

[La décision de Mohamed Morsi d'élargir ses pouvoirs a provoqué la colère du Conseil supérieur de la magistrature. Le chef de l'État doit rencontrer ce lundi les membres de la plus haute autorité judiciaire d'Égypte pour tenter de renouer le dialogue. Mohamed Morsi rencontrera lundi 26 novembre des membres du Conseil supérieur de la magistrature pour tenter de désamorcer la crise déclenchée par la publication d'un décret élargissant les pouvoirs du chef de l'État. L'Égypte est en effet en pleine effervescence après la décision du président égyptien, issu des Frères musulmans, d'interdire notamment au judiciaire d'examiner des recours contre ses décisions, et ce jusqu'à la mise en place d'une Constitution, provoquant la colère de l'opposition et des juges égyptiens.]

BURUNDI :

Le Burundi pourrait devenir exportateur du riz à l'horizon 2020

(Xinhua)/26.11.2012

Le Burundi pourrait devenir exportateur du riz à l'horizon 2020 grâce à la Stratégie nationale de développement de la filière riz au Burundi (SNDR-B), a déclaré Jean-Jacques Pesquet, ingénieur agro-économiste et consultant international, qui présentait cette stratégie vendredi à Bujumbura.

Selon M. Pesquet, la SNDR-B a comme objectif l'amélioration de la productivité et la production du riz, la réduction des importations, l'amélioration des revenus des riziculteurs et l'exportation du surplus dans les pays voisins.

Avec cette stratégie, la production du riz blanchi, estimé à 69.000 tonnes en 2012, pourrait atteindre 135.000 tonnes en 2015 et 169.000 tonnes en 2020, a-t-il estimé.

Le Burundi importe actuellement 10.000 tonnes de riz blanchi, alors que la situation pourrait changer radicalement à l'horizon 2020, puisque à cette échéance, les prévisions dotent le pays d'une capacité pour exporter 52.000 tonnes dans la sous-région africaine des Grands Lacs et de la Communauté de l'Afrique de l'est-africaine (CAE), avec une consommation interne de 117.000 tonnes.

Le budget global de la mise en oeuvre de la SNDR-B est estimé à 315.141.000 dollars dont un montant de 199.168.000 dollars restant à mobiliser, a révélé M. Pesquet.

Cependant, a-t-il fait remarquer, la filière riz au Burundi reste confrontée actuellement à de gros défis, comme la faible productivité dans les marais, la faible capacité de production de semences, l'absence de garantie pour la qualité, une utilisation insuffisante d'intrants de qualité, des structures foncières contraignantes, une faible organisation des producteurs, une collecte et le stockage peu organisée ainsi qu'une transformation avec des unités artisanales.

Toutefois, a-t-il noté, le Burundi regorge des potentialités pour la culture du riz. Il s'agit notamment d'un potentiel important de terres aménageables, une existence de variétés de plaine et de marais à haut rendement, une rentabilité de la production rizicole et des prix rémunérateurs.

RWANDA :

RDC CONGO :

RDC: Kinshasa et le M23 enjoins d'appliquer les décisions du sommet de Kampala

Afp / 25 Novembre 2012

Le président rwandais Paul Kagame et son homologue du Congo-Brazzaville Denis Sassou Nguesso ont appelé dimanche le gouvernement de Kinshasa (RD Congo) et les rebelles du M23 à appliquer les décisions prises la veille lors d'un sommet extraordinaire à Kampala en Ouganda, consacré au conflit dans l'est de la RDC.

Les présidents Kagame et Sassou "invitent le gouvernement de la RDC et le M23 à mettre en oeuvre les conclusions de Kampala qui représentent une bonne base pour le règlement de ce conflit", selon les termes d'un communiqué publié par le gouvernement de Kigali.

"Ils ont noté l'importance d'évaluer et de comprendre correctement la véritable nature des nombreux groupes armés en RDC afin que des solutions appropriées soient trouvées pour chacun d'eux", poursuit le communiqué.

Le président de la RDC, Joseph Kabila a participé samedi dans la capitale ougandaise, à un sommet extraordinaire avec son hôte et ses homologues Mwai Kibaki (Kenya) et Jakaya Kikwete (Tanzanie).

Dans leur déclaration finale, les quatre dirigeants ont demandé aux rebelles d'arrêter la guerre dans l'est de la RDC et de se retirer de la ville de Goma (est) qu'ils avaient prise mardi, mais ont aussi enjoint Kinshasa de prendre en compte leurs revendications.

Un retrait de Goma est exigé d'"ici 48 heures", a indiqué samedi le ministre ougandais des Affaires étrangères, Sam Kutesa, lisant un texte légèrement différent des conclusions finales remises à la presse.

M. Kutesa a déclaré que le M23 devait se retirer à "au moins 20 kilomètres au nord de Goma", ce qui correspond aux positions que tenaient les rebelles près de Kibumba avant de s'emparer de Goma.

Les dirigeants africains ont aussi déclaré que le M23 devrait arrêter de "déclarer qu'il faut renverser le gouvernement élu" en RDC.

De son côté, Kinshasa doit "écouter, évaluer et prendre en compte les revendications légitimes" des rebelles, ont-ils écrit en tête de leur communiqué.

Les rebelles avaient posé comme "préalable" à tout retrait de Goma de "dialoguer" avec M. Kabila. "Se retirer de Goma ne peut être que le fruit des négociations", a répété samedi leur chef politique, avertissant que le M23 se défendrait en cas d'attaque de l'armée congolaise sur ses positions.

L'est de la RDC (ex-Congo belge, ex-Zaïre) est depuis une vingtaine d'années le théâtre de conflits quasiment ininterrompus en raison de ses richesses minières et agricoles que se disputent le gouvernement congolais, des mouvements rebelles et les pays voisins

A la question de savoir s'il était satisfait de la réunion, M. Kabila a simplement répondu qu'il serait

satisfait "quand la paix reviendrait" dans l'est de son pays.

Son homologue rwandais, Paul Kagame, n'avait pas fait le déplacement. Des responsables ougandais avaient pourtant assuré que le sommet serait "dénué de sens" si MM. Kagame et Kabila n'étaient pas tous les deux présents.

Le rôle du Rwanda dans la rébellion suscite la controverse: Kigali est accusé par des experts de l'ONU d'"apporter un soutien militaire direct" au M23 dans l'est de la RDC, région aux ressources minières et agricoles très convoitées, frontalière avec le Rwanda.

Le M23, Mouvement du 23 mars, est surtout composé d'anciens rebelles qui, après avoir été intégrés en 2009 dans l'armée, se sont mutinés en avril dernier et combattent depuis l'armée régulière dans la région du Kivu. Le Rwanda et l'Ouganda sont accusés par l'ONU de soutenir les rebelles, ce qu'ils démentent.

Les rebelles du M23 sous pression pour quitter Goma

25/11/12/Source: afp.com

Les efforts diplomatiques s'accroissent pour une sortie de crise en RD Congo, où les rebelles du M23 sont pressés par l'Union africaine de quitter Goma, principale ville de l'est, alors que le chef du M23 espérait dimanche une nouvelle rencontre avec le président congolais Joseph Kabila.

Le chef politique du Mouvement du 23 mars (M23), Jean-Marie Runiga, a expliqué que de nouveaux pourparlers avec M. Kabila étaient prévus dimanche à Kampala, après une première entrevue samedi, en marge d'un sommet régional de chefs d'Etats africains dans la capitale ougandaise. "Le président de la République démocratique du Congo, Joseph Kabila, n'a rencontré aucun membre de la rébellion du M23 dimanche à Kampala," a toutefois indiqué une source à la présidence congolaise.

Dimanche, l'Union africaine (UA) a appelé le M23 à se conformer aux décisions du sommet de Kampala d'arrêter les hostilités et de se retirer avant mardi de Goma, la capitale de la riche province minière du Nord-Kivu (est). Le M23 doit prendre "instamment les mesures appropriées, en accord avec les décisions de Kampala", a déclaré dans un communiqué la présidente de la commission de l'UA, Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma. Elle a également salué "l'engagement du gouvernement de la RDC à écouter, évaluer et prendre en compte toute revendication légitime du M23". "Le sommet (...) a dressé un plan en dix points qui prévoit le retrait immédiat des éléments du M23 de tous les endroits qu'ils ont récemment occupés ainsi que l'établissement d'arrangements de sécurité pour suivre la situation sur le terrain", ajoute le communiqué de l'UA.

La déclaration finale du sommet demande aux rebelles de se retirer au moins à 20 km au nord de Goma - soit un retour à leurs positions d'avant la prise de la capitale du Nord-Kivu. Les chefs d'Etats de la région - membres de la Conférence internationale sur la région des Grands Lacs (CIRGL), qui compte 11 pays - ont laissé samedi deux jours aux rebelles pour quitter Goma. Mais le chef du M23 Jean-Marie Runiga a bien spécifié que leur retrait conditionné par des négociations "directes" avec Joseph Kabila. Il a ajouté que la rébellion se défendrait en cas d'attaque de l'armée régulière congolaise.

Dimanche à Goma, les rebelles étaient toujours présents et la présence des soldats de la Mission de l'ONU pour la stabilisation de la RDC (Monusco) - qui appuie l'armée congolaise contre les rebelles - était plus importante dans les rues que les jours précédents, ont constaté des journalistes de l'AFP.

Un diplomate occidental dans la région a déclaré que le président ougandais Yoweri Museveni avait accepté de rencontrer directement le chef militaire du M23 Sultani Makenga. Cette information n'a pas pu être confirmée dans l'immédiat par la présidence ougandaise ou le M23.

Le président du Congo Denis Sassou Nguesso, arrivé samedi à Kigali pour une visite de deux jours, a rencontré son homologue Paul Kagame, qui n'a pas assisté au sommet de Kampala de samedi. Le président rwandais Paul Kagame et son homologue du Congo-Brazzaville Denis Sassou Nguesso ont appelé dimanche le gouvernement de Kinshasa et les rebelles du M23 à appliquer les décisions prises la veille lors du sommet de Kampala.

Les présidents Kagame et Sassou "invitent le gouvernement de la RDC et le M23 à mettre en oeuvre les conclusions de Kampala qui représentent une bonne base pour le règlement de ce conflit", selon les termes d'un communiqué publié par le gouvernement de Kigali.

Paul Kagame a toujours rejeté les accusations de Kinshasa et aussi d'experts de l'ONU affirmant que son pays soutient -- et dirige -- le M23, qui compte dans ses rangs principalement des Congolais d'ethnie tutsi, au pouvoir au Rwanda. Bien que Yoweri Museveni joue un rôle de médiateur depuis ces derniers jours et qu'il ait accueilli le sommet de samedi, les experts de l'ONU ont également accusé son pays de soutenir les rebelles, ce que Kampala dément.

Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma a réitéré la "profonde inquiétude" de l'Union africaine quant à "l'aggravation de la situation humanitaire sur le terrain et aux exactions commises contre les populations civiles", indique le communiqué sde l'UA.

