tués dans l'après-midi dans une frappe aérienne qui a détruit un immeuble de trois étages du quartier de Nasser (nord) dans la ville de Gaza. "Le massacre de la famille Dallou ne restera pas impuni", ont averti les Brigades Ezzedine al-Qassam, la branche armée du Hamas qui gouverne la bande de Gaza. "Ce massacre prouve que l'occupant se venge sur les civils de son échec militaire. Les Israéliens vont payer", a renchéri un porte-parole du mouvement, Sami Abou Zouhri.

Côté israélien, pour la quatrième journée consécutive, les sirènes d'alerte ont retenti dimanche à Tel-Aviv. La police a ensuite annoncé que deux roquettes avaient été interceptées par le système antimissile "Iron Dome". Sept Israéliens ont été blessés. Un bâtiment de quatre étages a été touché de plein fouet. Au moins 846 roquettes ont été tirées depuis mercredi sur Israël, dont 302 ont été interceptées par le système antimissile "Iron Dome", selon un bilan rendu public dimanche par l'armée israélienne.

Discussions en Égypte

Israël a mobilisé des milliers de réservistes et déployé des transports de troupes blindés, des bulldozers et des chars à la frontière avec la bande de Gaza. Le ministre israélien des Affaires étrangères, Avigdor Lieberman, a affirmé dimanche que la seule condition d'une trêve était que tous les groupes armés de Gaza arrêtent leurs tirs.

Un responsable israélien s'est rendu dimanche au Caire où des discussions se poursuivaient pour parvenir à une trêve, selon des responsables égyptiens. Le président égyptien Mohamed Morsi a discuté avec les dirigeants des deux principaux mouvements de la bande de Gaza, le chef en exil du Hamas Khaled Mechaal et le chef du Jihad islamique Abdallah Challah, "des efforts égyptiens pour mettre un terme à l'agression", selon un communiqué de la présidence au Caire. Mohamed Morsi avait évoqué samedi des contacts avec les deux camps et "quelques indications sur la possibilité d'un cessez-le-feu bientôt". Après le Premier ministre égyptien et le ministre tunisien des Affaires étrangères, le secrétaire général de la Ligue arabe, Nabil el-Arabi, se rendra mardi à Gaza à la tête d'une délégation ministérielle.

"Pilier de défense" est la plus vaste opération israélienne contre Gaza depuis l'offensive dévastatrice de décembre 2008-janvier 2009, qui n'avait que temporairement fait cesser les tirs de roquettes.

Nouvelle nuit de bombardements sur Gaza par l'aviation et la marine israéliennes

Le Monde.fr avec AFP / 19.11.2012

L'aviation et la marine israéliennes ont repris tôt lundi 19 novembre leurs bombardements de la bande de Gaza, faisant dix morts dont un enfant de 5 ans et une femme, au lendemain de la journée la plus meurtrière de l'offensive de l'Etat hébreu qui a tué 31 Palestiniens.

Outre un raid sur le quartier de Zeitun, l'aviation israélienne a également totalement détruit un bâtiment de la police de la ville de Gaza pendant la nuit de dimanche à lundi. Des navires de guerre israéliens ont également bombardé la bande de Gaza durant la nuit, ont constaté des correspondants de l'AFP.

DIMANCHE, JOURNÉE MEURTRIÈRE

Depuis le déclenchement mercredi de l'offensive israélienne "Pilier de défense" avec l'assassinat à Gaza du chef des opérations militaires du Hamas, Ahmad Jaabari, 90 personnes ont été tuées : 87 Palestiniens, pour moitié des civils, et trois civils israéliens. Dimanche a été la journée la plus meurtrière avec 31 Palestiniens tués, en majorité des femmes et des enfants.

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TIRS DE ROQUETTES

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EFFORTS ÉGYPTIENS

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Après le premier ministre égyptien et le ministre des affaires étrangères tunisien, le secrétaire général de la Ligue arabe, Nabil Al-Arabi, doit se rendre mardi à Gaza à la tête d'une délégation ministérielle. "Pilier de défense" est la plus vaste opération israélienne contre Gaza depuis l'offensive dévastatrice de décembre 2008-janvier 2009, qui n'avait que temporairement fait cesser les tirs de roquettes.

