



[Le Premier ministre du Mali, Cheick Modibo Diarra, a annoncé mardi matin sa démission quelques heures après avoir été arrêté par des soldats à Bamako alors qu'il avait prévu de se rendre en France. Cet incident politique risque de compliquer les efforts actuellement menés pour rétablir la stabilité dans le pays dont le nord est passé sous le contrôle de groupes islamistes armés après un coup d'Etat militaire le 22 mars.]

BURUNDI :

Le Burundi classé sixième pays le plus corrompu du monde

Léonce Bitariho /pieuvre.ca/ 10 déc 2012

Léonce Bitariho, correspondant au Burundi

L'organisation Transparency International vient de classer le Burundi, dans son rapport pour l'année 2012, au sixième rang parmi les pays les plus corrompus de la planète. Une association locale dénommée Olucome (Observatoire de lutte contre la corruption et les malversations économiques) déplore la situation. Elle estime que « les corrupteurs sont devenus plus forts que l'État ».

Cent soixante-seize pays ont été fait l'objet d'une enquête par l'ONG sur l'état de la corruption au niveau mondial. Dans un rapport récemment publié par Transparency International, le Burundi occupe la sixième place. Il est au même rang que le Tchad, Haïti et le Venezuela, avec 19 points. Ce pays de la communauté est-africaine vient avant l'Irak (18 points), le Turkménistan et l'Ouzbékistan (17 points), le Myanmar (15 points) et le Soudan (13 points). Avec ses 19 points, le Burundi se trouve finalement loin des autres pays de sa région: le Kenya est à la 139e position avec 27 points; l'Ouganda à la 130e avec 29 points, et le Rwanda à la 50e position avec 53 points. La Tanzanie ne figure pas parmi les pays évalués par l'ONG.

Selon le président d'Olucome, qui s'est donné la mission de lutter contre la corruption et les malversations économiques, ce fléau « est devenu un cancer ». Et de déclarer que « si rien n'est fait, le pays est en train de se creuser un fossé dont il ne sortira pas. Il risque de devenir comme la Somalie, un pays où la bonne gouvernance reste un tabou tant sur le plan culturel, social que politique ».

Parmi les personnalités corrompues, Gabriel Rufyiri aime citer certains dignitaires de l'État comme des hauts gradés de la police nationale, des ministres et bien d'autres grands gestionnaires de la chose publique. Très récemment, il avait dénoncé la disparition d'une somme oscillant autour d'un milliard de francs burundais (soit près d'un millions de dollars américains) destinée à soutenir des policiers en état de séropositivité. « Des retraits mensuels sur salaires sont opérés régulièrement pour tout policier depuis l'année 2006, mais aucun sou n'a été donné aux bénéficiaires. » Il y a quelques mois, le médiateur burundais avait également été cité dans le blanchiment d'argent par la justice belge. L'affaire a fait beaucoup de bruit au Burundi dans différents milieux tant politiques qu'ailleurs, mais l'Honorable Mohamed Rukara au service noble du pays n'a jamais été inquiété.

En 2005, le Burundi était classé parmi les 32 pays les plus corrompus sur la planète. Il avait la vingt-deuxième place en 2007 et, aujourd'hui, sixième place au monde. Le président de l'Olucome déplore que les paroles n'aillent jamais de pairs avec les actes chez des cadres de l'État. « À sa prise de pouvoir en 2005, dit Gabriel Rufyiri, le président burundais Pierre Nkurunziza avait prononcé un discours fort et rassurant que le moment est venu pour traquer les corrupteurs et les corrompus. » Mais « au lieu de les punir, déplore M.Rufyiri, il les protège. » Lors de la prestation du serment le 26 août 2010, le numéro un burundais avait déclaré la tolérance zéro contre la corruption, mais les actes semblent n'avoir pas suivi. Avec l'état de corruption au Burundi, estiment certains milieux, les bailleurs peuvent être réticents sur le déblocage des fonds promis notamment dans le cadre stratégique de lutte contre la pauvreté, deuxième génération (CSLP II). Au Burundi, l'Olucome a lancé lundi une semaine dédiée à la lutte contre la corruption. Une journée internationale de lutte contre ce fléau a été célébrée le 9 décembre.

Le Burundi fait face à un déficit énergétique chronique

11 décembre 2012/temoignages.re

Le Burundi vit une crise énergétique chronique depuis des années, malgré un potentiel hydro-électrique de 1.200 mégawatts, constate-t-on.

Au cours de ces 26 dernières années, aucun nouveau barrage hydroélectrique n'a été construit dans le pays et la Régie de production de l'eau et l'électricité (REGIDESO) ne dispose actuellement que de 30 mégawatts, selon le ministre de l'Énergie et des Mines, Côme Manirakiza.

Ce dernier a multiplié ces derniers jours ses sorties dans la presse pour contenir la colère des consommateurs qui souffrent de délestages interminables depuis le mois de juillet dernier.

La plus grande centrale hydroélectrique de Rwegura (Nord-Ouest) produit à elle seule 18 des 30 MW actuellement disponibles.

La situation pourrait empirer dans les prochains mois avec l'annonce par le ministre de l'Énergie de la mise au repos de la vieillissante centrale dont les turbines tournent dans le vide par manque d'eau de pluie en quantité suffisante.

Le déficit énergétique en période pluvieuse s'élève à 15 MW, alors qu'il est estimé à 28 MW durant la période estivale, selon la REGIDESO.

En attendant les pluies, le ministre de l'Énergie a annoncé la mise en marche prochaine d'une centrale diesel, ce qui pourrait corser les factures d'électricité déjà difficilement supportables pour les clients ordinaires de la REGIDESO.

Une centrale qui utilise le carburant produit de l'électricité à un prix presque six fois plus élevé qu'un barrage hydroélectrique, a reconnu le ministre de l'Énergie et des Mines.

Des projets de nouveaux barrages hydroélectriques sont à l'étude qui pourraient générer quelque 300 MG d'ici 2030, selon le ministre.

L'exploitation des gisements de nickel nécessitera, à elle seule, 200 MW, a-t-il indiqué.

En effet, le Burundi compte beaucoup sur cette richesse naturelle abondante pour assurer son développement socioéconomique.

Les quantités estimées de nickel sont comprises entre 200 millions et 230 millions de tonnes.

Burundi : La France accorde un prix des droits de l'homme à une association de soutien aux sidéens
Mardi 11 décembre 2012 /Xinhua

BUJUMBURA (Xinhua) - L'ambassadeur de la France au Burundi Jean Lamy a remis lundi soir à Bujumbura une médaille marquant la mention du prix des droits de l'homme de la République française à l'Association nationale de soutien aux séropositifs et aux sidéens (ANSS).

Selon un communiqué de l'ambassade de France, l'ANSS s'est vue accorder cette distinction, à l'occasion de la Journée Internationale des Droits de l'Homme célébrée le 10 décembre de chaque année, pour ses efforts menés depuis plusieurs années dans le domaine de la lutte contre le sida.

En l'espace de 19 ans, plus de 8.200 malades du sida ont bénéficié des services de l'ANSS, via notamment les activités de prévention, la prise en charge médicale de patients, le plaidoyer pour la non-discrimination et la défense des droits des séropositifs et sidéens.

Les barrières socioculturelles participent à la marginalisation de la femme burundaise
(Xinhua)/11.12.2012

Les barrières socioculturelles participent à la marginalisation de la femme burundaise, a déclaré lundi à Bujumbura Mme MO-MAMO Karerwa, 1ère vice-présidente de l'Assemblée Nationale du Burundi.

La députée Karerwa, qui a pris la parole lors d'un atelier de renforcement de capacités des femmes parlementaires sur le leadership, la communication et le plaidoyer, a interpellé particulièrement les femmes parlementaires burundaises, pour inciter leurs compatriotes femmes à adhérer massivement aux partis politiques, qui doivent être plus ouverts, en vue d'accorder aux femmes des rôles plus importants.

Elle a souligné que les femmes parlementaires burundaises, en tant que législateurs et contrôleurs de l'action gouvernementale, ont un grand rôle à jouer en matière de conception de politiques directement liées à l'amélioration de la situation de la femme burundaise.

"Nous devons nous assurer de la représentation équilibrée des hommes et des femmes dans tous les secteurs de la vie du pays", a-t-elle insisté. En outre, a-t-elle poursuivi, les femmes parlementaires burundaises doivent plaider pour le changement de mentalités chez certains hommes qui affichent encore un comportement contraire à l'épanouissement et au rôle de premier plan de la femme dans la société burundaise. Pour y parvenir, a-t-elle recommandé, la population burundaise devrait être

mobilisée pour être active dans la mise en place des textes garantissant l'égalité des genres et réprimant les violences basées sur le genre (VBS) au Burundi.

RWANDA :

RDC CONGO :

Eastern Congo rebels thrive on fear, chaos

By Robyn Dixon/Los Angeles Times/December 11, 2012

To residents of eastern Congo, the M23 fighters who have taken control of their region are bandits, not rebels. A peace deal with the government is unlikely, and hope for justice is remote.

RUTSHURU, Democratic Republic of Congo — The rebels materialized out of the moist, heavy air, startling the woman as she tended her crops in the lush volcanic hills near the Rwandan border.

They wanted a bag of salt. No salt, and they'd kill her.

"You just do what they say," said Solange, a widow struggling to support a family in the midst of war.

To people like her who live in eastern Congo's North Kivu province, the M23 fighters who have taken control of their region are bandits, not rebels. After they seized Solange's village of Rutshuru in July and plundered all her beans, she fled south to the provincial capital, Goma.