Les agences humanitaires craignent que ce dernier développement donne le coup d'envoi d'un autre conflit régional, après de précédents qui ont éclaté en 1996 et 2002. Le M23 est composé d'anciens rebelles qui, après avoir été intégrés en 2009 dans l'armée, se sont mutinés en avril dernier et combattent depuis l'armée régulière dans la région du Kivu. Ils estiment que Kinshasa n'a pas pleinement appliqué l'accord, ce que dément le gouvernement congolais.

RDC: le M23 veut un message officiel

AFP/le 26/11/2012

Le mouvement rebelle du M23 a affirmé aujourd'hui dans un communiqué ne pas avoir encore reçu par la "voie officielle" les résolutions du sommet de Kampala exigeant son retrait de Goma, dans l'est de la République Démocratique du Congo, et donnera "sa position" quand elles lui seront communiquées.

"La direction politique du Mouvement du 23 Mars a appris, par la voie de la presse, qu'une série de résolutions concernant notre organisation auraient été prises par la Conférence internationale sur la région des Grands-Lacs (CIRGL)", lors du sommet de Kampala samedi, écrit le M23.

Le chef du M23 Jean-Marie Runiga, présent dans la capitale ougandaise en marge du sommet, "a essayé, sans y parvenir, d'obtenir par la voie officielle copie de ladite résolution", est-il ajouté.

"La direction politique de notre mouvement reste disposer à communiquer sa position officielle en rapport avec lesdites résolutions aussitôt qu'elles lui seront communiquées par les autorités compétentes de cette organisation régionale", la CIRGL, conclut le communiqué.

Le sommet extraordinaire de Kampala, qui a réuni les président Yoweri Museveni (Ouganda), Joseph Kabila (RDC), Mwai Kibaki (Kenya) et Jakaya Kikwete (Tanzanie), a exigé le départ des

rebelles de Goma avant mardi et leur retrait à une vingtaine de kilomètres au nord de la ville, capitale de la région du Nord-Kivu. En échange, Kinshasa s'est engagé à "prendre en compte les revendications légitimes" des rebelles.

Defining Peacekeeping Downward: The U.N. Debacle in Eastern Congo

By Jessica Hatcher / Goma and Alex Perry/world.time.com/Nov. 26, 2012

At 9am on Monday Nov. 20, one of the few tanks belonging to the M23 rebels of eastern Congo fired a single shell into the international airport on the outskirts of Goma, the second biggest city in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The townspeople, who looked up to see the first of 1,000 or so guerrillas marching on the city, began walking and running towards the city center, carrying their children and anything else they could. After a short while they were overtaken – by two large trucks packed with foreign soldiers from the UN peacekeeping force for Congo, MONUSCO. Mandated to protect Congo's civilians, with 19,000 men in uniform and costing \$1.4 billion a year, the world's biggest and most expensive peacekeeping operation was literally leaving its charges in its dust. Later in the day MONUSCO, far better armed and more numerous than the rebels, simply stood and watched as the M23 – easterners who oppose the central government in Kinshasa – took Goma almost without firing a shot. France called MONUSCO's conduct "absurd." The Congolese were less forgiving. Across the east of the country, angry mobs surrounded UN positions, threw stones at aid workers and burned UN compounds. Asked what they thought of MONUSCO, a group of young men standing by the shore of Lake Kivu in Goma cried out in unison: "Useless." Amani Muchumu, 18, had a message for the peacekeepers. "You could not defend us," he declared. "You are dismissed."

MONUSCO's dismal performance this past week caps a wretched 12 years for the force that, by dint of its size and costliness, was meant to fly the flag for all 16 UN peacekeeping operations around the world. Since it was set up in Nov 1999, the then MONUC (renamed MONUSCO in 2010) has proved extraordinarily inept. Rarely has it engaged the various militias that hold eastern Congo in their murderous sway. Just as awkwardly, bound by the terms of its deployment to support the national government, it has found itself backing not just one of the most corrupt states in the world but a Congolese army whose generals are among the most industrious of Congo's thieves and whose rank-and-file boast one of the worst records on human rights, and cowardice, in eastern Congo.

Perhaps worse even than failing to keep or establish peace, MONUSCO has also failed spectacularly in its most fundamental mission: protecting civilians. In 2005 MONUC expelled 63 of its soldiers for paying refugee children for sex. A separate internal inquiry the same year found Pakistani peacekeepers sold weapons to militias in exchange for gold. While those incidents may be exceptional, TIME has seen in repeated trips to eastern Congo how, at the first sign of trouble, blue helmet peacekeepers habitually barricade themselves into their bases, leaving crowds of several thousand refugees who tend to gather outside to fend for themselves.

Now TIME has learned from two NGO sources in eastern Congo about an incident that memorably illustrates MONUSCO's callous ineffectiveness. In September the town of Pinga, west of Goma, was taken over by a private militia and protection racket called Mai Mai Cheka (after its commander Col. Cheka). Cheka, wanting to force the peacekeepers out of town but unable to persuade them to leave their base, resorted to the kind of barbarism he thought no UN force could ignore. On his orders, two civilians from the town were abducted, decapitated and their heads thrown at the base gates, while Cheka shouted: "Come out!" "Do you think MONUSCO ventured out of the gate?" asks a senior aid worker with knowledge of the incident. "[They did] nothing. How safe did the population feel after that?" Other humanitarian workers fear a true catastrophe

may now be unfolding nearby as a result of MONUSCO's weakness. In the town of Masisi, another militia, Raia Mutomboki – originally a self-defense group which now pursues an aggressive campaign of ethnic cleansing against Rwandese – is not attacking the civilian population for the third time this year with the apparent aim of eliminating thousands of ethnic Rwandese from the area. Though MONUSCO has a base in the area, it has failed to intervene. (Monusco failed to respond to repeated attempts to contact it for this article.)

With that kind of record in Congo, now topped by this week's shameful conduct, many are asking whether the whole idea of peacekeeping needs re-thinking or even scrapping completely, at least as it is currently conceived at the UN. Among the most confused by what they are meant to be doing, it seems, is MONUSCO itself. A staffer in Goma told TIME MONUSCO was still robotically patrolling the town as if nothing had happened "because that is our mandate. We support the [Congolese army] to fight M23 but it's not up to us to fight directly with the M23." The staffer added that MONUSCO currently felt unable to fight without the Congolese army, seeming to forget that the founding justification for foreign humanitarian intervention is when national forces on the ground are unwilling or unable to take care of their own. Asked whether MONUSCO itself was secure in the face of popular anger, the official replied without any apparent irony: "Any misconduct will be met with punishment by the rebels."

A humanitarian official at an international aid group in Goma says MONUSCO's behavior has graduated from incompetent to dangerous. "They're telling lies," he says. "We're told that MONUSCO is aerial bombing M23 positions, then a few hours later the M23 is in Goma." Caelin Briggs, an advocate at Refugees International in Goma, says: "The current system is, quite simply, not working. Pretending that it is only serves to make the problem worse." About the only people who approve of MONUSCO, it seems, are the rebels themselves. "We don't have a problem with MONUSCO," says Lt. Vianney Kazarama, M23 spokesman at a lakeside hotel in Goma. "They're following their mandate, doing their job and doing it well. We'd be happy to collaborate with MONUSCO."

For some, MONUSCO's ineffectiveness opens up some big questions about all foreign intervention. Congo abounds with examples of how foreign assistance, though well-intentioned, can sometimes turn out to be nothing of the kind. The 1994 influx of hundreds of thousands of Hutu genocidaires from Rwanda – the Interhamwe – provided the spark for the near constant war that has raged ever since. That fledgling flame was nursed, however unintentionally, by the international community: while the Interhamwe had been defeated by the forces of the then rebel leader and now Rwandan President Paul Kagame, a Tutsi, over the border in Congo a giant humanitarian aid camp operation gave the genocidaires the space and opportunity they needed to regroup, rearm and refinance. More recently the Dodd-Frank Act of 2010, which contained a clause mandating U.S. companies to disclose whether they use minerals from Congo, has often had the opposite effect to intended. Rather than clean up the trade, U.S. companies simply stopped using Congolese minerals, leaving mines in Congo dependent on the illegal trade.

MONUSCO's Goma fiasco is merely the most recent example of the international community's questionable record in eastern Congo. It's also only the latest spur to efforts by neighboring Rwanda and Uganda to take back control of their region's own affairs. This year leaders of the 11-nation International Conference on the Great Lakes agreed to set up their own regional stabilization force designed eventually to replace MONUSCO in eastern Congo. And on Wednesday at a meeting in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, Rwanda's President Kagame, Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni and Congo's President Joseph Kabila issued what their advisors described as a "breakthrough" statement on the "deteriorating security and humanitarian situation" after Goma's fall to the rebels. Kagame and Museveni "made it clear that even if there were legitimate grievances by the mutinying group known as the M23, they cannot accept expansion of this war or entertain the idea of

overthrowing the legitimate government of the DRC or undermining its authority. Therefore, the M23 rebel group must immediately stop its offensive and pull out of Goma.” For his part, Kabila “made a commitment to look expeditiously into the causes of discontent and address them.” All three also agreed to draw up “a comprehensive and operational plan geared towards lasting peace and stability ... as a matter of urgency.”

All of which you might expect to be welcomed by the international community. In fact, those initiatives were met with stony silence. That is due to the dominant opinion inside the UN, the aid community and Western journalists that the leaders of Rwanda and Uganda are not well-intentioned pursuers of peace. Rather, they are seen as the cause of much of the instability through their alleged backing of the M23 and other militias. The strategy in Kigali and Kampala, say their accusers, is to create chaos, then be called in to make peace, a nefarious plan born of a desire to both improve regional security and establish an economic dominance over eastern Congo’s considerable mineral and metal resources, such as gold, diamonds and coltan. Two groups, Human Rights Watch and the UN Group of Experts (GoE) on Congo, have collected substantial circumstantial evidence in support of foreign backing for the M23 and it was perhaps no coincidence that as Kagame, Museveni and Kabila met in Kampala, a GoE report once again accusing Rwanda and Uganda of backing the M23 was being leaked in New York. Rwanda provides “direct military support, facilitation of recruitment, encouragement and facilitation of [Congolese army] desertions, as well as the provision of arms and ammunition, intelligence and political advice,” said the GoE. Meanwhile Uganda gives the M23 “direct troop reinforcements... weapons deliveries, technical assistance, joint planning, political advice and facilitation of external relations.”

Kagame and Museveni both regularly deny the charges and point out that the UN and the aid groups – with tax-free salaries of up to \$200,000, and a \$75,000 car and \$5,000-a-month in rent thrown in – are hardly disinterested parties to the conflict themselves. At its most fundamental level, this is a dispute about sovereignty and whether, in a 21st century multipolar world, bossy Westerners still get to tell Africans what to do. In other African trouble-spots such as Mali and Somalia, foreigners are only too happy for Africans to take the lead, and pay the human cost, even if the outside world foots the financial one. In Somalia, another place where UN peacekeeping was a failure, that approach has proved a success: AMISOM is steadily taking territory from the Islamist militants of al-Shabab.