Gaza : les bombardements continuent, les efforts diplomatiques s'intensifient
le 19 novembre 2012 /par Marion GARREAU/lci.tf1.fr

Les bombardements de l'armée israélienne ont repris tôt ce lundi matin dans la bande de Gaza, faisant déjà trois morts. Depuis le déclenchement de l'offensive de l'Etat hébreu mercredi, 83 personnes sont décédées. Dimanche a été la journée la plus meurtrière, avec 31 Palestiniens tués.

Déjà trois morts, dont un enfant de 5 ans, depuis que les bombardements de l'aviation et la marine israéliennes ont repris ce lundi. Dimanche, la journée la plus meurtrière, le raid israélien a tué 31 Palestiniens, essentiellement des femmes et des enfants (voir la vidéo).

"Le nombre de martyrs a atteint 80 avec la mort de Nisma Abu Zorr, 23 ans, de Mohammed Abu Zorr, 5 ans et de Ahid al-Qatati, 35 ans, dans un raid aérien" ayant visé le quartier de Zeitun, dans la ville de Gaza, a déclaré le porte-parole du ministère de la Santé de la bande de Gaza, Ashraf al-Qudra.

846 roquettes tirées sur Israël

Depuis le déclenchement mercredi de l'offensive de l'Etat hébreu "Pilier de défense" avec l'assassinat à Gaza du chef des opérations militaires du Hamas, Ahmad Jaabari, 83 personnes ont été tuées: 80 Palestiniens, dont la moitié des civils, et trois civils israéliens. Outre le raid sur le quartier de Zeitun, l'aviation israélienne a également totalement détruit un bâtiment de la police de la ville de Gaza pendant la nuit de dimanche à lundi.

"Ce massacre prouve que l'occupant se venge sur les civils de son échec militaire. Les Israéliens vont payer", a déclaré un porte-parole du Hamas, Sami Abou Zouhri.

Côté israélien, un bilan rendu public dimanche par l'armée israélienne estime qu'au moins 846 roquettes ont été tirées depuis mercredi sur Israël, dont 302 ont été interceptées par le système antimissile "Iron Dome". Le ministre israélien des Affaires étrangères, Avigdor Lieberman, a affirmé dimanche que la seule condition d'une trêve était que tous les groupes armés de Gaza stoppent leurs tirs.

Egypte, Tunisie et Ligue arabe attendues mardi à Gaza

Un responsable israélien s'est rendu dimanche au Caire où des discussions se poursuivaient pour parvenir à une trêve, selon des responsables égyptiens. Le président égyptien Mohamed Morsi a discuté avec les dirigeants des deux principaux mouvements de la bande de Gaza, le chef en exil du Hamas Khaled Mechaal et le chef du Jihad islamique Abdallah Challah, "des efforts égyptiens pour mettre un terme à l'agression", selon un communiqué de la présidence au Caire.

Mohamed Morsi avait évoqué samedi des contacts avec les deux camps et "quelques indications sur la possibilité d'un cessez-le-feu bientôt". Après le Premier ministre égyptien et le ministre tunisien des Affaires étrangères, le secrétaire général de la Ligue arabe, Nabil al-Arabi, se rendra mardi à Gaza à la tête d'une délégation ministérielle.

Nord du Mali: combats entre islamistes du Mujao et rebelles touareg du MNLA
(AFP) /16112012

BAMAKO — Des combats ont éclaté vendredi entre les islamistes du Mouvement pour l'unicité et le jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest (Mujao) et des rebelles touareg du Mouvement national de libération de l'Azawad (MNLA) près de Gao (nord-est du Mali), a appris l'AFP de sources concordantes.