It would prove to be no refuge. The rebels and the violence followed her.

The awesome serenity of the cloud-swathed emerald hills, twittering with bird life, home to mountain gorillas, is almost deep enough to erase, for a moment, successive waves of gruesome violence.

The region, an important source of minerals used in laptops and cellphones, was swept up in the aftermath of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Since then, it has become the scene of one of the great tragedies of the last century: Wars fueled by a toxic blend of resource riches, ethnic hatred and interfering neighbors have killed 5 million people.

In recent years, the area settled into a fragile peace. But militias still drain the country's wealth. There now are fears that eastern Congo could spiral into another long and bloody conflict.

United Nations experts say Rwanda armed and commanded M23, which rebelled against the Congolese army in April, and directly supported the rebels' attack on Goma.

Rwanda has been accused of backing militias and fueling conflict in the region for years, but it denies interfering. It has a security interest because Hutu militias responsible for the 1994 genocide fled into eastern Congo, where they continue to mount attacks. And with few mineral resources of its own, Rwanda has a strong economic interest in the region.

Among M23's reputed leaders is Bosco Ntaganda, a commander nicknamed the Terminator who was indicted in July by the International Criminal Court on suspicion of atrocities including murder, rape, sexual slavery and pillaging.

The M23 political leaders wear shiny silk suits, with labels like "High Class" left ostentatiously on the sleeve. They made Rutshuru their base, imposed compulsory weekend cleanup brigades for the entire population, planted grass around the administrative building and put up signs condemning corruption. They made the town look like a miniature copy of Rwanda, a country so tidy that all plastic bags are banned and seized at the border.

They also looted villages and killed an undetermined number of people.

Solange is 35 and belongs to the Nande tribe, the main ethnic group in North Kivu. Her husband was a government soldier who earned \$55 a month before his death three years ago from malaria. They had no children.

On the farm, she grew cassava and beans to sell in the local market and always had plenty to eat. "Life was good," she said. After her husband's death, she had to support not only her family, including her parents and a younger sister with children, but her late husband's family too. In all, there were 15 mouths to feed.

M23 disrupted all that.

After fleeing to Goma, she stayed at a friend's house. She registered with an aid agency, hoping to get food assistance, but never received any.

"It's very difficult. Sometimes we don't have enough food," said Solange, who preferred not to use her last name out of concern for her safety.

Goma's idyllic lakeside setting could be a tourist haven in a parallel universe. But in this one, teenage boys and grimy men push heavy loads of water, wooden poles or potatoes. Women pound cassava leaves or fry tennis-ball-size lumps of dough in bubbling oil.

Solange didn't outrun M23 for long. The rebels seized Goma in November, looting, killing their enemies, raping women and then retreating after intense international pressure 11 days later, vowing to take the city back whenever they wanted. Peace talks between the Congolese government and rebels began Sunday, but a scheduled meeting Monday didn't take place because the rebels failed to attend.

A week after the rebels took Goma, there was a pro-M23 rally in the city, a ham-fisted propaganda stunt that fooled no one. The signs were mostly written by one person, and onlookers sneered that the participants were all maibobo — street boys. And it was a little embarrassing at the end of the march when participants like David Umbeni, a cleaner who smelled strongly of alcohol, loudly demanded their pay for taking part.

"They promised to give us two dollars, and now they're not giving it to us," he grouched.

In Goma's empty marketplace, Regan Balume, a butcher, lovingly sliced pieces of beef stomach, heart and liver when a rare customer appeared. Like many here, he muttered a dark refrain that the rebels were not just bandits and looters, but also foreigners. Some fear there could be another genocide.

"I'm angry at these so-called liberators, who just came to lie to us," Balume said. "They should just go back to where they came from, Rwanda." Then, abruptly, agitation died, replaced with fear, and he fell silent, glancing sullenly at his feet. A plainclothes M23 official had materialized beside him.

That evening, Solange, who had nothing to eat and no money, did the only thing she could think of to get a few dollars for food: She went to a bar, hoping to meet a man who'd buy her a soda and give her some cash in exchange for sleeping with him.

But nothing happened at the bar, and she hurried home in the dark. "That's when the bandits caught me," she said, referring to M23 rebels.

She told the story later, in a doctor's office back in Rutshuru. Small and slight, she sat clutching a handbag to her body. She wore a black scarf on her head, the knot arranged above the hairline like a plump flower in bud.

There were five of them, she recalled. They also seized a passing boy and tied him up. The boy watched as they threw her onto the street and ripped at her clothes.

"One put a gun to my head," she said in a soft, clear voice. "They said to me if I cried, they'd kill me. They were saying, 'Let her die, let her die.' When one was finished, another would say, 'Have you finished? Let me do it too.' "

She fled after the attack, never knowing the fate of the boy.

Analysts fear that it will be hard to get a peace deal between the Congolese president, Joseph Kabila, and M23, and that there will be many more victims like Solange.

If there is a peace agreement, it will probably contain the same weaknesses of previous bargains, stitched together quickly, co-opting the enemy into the military, doling out positions, access to resources and other benefits to placate them.

"It could escalate into all-out war, or it could go back to skirmishes," said Jason Stearns, author of the blog Congo Siasa. "It's going to be extremely difficult to find a compromise between M23 and the Congolese government. It's about trusting Kabila.

"Everything we have been describing is a recipe for a mess, and M23 thrives on chaos."

Beneath the surface, analysts say, the rot deepens. Kabila's weak government on the other side of the country is disconnected and isolated from eastern Congo, with no ability to provide decent services or impose security. Corrupt military and venal government officials plunder the minerals and smuggle them into Rwanda and Uganda.

People like Solange expect little from the government. She'd like justice. But she sees no reason to expect it.

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Congo: le M23 boycotte le deuxième jour des négociations avec Kinshasa
le lundi 10 décembre 2012/Belga

Les rebelles congolais du M23 ont décidé lundi de boycotter le deuxième jour des négociations avec les autorités de République démocratique du Congo (RDC) organisées dans la capitale ougandaise Kampala, reprochant à Kinshasa son agressivité au début des pourparlers.

"Nous ne venons pas. Nous sommes à notre hôtel, " a affirmé René Abandi, responsable des relations extérieures du M23.

"Nous sommes ici pour négocier, pas pour écouter la colère du gouvernement, " a-t-il ajouté, sans dire si les rebelles participeraient aux négociations mardi. "Quand il nous semblera qu'il y a un cadre pour négocier, nous viendrons."

Des pourparlers entre le M23, un mouvement de mutins qui combat depuis avril l'armée régulière de RDC dans la riche province minière du Nord-Kivu (est), et Kinshasa se sont ouverts dimanche à Kampala.

Ces pourparlers avaient été promis aux rebelles au terme d'une médiation des pays des Grands Lacs orchestrée par l'Ouganda, en échange de leur retrait de Goma, capitale du Nord-Kivu.

Dès dimanche, les discussions ont failli capoter, quand le chef de la délégation du M23, François Rucugoza, a affirmé que le conflit dans l'est était dû à "une mauvaise gouvernance et, surtout, à un manque de leadership visionnaire", et que le ministre congolais des Affaires étrangères, Raymond Tshibanda, a alors menacé de bloquer les pourparlers.

Le M23 est composé essentiellement d'ex-rebelles Tutsi congolais qui avaient été intégrés à l'armée de RDC après la signature d'un accord de paix en 2009. Ses hommes se sont mutinés en avril, estimant que cet accord n'avait jamais été entièrement respecté.

UGANDA :

Uganda Police Asks Interpol to Arrest Mubiru

By Julius Odeke/The Independent (Kampala)/10 December 2012

Following recent media reports of a one Chris Mubiru who is alleged to have been sexually abusing minors, Government of Uganda wishes to condemn such acts in the strongest terms possible.

Through several video images so far availed to the media and Police, Mubiru seemed to have been luring minors into sexual harassment.

Defilement is a punishable offense according to the penal code (section 1, 29 of the Penal Code replaced) - any person who attempts to perform a sexual act with another person who is below the age of 18 years commits an offense and is, on conviction, liable to imprisonment not exceeding 18 years.

Government is therefore appealing to the public who have empirical evidence regarding these heinous acts by a one Chris Mubiru and others to report to the Police.

Uganda Police Force has opened a General Inquiry file and is now looking for Mubiru for interrogation. However, police has since confirmed that Mr Mubiru quietly left the country on Saturday morning at 5.00am aboard Turkish Airways number 606 and he is believed to have headed

to either USA or Canada.

In this regard, Uganda Police has sent out a request to INTERPOL to arrest Mubiru wherever he has escaped to and hand him over to Uganda Police for further interrogation.

SOUTH AFRICA :

South Africa: Nation, Vietnam Sign Pact to Save Rhino

By Chris Bathembu/SouthAfrica.info (Johannesburg)/10 December 2012

South Africa and Vietnam have signed a landmark agreement that could turn the tide on the scourge of rhino poaching that has seen over 600 rhinos slaughtered in South Africa this year.

The release last month of the official rhino poaching figures for South Africa had environmentalists questioning whether authorities were winning the war against the crime.

As of this week, a staggering 607 rhinos have been poached in South Africa this year - 364 of these in the Kruger National Park.

But as SAnews reports from the Vietnamese capital Hanoi, the memorandum of understanding signed on Monday by South Africa's Environmental Affairs Minister Edna Molewa and her Vietnamese counterpart, Cao Duc Phat, signals the widest-ranging step yet taken to pull the plug on the illegal rhino horn trade.