The crucial difference between an African intervention force and a UN one, it seems – and one that is not only a riposte to Rwanda and Uganda’s accusers but, ultimately, to the whole idea of neutral foreign intervention – is that with nothing personal at stake, the UN is often unwilling to do what it takes to win. More than 1,000 Ugandan soldiers have been killed in Somalia since 2007 as part of AMISOM. Since 2000, the far larger MONUC/MONUSCO have suffered just 47 casualties. In Congo, a Uruguayan platoon officer explains: “I have to make the right decision for everyone concerned. I have a wife and a son back home. My men have families too. I want us to get out there, but it’s not safe.” For the people of Goma, that’s a level of commitment now forever encapsulated by a dusty view of the rear of a fleeing UN troop truck.

Congo-Kinshasa: UN Chief Welcomes African Leaders' Call On M23 Rebels to Stop War in DR Congo

26 November 2012/UN News Service/allafrika.com

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today welcomed a joint statement issued by the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) Joseph Kabila Kabange, Rwandan President Paul Kagame and President of Uganda Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, calling on the 23 March Movement (M23) rebel group to immediately cease fire in Eastern DRC.

In a statement issued by his spokesperson, Mr. Ban also welcomed the outcome of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region Summit, held yesterday in the Ugandan capital of Kampala and attended by several African heads of State, which urges the rebel group to stop the violence and threats to depose the DRC Government.

"The Secretary-General calls on the M23 to immediately lay down their arms in accordance with the agreements reached in Kampala, and comply with the immediate withdrawal of their forces from Goma," said the statement.

"The Secretary-General encourages the parties to build on the dialogue among the leaders of the Great Lakes region to address the fundamental causes of conflict."

M23 fighters - a rebel group composed of soldiers who mutinied from the DRC national army in April - occupied Goma, the capital of North Kivu, on Tuesday after launching a new wave of attacks last weekend. Fighting has continued and the rebels are now said to have reached the town of Sake, which is 20 kilometres west of Goma.

The advance of the M23 has uprooted some 60,000 civilians and fuelled numerous allegations of human rights abuses by both the rebels and the national army, known by the French acronym FARDC.

The violence also prompted the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) to deploy attack helicopters in support of the FARDC.

Mr. Ban reiterated his commitment to support the efforts of African leaders, and his determination to ensure that the UN presence in the DRC is adjusted "to respond to the evolving challenges."

MONUSCO currently has some 1,500 'blue helmets' in Goma, and another 6,700 and 4,000 in the provinces of North and South Kivu, respectively, including, in some places, behind the M23 lines. In Goma, the 'blue helmets' control the city's airport and are conducting regular patrols, in line with their mandate to provide protection for civilians.

UGANDA :

Uganda: Can Muntu's Military Credentials Bring the Needed Change?

By Morris D.c. Komakech/The Observer (Kampala)/25 November 2012

opinion

I am not an FDC card-carrying member but I identify with my contemporaries in the party.

FDC is the largest opposition party in Uganda today and should any misfortune occur to the NRM, certainly the odds that FDC will become the next manager of state affairs would get enhanced. The dice has been thrown and come to rest, and Maj Gen Mugisha Muntu has emerged as the new leader of FDC, beating Tororo MP Geoffrey Ekanya and Leader of Opposition in Parliament, Nathan Nandala-Mafabi.

Proponents of Muntu's candidacy have all along argued that since he was a decorated soldier and an

army commander for nine years, then he is the best-suited leader to replace Dr Besigye, as if FDC is a military outfit. They also argue that given Muntu's military background, he is best-suited to challenge President Museveni.

The implication of these arguments situates the military at the heart of governance of Uganda. It tells us that unless you wear a uniform, your chances of becoming president of Uganda are that much diminished. I have issues with this kind of thinking. The world over, democracy has required constitutionalism to prevail in countries where power is vested in the common man.

The military is not expected to be partisan as has been in Uganda since independence. Uganda has never had a truly national army and this has always given our democracy a lot of stress. It is this culture of militarizing politics and civil life that has placed Uganda in a vicious circle of violence and conflict. Unfortunately, as real as it is, I find it very obnoxious that a section of FDC still believes that they can win over a composite of Museveni's personalized military support when a person with a military background becomes its leader.

The contrasting reality proves otherwise. Col Besigye was a celebrated leader in the NRA with a lot of clout, influence and prestige. When he fell out with President Museveni, his army connectedness was decapitated. His record of service in the army became a reference that only appealed to civilians who bore the brunt of the chaos that descended on the country and have deep-seated apathy towards the army.

If being in the army could create a balance of power, certainly FDC's fortunes should have improved each of the years they contended for state power. To the contrary, Besigye's percentages waned and so was his real support, even amongst intellectuals, because such expectations were never realized.

FDC could have thought about these unfortunate developments to enable them transform the candidacy of Col Besigye to that of a civilian victim of state machinations. I still believe that the true support for Besigye struck the highest pitch when he was manhandled by that tiny, ruthless and warped undercover cop, Gilbert Bwana Arinaitwe.

So, does being a military man or having a military past make one a viable presidential candidate? This is debatable, but it is also a cultural thing borne out of fear, yet we all know that Muntu would never dare challenge the system as much as Besigye did. This is because none of the presidents of Uganda have been able to effectively demilitarize Ugandan politics. Instead, they have ridden on the backs of their armies to procure long and cumbersome tenure in power.

I think FDC may need a leader who is grassroots-oriented and is as astute in mobilizing the grassroots as in reaching out to the middleclass, the unemployed and the wealthy. I am certain that across the Ugandan society, everyone yearns for personal safety and that of their property. I believe that Besigye was positioned and gifted with such a trait.

Although Muntu is calm, sober-minded and a disciplined person, his military background alone may not inspire many to guarantee their allegiance to FDC. Furthermore, sustaining the militarization of our politics provides a recipe for further confrontation and chaos. I contend that past membership in UPDF has never been and will never be on its own a viable asset for shaping our democracy without other pertinent attributes.

Indeed, there is a strong degree of agreement across our society to disagree with the NRM regime and its appendages such as the UPDF. The real challenge is that we have failed ourselves by always opting for rather small pushes towards the windows of opportunity that beckon on us for a real

change.

The author is a Ugandan social critic based in Toronto, Canada.

Uganda: How Museveni Has Outfoxed the United States and Allies

By Emma Mutaizibwa/The Observer (Kampala)/25 November 2012

Four months after Yoweri Museveni captured power with his NRA rebels, US President Ronald Reagan ordered strikes against Col Muammar Gaddafi's government in Libya.

It was in response to a bomb blast at a Berlin discotheque, carried out by suspected Gaddafi agents. However, these events would have little meaning in Uganda which was still nursing the scars of the Luweero bush war where thousands had died. Our economy was on a death spiral and a staccato of gunfire rent the air as a rebellion sprang up in northern Uganda.

But hope had replaced trepidation amongst the citizens who had lived through the reign of terror under Idi Amin and the anarchy under the Obote II regime. Museveni introduced new reforms like free markets, fiscal discipline and the regime postured itself as a benevolent amalgamation of all political shades.

Attempting to mimic a Marxist lifestyle, the NRA soldiers lived simple life-styles, while ministers wore cheap Kaunda suits and used budget Toyota Laurel vehicles. Gradually, the economy began to make a turn around as the West hailed Museveni as one among a new breed of African leaders who would not overstay his welcome.

Yet many historic events like the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the release and retirement of iconic South African leader Nelson Mandela, the US invasion of Iraq, the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre, the Rwanda genocide, the apocalyptic tsunami and the death of Pope John Paul II have come to pass but Museveni continues to reign.

Initially, Museveni was expected to serve for four years but in October 1989, the NRC extended the interim period of his regime for five more years until January 1995 in order to allow time to draft, debate, and adopt a permanent constitution, and to complete the political, economic, and rehabilitation programmes that had been interrupted by the civil wars in the north and eastern Uganda.

Keeping his word?

Today Museveni's old image swirls over him like an apparition. He has joined that exclusive club of long-serving presidents like Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe, the Equatorial Guinea's Obiang Nguema Mbasogo and Cameroon's Paul Biya. According to the former Army Commander and newly-elected FDC President, Maj Gen Mugisha Muntu, Museveni's continued stay in power contradicts what he preached in Luweero.

"Long-serving leaders like Bokassa [former Central African Republic leader] and Mobutu Sese Seko [former Zaire President] were despised as autocrats during the Luweero bush war," says Muntu, who joined Museveni in the bush-war just after completing university.

Just like Muntu opines, many of his peers believe Museveni does not live up to his word.

In his book *Impassioned for Freedom*, his childhood friend and now first deputy Premier Eriya

Kategaya shared this frustration when Museveni, who had promised to serve one last term, wanted to hang onto power after 2006. "A man can only shift positions on his bed but not go back on his word."

Boniface Byanyima, under whose tutelage Museveni was raised, also speaks of Museveni as a man you can only trust at your own peril. "I told my daughter Museveni was not a reliable character," Byanyima told *The Observer*. "You cannot understand him at once. There is one side, which he shows you and another side he keeps to himself."

So why has Museveni changed from a leader who mocked African leaders who stayed in power for so long?

Appearing on the BBC no-holds-barred show *hard-talk*, early this year, it came of no surprise that Museveni encountered the same question by the host Stephen Sackur. "After a quarter of a century in power, have you forgotten your own words?" the host asked much to the chagrin of the President.

Museveni's answer was curt, "I've not forgotten my words. What I meant was, people who stay long in power without being elected. And the quarter of a century you are talking about I've been in government I've been elected all the time."

His response would only elicit further prodding from the host who would later question the President why he lifted the presidential term limits and yet the 1995 Constitution ushered in during his regime provided for two terms.

"I think term limits is not really the crux of the matter. What is the crux of the matter is the ability to elect or otherwise. I think we are leaving the core issues and going for the peripheral issues," responded Museveni with a tone of uneasiness.

Survival instinct:

Though the Western media has not spared Museveni criticism, it's the president's eagerness to please Western powers that has endeared him towards the US. Eventually in the much-later years where Museveni's popularity has gradually been subsiding, his fanatical embrace of Western policies has largely shaped his political survival narrative.

Though his critics accuse him of being a pawn of geopolitical gamesmanship, Museveni has a strong survival instinct. The conflict in Somalia handed Museveni a perfect opportunity to prove his pan-African credentials, portray himself as the anchorman of peace in the Great-Lakes region and more importantly get off the US radar list of countries with poor democratic ratings.