"Des affrontements se déroulent actuellement entre combattants du Mujao et ceux du MNLA, ça se passe dans la région de Ménaka" à l'est de Gao, a déclaré un élu de la région contacté depuis Bamako sur son téléphone satellitaire.

"Le MNLA et le Mujao se battent actuellement dans la zone de Menaka", mais "c'est difficile de

savoir ce qui se passe, parce que le réseau (téléphonique normal) ne marche pas", a confirmé un notable de la région.

Une source sécuritaire régionale a également confirmé ces combats.

A Paris, un représentant du MNLA, Moussa Ag Assarid, a affirmé que "des combats ont éclaté vendredi matin près d'Ansongo (localité située entre Gao et Ménaka) entre combattants du MNLA et du Mujao dans le cadre d'une offensive visant à récupérer la région de Gao", tombée aux mains du Mujao fin juin.

Selon une source sécuritaire du Burkina Faso, pays médiateur de l'Afrique de l'Ouest dans la crise malienne, "le Mujao a attaqué des éléments du MNLA à 80 kilomètres de Ménaka, à Idelimane" une petite localité qui est "le dernier bastion du MNLA".

"Le Mujao a fait beaucoup de prisonniers et pris deux véhicules, il y a eu des morts", a ajouté cette source.

Ibrahim Ag Assaleh, membre d'une délégation du MNLA qui se trouve actuellement à Ouagadougou, a affirmé que le "MNLA avait tendu une embuscade au Mujao à 50 kilomètres à l'ouest d'Ansongo. Il a tué 13 combattants du Mujao et en a blessé 17". "Côté MNLA, il y a neuf blessés, dont un grave", a-t-il dit, ajoutant: "les combats continuent".

Le porte-parole du Mujao, Walid Sahraoui, a de son côté affirmé à l'AFP qu'il y avait eu "plusieurs morts et blessés parmi les soldats du MNLA", sans donner de chiffres. Des véhicules de la rébellion touareg ont également été détruits, selon lui.

Depuis deux semaines, un groupe de rebelles du MNLA avait élu domicile dans la région de Ménaka, espérant prendre sa revanche sur le Mujao dans la région de Gao.

Le 27 juin, à l'issue de violents combats qui avaient fait au moins 35 morts, le Mujao, appuyé par Al-Qaïda au Maghreb islamique (Aqmi), avait évincé le MNLA de Gao où la rébellion touareg avait établi son quartier général.

Depuis ces combats de juin, le MNLA ne contrôle plus aucune ville du nord du Mali, immense région entièrement occupée par les groupes islamistes, Aqmi, Ansar Dine (Défenseurs de l'islam) et le Mujao qui y appliquent la charia (loi islamique) avec une extrême rigueur.

La tension était montée d'un cran en début de semaine après la mort suspecte dans la région de Ménaka d'un membre du Mujao, selon des sources concordantes. Certains témoins avaient affirmé que ce jihadiste du Mujao avait été tué dans un accident, d'autres sources qu'il avait été assassiné par le MNLA.

Ces combats interviennent au moment où d'intenses négociations ont lieu à Ouagadougou entre la médiation burkinabé, Ansar Dine et le MNLA. Le but de ces discussions est de rapprocher Ansar Dine et le MNLA et d'éloigner Ansar Dine d'Aqmi et du Mujao, considérés comme des groupes "terroristes" et "criminels" composés essentiellement d'étrangers.

Alors qu'une intervention armée ouest-africaine soutenue par des pays occidentaux, approuvée par l'ONU, se précise de plus en plus pour reconquérir le nord du Mali, Ansar Dine et le MNLA se sont dits vendredi prêts à un "dialogue politique" avec le pouvoir malien.

Ansar Dine a levé d'importants obstacles à un rapprochement avec ses frères ennemis du MNLA en

annonçant également cette semaine qu'il renonçait à imposer la charia dans tout le Mali, sauf dans son fief de Kidal (nord-est). Il s'est également dit prêt à aider à "débarrasser" le nord du Mali du "terrorisme" et des "mouvements étrangers",

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