Illegal horn trade centres on Vietnam

According to the World Wildlife Fund, more than 75% of the world's rhino population is found in South Africa.

And while the illegal horn trade reportedly once revolved around markets in China, Taiwan, South Korea, Japan and Yemen, it now centres on Vietnam - premised on the superstitious belief, widespread through Asia, that rhino horn improves sexual performance and can help cure various diseases, including cancer.

The agreement sealed on Monday lists seven areas of cooperation in biodiversity, and is not only limited to the issue of rhino poaching. But judging by the media interest the poaching crisis has generated, the fight to save the rhino will be central to the agreement.

Active intervention by authorities

South Africa wants Vietnamese government officials at the highest level to commit to the fight by imposing strict punishments for poachers and traders.

"Having signed this memorandum of understanding with Vietnam today, we hope that the two countries will be able to tighten the regulatory framework so that any potential transit that can happen or could happen is actually curbed," Molewa said.

She stressed the importance of authorities from both countries actually getting involved to curb the illegal trade.

"We want to ensure that we will really work hard to see to it that all the regulations governing hunting, and rhino in particular, are adhered to ... Poaching is quite a serious issue in South Africa, so we really think that we need to work together, and we are happy that the authorities in Vietnam have actually agreed to sign this memorandum of understanding."

The minister revealed in an interview that talks with scientists were planned to get their views on the medical benefits of the rhino horn, with controlled harvesting of the horn a possible future step.

No ban on legal hunting

Molewa said her ministry would continue to allow legal hunting, and that there was no ban being imposed on Vietnamese game hunters.

Figures in possession of SAnews show that in 2009, South Africa granted 85 hunting permits to Vietnamese nationals. The number rose to 91 in 2011 before a sudden decline to just eight permits this year.

Molewa said this decline was due to processes that were put in place to ensure that there was control over rhino horns were entering Asia.

"This memorandum we are signing here is one of those processes. There is absolutely no ban being imposed on [legal hunters from] Vietnam," she said.

The government hopes that recent amendments to the Biodiversity Act will help manage the hunting industry, which contributes about R2.3-billion to South Africa's gross domestic product (GDP) while creating hundreds of jobs in rural areas.

The amendments make it illegal for people to hunt without the supervision of a conservation officer. "Any hunting that does not abide by this regulation is deemed illegal. We realised that there were gaps in the law, and we have closed those gaps," Molewa said.

Vietnam 'committed to curbing illegal trade'

Vietnamese government officials on Monday came out in full condemnation of poaching.

To demonstrate its commitment to curbing illegal rhino killings, Minister Cao Duc Phat said the Vietnamese government had increased its resources to security agencies fighting the crime.

Cao Duc Phat said claims that Vietnam had been soft on poachers were unfair and unfounded.

"So far, Vietnam has made strong commitments to tackle the illegal use of rhino horns, and we will increase our commitment," he said. "With the signing of the memorandum, the two sides will sit together and draw a very detailed plan to address this problem."

Of the widespread belief that rhino horn can cure and prevent cancer, Cao Duc Phat said: "I would like to repeat, that information is not official and not correct. We have directed scientific authorities to conduct some research on whether or not rhino horn can cure cancer. So there is not an official announcement in that regard."

Hacong Tuan, the deputy minister of agriculture and rural development, even hinted at the possibility of banning the import of rhino horn hunting trophies.

He admitted though that there could be many rhino horns entering the country without the knowledge of the authorities, adding that it was not an easy matter to combat smuggling.

"It's never easy... we believe the signing today should serve as our commitment to address all the violation issues."

SANews.gov.za

Patronage just part of South African politics

11 Dec 2012 /mg.co.za/Faranaaz Parker

Politics is so riddled with patronage that the latest revelations about payments made to President Jacob Zuma have been dismissed, say analysts.

On Friday the Mail & Guardian revealed the details of an auditor's report, which formed part of the National Prosecuting Authority's 2006 investigation into Zuma's financial affairs, and showed how benefactors had funded the president's lifestyle by more than R7-million.

The story was widely read over the weekend but reaction to it was muted. The presidency declined to comment on the matter at the weekend, as did the ANC.

"We can't comment on a private matter as an organisation. It has nothing to do with anybody," said spokesperson Keith Khoza said. "We cannot dignify irresponsible reporting by the M&G; this has got nothing to do with the public office and the office of the president."

There was no reaction from the ANC's tripartite alliance partner, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), either. Spokesperson Patrick Craven told the M&G the federation had "so many issues on our plate at the moment it maybe slipped under the radar".

Craven said this didn't mean Cosatu didn't take the matter seriously but that more detail was needed before it could comment.

The Young Communist League (YCL), meanwhile, described the report as "recycled, repackaged by yet irrelevant gossip intended to discredit the president".

The league's deputy national chairperson Mawethu Rune said the story had "Mangaung written all over it", and that the media was using the issue to dissuade delegates from pushing ahead with the Zuma's re-election at the ANC's elective conference.

Other political parties were, in the main, silent on the matter.

Step down

The Democratic Alliance, which has pursued court action to try to get the corruption case against Zuma reopened, responded with a call for Zuma to step down until the allegations had been dealt with.

The Christian Democratic Party echoed the sentiment, saying the country had dropped 15 positions in the corruption perception index under Zuma's leadership and that the country was being lead by a president it could not afford.

One reason put forward for the subdued response was that the report only added some detail to what was already known about Zuma's network of supporters.

Political analyst Adam Habib said reactions had been muted because nobody was surprised by the latest revelations.

"I looked at this and I thought 'So what?' We know this already. So you've provided more detail but we've known for a while that Schabir Shaik was funding him and everybody suspected [that] was just the tip of the iceberg," he said.

"Is the president a kept man? It's been a widely accepted fact, both inside the alliance and without. People are resigned to that."

Habib said that in any other society such patronage would be seen as a security threat but this wasn't the case in South Africa, where both politicians and the citizenry had become cynical about their leaders.

"When your president is so vulnerable to a series of dubious individuals then it becomes a security question because policy is vulnerable, decision making in the state is vulnerable, everything becomes vulnerable," he said.

"Anybody who says this is a personal issue doesn't understand state power, democracy and accountable government."

A kept president

Yet the argument among politicians now was not how to stop Zuma from being elected at Mangaung, but how to stop him from being overly influenced by the business people who maintain him as a kept president.

The reason why opposition parties had not reacted either was because there was nothing new, he said. "[The DA] are already taking action with regard to the court case. They've already got in a motion of no confidence," he said.

Susan Booysen, politics lecturer at the University of the Witwatersrand, said the public had become "saturated with reports on wheeling and dealing, enrichment and kept politicians".

"That is probably the scariest thing about it all. It is so pervasive that it does not actually draw that much attention. That is a severe indictment on the state of South African politics," she said.

Booyesen said there was a "deeply entrenched patronage system" in the party, as illustrated by the concept of cadreship.

"The ANC has just accepted that is how it is. They make so many statements about cadreship and how vulnerable they are, each time round there are more promises of action to come, even this time around with resolutions coming into Mangaung, there's quite a bit [of talk] on organisational integrity and ethics ... but there is no interest in implementing it," she said, only a "smattering of symbolic action".

Steven Friedman, director of the Centre for the Study of Democracy, however said he was "pleasantly surprised" that the public debate had proceeded as it had. "What we've had for some time is a rather peculiar process in which every single ill in the politics of this country is attributed to Jacob Zuma and it's assumed that all we have to do is get rid of Jacob Zuma and then South

Africa will thrive," he said.

"A lot of people buy into this misleading and simplistic view. If anybody thinks for one moment that the fact that Zuma has connections to wealthy people is exclusive to Zuma, then they've been living in a bubble for the last 20 years," he said.

"This is absolutely standard in our politics. That doesn't make it right but an approach that continually brings this back to one individual is ultimately going to bore people and people are ultimately going to switch off," he said.

"It would be important if it was happening in an environment where the president of the country is acting differently to the rest of the political class," he said.

But this wasn't the case. Instead, the patronage revealed by the report affects the entire political class. "It's a huge problem," said Friedman.

One reason why politicians had not responded to the report, he said, was because it would be hypocritical.

"People know if they start pointing fingers at colleagues, business connections and financial connections, then they really are inviting a lot of unwelcome attention to themselves," he said.

S Africa worried as Mandela remains in hospital

By Jon Gambrell/Associated Press/Posted: 12/10/2012

JOHANNESBURG -- South Africa's former President Nelson Mandela underwent more medical tests Monday in a military hospital as the public and journalists outside asked: What, if anything, is wrong with the health of the 94-year-old anti-apartheid icon?

Government officials in charge of releasing information about Mandela have repeatedly declined to provide specifics about Mandela's now three-day hospitalization, calling on citizens to respect the beloved politician's privacy. Yet Mandela represents something more than a man to many in this nation of 50 million people and to the world at large, and the longer he remains in hospital care, the louder the demand for the private details about his health will grow.

"He symbolizes what our country can achieve with a statesman of his stature. He's our inspiration and personifies our aspirations," an editorial in Monday's edition of the Sowetan newspaper reads. "And that's why we dread his hospital visits, routine or not. That's why even now when we are told not to panic, we do."

Mandela is revered for being a leader of the struggle against racist white rule in South Africa and for preaching reconciliation once he emerged from prison in 1990 after 27 years behind bars. He won South Africa's first truly democratic elections in 1994, serving one five-year term. The Nobel laureate later retired from public life to live in his remote village of Qunu, in the Eastern Cape, and last made a public appearance when his country hosted the 2010 World Cup soccer tournament.