Uganda has since then won glowing praise from the West for its exploits in Somalia, which had been turned into an enclave of Islamic militancy and a breeding ground for al-Qaeda. He is well aware that the West will turn a blind eye to Uganda's tainted human rights record as long as their interests are well-served.

"You cannot eat democracy," was a response from a senior Commonwealth official in the aftermath of Dr Kizza Besigye's arrest on November 14, 2005.

US blank cheque:

Though the West often condemns the violent crackdown on opposition protests and rallies and, on a number of occasions, suspended aid as a result of graft, their engagement with Museveni, for

example on fighting terrorism, is a much bigger priority. Uganda has been a major US ally in the geopolitics after Osama bin Laden sought a safe haven in Sudan in the early 1990s.

US presidents Bill Clinton and George W Bush fell for Museveni's charm offensive and admired his enthusiasm for the war against terrorism, both paying him visits. However, when US President Barack Obama got elected for his first term in 2008, some thought the blank-cheque endorsements had ended.

He aroused exuberance and many expected he would re-set American policy towards the continent of his father's birthplace. It would not be business as usual, anymore. During his visit to Ghana in 2009, Obama stepped up the ante. In his fervent speech, Obama outlined what hopefuls thought would be a paradigm shift towards Africa.

The days of the so-called Big Man or one-man rule, was over in Africa, Obama declared. Development depends on good governance. He spoke on hallowed grounds where the revered pan-African hero, Nkwame Nkrumah had whipped a frenzy amongst a fervent crowd on the eve of Ghana's independence on March 5, 1957. Obama's speech emboldened pro-democracy activists, as many prophesied the winds of change were about to blow across Africa.

But Obama was entangled in a cobweb of both domestic and foreign perils. He had inherited an economy in recession, two wars with disastrous effects, a restless Middle-East and a hostile Iranian regime.

Therefore, Obama spent most of his first term attempting to navigate the proverbial corner.

Second term lucky?

On November 8, 2012, Obama won a second term and just like four years ago, he is still confronted with monumental challenges. It's likely that before Obama pays much more attention to Africa, he will be preoccupied with rescuing the US economy from what has come to be known as the fiscal cliff.

Will he pay much more attention to the issues of governance and civil liberties affecting many African states including Uganda in his second term?

Pundits argue that as long as Museveni continues to ingratiate himself towards the West and the US economy remains in dire straits, Obama will only offer a cursory glance at Uganda's political challenges. Today Gaddafi is dead, after the west backed rebels to topple him.

It is remarkable that one of the few leaders who condemned the West for bombing Gaddafi out of power was Yoweri Museveni. It would appear that as long as he serves their strategic interests, America and Europe will not offer more than perfunctory protestations.

Congo and M23 rebels negotiate in Uganda

November 25, 2012/By PETE JONES and RODNEY MUHUMUZA, Associated Press

KAMPALA, Uganda (AP) — Congolese officials are in talks Sunday with representatives of M23, the rebel group that last week took control of the eastern Congo city of Goma, according to Ugandan officials.

Ugandan Defence Minister Crispus Kiyonga said that he is mediating discussions to help both sides

reach a settlement that would end a violent rebellion that has sucked in Uganda and Rwanda, which both face charges of backing the rebels.

M23 President Bishop Jean-Marie Runiga is leading the rebels in the talks, according to M23 in Congo.

A regional summit of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region in Kampala, including Congo President Joseph Kabila and Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, on Saturday called on the rebels to leave Goma and urged Kabila to listen to the "legitimate grievances" of M23.

Despite the regional leaders' demands for the rebel forces to withdraw from Goma, M23 soldiers were visibly in control of the city Sunday. M23 also still held Sake, a contested town 25 kilometers (15 miles) west of Goma. The Congolese army attacked the town Saturday, but M23 retained control.

M23 President Runiga said that withdrawal from Goma was "under consideration" and, while M23 did not oppose the idea "in principle," no decision had been taken yet, according to M23 spokesman Lt. Col. Vianney Kazarama, speaking to the Associated Press. Runiga is still in Kampala and no official response to the demands from the regional summit is expected before his return to Congo, said Kazarama in Goma.

"We are waiting to hear from Runiga when he will be back from Kampala," said Kazarama.

Congolese President Joseph Kabila also met briefly with Runiga in Kampala, said M23's deputy spokesman Amani Kabasha.

"Since May we have asked to meet with President Kabila," said Kabasha. "At least now there has been contact. The door is open for talks to find the durable peace that eastern Congo needs."

Government troops remain in Minova, 25 kilometers (15 miles) south of Sake, following a failed attack on M23 on Thursday 22 November. Unruly Congo army soldiers had looted residents for the third night running, according to a United Nations official in the town, who insisted upon anonymity because he is not authorized to speak to the press. U.N. peacekeepers patrolled Minova throughout the night to protect civilians from the rampaging government troops.

No movement of government forces at Minova was reported. Congolese army spokesman Colonel Olivier Hamuli was not available for comment when contacted by telephone, but an M23 communiqué sent Saturday night claimed that government regiments were moving into attack positions around rebel-held territory.

"Let them attack us!" said M23 spokesman Kazarama. "Do they have the strength? Absolutely not, we are in a strong position."

Jones reported from Goma, Congo. Associated Press reporter Melanie Gouby also contributed to this report.

SOUTH AFRICA :

South Africa: Peace in the Home, Peace in the Community

By Sifiso Dube and Mercilene Machisa/Gender Links (Johannesburg)/allafrica.com/25 November 2012

analysis

The Sixteen Days of Activism Against Gender Violence campaign that runs annually from 25 November to 10 December is this year running under the banner "from peace in the home to peace in the world: Let's challenge militarism and end violence against women."

Over the years, many governments have made commitments to end Gender-Based Violence (GBV). They have drafted National Action Plans (NAPs). Various messages have been devised to raise awareness on the importance of ending GBV. Yet, according to the findings of research undertaken by Gender Links in three countries, GBV is on the rise.

The research carried out in Botswana, Mauritius and four provinces in South Africa has some glaring findings about the levels of GBV in these countries. Over three quarters (77%) women in Limpopo, 67% of women in Botswana, 51% of women in Gauteng, 45% of women in Western Cape and 36% of women in KwaZulu Natal and 24% of women in Mauritius, have experienced some form of GBV at least once in their lifetime both within and outside their intimate relationships.

A higher proportion of men in Gauteng (78%) and KwaZulu Natal (41%) admitted to perpetrating violence against women than what women reported. Slightly lower proportion of men, compared to the proportion of women, reported perpetrating GBV in Limpopo (48%), Botswana (44%), Western Cape (35%) and Mauritius (23%). Overall the high level of corroboration between what women say they experience, and the way men report behaving, confirms the high level of GBV in these countries.

These findings beg the question of whether the campaigns, national laws and NAPs are enough to deal with the high prevalence of GBV in Southern Africa. Will Southern African countries halve the levels of GBV by 2015 in line with the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development?

Sithembiso* lives in deep rural Zimbabwe and she has endured several forms of gender violence. She married Themba* who had psychological scars from the liberation struggle. Sithembiso had to occasionally deal with her husband's temper, which often culminated in fights and left her with bruises on her body.

She endured the physical abuse but her husband's infidelity also brought HIV into their matrimonial home. Sithembiso, being the loyal rural wife provided care to her sick husband for almost two years. Themba vehemently refused to take antiretroviral treatment, as he strongly believed that he had been bewitched. To his grave, Themba's family also shared his belief.

Upon Themba's death, his brother came to loot Themba's property including livestock because he felt it within his rights to inherit his brother's property. He left Sithembiso with nothing.

A year down the line, out of desperation and poverty, Sithembiso remarried Micah* her brother-in-law from another village whom she hardly knew, as is expected by culture and tradition. Within two weeks of her new marriage, Sithembiso found out that Micah abused alcohol. He started to beat her up. Micah chased Sithembiso away and accused her of being a whore and a witch who had caused Themba's death. He also barred her from staying at her ruined homestead.

A flashback of how her life had unfolded brought tears to Sithembiso's eyes. She neither had a home nor source of income. She had HIV. She went to the village headman to ask him to preside over her case and her brother-in-law. The village headman further referred Sithembiso to the village chief who in turn said he could not keep whores in his village.

Sithembiso's story echoes those of many women in Southern Africa.

On the one hand, there is the man who feels that he has to exert his power in the family by abusing a woman. On the other, there is the extended family system where one dominating voice (usually a man) will determine what the future of a widow will be. With many communities still putting their trust in the family system to avoid washing "dirty linen" in public, the fate of widows usually lies within the family's hands.

However, there is the justice system that needs to protect the vulnerable and citizens at large. The gap with the justice system lies in its inaccessibility and the lack of knowledge on how it works. Many women who reside in rural areas often have to turn to the traditional justice system, which is unjust.

Governments and civil society must educate women including those who reside in rural areas like Sithembiso about GBV and the laws that are in place to protect them. There is need for programmes by all stakeholders to demystify attitudes and perceptions about power relations between women and men in society. Huge investments into radio programmes and mobile phone GBV messages should be made so that rural women, who are not reached by the 16 Days of Activism campaign, can access messages on gender violence.

It is also high time that governments and activists start talking about the economic empowerment of women. The relationship between economic empowerment and ending GBV is not necessarily linear. GBV cuts across class, colour and race. But women who are economically independent have a far greater range of choices, and recourse to legal redress.

This is why Gender Links (GL) has chosen to focus its efforts on working with local councils across ten Southern African countries that have opted to become Centres of Excellence for Gender with flagship action plans on GBV. In 2013, GL will work with 50 councils on supporting women survivors of violence to access economic opportunities and become self-sufficient. With its slogan, "peace begins at home" GL believes that if the war against GBV can be won community by community, the dream of a region free of GBV will become a reality.

South Africa: Police kill 7 suspected robbers

November 25, 2012/AP

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — Police in South Africa say they shot dead seven suspected robbers and wounded nine others in a botched theft at an armored car company.

Capt. Paul Ramaloko of the South African Police Service said Sunday that officers got a tip that the thieves wanted to rob a Protea Coin depot in Robertville, a suburb west of Johannesburg.

A gunfight began Saturday night as officers tried to arrest the suspects. Ramaloko says no officers were injured in the shooting. He said they recovered firearms from the suspected robbers at the depot.

Violent crime remains common in South Africa, as unemployment remains high and options few for the nation's poor. Mass police shootings often occur as officers confront heavily armed criminal gangs.

South Africa: Stop Being an Armchair Critic and Help Fight Violence Against Women - Minister Lulu Xingwana/South African Government (Pretoria)/allafrica.com/25 November 2012

press release

This is a summary of the speech delivered by the Minister of Women, Children and People with Disabilities, Ms Lulu Xingwana at the Opening of the 16 Days of Activism Against Women and Children.

As we mark 16 Days of No Violence Against Women and Children, we must pose uncomfortable questions to ourselves. One of the critical questions is: What are we doing, individually and collectively, to address this scourge that threatens to erode the gains we have been making since 1994 to build a caring society? Beyond adopting the role of critics, what is it that other sectors can do to help government to eliminate violence against vulnerable groups?

Whilst there are programmes and interventions to prevent and respond to abuse, government cannot do this alone and therefore depends on mutual partnerships with non-governmental and women's organisations, business, faith-based organisations, traditional leaders, political parties, various sectors of society and communities.

Domestic violence is not something that should be left to families to resolve. Neither is it a private family matter. An uncle who rapes a niece needs to face the full might of the law. Once a crime has been committed, let us allow the law to take its course.

The reality that we must collectively confront is the reluctance on the part of some victims of violence to come forward and seek legal advice and social support. This could be due to lack of knowledge about their rights and the social stigma around domestic violence. We must also accept the sad reality that financial dependency on husbands, fathers, partners and family members increases their vulnerability to domestic violence, rape, incest, abuse, and murder. We remain convinced that empowering women will help us win the war against poverty, inequality, unemployment and abuse.

Those most severely affected by violence are in these areas and may not be aware of the resources and services available to them to help them cope with their circumstances. We believe that the unacceptably high levels of gender-based violence require the collective efforts of all South Africans.

As South Africans, we must pause and ponder the real impact of gender-based violence. These include direct costs relating to health care services, judicial services, social services and other related services. Gender-based violence robs women and children of the opportunity to become productive citizens of the country. It denies them their constitutional rights and condemns them to a life of perpetual fear. They are therefore prevented from enjoying the fruits of our freedom and democracy.

Despite South Africa's constitutional and legislative protection, violence based on gender and sexual orientation remains at unacceptable levels. The violence takes different forms such as sexual harassment, abuse, assault, rape, domestic violence and other cultural practices that are harmful to

women and children (ukuthwalwa and ukungenwa etc).

The current spate of child murders in our country is a matter of grave concern and a painful reminder of the disregard for human life and rights of children. In memory of all children who perished in the hands of abusers, we must move with speed to put these murderers behind bars. As we do so, we must also focus our attention to those who claim to be sangomas who pay for the body parts of our children. The law must be equally harsh on them. I urge real sangomas to take a stand and expose those who trade with the bodies of our children.

By giving women and child abusers harsher sentences, our courts are continuing to play a role in sending a message to these abusers that their actions will not be tolerated. Those who commit atrocities and murders against women and children must rot in jail. They do not deserve bail or parole. They must not be allowed to share the same spaces with our women and children, nor must they be allowed to roam our streets. We also urge the Minister of Justice to speed up the re-establishment of the sexual offences courts.

We are cautiously encouraged by the crime statistics released recently by the Minister of Police, Mr Nathi Mthethwa. For the 2011/12 financial year, the sexual offences cases decreased by 3,7%. Rape decreased by 1,9% but it is still unacceptably high. We believe that the introduction of the Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences (FCS) units have contributed positively to the fight against the scourge of violence against women and children.

Despite these encouraging figures, we believe that the levels of crimes committed against women and children remain high, and that more needs to be done to ensure that we eliminate this scourge.

TANZANIA :

Tanzania: East African Federation 'Best Left to Next Generation'

By Harid Mkali/Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)/26 November 2012

opinion

THE present generation of leaders in East Africa have already significantly contributed to bringing the region's integration closer through the creation of a regional Common Market and Customs Union.

History will remember them kindly for these achievements. However, if these same leaders truly hold the long-term peace and prosperity of the region close to their hearts, then they need to leave their plans for monetary union and full political federation to the next generation, especially now that leaders in Kenya, Uganda and Burundi have clearly demonstrated their unwillingness to undertake land nationalisation and rationalisation in their own countries.

From the outset, East African Cooperation should be brought about for practical reasons of 'mutual interests' that are specifically designed to bring about broad-based prosperity in the region and not based on vacuous emotional political slogans of 'we are one people' or 'we have a common destiny'. None of those assertions are real. Therefore, the East African 'masses', and not just the 'leaders' need to see and feel tangible fruits of the already-established Customs Union and Common Market before jumping into the next stage of the integration process, if and when the need be.

When the Customs Union and Common Market bear fruits that are equitably shared among the common people, then there will be no need for any politician or self-declared "expert" to drum the advantages of federation into the people. To conduct 'sensitisation' campaigns designed to do this is basically an insult to the intelligence of the peoples of East Africa, which basically means the campaigners are dismissing the people as too stupid to understand the merits of federation without such campaigns.

This is arrogant paternalism at best, and at worst an actual con-trick. Building a federation or a nation which is not accompanied by a broad-based economic prosperity always ends in tears. We have seen it happen in Nigeria; we have seen it happen in North and South Yemen; we have seen it in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. It serves no purpose to gloss over these realities.

If the region cannot meaningfully cooperate economically, then there is no chance at all of bringing about a peaceful, viable and lasting federation. But both realpolitik and commonsense counsel Tanzania to desist tooth and nail from signing up to a political Federation in East Africa as long as Kenya, Uganda and Burundi refuse to conduct land nationalisation and redistribution in their own countries; to join such a Federation under these circumstances is the shortest route to land-induced civil wars in Tanzania.

Politicians in the country should never sacrifice land, peace and stability for the now tired notion of Pan-East Africanism; moreover, we do not need to be in a Federation to participate in the now largely discredited economic policies of free market and globalisation, if we so desire. Therefore, the argument of Federation being necessary because of free market and globalisation imperatives is an absolute nonsense. Population size It is often argued by some high-ranking politicians and pro-East African Federation pundits that the potential land surface of 1.7 million square kilometres (this is exclusive of areas covered by water) and an estimated population of 150 million people will be the region's economic panacea under federation.

Some leaders have even stated that China's prevailing economic success is purely due to its population size and large geographic land factors. It has also been claimed that Africa is underdeveloped largely due to the colonial compartmentalisation of that continent, so Union or Federations is seen as the magic cure. Once again those are very simplistic notions and falsehoods that bear no relation to reality. Both China and India have always been world leaders in terms of land size and population, yet those two countries' visible economic strides are recent phenomena, only about 20 to 25 years old.

Had population and land size alone been a secret of economic success then India and China would have become super-powers long ago. Moreover, some countries which are small in geographic size and population are doing very well economically, often far better than much larger nations. For example, Africa's 16 smallest countries with a combined population of 41.8 million people (less than Tanzania's population alone) and inhabiting a total area of 802,880 square kilometres have a combined gross national income (GNI) of US dollars 60,940, the smallest nation, the Seychelles, with an area of only 455 square kilometres having an annual GNI of 11,130 US dollars.

On the other hand Africa's 16 biggest countries with a total population of 558.9 million people (roughly equal to half the continent's population) and occupying a land area of more than 21 million square kilometres have a combined gross national income (GNI) of US dollars 41,800. The second largest nation in area, is the minerals rich Congo - Kinshasa with 2.34 million square kilometres but with a GNI of only 190 US dollars per annum, a mere one sixtieth of tiny Seychelles; and even Nigeria, large in size and rich in oil resources, shows a GNI of only 1,200 US dollars per annum, one tenth of the Seychelles and little more than Mauritania, larger in area (though much of this is desert) but much less developed.

(The source of all the above figures and those below is the World Bank 2011). Small is beautiful. The reality of the 'small is beautiful' model is not confined to Africa alone. A quick perusal of global economic performance and quality of life delivers the same conclusion; the smaller the nation the better off its people are likely to be. A quick look at the world's smallest countries shows the second smallest, Liechtenstein, which is only 160 square kilometres in area coming in with massive GNI of 137,000 US dollars per annum.

Therefore, the idea that a federated East Africa will necessarily be prosperous flies against the face of reality. In addition, the small is beautiful model is also dramatically demonstrated in East Africa itself. The fact that Rwanda, small both in land size and population and poor in natural resources, should today be dubbed the 'Singapore of Africa' due to its rapid economic development and improvement in quality of life for the masses says everything. Rwandans now enjoy a longer life expectancy not only than Uganda or Burundi, but also significantly longer than in oil rich-Nigeria.

Some leaders in East Africa have been quoted justifying East African Federation for reasons of "... political stability, greater feeling of safety in numbers and an economic entity better able to fight poverty." I have addressed the last part of that argument in the previous paragraphs in the 'small is beautiful' instances. I would like now to deal with the first part of their argument regarding the issue of political security.

East Africa's original greatest security threat was posed by wars against colonial powers in Africa, namely the British, French, Portuguese and Spanish followed by the Apartheid regime in South Africa, their occupation of Namibia and minority rule in the then Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. That was indeed the time we needed 'safety in numbers', not now, because all those threats are history.

The only remaining colonial problem of any consequence in Africa is Morocco's illegal occupation of Western Sahara and Morocco is not a threat to East Africa, so against whom do we need this 'safety in numbers'? As it happens, ironically only Tanzania played an outstanding role in the liberation wars of Africa, while by contrast Kenya allegedly maintained cordial trade relations with the Apartheid regime in South Africa throughout that period, according to the US Library of Congress, which implies that Kenya was fighting Tanzania by proxy during the years of the African liberation wars.

We therefore, need to put into context the present Pan-Africanist postures by some of Tanzania's East African partners. Another East African leader promoted the need for regional federation as it "solidifies the unity of communities with personal ties and common history, language and culture". However, this is another major redherring. What solidifies national cohesion is not fine words, but transparently fair policies that equitably distribute national resources, principally land, among the population. Common culture, language and history are meaningless when a few people in society treat the majority as pawns on the political chess board.

The fact that civil wars took place in countries such as Spain, Russia, America, England, China, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi are good examples here. The people in those countries had much in common including language, history and culture, but historical land injustices guaranteed they ended up at each other's throats. Tanzania has no spare land. The simple truth is that Tanzania does not have enough land for its own citizens, much less for the beleaguered landless and near landless people from the rest of the proposed East African Federation, who now conservatively number 36.4 million and growing daily.

Tanzania also does not have spare land to accommodate land-grabbers and speculators from around

the world coming in the guise of 'foreign investors.' The Siasa Ya Kilimo Kwanza (Agriculture First Policy) should never ever take the form of inviting so-called 'foreign investors' to take over land and water resources, which are Tanzania's real independence. Instead it should empower Tanzanians themselves to effectively control and manage the agricultural sector in their own country.

'Leasing' land for 66 or 99 years to foreign 'investors', as has now become the norm, is practically granting them a freehold and giving away control of our land forever (milele). No country in history has 'leased' land for this length of time and then got it back without bloodshed. Land and independence are two sides of the same coin and are inextricably linked one to the other. Although large in size, in fact Tanzania has no land surplus; the country covers an area of 945,087 square kilometres of which 59,050 square kilometres are inhabitable because it is covered by water, which means the country's land surface is effectively one of 886,037 square kilometres, equivalent to 88,606,700 hectares.