On Saturday, President Jacob Zuma's office announced Mandela had been admitted to a Pretoria hospital for medical tests and for care that was "consistent for his age." Zuma visited Mandela on Sunday and found the former leader to be "comfortable and in good care," presidential spokesman Mac Maharaj said in a statement.

Such is the level of confidentiality surrounding Mandela's hospitalization that it wasn't until Monday that the public received government confirmation that he was being treated at 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria, the capital. That word came from Defense Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, who visited the aging leader there.

Speaking to journalists afterward, Mapisa-Nqakula said Mandela was "undergoing a series of tests to determine what is going on in his body." She said Mandela's release date would be determined by the result of those tests.

"He's doing very, very well," Mapisa-Nqakula said. "And it is important to keep him in our prayers and also to be as calm as possible and not cause a state of panic because I think that is not what all of us need."

The presidency later issued a statement Monday saying Mandela "had a good night's rest" and would have more tests done.

"He is in good hands," Maharaj said in the statement.

South African Retail Sales Growth Eases as Economy Stalls

By Mike Cohen/bloomberg.com/Dec 11, 2012

South African retail sales growth slowed for a second month in October as the expansion in Africa's largest economy stalled and the unemployment rate rose.

Retail sales rose 1 percent from a year earlier, below the revised 4.7 percent pace in September, Pretoria-based Statistics South Africa said on its website today. The median estimate in a Bloomberg survey of 10 economists was for growth of 4 percent. Sales fell 1.7 percent from a month earlier.

South Africa's economy expanded at the slowest pace in the third quarter since a recession in 2009 after the worst mining strikes since the end of apartheid and transport-industry protests curbed production. The unemployment rate rose to 25.5 percent from 24.9 percent in the previous quarter, weighing on consumer spending which makes up about two-thirds of expenditure in the economy.

"Domestic demand lost further momentum in the third quarter, dragged down mainly by weaker growth in consumer expenditure," Nedbank Group Ltd. (NED), South Africa's fourth largest bank, said in e-mailed comments before the release of the retail data. "We expect growth in consumer spending to moderate this year and in 2013."

The Reserve Bank cut its benchmark lending rate for the first time in 20 months to 5 percent in July to stimulate spending and spur growth. The bank's Monetary Policy Committee kept rates on hold on Nov. 22, saying that a weaker rand and high wage settlements posed risks to the inflation outlook.

TANZANIA :

Tanzania: EU Scoops Nobel Peace Prize

By Rose Athumani/Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)/11 December 2012

THE European Union has won the Nobel Peace Prize for its relentless efforts in promoting peace, democracy and human rights.

Addressing journalists in Dar es Salaam, the EU Ambassador to Tanzania, Mr Filiberto Ceriani Sebregondi, said the Nobel Peace Prize is a result of six decades of contribution to the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe.

Ambassador Sebregondi said this was the first time that the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to such an entity. The prize is normally awarded to individuals and states. "We are very proud of this award.

The EU construction during the 55 years from its foundation, growing from six countries to 27 and very soon 28 member countries, represent the most successful peace project in the world, which could be taken as an example," he said.

He explained that EU has transformed Europe from a continent of war to that of peace, becoming an attraction for more countries to join, including former socialist states. The prize consists of nearly 1 million Euros, a Diploma and a medal. Ambassador Sebregondi noted that the money will go into assisting children affected by war, while the medal and Diploma will be kept by EU institutions.

Ambassador Sebregondi said that the EU delegation together with EU States' Missions in Tanzania had organized a reception and the Tanzania Vice-President, Dr Gharib Bilal, will be the guest of honour.

Commenting on what the East African Community (EAC) can learn from EU, Ambassador Sebregondi noted that the community which is still in its infancy has a path similar to that of the union but has not been in the forefront in addressing conflicts in Somalia or the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

He said EU has been closely engaged in promoting peace in the Horn of Africa, including the DRC, through different initiatives including supporting AMISOM financially.

The Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of African Affairs, Ambassador Johnnie Carson, was quoted calling on East African countries to utilize the regional body to curb the wave of intra regional conflicts and terrorism which are detrimental to economic development, peace and stability.

Mr Carson who has a vast experience in diplomatic circles and African affairs said that Kenya and the DRC are in dire need of assistance from their neighbours to resolve ongoing problems.

Tanzania: Iso Offers to Help Dar es Salaam Fights Counterfeits

By Pius Rugonzibwa/Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)/11 December 2012

THE International Organization for Standardization (ISO) has advised Tanzania to identify specific areas where it can get international support to ensure importation of quality goods.

The visiting ISO Secretary General, Mr Rob Steele, said in Dar es Salaam on Monday that Tanzania should identify at least five top products where ISO can technically assist in ensuring the goods are imported with strict observation of required quality and standards.

"I am advising the country to select top products that may need ISO involvement in determining the quality and standards as issues of standards are absolutely vital today than it was the case five years ago," he said. Mr Steele who is on official visit to the country was speaking at a seminar on "Benefits of Standardization for Competitive Trade" organized by the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) to raise public awareness on international standards.

Opening the seminar, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Industries and Trade, Ms Joyce Mapunjo, said Tanzania appreciates ISO assistance in various areas and called for continued support to enable the country and the developing world at large effectively compete in international trade.

"Based on Tanzania's needs and experiences, my government would like to partner with ISO in various areas including the development of standardization and quality assurance policy as well as in capacity building," she said. Other priority areas according to the PS include catalyzing regional cooperation in standardization, quality assurance and conformity assessment regime.

She also asked ISO to assist developing countries like Tanzania in transforming into international standards the traditional knowledge of its people in preparation and preservation of food and drinks. Mr Steele who is also scheduled to visit other four African countries is today expected to officiate at a function of awarding certificates to a number of Small and Medium Entrepreneurs.

Tanzania: Tanesco, Dowans Saga Drags On

By Timothy Kahoho/East African Business Week (Kampala)/ 10 December 2012

Dar es Salaam — Settlement of Arbitration Award by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) between the Tanzania Electric Supply Company Limited (TANESCO) and Dowans Tanzania Limited and Dowans Holdings of Costa Rica, still remains dull regarding a decretal sum of over \$65.8m.

This was prompted by the Tanzania Court of Appeal's move to adjourn the applications of the parties until February 2013 over execution of the ICC's award amounting \$65.8m with annual interests of 7%.

A panel of judges at the Court was on December 5, 2012, forced to adjourn the matter following notification by counsel Kennedy Fungamtama from Dowans, that one of the judges, Justice Kathrine Oriyo had been involved in the suit as a judge of the Commercial Division of the High Court of Tanzania.

The said counsel's notification made Justice Oriyo for interest of justice disqualify herself. Her reaction led the court not to entertain the three applications till next year.

The public utility institution had filed the application seeking a conservatory order of DTL's plant pending the decision of the ICC. The said judge dismissed the application but restrained DTL from selling or disposing its plant.

Another one is Civil Application No. 53 of 2012 filed by DTL and DHSA against TANESCO in respect of the decision Judge Emillian Mushi in Misc. Civil Application No. 8 of 2011 of the High Court of Tanzania dated 28th September, 2011.

Fungamtama had filed it for the purposes of moving the court for the order that the Notice of Appeal filed by TANESCO on 4th October, 2011, be struck out for being time barred.

The third one is Civil Application No. 142 of 2012 filed by TANESCO against DHSA and DTL, wherein their teams of counsels are disputing payment of \$65.81m to the respondents because will entail great economic loss to the public institution.

The team of legal experts consists of Richard Karumuna Rweyongeza, Prof. Florens Luoga, and Prof. Palamaganda Kabudi, who are expected to jointly move the Court for orders to stop payment of such money to the two foreign firms.

They indeed asserted that TANESCO has already deposited a total sum of \$30m as security in compliance with an order of the High Court of Justice Queen's Bench Commercial Division, Royal Court of Justice, London.

Furthermore, they expressed to the balance of convenience that the power utility would likely suffer in the event the order for stay for execution of the decree is not granted.

The application was supported by the affidavit of the TANESCO's Chief Legal Counsel, Godwin Ngwilimi, who said both parties had arbitration dispute before the ICC over the principal sum of over \$65m.

He attributed the public power utility being dissatisfied with the ICC award to extent of challenging it in the court of law to that effect. He however gave 23 reasons ranging from ICC's arbitration award to the petition in the High Court of Tanzania at Dar es Salaam.

He stated that while still aggrieved by such decision, they intend to seek redress from the Court of Appeal upon having lodged the notice of intention to appeal although the Dowans had been frustrating their efforts by referring the matter to Royal Court of Justice in London.

Ngwilimi further emphasized that if the execution would be allowed to proceed, that the power utility's ability to generate, transmit and distribute the much needed electricity to the public will be adversely affected, thereby causing a serious power crisis and damage to the Tanzanian economy.

"That, further to the foregoing averments, I state that the damage arising from the power crisis will be substantial and irreparable and not capable of being compensated by any award of damages," stressed Ngwilimi, praying the Court to exercise its discretion in protection of the interest of TANESCO by staying the execution of the decree until determination of their intended appeal.

Tanzania: Two More Child Vaccines Come Aboard in Dar es Salaam

By Pius Rugonzibwa/Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)/11 December 2012

IN less than a week after it announced the introduction of two new vaccines, Tanzania has announced that it is in the final steps to introduce the Hepatitis B (HPV) and second dose of measles vaccines in 2014.

Last Thursday, the government announced the introduction of Pneumococcal Vaccine or Pneumonia Vaccine and Rotavirus Vaccines which are aimed at protecting children under five years of age against pneumonia and diarrhea. Vaccination starts early next month.

Speaking at the International Conference for Immunization held in the city, the Minister for Health and Social Welfare, Dr Hussein Mwinyi, said all the achieved milestones are meant to ensure all children country-wide receive vaccinations under the campaign christened as "Reaching Every Child Approach."

We need to ensure these children are reached by immunization services through the Reaching Every Child Approach. Our mission is to build on past achievements and use our knowledge and experience to save more lives," he said. He said the last Effective Vaccine Management Assessment conducted in mid-2012 indicated that Tanzania has greatly improved in the vaccine management at all levels.

Dr Mwinyi noted that Tanzania has expanded the vaccine storage capacity at National Vaccine Level five times compared to 2008 whereas in each region it has managed to install Movable Cold Rooms. The minister said the Cold Rooms have the capacity ranging between 30 and 40 cubic metres to ensure all traditional and new vaccines are accommodated.

He added that the country's priority was now on installing the District Vaccine Stores. However, he said there were some challenges accompanying the recorded achievements including shortage of skilled staff, inadequate allocation of funds to support immunization services, lack of reliable transport for vaccine distribution and lack of adequate funds for supervision at region and district levels.

The minister thanked the World Health Organization (WHO) for choosing Tanzania to host the 4th Annual Regional Conference on Immunization with the theme "Innovation, access and the rights of all to vaccines."

"This is an important forum in the African region bringing together partners and experts in the area of immunization to review the progress and make recommendation of the following year," he said.

The minister said the immunized children, who are protected from the threat of vaccine-preventable diseases, have the opportunity to thrive and a better chance of realizing their full potential.

He said Reaching Every District reaching Every Child approach has made Tanzania routine immunization vaccination coverage to be above 80 per cent in most of the districts in the country in five consecutive years and above 90 per cent at national level in three consecutive years.

Speaking at the event, Dr Luis Chambo of the WHO, said the introduction of the vaccinations was great achievements and the perfect illustrations of the progress the country has made in improving its immunization programme.

"The leadership and commitment of President Jakaya Kikwete has allowed Tanzania to remain on track in achieving some of the health-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by attaining the highest immunization coverage in the last two years," he said.

The conference is attended by more than 200 participants from various African countries and Development Partners supporting various health programmes in the continent.

KENYA :

Kenya: Kalonzo Gets Party Nod to Contest Presidency

By Lordrick Mayabi/Capital FM (Nairobi)/10 December 2012

Vice President Kalonzo Musyoka was on Monday afternoon endorsed by the Wiper Democratic

Movement's National Delegates Conference to be the party's presidential candidate in next year's General Election.

Nominated MP Shakila Abdalla proposed the endorsement after a round of backing by selected county representatives and was then seconded by John Cheruiyot from Nandi County.

In his acceptance speech, Musyoka said that he aims to be the candidate who will spearhead the transformation of Kenya by leading the economy to grow to double digits, create employment opportunities and reduce poverty levels.

"I am running for president to lead a movement of Kenyans to confront these challenges head-on, with the sharpest focus and greatest energy. I don't need a focus group, opinion poll or research to know the major issues that affect wananchi," Musyoka said while reflecting on his upbringing steeped in poverty in rural Mwingi North.

The VP says that the transformation will be realised when the people of Kenya renew their hearts and minds. He says that Kenyans must change the way they relate to each other. Musyoka assured that his administration will ensure that the differences among communities are turned into fodder for greater unity and national.

The VP added: "This process must begin with the leadership. We need a leadership that gives to Kenya; not one that takes from Kenyans. This spirit ought to be embraced by our public servants, the private sector and all our citizens."

"Our 42 communities should be viewed as national variants and options. They are not enclaves for hate-mongering. They are not reasons for disintegration. Out of many people, we must forge one nation, one Kenya," he added while accepting endorsement from over 3,000 delegates gathered.

Other areas that the VP listed to be a top priority are food security, environmental conservation, transforming the healthcare sector, national security and initiating a 24-hour economy.

The NDC held at the Moi International Sports Centre gymnasium was also attended by Prime Minister Raila Odinga who was similarly endorsed as the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) flag bearer last Friday.

Odinga insisted that the recently formed Coalition for Reform and Democracy (CORD) stood for the same national rebirth ideals like the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) did in 2002.

The PM said that just like in 2002, CORD faces the same forces that tried to stop the realisation of the NARC dream that year.

"We remain the force for good that we were in 2010 when we said 'Yes' to the then proposed constitution, that is liberating Kenya today", he said.

He added that CORD will ensure unity, dignity and equality and an indivisible Kenya where every community, every region and every citizen gets a fair share of the national cake.

"Never should one part of Kenya wallow in plenty while another struggles in want. We must never again have two, three or four nations in one," said the PM.

Ford-Kenya leader Moses Wetangula whose party is also part of CORD, maintained that the coalition was a movement that will unite the country.

Wetangula reassured the country that CORD was not a political experiment but a real movement that will make the interests of the country a priority.

The Wiper party delegates also endorsed CORD which was formed last Tuesday between ODM, Wiper and Ford Kenya. The Wiper party at the same time extended the deadline for aspirants to make applications for nominations from December 10 to December 17.

The convention also unanimously filled vacant party positions confirming Assistant Minister for Defence David Musila as the Chairman, Esther Keino as Deputy Secretary General and Assistant Minister for Agriculture, Gideon Ndambuki as National Organising Secretary.

Kenya: Raila Behaving Like a Jilted Lover - TNA

By Judie Kaberia/Capital FM (Nairobi)/10 December 2012

The National Alliance party on Monday accused Prime Minister Raila Odinga of dishonesty after branding Jubilee Alliance as corrupt, simply because they are not in his Coalition for Reform and Democracy.

TNA Secretary General Onyango Oloo said it was surprising that Odinga did not see Eldoret North MP William Ruto and Deputy Prime Minister Musalia as corrupt when he was approaching them to join his party.

"A few weeks ago Kenyans, we were treated to the spectacle of the prime minister literally begging Ruto to be his running mate. He sent his machinery to plead with Mudavadi to be his running mate. When did he associate them with corruption yet he wanted them to be his running mate... is it because they refused?" he wondered during an interview with Capital FM News.

He was responding to a challenge by the PM that those in the Jubilee Alliance should tell Kenyans what they will do to return looted public property.

Oloo instead challenged Odinga to revert the Kisumu Molasses plant to the public if he was serious about returning 'stolen' public property.

"It cannot be they were saints while in the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) and become devils while in any other alliance. Raila should stop behaving like a jilted lover and promise Kenyans what he means by restoring Kisumu Molasses."

Oloo said the Prime Minister should not wait to become president for him to restore the Kisumu Molasses plant.

In the meantime, disquiet that threatened to split the Jubilee Alliance fizzled out after TNA leader Uhuru Kenyatta made it clear he would not step down for Musalia Mudavadi but will face him in the Jubilee Alliance presidential primaries.

One of the MPs who was among those leading the rebellion Kareke Mbiuki told Capital FM News that they were content, after Kenyatta made it clear he will only quit the presidential race if he loses to Mudavadi in fair nominations.

Mbiuki says they are now ready to support whoever will win after the nominations scheduled for next week.

He argued most dissatisfied MPs from the Mount Kenya region are now happy since the coalition has met the demand for Kenyatta and Mudavadi to undergo nominations.

"We are now waiting for the technical team which is preparing the nomination rules. Our problem was the boardroom affair of deciding Kenyatta should step down for Mudavadi. They have now agreed on a nomination process and we will support whoever will win," he declared.

Sources said the six-member committee drafting the nomination rules for the Jubilee Alliance was working round the clock to finalise the procedures in time.

Last week, the committee agreed to have The National Alliance, United Republican Party and the United Democratic Forum to enrol 20 members each from the 47 counties to participate in a secret ballot vote.

The Jubilee Alliance comprises Kenyatta's TNA, Mudavadi's UDF and Eldoret North MP William Ruto's URP.

Kenya in Unison With Region On EPAs

By Margaret Wahito/Capital FM (Nairobi)/ 10 December 2012

Kenya has denied allegations of trying to 'force' faster completion of negotiations for the five countries in the East African region to sign the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with the European Union (EU).

The Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Trade Abdulrazaq Ali insist that Kenya will be stick with the other countries and will follow whatever decision that will be made concerning the issue.

Kenya has been arguing that it may lose a lot in terms of revenue from exports to the EU markets if the agreements are not signed as opposed to the other four EAC countries.

"Kenya does not have a separate position from the others. All the five countries are on the same page. The only difference is that if today Europe were to withdraw we will start paying duty on our goods. We are not under LDC (Least Developed Countries) unlike the rest which even if we do not sign they will still be allowed to export their goods freely," lamented Ali who was speaking in Nairobi during a consultative meeting on the EPAs, organized by the East African Legislative Assembly(EALA).

If EAC decides not to sign the agreements, Kenya stands to lose \$1.2 billion (Sh132.8billion) annually in earnings from horticulture alone.

But the rest which include Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi are categorized as LDCs and will instead be put them in a better trading position compared to Kenya.

This is because the LDCs do not have to sign the EPAs since their preferences will continue under the Everything But Arms (EBA) scheme. Under EBA, poor nations are granted duty free access to the EU for all products, except arms and ammunition and 41 tariff lines concerning rice and sugar, on which duty free quotas are established until full liberalisation.

But the signing of the agreement will particularly be essential for Kenya which is the only country in the EAC trading block classified as a developing country.