However, only 44 million hectares, less than half the whole area, are arable land. When we divide the overall hectares by Tanzania's population of 46,218,000 (UN 2011) we get an average of 1.9 hectares per person; but when adjusted to arable land area the average drops to only 0.9 hectares per person. In addition, at the current demographic rate of growth, Tanzania's population will be doubling every 17 to 20 years, resulting in a reduction of land ratio to 0.5 hectares per head by 2030. Who can seriously suggest under these circumstances that either Tanzania has enough land to resettle all the willfully created landless people from the East African Federation?

And who can suggest that Tanzania possesses enough unutilized land to justify the adoption of extravagant policies of inviting global land speculation dressed-up as foreign investments? With the amount of land at our disposal there is absolutely no room for misguided landsharing Pan-East Africanism or for the accommodation of foreign land speculators called "investors".

Tanzania should call time now on foreign investment in our land, as well as to landsharing Federation, before it is too late Kagame: East Africa's Lula Leaders in East Africa should refrain from propagating the notion that Federation is essential for the sake of their people's economic and political well-being, because it is simply not true. To just lump the masses of people together in the region through Federation will bring little or political, social or economic advantage; if anything it will hamper the potential developments that could actually be achieved through the Customs Union and Common Market cooperative measures.

To bring development and prosperity to the people takes more than a simple matter of Federation. Rwanda is the classic local example of this fact. After independence Rwanda continued with the colonial policy of allowing 15 per cent of the people to control almost all the arable land in the country. The result has been repeated civil wars, culminating in the genocide of 1994. President Kagame has now reversed those policies through land nationalisation and redistribution plus very strict and precise control of would-be looters (mafisadi) among the leadership.

The result is near miraculous and the country is doing better politically and economically than any other country in East Africa, and many in the continent as a whole. Today Rwanda is the "Singapore of Africa", and President Kagame is East Africa's Lula da Silva of Brazil. By his actions, President Kagame of Rwanda has demonstrated to leaders in the rest of the continent just what it takes to develop their countries; not an African Union or regional federations, but land nationalisation and fair land distribution, coupled with control of corruption - this is the secret of future success for any country in Africa.

Therefore, for leaders in Kenya, Uganda and Burundi to tell their people that they need to surrender their hard-won freedoms for them to prosper is less than the truth. What is needed is land reform

and control of corruption. It is as simple as that. Civil wars are raging in Kenya, Uganda and Burundi and the root cause of these wars is not tribalism but unfair resources distribution. Since leaders in those countries do not want to swallow the bitter pill of land nationalisation and distribution, then those countries do not qualify to go into a Federation with Tanzania, Rwanda, South Sudan, where land is accessible equitably to all citizens.

To bring about Federation under these circumstances is simply federalising civil wars in East Africa. For the leaders of Tanzania to take the country into a Federation in the prevailing climate is a clear case of betrayal of tomorrow's generations. Tanzania should never sacrifice its land, peace and stability for the sake of a sham East Africa Federation. It is very difficult to restore peace where peace has broken down; we see it in Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Afghanistan and the Middle East.

We saw it in Sierra Leone, Somalia, Liberia, Iraq, and in the Democratic Republic of Congo more than five million innocent people have lost their lives so far and still counting. Tanzania should not disturb its national peace and unity for whatever reason; let the rest of East Africans settle their civil wars themselves. Why are we getting involved? Therefore, no case for Federation exists in East Africa today and the leaders as well as the led know it.

Foreign powers should not be allowed to force the creation of East African Federation for their own interests. The common people in the region are yet to be convinced as to why federation in East Africa is needed now and at this point in history. The 1967 to 1977 East African Community was the most integrated Community in the world at the time, more integrated even than the European Union or any other trading bloc/community that exists in the world today; yet surrender of national independence and sovereignty, free movement of people or common passports were never part of the equation of the 1967/77 East African Community.

A renewal of such regional cooperation is what the people of East Africa need now, not a full political Federation. Therefore, the current obsession with the need to merge sovereignties is highly suspect and will serve no useful purpose for the general public. The decision on Federation is therefore best left for future generations in Tanzania and the region as a whole to decide if and when such a Federation will really be of benefit to them.

- Harid Mkali is the author of a book titled, East African Federation: blessing or blight?

Tanzania: CEO Forum Basks in Gas Galore

By Orton Kiishweko/Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)/26 November 2012

THE CEO Roundtable of Tanzania is optimistic that the discoveries of vast deposits of natural gas has the potential to lift the country from the category of least developed countries to a modern and prosperous, gas fuelled economy.

Speaking at the Annual CEO Roundtable Gala Dinner 2012 in Dar es Salaam on Saturday, the forum's Chairman, Mr Ali Mufuruki, said that as a private sector, they believed that a bright future beckoned if the country would manage the newly-found resource well.

"If we can work together in a smart way, if we can together build bridges between the public and private sectors to marshal the resources and policies we need to extract economic value from the natural gas, a bright future for our country is within reach," he told roundtable members, cabinet ministers, diplomats and MPs.

Tanzania recently raised its estimate of recoverable natural gas reserves to 33 trillion cubic feet (tcf)

from 28.74 tcf following fresh and big offshore discoveries. The government has already expressed optimism that the gas finds would help to transform the largely farming, mining and tourism driven economy.

Mr Mufuruki highlighted the gas finds as one of the 2012 events that have the potential to impact the economic growth trajectory of the country. He said the year will be remembered as the one when the private sector made a bold decision to take charge of its own destiny, adding that a new-look Tanzania Private Sector Foundation is envisaged soon -- as a result.

Elaborating, Mr Mufuruki said the new look foundation would both be inclusive and representative of all Tanzania's diverse private sector interests and whose governance structures and calibre of management will ensure effective delivery of the expected outcomes.

The main objective of the CEO Roundtable is to cultivate stronger, more effective and productive ties between the public and private sectors in Tanzania. He said they do this primarily by engaging in economic and social policy dialogue and analysis with senior government officials with the view to supporting the emergence over time, of a strong, equitably shared and globally competitive economy in the country.

"In more than twelve years of working together, we have built an increasingly robust and productive partnership with successive governments of the country, with our legislature, with our development partners and various diplomatic missions in the country," he said.

During the event, the Permanent Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office, Mr Peniel Lyimo, was picked the CEO Roundtable's Public Sector Partner of the year 2012. He was awarded for "having worked tirelessly for many years and with unequalled commitment in transforming the way the government engages with the private sector equally in matters of policy dialogue, investments and public private partnerships".

Mr Lyimo was further described as a very dedicated senior civil servant whose years of service have been marked by exceptional probity, inspired leadership, wisdom, hardwork, all in the service of his country and its people.

The roundtable has also this year introduced the "Lifetime Distinguished Public Service Award", which recognizes a public servant whose career has been marked by exceptional contributions to improvement of the investment climate. The award went to former Executive Director of Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC), Mr Emmanuel Ole Naiko.

KENYA :

Kenya: Nurses Threaten to Strike in December

By Charles Gichane/Capital FM (Nairobi)/25 November 2012

Three nurses unions have issued a fresh seven day strike notice which could see over 60,000 nurses not report to work on December 3 if the government doesn't meet their demands.

The Kenya National Union of Nurses (KNUN), the National Nurses Association of Kenya and the Kenya Progressive Nurses Association have been holding consultations over the past few weeks regarding the issues they presented to the government, but KNUN Secretary General Seth Panyako

said that the government has not addressed a single issue in over three months.

"All nurses in the country shall go on strike unless the government implements the immediate registration of the Kenya Union of Nurses, the employment of all nurses on contracts, the replacement of retiring or resigning nurses, the continuous employment of all qualifying nurses and the commitment to improve medical equipment and supplies in public health facilities," he explained.

"There is need for the establishment of the Health Service Commission in the constitution, setup of the Kenya National Ambulance Services, training of health personnel, availability and functionality of diagnostic equipment, management in public health institutions and the strengthening of human resource management in the ministries," he added,

He said that they are also demanding the re-designation and promotions of all deserving nurses, the appointment of a director of nursing services and other vacant positions and the implementation of all approved allowances.

"We are only asking for what has been approved, we are not asking for anything new," he emphasised.

"We want the government to implement uniform allowance of Sh5,000 per month, non-practice allowance of Sh30,000 per month, commuter allowance of Sh15,000 per month, high risk allowance for Sh20,000 per month, theatre allowance of Sh30,000 per month and call allowance of Sh30,000 per month," he explained.

The Unions have also called on the government to finalise the Collective Bargaining Agreement as per the salaries and remuneration commission's guidelines.

Panyako expressed his disappointment in the government's employment of nurses saying, "It is very sad to note that the government can still employ nurses on a contract that is not comprehensive and a little amorphous in its construct."

He pointed out that the contract between the government and the Economic Stimulus Programme (ESP) nurses is in utter disregard of the government's own civil service code of regulations section E20 which says, "Appointment on temporary terms will be confined to those cases where the service of an officer would not normally be required beyond a period of twelve months or where a candidate does not qualify for appointment to the particular vacancy other than on temporary terms under the service regulations or where the establishment is of a temporary nature."

"The health sector is very important and it's very odd and unacceptable for nurses or any health care providers to be employed as 'casuals' in the name of a contract," Panyako emphasised.

"We demand that all nurses working on contracts must be employed on permanent and pensionable terms immediately and with effect from July 1, 2012," he added.

He made it clear that the unions will not accept any nurse to be employed on contract by the Public Service Commission and they are asking for the immediate recruitment of three senior deputy chief nursing officers, ten deputy chief nursing officers, 20 assistant chief nursing officers and 81 assistant chief nursing officers.

"There is an acute shortage of nurses in the Ministry of Medical Services and Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation, which currently stands at about 49,245 nurses," he said.

"A further 13,000 nurses may retire in the next two years beginning in 2013 who need to be replaced immediately. The shortage of nurses in the public sector has been contributed to by factors such as natural attrition and the high market for experienced Kenyan nurses abroad," he added.

He explained that as a result, the workload for nurses has increased tremendously in recent years and the need for more nurses has also been brought about by an increase in new health facilities built through the Constituency Development Fund and a rise in districts, causing the establishment of new district hospitals.

ANGOLA :

AU/AFRICA :

RPT-Africa chokes telecoms growth by hoarding spectrum

Mon Nov 26, 2012/Reuters

(Repeats story from Nov 25)

- * Mobile data to grow by 46 pct annually - GSMA
- * Telecoms important for wider economic growth
- * Authorities lack know-how, resources to release spectrum

By Helen Nyambura-Mwaura

CAPE TOWN, Nov 25 (Reuters) - African governments are stifling telecoms development by failing to sell more bandwidth to mobile phone operators, a mistake that could undermine growth in the world's poorest continent.

After an explosion in the use of mobiles for phone calls, consumers in countries such as South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya are increasingly using them to access the Internet.

That requires more spectrum, the range of radio waves set aside for cellular networks. But many governments in sub Saharan Africa lack the motivation, know-how and money needed to auction more bandwidth to meet the demand, industry participants and analysts say, which bodes ill for economies.