Ali insists on more negotiations to ensure that the final decisions by all the parties does not hurt any of the country in the region.

"I know we have various views and each view has its own merits and demerits. We as the EAC governments work very closely with the business people and we will ensure that they are involved to the end," the PS said.

On the other hand, the EU has given EAC up to January 2016 to sign the agreements something Professor Yash Tandon senior advisor at South Centre, an intergovernmental organization of developing countries, disagrees with.

He argues that the region should not be put under pressure to sign the EPAs until both sides are satisfied.

"It is high time Africans realise that the Europeans countries need us more than we need them. We should not sign them and life will still go on," he said during the meeting.

He says the region needs to first have a strong trade policy that would put it in a good position for further negotiations with EU.

The EAC- EU negotiations started in 2007.

Kenya: Cofek Challenges TV Switch-Off Deadline

By Lola Okulo/The Star/10 December 2012

THE planned switch off of from analogue television transmission to digital by the government is "ill-timed" and will be too costly for users, a consumer lobby group has said.

Consumer Federation of Kenya secretary general Stephen Mutoro has said that Kenya is being irrational in rushing to beat the global deadline three years before its due yet majority of TV owners will not be able to acquire a set top box on time mainly because of cost.

"Consumers Federation of Kenya's view is that the planned switch-off is no priority over denying access to an estimated viewership of 1.5 million analogue TVs within Nairobi and its environs," said Mutoro in a statement released on Saturday.

"Whether it is ambitious for Kenya to have to "comply" with a global dateline three years earlier or an individual being keen on personal exaltation is any one's guess."

Last week the government said that it will switch off analogue transmission within Nairobi to compel as part of migration to digital transmission. It is estimated that at least 80 per cent of TV users will be affected by the switch off since the uptake of set top boxes- the device that transform signals from analogue to digital for old tv sets-has been very low.

"We find the government's move not only unreasonable but expensive to consumers, most of whom do not have surplus funds to purchase the required set-boxes to shift to digital television frequency signals," said Mutoro.

He added that the timing of the switch off was suspect because of the ongoing civic education media campaigns and other matters pertaining to the upcoming general elections.

COFEK said the impending switch off contravenes provisions of Articles 10, 27 and 35 of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 because it discriminates against individuals who cannot afford set-boxes at an estimated cost of up to Sh5,000.

Communication PS Bitange Ndemo said last week that the government will adhere to the deadline because it has become expensive to manage the analogue transmissions and also that the freed up frequencies through changing to digital would fasten access to high speed internet. The government is doing the switch in phases starting with Nairobi.

ANGOLA :

Angola: Nation Entered New Human Rights Era - Minister
10 December 2012/AngolaPress

Luanda — With the legislative election of 2008 and the coming into force of the Constitution of the Republic, in February 2010, Angola entered a new era in the conquest and protection of human rights.

This was said Monday in Luanda by the Angolan minister of Justice and Human Rights, Rui Manguera.

Minister Manguera was addressing the main event of the celebrations of the 64th anniversary of the International Day of Human Rights, December 10.

The official on the occasion recalled that Angola is a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council since 2007, of the African Union and of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), attaching importance to actions of defence of security and peacekeeping.

"We are a country with a future, but which still experiences the marks of a long lasted armed conflict, which makes us pay a special attention to people with disabilities, considering the adhesion to existing international conventions," he stated.

According to the minister, the above actions are meant for one more goal of the Governance Programme of paying a special attention to the improvement of the living of the people living with disabilities.

"Angola is for the first time in its history experiencing a context that enables it to progress on the basis of duly outlined strategies, and can in this context set as priority the consolidation of a system of justice at the service of human rights," the minister also said.

Rui Manguera also said that the Government Programme is committed to permanently implementing, in partnership with the civil society, actions directed to the protection of human rights, with the aim of creating and supporting the improvement and efficacy of the organs that deal in the promotion of these vectors.

"The Executive works in democratic interaction with institutions of the civil society on documents that help strengthen participative democracy, and runs programmes for education and respect for human rights involving state and private organisations, including students," the minister added.

The ceremony that went with the theme "For a culture of human rights," was witnessed by the presiding judge of the Supreme Court, Cristiano André, the deputy speaker of the National Assembly João Lourenço, the first lady, Ana Paula dos Santos, MPs, Government officials and accredited diplomats.

Angola: Sonangol Announces Construction of Lobito Refinery

10 December 2012/AngolaPress

Luanda — The Angolan State-run Oil Company (SONANGOL) announced the formal start of construction of the Lobito Refinery with a capacity to process 200,000 barrels of crude oil a day.

The announcement was made by SONANGOL CEO, Francisco de Lemos, in Lobito, central Benguela province, during the ceremony of laying of the foundation stone for the construction of the refinery by the Angolan vice president, Manuel Vicente.

The official said the project follows the engagement of hundreds of staff and officials of the company since 2000, when the vision and corporative strategy of the undertaking was proclaimed. The works may come to conclusion within the coming five to six years.

"The construction of the Lobito Refinery is also the result of the devoted effort of a great patience and passion of the president of the Republic, José Eduardo dos Santos who, with his vision and strategic orientation always believed in the country's capacity to supply fuels in quantity and quality, mainly at low prices," he added.

According to the source, this SONANGOL's substantial investment represents the beginning of a long journey that will gradually culminate with the reduction and full elimination of imports of fuels and lubricants, aiming at national energetic independence.

Francisco de Lemos explained that the refinery will provide an additional industrial unit to a more modern and environmentally compliant economic and productive structure to quality standards.

"As from Monday, SONANGOL will start actions for the launch of tenders that will permit the award on the basis of a detail engineering that is ready and the amount for the construction of all units that will serve the undertaking," the official said.

The project that will generate 10,000 direct and indirect jobs during the construction phase, is situated in the Quileva region, some 10 kilometres of Lobito port city.

It is located 150 metres above the sea level, over an area of 3,805 hectares, on the north-south axis and will permit the supply of oil derivatives to all provinces of Angola and neighbouring countries.

Angola: UEA Official for Continuous Divulgence of Literature

10 December 2012/AngolaPress

Luanda — The secretary general of the Angolan Writers Association (UEA), Carmo Neto, defended on Sunday in Luanda the continuous promotion and divulgence of the Angolan literature.

Carmo Neto said so to Angop during the official opening of the first children book fair, held under the 37th founding anniversary of the Angolan Writers Association (UEA).

According to him, literature is source of all knowledge and development of any society and country.

He said that there are a lot of children book, but the problem is related to difficulties of releasing books of various authors.

Carmo Neto also defended the creation of libraries in each school of general teaching, according to the dimension of the institution, where every student may have a selected book for the reading encouragement.

The official said that he believes that this partnership will also contribute to the emergence of more publications and national authors.

Moreover, the secretary general said that it must be promoted the liking to reading in population, aiming to contribute to the people's cultural and intellectual training, so that they may have a better understanding of facts and phenomena in the world.

The book fair, happening from 9-12 December, includes the exhibition, sale and releasing of books, learning about stories, theatre, drawing and games.

AU/AFRICA :

Arrêté par l'armée, le Premier ministre malien démissionne

11/12/2012/Reuters

BAMAKO (Reuters) - Le Premier ministre du Mali, Cheick Modibo Diarra, a annoncé mardi matin sa démission quelques heures après avoir été arrêté par des soldats à Bamako alors qu'il avait prévu de se rendre en France.

Cet incident politique risque de compliquer les efforts actuellement menés pour rétablir la stabilité dans le pays dont le nord est passé sous le contrôle de groupes islamistes armés après un coup d'Etat militaire le 22 mars.

"Il a été arrêté alors qu'il essayait de partir pour la France", a dit Bakary Mariko, porte-parole des militaires qui ont participé au putsch fomenté par le capitaine Amadou Haya Sanogo.

"Le pays est en crise et il bloquait les institutions", a ajouté Bakary Mariko. "Il ne s'agit pas d'un coup d'Etat. Le président est toujours en place mais le Premier ministre ne travaillait plus dans l'intérêt du pays", a-t-il poursuivi.

Diarra s'est prononcé à plusieurs reprises en faveur de l'intervention d'une force internationale dans le nord du Mali et ses relations avec l'armée se sont dégradées, le capitaine Sanogo étant opposé à cette option.

La majorité des militaires estiment avoir seulement besoin d'un soutien financier et logistique pour mener eux-mêmes une opération de reconquête du nord du pays.

Le chef du gouvernement a été conduit à Kati, ville de garnison située à l'extérieur de Bamako, qui sert encore de quartier général à l'ancienne junte.

Il a annoncé sa démission dans un communiqué diffusé par la télévision officielle mardi matin, a précisé un responsable de la chaîne.

Les militaires maliens, qui avaient renversé le président Amadou Toumani Touré, ont restitué la direction de l'Etat aux civils mais demeurent influents dans la gestion des affaires.

Cet événement risque de compliquer les efforts visant à stabiliser le Mali dont la partie septentrionale est contrôlée par des rebelles touaregs et des groupes islamistes dont certains liés à Al Qaïda entendent y appliquer la loi coranique.

Selon des habitants de Bamako, la capitale était calme aux premières heures de la journée, mardi.

Ancien ingénieur de la NASA et dirigeant de Microsoft pour l'Afrique, Diarra assurait l'intérim en tant que chef du gouvernement depuis avril lorsque les militaires avaient officiellement restitué le pouvoir.

Gendre de Moussa Traoré, ancien chef putschiste et président de 1968 à 1991, Diarra semblait entretenir de bonnes relations avec les militaires.

Mais, selon les observateurs, des tensions sont apparues au cours des dernières semaines lorsque Diarra, relativement peu expérimenté en politique, a paru vouloir se constituer une base électorale en vue de futurs scrutins.

Des divergences sont également apparues depuis plusieurs mois avec le président intérimaire Dioucounda Traoré.

Tiemolo Diallo et David Lewis; Pierre Sérisier pour le service français

Mali Prime Minister Resigns, Dissolves Government After Arrest

By Diakaridia Dembele/bloomberg.com/Dec 11, 2012

Malian Prime Minister Cheick Modibo Diarra resigned and dissolved his government on state television, hours after his reported arrest by the military.

The decision to quit is part an effort to find a solution to the country's crisis, Diarra said in an address on ORTM, the state-owned broadcaster. The West African nation's army arrested Diarra in the middle of the night at his home in the capital, Bamako, Agence France-Press reported.

"Men and women concerned about the future of our nation want a peaceful situation, which is why I, Cheick Modibo Diarra, resign with all my government today," he said in the broadcast. "I apologize to all the people of Mali who suffer from this crisis in various forms and at many levels."

Malian soldiers led a coup in March that ousted President Amadou Toure and left a power vacuum in Bamako that allowed Touareg and Islamist rebels to take control of the north. Diarra, the former Africa chairman for Microsoft Corp. and U.S. National Aeronautic Space Association engineer, was named prime minister of the West African state in April, after the military junta handed back power to a civilian government.

Mali PM quits after arrest, may hurt intervention plan

By Tiemoko Diallo/Reuters/Tue Dec 11, 2012

BAMA KO |

(Reuters) - Mali's prime minister announced his resignation on Tuesday, hours after being arrested by soldiers while trying to leave the divided and unstable West African nation for France.

The development in the Sahel state, whose desert north was occupied by al Qaeda-linked Islamists following a March coup, seemed likely to complicate African and international efforts to organise a military intervention to reunite the country.

"I, Cheick Modibo Diarra, hereby resign with my entire government on Tuesday, December 11, 2012," a nervous-looking Diarra said in a statement broadcast on state television early on Tuesday morning.

News of Diarra's resignation came hours after he was arrested late on Monday as he tried to leave the country for France. It was not immediately clear whether he made the statement of his own volition or was forced to do so.

Bakary Mariko, a spokesman for the group of soldiers that seized power in the March coup, and which remains powerful despite officially handing power back to civilians in April, said Diarra had been arrested for not working fully to address the nation's problems.

"The country is in crisis but he was blocking the institutions," Mariko said. He added Diarra had been taken to the ex-junta's headquarters in Kati, a military barracks town just outside Bamako, after his arrest.

Asked if the overnight arrest was a second coup, Mariko said: "This is not a coup. The president is still in place but the prime minister was no longer working in the interests of the country."

There was no immediate reaction from interim civilian President Dioucounda Traore.

Coup leader Captain Amadou Sanogo has been repeatedly accused of meddling in politics since he stepped down and was officially tasked with overseeing reforms of Mali's army.

Residents in Bamako said the town was quiet in the early hours of Tuesday morning.

There have been divisions for months between the former junta, interim President Traore and Diarra, a former NASA scientist and Microsoft chief for Africa.

"POTENTIALLY EXPLOSIVE"

Fearing Mali has become a safe haven for terrorism and organized crime, West African leaders have signed off on a plan to send 3,300 soldiers to Mali to revamp Mali's army and then support operations to retake the north from the Islamist rebels.

But support for the plan is not universal.

France is keenest to see military action to tackle the Islamist groups, including al Qaeda's North African wing, AQIM. But the United States and the United Nations have expressed concern, saying the plan lacks necessary detail for a complex operation.

The United States warned on Monday that Mali was "one of the potentially most explosive corners of the world".

Some of Mali's politicians support the idea of a foreign-backed military operation while others, including much of the military, say they need only financial and logistical support and insist that Mali can carry out the offensive itself.

Diarra was made prime minister in April after the military officially handed power back to civilians. As the son-in-law of Moussa Traore, a former Malian coup leader and president, he appeared to have good ties with the military.

However, tensions became particularly acute in recent weeks, with analysts saying Diarra, a relative newcomer to Malian politics after years abroad, seemed keen to establish a political base of his own ahead of any future elections.

(Additional reporting by David Lewis in Dakar; Writing by David Lewis; Editing by Pascal Fletcher and Catherine Evans)

Egypt crisis: Cairo braced for rival protests

11 December 2012/bbc.co.uk

Egypt's capital Cairo is steeling itself for rival rallies sparked by a referendum on a new constitution ordered by President Mohammed Morsi.

The demonstrations have been called by largely secular opposition groups and Islamists backing Mr Morsi.

At least nine people were hurt early on Tuesday when shots were fired at opposition protesters in central Cairo.

President Morsi has called in the army to maintain security and protect state institutions ahead of Saturday's vote.

He has given the army powers to arrest civilians and has tried to calm public anger by annulling a decree boosting his powers.

But some rulings of the 22 November decree - which stripped the judiciary of any right to challenge his decisions - will stand.

The general prosecutor, who was dismissed, will not be reinstated, and the retrial of former regime officials will go ahead.

Clashes feared

Petrol bombs were thrown and shots fired at opposition demonstrators camped out in Tahrir square in the early hours of Tuesday. Nine people were wounded in the arms and legs while another protester suffered a head injury, Al-Misri al-Yawm newspaper reported.

After the attack, police cars were deployed around the square for the first time this month.

Earlier, around 100 protesters milled around outside the presidential palace - a focus for earlier opposition demonstrations which the army has now surrounded with concrete blocks and ringed

with tanks.

Islamist demonstrators have been staging a sit-in outside a Cairo media complex that hosts the studios of several private TV channels, which pro-Morsi protesters accuse of bias.

There are fears there could be more clashes during the day if rival groups of protesters come face-to-face, the BBC's Jon Leyne in Cairo reports.

The military presence on the capital's streets has also raised fears Egypt is moving back towards military rule, our correspondent says.

The president says he is trying to safeguard the revolution that overthrew Hosni Mubarak last year, but critics calling for large turnouts at Tuesday's protest accuse him of acting like a dictator.

The opposition National Salvation Front has said it will not recognise the draft constitution, as it was drafted by an assembly dominated by Mr Morsi's Islamist allies.

NSF chief co-ordinator Mohammed ElBaradei said the "sham" draft constitution defied Egyptians' "basic rights of freedom".

"It doesn't establish proper democratic systems, so at this stage at least we have decided that we are going to continue to fight tooth and nail against the referendum," the Nobel prize winner told the BBC.

Mr ElBaradei would not go so far as to call for a boycott of Saturday's vote, but said he hoped the turn-out at Tuesday's protests would persuade Mr Morsi to postpone the referendum until consensus was reached through dialogue on a "proper, democratic" constitution.

Meanwhile, Mohamed Soudan, foreign relations secretary of the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party, said Mr Morsi was constitutionally bound to go ahead with Saturday's vote because the date had been announced by the constituent assembly.

An umbrella group calling itself the Alliance of Islamist Forces plans to hold counter-demonstrations on Tuesday in support of the referendum and the president, under the slogan: "Yes to legitimacy".

The proximity of the protests has raised fears of further bloody clashes on the streets of the Egyptian capital.

Fighting between rival protesters has killed several people and wounded many more since Mr Morsi signed the decree giving himself sweeping new powers.

The police have been seen as weakened since the fall of former President Hosni Mubarak, correspondents say.

They failed to intervene when anti-Muslim Brotherhood protesters ransacked the Islamist movement's Cairo headquarters last week.

Les appels à manifester en égypte se multiplient

Par : M. A. Boumendil/liberte-algerie.com/Mardi, 11 Décembre 2012

Mohamed Morsi veut impliquer l'armée

En promulguant des décrets pour les annuler quelques heures plus tard, comme ce fut le cas pour les taxes sur les tabacs et les alcools, avant de confier la sécurité du pays à l'armée, Mohamed Morsi donne l'image d'un président aux abois.