The World Bank estimates that with every 10 percent growth in broadband penetration, African economies grow by a corresponding 1.4 percent.

"The governments do not know how to release it and do not see the importance of prioritising the release of spectrum," said Peter Lyons, a director of spectrum policy at GSMA, a UK-based mobile industry body.

There is little fixed-line broadband infrastructure to carry the rising data traffic on the continent, so the growing demand for Internet connection can only be delivered through mobile networks. More than half of Internet activity is on handsets.

Mobile data is expected to grow by 46 percent annually over the next four years, according to GSMA. It also expects Africa's 35 million 3G connections to grow nearly five-fold to 160 million by 2016.

"Governments and regulators are not prepared for the coming growth because they have been dragging their feet in allocating spectrum to support the mobile data networks," said Lyons.

Many African authorities lack the expertise to run auctions for spectrum licences. The few engineers and lawyers that have telecoms experience are already working for the mobile phone firms and many governments can't afford to hire advisors from abroad.

Even when they are in a position to seek outside help, red tape can get in the way. In South Africa, the continent's most advanced economy, telecoms regulator ICASA has to get the communications minister's permission to recruit foreign experts. One such request sat on the desk of successive ministers for years.

ICASA says the process of licensing additional spectrum started last year, but was delayed because it had to consider a policy paper from the minister.

"ICASA will continue with its process as soon as the policy direction has been concluded and published," a spokesman for the regulator said.

Dobek Pater, a telecoms analyst at South Africa-based consultancy Africa Analysis, said another problem is that some governments need to find out who holds what spectrum and whether it can be reallocated from other users, such as the military or analog television.

"There are spectrum constraints that we have been running into in most countries across Africa," Pater said.

Some analysts say many African governments do not fully appreciate the correlation between mobile growth and economic expansion.

GSMA calculates that if the top six markets released new spectrum, it would create \$34 billion in economic growth between 2015-2020, which could translate into 15 million jobs.

In 2011, the industry accounted for 4.5 percent of sub-Saharan GDP and contributed \$32 billion to economies there, including \$12 billion in tax revenue, GSMA said.

"The mobile networks are not necessarily cows to be milked but a horse to pull the nation forward. And if that horse cannot breathe, it cannot move forward as fast as it could," GSMA's Lyons said. (Editing by David Dolan and Erica Billingham)

AU calls on M23 rebels to stop fighting, leave Goma

by Max Delany/Sapa-AFP/novembre 26 2012

KAMPALA — THE African Union (AU) on Sunday called on rebels occupying a key town in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo to stop fighting, as diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis

continued amid fears of wider conflict in the unstable region.

The AU echoed a call by regional heads of state at a summit on Saturday for the M23 rebels to stop fighting and withdraw from the regional capital of Goma, and welcomed a commitment by the Congolese government to resolve the rebels' grievances.

AU chief Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma "welcomes the commitment of the government of the (Congo) to listen, evaluate and resolve any legitimate grievances of the M23. She urges the M23 immediately to take the steps expected of it," the AU said in a statement.

"The summit ... outlined a 10-point plan that provides for the immediate withdrawal of the M23 elements from all the locations they recently occupied, as well as the establishment of security arrangements to monitor the situation on the ground," the statement said.

Ms Dlamini-Zuma reiterated the "AU's deep concern at the worsening humanitarian situation on the ground and the abuses committed against the civilian populations".

The political leader of M23, Jean-Marie Runiga Lugerero, said he expected to hold further talks on Sunday with Congo's President Joseph Kabila after seeing him on Saturday night after the summit of the 11-member International Conference on the Great Lakes.

Uncertainty, meanwhile, hung over the fate of Goma, capital of the restive Congolese province of North Kivu.

Leaders at Saturday's summit in the Ugandan capital said the rebels should withdraw to positions at least 20km north of the town, which the guerrillas — former army soldiers who staged a mutiny in April — seized on Tuesday last week.

That would mean the rebels returning to the positions they held before launching the assault that claimed Goma.

The regional leaders said the pull-out should be done within two days. But Mr Runiga Lugerero made it clear that any withdrawal would come only after talks between the rebel movement and Mr Kabila.

M23 fighters will defend their positions if government troops attacked, he warned.

M23 was launched by former fighters in an ethnic Tutsi rebel group who were integrated into the military under a 2009 peace deal that they claim was never fully implemented.

In exchange for a pull-out, the Congolese government said at the summit it was committed to "listen to, evaluate and resolve any legitimate grievances" the M23 group has.

A reporter in Goma said M23 rebels were still present in the city on Sunday. He said that troops from the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping mission, Monusco, were also more visible than in previous days.

A western diplomat in the region said Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni had agreed to meet directly with M23's military leader, Sultani Makenga.

Republic of Congo President Denis Sassou Nguesso was meanwhile in the Rwandan capital, Kigali, on Sunday on the second day of a two-day visit, meeting his Rwandan counterpart, Paul Kagame —

who was notably absent from Saturday's summit in Kampala.

Officially, Mr Sassou Nguesso was there to discuss bilateral relations, but the conflict in eastern Congo was likely to come up. The UN and Congo have accused Rwanda and Uganda of backing the M23 rebels, charges both countries deny.

Sapa-AFP

Tanzania: AU Seeks Faster DR Congo Solutions

26 November 2012/Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)

THE African Union (AU) has called for the immediate implementation of the Kampala Summit decisions on the situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

According to a statement posted on the AU website, the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, has stressed on the importance of the decisions reached by the Extraordinary Summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) in Kampala on Saturday.

The Summit, in which the Chairperson of the Commission and the Commissioner for Peace and Security participated, outlined a 10-point plan that provides for the immediate withdrawal of the M23 elements from all the locations they recently occupied, as well as the establishment of security arrangements to monitor the situation on the ground.

"The Chairperson of the Commission welcomes the commitment of DRC government to listen, evaluate and resolve any legitimate grievances of the M23. She urges the M23 immediately to take the steps expected of it, in line with the Kampala decisions.

The Chairperson of the Commission requests all concerned to fully cooperate with the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) and the envisaged neutral regional arrangements, to facilitate the effective implementation of their mandates," reads the statement in part.

She stressed the obligation of all concerned parties to refrain from any action that could put at risk the security and safety of MONUSCO personnel, as well as any other neutral elements. She reiterated AU's appreciation to the ICGLR, in particular to its current Chairman, President Yoweri Museveni, for its commitment to the promotion of lasting peace, security and development in the region.

She called on all the countries of the region to lend their full support to the ongoing efforts and to contribute to the early resolution of the current crisis. She also appeals to all the AU member states to extend political and material support to the regional efforts.

President Mwai Kibaki of Kenya and Tanzania's Jakaya Kikwete who is the current Chairman of the SADC Organ on Security, Defence and Politics under the framework of the International Conference on Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) was in Kampala for the summit, along with host President Museveni.

Also in attendance are head of African Union Commission Dlamini-Zuma, the Mozambican Foreign Affairs minister Oldemiro Júlio Marques Balói and South Africa Defence minister Mapisa-Nqakula and East Africa Community Secretary General Richard Sezibera.

Mohamed Morsi tente de désamorcer la crise avec les magistrats

26/11/2012/FRANCE 24 avec dépêches

La décision de Mohamed Morsi d'élargir ses pouvoirs a provoqué la colère du Conseil supérieur de la magistrature. Le chef de l'État doit rencontrer ce lundi les membres de la plus haute autorité judiciaire d'Égypte pour tenter de renouer le dialogue.

Mohamed Morsi rencontrera lundi 26 novembre des membres du Conseil supérieur de la magistrature pour tenter de désamorcer la crise déclenchée par la publication d'un décret élargissant les pouvoirs du chef de l'État. L'Égypte est en effet en pleine effervescence après la décision du président égyptien, issu des Frères musulmans, d'interdire notamment au judiciaire d'examiner des recours contre ses décisions, et ce jusqu'à la mise en place d'une Constitution, provoquant la colère de l'opposition et des juges égyptiens.

La plus haute autorité judiciaire du pays et Mohamed Morsi devraient donc chercher aujourd'hui un compromis pour éviter une escalade. Les magistrats estiment que le décret présidentiel ne devrait s'appliquer qu'aux décisions ou textes législatifs relatifs à des "domaines de souveraineté". Les opposants au président égyptien réclament, eux, le retrait total du décret qui, estiment-ils, menace la démocratie.

Caractère "provisoire" du décret

Mohamed Morsi avait déjà fait dimanche 25 novembre un geste en direction de ses adversaires en se disant prêt à dialoguer avec "l'ensemble des forces politiques" et en soulignant le caractère "provisoire" du décret. Pour lui, le texte n'a pas pour objectif de "concentrer les pouvoirs", mais au contraire de les déléguer, et également d'éviter une politisation de l'appareil judiciaire. Le décret vise aussi à "tuer dans l'œuf toute tentative" de dissolution de l'organisme chargé de rédiger la Constitution et de la Chambre haute du Parlement, deux assemblées dominées par les islamistes alliés à Mohamed Morsi.

Depuis le 22 novembre, un demi-millier de personnes ont été blessées dans des heurts durant des manifestations pro et anti-Morsi et des attaques ont visé des bâtiments abritant des locaux des Frères musulmans. De leur côté, les juges égyptiens dénoncent une "attaque sans précédent" du président égyptien sur les institutions du pays. Ils appellent à une grève des tribunaux.

"Dictateur"

Le 25 novembre, la Bourse du Caire a plongé de près de 10 % au premier jour de sa réouverture après la publication du décret Morsi. Jamais les valeurs n'avaient accusé une telle baisse depuis la Révolution du Nil qui avait abouti en février 2011 à la chute d'Hosni Moubarak.

Mohamed El-Baradeï, l'une des figures de l'opposition, a qualifié Mohamed Morsi de "dictateur". Pour l'opposition, le décret révèle les tendances autocratiques d'un apparatchik des Frères musulmans qui avait été jeté en prison sous l'ère Moubarak. "Il n'y a pas de place pour le dialogue lorsqu'un dictateur impose les mesures les plus oppressives et détestables qui soient [...]. J'attends, et je l'espère rapidement, une déclaration très ferme de condamnation de la part des États-Unis, des Européens et de tous ceux qui ont vraiment à cœur la dignité humaine", a ajouté Mohamed El-Baradeï dans un entretien accordé à Reuters et à Associated Press.

Des adversaires du décret Morsi campaient toujours dimanche, pour la troisième journée

consécutive, dans le centre du Caire.

FRANCE 24 avec dépêches

Gaza: un Palestinien blessé à la frontière par des soldats israéliens

Belga/25 Novembre 2012

Un Palestinien a été blessé dimanche dans le sud de la bande de Gaza par des tirs de soldats israéliens, un jour après que la police du Hamas s'est déployée sur place pour empêcher de tels incidents, ont indiqué des sources médicales palestiniennes.

Cet incident s'est produit à l'est de la ville de Khan Younès, ont-elles précisé. Selon des sources militaires israéliennes, "des Palestiniens se sont rassemblés près de la +barrière de sécurité+, et une unité de l'armée a tiré en l'air des balles caoutchoutées" en guise de tirs de semonce. Ces sources ont affirmé ignorer que ces tirs ont fait une victime. Vendredi, des soldats israéliens avaient ouvert le feu sur des habitants de Khouzaa, près de Khan Younès, qui s'étaient approchés de la frontière, tuant l'un d'eux et faisant 19 blessés. Le Hamas au pouvoir dans l'enclave palestinienne avait dénoncé "une violation de la trêve" conclue mercredi à l'issue de huit jours de confrontations qui ont fait 166 morts palestiniens et six israéliens. L'armée israélienne maintient une "zone-tampon" d'au moins 300 mètres de profondeur dans la bande de Gaza tout au long de la frontière dont elle interdit l'accès aux Palestiniens sous peine de s'exposer aux tirs de ses soldats. Selon un communiqué de Gisha, une ONG israélienne qui lutte pour la liberté de mouvement et de commerce vers Gaza et depuis cette région, "les paysans se sont déplacés dimanche à l'intérieur de la zone-tampon pour travailler leurs terres jusqu'à 100 mètres de la barrière". "Avant le dernier cycle de violences, la zone-tampon interdite d'accès par Israël s'étendait jusqu'à 300 à 1.500 mètres de la barrière, soit une superficie représentant 35% des terres arables de Gaza", a précisé ce communiqué. (BAJ)

Hamas victim dragged through the streets of Gaza City Tuesday by motorcycle was no collaborator, widow says

By Matthew Kalman / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS/Monday, November 26, 2012

It was a sight that shocked the world — the corpse of Ribhi Badawi being dragged through the streets of Gaza City Tuesday by a motorcycle as Hamas gunmen fired into the air.

It was a sight that shocked the world — the corpse of Ribhi Badawi being dragged through the streets of Gaza City Tuesday by a motorcycle as Hamas gunmen fired into the air.

His crime? Collaborating with Israel to pinpoint Hamas targets.

But the charge wasn't true, the militant's grieving widow told The News.

Actually, Badawi, 37, had spent the last four years in a Hamas prison under armed guard. He was tortured for seven months into confessing that he was working for Israel.

"They burned (him) and broke his jaw and teeth," said his widow, Kholoud Badawi. "He was hanged for 45 days by his arms and legs to make him confess. He confessed because of the torture.

"He told me every detail of what had happened to him and he gave me a diary he was writing," she added.

Ribhi Badawi was no innocent, having belonged to the Jaljalat Brigades, an Islamic group that

wanted the Palestinians ruled by strict religious law.

But he was sentenced to death in a show trial. His family appealed and asked that the sentence be reduced to 10 years in prison, and the court was due to rule the day he was executed.

“We hoped they would accept our appeal because they had no evidence — just his supposed confession,” she said.

As Kholoud and her five young children accepted the condolences of neighbors and friends in their tiny home in the poverty-stricken Sheikh Radwan neighborhood of Gaza City, friends and neighbors said Badawi was a kind, helpful man who made a living as a herbalist.

They said he once broke down a wall to save an elderly, disabled neighbor whose house was hit in an Israeli airstrike.

Badawi’s father, Ahmed, said his son hated the Israelis more than Hamas.

“My son could never have been an informer,” he said. “They say he got money from the Israelis. Look at his house. This is the house of a poor man. He helped everyone. Everybody liked him. I bless him.”

Hamas officials declined to comment. They referred reporters to comments last week by a Hamas leader who said such executions must not happen again.

Cameroun:Un dispositif d'adoption d'enfants mis en place après des scandales de vol de bébés
XINHUA : auteur/23112012

Cameroun:Un dispositif d'adoption d'enfants mis en place après des scandales de vol de bébésAprès divers scandales de vol de bébés enregistrés au cours des récents mois, le gouvernement camerounais a annoncé jeudi, à travers le ministère des Affaires sociales, la mise en place d'un dispositif d'adoption d'enfants à la fois par les nationaux et les étrangers.

Alors que l'affaire Vanessa Tchatchou, du nom d'une jeune fille qui déclare le vol de son bébé dans une formation hospitalière de la capitale camerounaise en 2011, n'a pas arrêté de créer le trouble et le pouvoir de Yaoundé a décidé de réactiver de vieux mécanismes juridiques méconnus du public, par la "validation des documents de procédures de la chaîne d'adoption d'enfants au Cameroun".

Selon la ministre camerounais des Affaires sociales, Catherine Bakang Mbock, "l'enfant visé par cette chaîne est une personne âgée de moins de 18 ans ; victime d'exploitation, d'abus ou de discrimination. Il s'agit plus spécifiquement des enfants : handicapés, abandonnés, orphelins, réfugiés, maltraités, de la rue, en détresse, en situation d'urgence, en conflit avec la loi ou issus de populations marginales, victimes de négligence, violences, d'abus, d'exploitation ou de traite..".

Si à ce jour l'absence de statistiques fiables empêche de connaître le nombre d'enfants adoptés et d'apprécier l'ampleur de ce phénomène au Cameroun, les constats établis décrivent cependant des violations de loi dans beaucoup cas d'adoption.

D'après le dispositif validé jeudi à Yaoundé, peuvent prétendre à l'adoption d'un enfant dans ce pays d'Afrique centrale, qu'il s' agisse de nationaux ou d'étrangers, pour ce qui concerne les couples, les conjoints non séparés de corps, l'un devant être au moins âgé de plus de 35 ans, en plus de ce que les adoptants doivent avoir 15 ans de plus que les personnes qu'il se proposent d'adopter.

En outre, "les conjoints doivent être mariés depuis plus de 10 ans et n'avoir pas eu d'enfant vivant de leur mariage, doivent apporter des garanties morales, affectives et matérielles", soulignent encore les documents dont Xinhua a obtenu copie, s'inspirant des articles de loi de 1939, 1941 et 1949, soit des textes remontant avant même l'indépendance du Cameroun en 1960.

Pour les personnes vivant seules (célibataires, divorcé (e), veuf (ve), les conditions édictées requièrent d'avoir 15 ans de plus que les personnes qu'elles se proposent d'adopter, apporter des garanties morales, affectives et matérielles, avoir au moins 40 ans au moment de l'adoption.

Par caution morale, les autorités camerounaises entendent "une personne qui s'engage à se substituer au postulant au placement familial provisoire en cas de défaillance ou de disparition de ce dernier dans la prise en charge de l'enfant placé. Elle doit avoir un lien de parenté ou toute autre relation avec le postulant".

De l'abandon dans des formations hospitalières au placement familial en passant par le transfert vers les services sociaux et les institutions d'encadrement en détresse, le dispositif annoncé définit le circuit de prise en charge d'enfants susceptibles d'être adoptés, sur la base d'un référentiel comportant l'évaluation de son processus de socialisation après son adoption.

De l'avis de la ministre Bakang Mbock, cette initiative traduit la volonté du gouvernement de "repandre en main toute la chaîne d'adoption d'enfants au Cameroun".

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UN/AFRICA :

Doha climate talks likely to generate more talk than action

Date November 26, 2012 /Reuters

Despite mounting alarm about climate change, almost 200 nations meeting in Doha from Monday are likely to pay little more than lip service to the need to rein in rising greenhouse gas emissions.

A likely failure to agree a meaningful extension of the U.N.'s Kyoto Protocol, a legally binding plan for cutting emissions by developed nations, would also undercut work on a new deal meant to unite rich and poor in fighting global warming from 2020.

"The situation is very urgent ... We can no longer say that climate change is tomorrow's problem," Andrew Steer, president of the Washington-based World Resources Institute think-tank, said of the Nov. 26-Dec. 7 talks in Qatar.

Superstorm Sandy had been a wake-up call for many Americans as the sort of extreme event predicted by climate scientists in a warming world, he said, even though individual weather events cannot be blamed on man-made global warming.

A U.N. study last week said the world was on target for a rise in temperatures of between 3 and 5 degrees Celsius (5.4 to 9F) because of increasing emissions. That would cause more floods, droughts, heatwaves and rising sea levels.

A U.N. conference two years ago agreed to limit any rise in temperatures to below 2 degrees

Celsius (3.6F) above pre-industrial times. But greenhouse gas levels hit a new record in 2011, despite the world economic slowdown.

And countries are showing little sign of raising ambition.

"A faster response to climate change is necessary and possible," Christiana Figueres, head of the U.N. Climate Change Secretariat, said in a statement outlining hopes for the talks.

"The climate talks so far have not produced anything like the results that the science tells us that we need," said Samantha Smith, leader of global climate and energy work at the WWF conservation group.

Delegates will meet in a cavernous conference centre in Qatar - the first OPEC state to host the annual talks and the nation with the world's highest per capita greenhouse gas emissions, roughly three times those of the average American.

Kyoto extension

To keep up climate action, most countries favour extending the 1997 Kyoto pact, which binds developed nations to cut greenhouse gas emissions by an average 5.2 per cent below 1990 levels between the years 2008 and 2012.

But Russia, Japan and Canada have pulled out in recent years, meaning that Kyoto backers are down to a core led by the European Union and Australia that account for about 14 per cent of world emissions.

The defectors say it is meaningless to extend cuts under Kyoto when big emerging countries, led by China, India, Brazil and South Africa, have no curbs on rising emissions. The United States never ratified Kyoto, for similar reasons.

Developing countries and Kyoto backers say it is vital that developed nations lead the way towards the new worldwide accord meant to be negotiated by the end of 2015 and to start up in 2020.

Failure to extend Kyoto would leave only national actions, with no legally binding U.N. framework. "The Kyoto Protocol is going to be very important for us," said Seyni Nafu, spokesman of the African group of nations. "And ambition is very low."

The EU and others agreed at last year's talks in Durban to extend Kyoto for a new period but details remain to be agreed, such as whether it should last five or eight years.

The EU said it would not deepen its own goal at Doha, of a 20 per cent cut in emissions below 1990 levels by 2020, to an alternative of a 30 per cent cut if other rich nations also act.

"We will ... keep the door open to go further, to 30 per cent, even if that is not going to happen this year," said EU Artur Runge-Metzger of the EU Commission.

A study by the London-based International Institute for Environment and Development said on Monday that rich nations had fallen short on promises to give poor countries \$US30 billion in new aid to help them combat climate change from 2010 to 2012.

It said commitments so far totalled just \$US23.6 billion, and most was in loans that would have to be repaid by the poor.

Another study by international aid agency Oxfam also estimated that only 33 per cent of the "fast-start finance" promised at a Copenhagen summit in 2009 could be considered new.

Rich nations have also promised aid totalling \$US100 billion a year by 2020, but did not make any clear pledges for 2013-2019.

Reuters

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