Treize partis islamistes, dont la confrérie des Frères musulmans dont est issu le président Mohamed Morsi, ont appelé, dimanche, à manifester aujourd'hui en soutien à la tenue du référendum constitutionnel, comme souhaité par le nouveau raïs d'Egypte. Quelques instants auparavant, c'était l'opposition libérale et de gauche qui appelait aussi, à travers le Front national du salut (FSN), à manifester le même jour, en guise de rejet du référendum prévu le 15 décembre. Les islamistes, décidés à contrer une opposition unie comme jamais auparavant et qui a déjà enregistré un succès remarquable en contraignant le président Morsi à renoncer à un décret lui donnant des pouvoirs étendus et le plaçant au-dessus de la justice, ont choisi de manifester sous le slogan "Oui à la légitimité et oui au consensus national". Le FSN de son côté avait appelé à manifester "dans la capitale et dans les provinces, mardi, en signe de refus de la décision du président". L'opposition ne reconnaît pas "le projet de Constitution", car "il ne représente pas le peuple égyptien", soutient-elle. Le président Morsi, acculé par une opposition fortement mobilisée et décidée à en découdre, a fini par céder sur le décret de la discorde, mais a maintenu le référendum constitutionnel pour le 15 décembre, comme prévu initialement. Il multiplie les actions qu'il annule parfois quelques heures plus tard. C'est ainsi que le président égyptien Mohamed Morsi a annulé dimanche soir les taxes supplémentaires sur la bière, l'alcool, les cigarettes et le soda, annoncées peu auparavant. Les taxes sur les cigarettes, qui devaient être augmentées de 20%, celles sur le soda de 25%, celles sur la bière de 200%, celles sur l'alcool de 150% et celles sur le tabac de 150%, ont été annulées. Hier, il a commencé par demander à l'armée d'assurer la sécurité jusqu'à l'annonce du résultat du référendum prévu samedi sur un projet de Constitution au centre d'une grave crise politique et de violences meurtrières, dans un décret, avant d'en promulguer un autre accordant à l'armée le pouvoir d'arrêter des civils, à la veille de manifestations rivales. L'opposition, dont la mobilisation est montée en puissance le long de ces derniers jours, estime que le projet de Constitution ouvre la voie à une islamisation accrue de la législation et met en danger les libertés. Des affrontements violents ayant déjà opposé soutiens et opposants du président islamiste, occasionnant des morts et des centaines de blessés, l'Egypte retient donc son souffle aujourd'hui, à l'idée que les manifestants des deux camps opposés puissent se croiser et s'affronter de nouveau. En cas d'affrontements, tout à fait probables au demeurant, nul ne peut en prévoir les conséquences. L'armée, qui a dirigé le pays depuis la chute de Hosni Moubarak jusqu'à l'élection de Mohamed Morsi, est sur les dents depuis l'amorce de la crise, il y a une quinzaine de jours. Elle a lancé un appel au dialogue, samedi, tout en prévenant qu'à défaut de pourparlers l'Egypte se dirigeait vers "un désastre", une sombre perspective que l'institution militaire "ne saurait permettre". Beaucoup interprètent cette sortie de l'armée comme un avertissement à prendre au sérieux. Surtout que dimanche, plusieurs avions de chasse ont survolé Le Caire, ce qui a été interprété comme une démonstration de force, annonciatrice, peut-être, de la volonté de la hiérarchie militaire de ne pas se limiter à un rôle d'arbitre. La question qui brûle toutes les lèvres en ce moment consiste à savoir si, au cas où la crise persisterait ou s'aggraverait, ce qui est tout à fait envisageable étant donné l'attitude des camps en présence qui semblent refuser toute concession, l'armée franchira-t-elle le Rubicon et ira-t-elle jusqu'à destituer le président Morsi, pour reprendre les rênes du pays temporairement ? Rien ne permet de l'affirmer, comme rien ne permet d'exclure un tel scénario. Le président Morsi, en tout cas, est conscient de la fragilité de sa situation puisqu'il vient de confier la sécurité à l'armée, jusqu'à la proclamation des résultats du référendum.

S'agit-il, pour lui, de chercher à rentrer dans les bonnes grâces de l'institution militaire ou, au contraire, ose-t-il une manœuvre qui vise à impliquer l'armée dans la crise pour la priver de ses marges de manœuvre ?

Manifestations à risque en Egypte pour et contre le projet de Constitution

11.12.2012/rts.ch

L'opposition au président égyptien et les islamistes, pro Mohamed Morsi, ont appelé à manifester mardi à quelques kilomètres les uns des autres, faisant craindre de nouveaux affrontements.

La gauche, les libéraux et d'autres groupes de l'opposition en Egypte ont appelé à des marches mardi après-midi vers le palais présidentiel dans le quartier d'Héliopolis au Caire. De leur côté, les islamistes appellent leurs partisans à se mobiliser "par millions" pour exprimer leur soutien au président Mohamed Morsi.

Ces deux manifestations qui opposeront partisans et adversaires du projet de nouvelle constitution voulue par le président égyptien raniment au centre du Caire la crainte d'affrontements meurtriers semblables à ceux survenus la semaine passée en Egypte.

Corset religieux

Les opposants aux récentes décisions prises par Mohamed Morsi dénoncent la procédure référendaire organisée, selon eux, à la hâte et qui doit avoir lieu samedi. Ils font valoir que le texte enfermerait le pays dans un corset religieux.

Les islamistes, qui dominent l'assemblée constituante chargée de la rédaction de la Loi fondamentale, estiment pour leur part être en mesure de remporter cette consultation populaire.

Sept morts la semaine dernière

Les affrontements en partisans des Frères musulmans et opposants à Mohamed Morsi, issu de cette formation, ont déjà fait sept morts et plusieurs centaines de blessés la semaine passée. La Garde républicaine a dû intervenir pour assurer la sécurité du palais présidentiel assiégé par les opposants au chef de l'Etat.

Celui-ci est accusé de se comporter de manière autocratique après avoir élargi ses prérogatives par simple décret le 22 novembre. Le texte contesté a depuis été annulé par Mohamed Morsi dans un geste d'apaisement adressé à ses adversaires.

ats/afp/vtom

Ghana / 48 heures après la victoire de Mahama, Akufo-Addo et le NPP toujours dans la contestation

le mardi 11 decembre 2012/L'intelligent d'Abidjan/news.abidjan.net

La commission électorale ghanéenne a levé le suspense hier, sur l'élection présidentielle du 7 décembre en proclamant la victoire de John Dramani Mahama du National Democratic Congress (NDC). Depuis un nouveau soleil s'est levé lundi et s'est couché et le Ghana continue sa marche. Les Trotros et les taxis continuent leurs services, les fonctionnaires à leurs postes, les chantiers des BTP qui n'ont jamais arrêté de tourner sauf le jour des élections passent à une vitesse supérieure sous la supervision de contremaîtres chinois. Les embouteillages sont toujours au rendez-vous aux mêmes lieux et aux mêmes heures. Les vendeuses de "pure water" (eau glacée) ou de "plantain" profitent toujours de ces terribles bouchons pour proposer leurs biens aux automobilistes et passagers. Tout Accra grouille comme de coutume. Avec la nouvelle donne (la victoire de Mahama), il faut compter avec les fanatiques qui portent encore fièrement leurs tee-shirts et autres gadgets à l'effigie du grand gagnant. Celui qu'on appelle ici «Edey Bee Kêkê» comme on dirait à Abidjan "c'est le last, c'est le meilleur ou bien y a pas l'homme pour lui". Il convient aussi de relever que

48 heures après la proclamation des résultats, on rencontre encore des supporters de Nana Akufo-Addo, eux aussi dans leurs tee-shirts de campagne, avec leurs foulards aux couleurs bleu-blanc-rouge assortis de l'emblème éléphant. Ils étaient très nombreux lundi dans le centre d'Accra dans l'un de leur QG de campagne situé à trois cents mètres environ du QG du NDC. Un important détachement de la police ghanéenne s'y est déployé pour les contraindre à rester sur place. Parce que non loin de là, John Mahama devait tenir son premier meeting d'après-victoire pour remercier ses électeurs et appeler tous les Ghanéens à regarder désormais dans la même direction. C'est ce que révèle le maître de cérémonie sur le lieu du meeting à Circle au moment où nous y étions, avant l'arrivée du Président de la République. Au NPP on ne croit toujours pas aux résultats de la Commission électorale. Et ce sont des dizaines de jeunes qui ont battu le pavé pour faire savoir leurs griefs ce lundi dans leur QG ci-dessus indiqué. Par ailleurs, Nana Akufo tient ce mardi une conférence de presse pour donner la conduite à tenir à ses militants. Mais déjà la presse nationale dans certaines de ses parutions se faisait l'écho de planification d'actes de violence avec la distribution de machettes dans la localité de Kibi. Ces machettes, rapporte ce journal, portent le slogan "all die by die" et cet acte serait l'œuvre d'extrémistes d'un parti politique. Un autre journal barre sa Une avec l'image d'un Désiré Tagro ensanglanté et défiguré et d'autres images prises à la résidence présidentielle de Cocody le 11 avril 2011. Il veut ainsi prévenir les politiques de tout mettre en œuvre pour éviter de telles horreurs au Ghana. Une image déshonorante pour notre pays mais ce journal n'a pas voulu chercher loin ce qui est tout près. C'est donc aujourd'hui, qu'on saura ce que le candidat du NPP compte faire de son poids politique non négligeable avec un peu plus de cinq millions d'électeurs et près de 110 députés au Parlement. Mais, il faut écouter les ghanéens dans la rue et dans les transports en commun pour conclure qu'ils sont unanimes que l'avenir du Ghana ne se trouve pas dans une contestation de résultats ou dans des dérives postélectorales. Pour certains, c'est le NPP qui a beaucoup à y perdre, lui qui compte dans ses rangs, l'essentiel de la classe bourgeoise ghanéenne. Pour sa part, la mission conjointe Union africaine – Cedeao conduite par l'ancien Président du Nigeria Olusegun Obasanjo a indiqué dans ses observations que l'élection du 7 décembre a été transparente, libre et démocratique.

S. Debailly

UN/AFRICA :

Africa: Cop18 Ends in New Commitment Period Under Kyoto Protocol
10 December 2012/SAnews.gov.za (Tshwane)

Doha — Governments meeting at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP18) were able to agree on solutions to respond to climate change.

The climate change talks were scheduled to end on Friday, but talks continued until Saturday.

Countries launched a new commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol as well as agreed on a firm timetable to adopt a universal climate agreement by 2015.

They further agreed on a path to raise necessary ambition to respond to climate change, endorsed the completion of new institutions and agreed on ways and means to deliver scaled-up climate finance and technology to developing countries.

The Kyoto Protocol, the only existing and binding agreement which developed countries commit to cutting greenhouse gases, has been amended so that it will continue as of 1 January 2013. The first commitment period ends on 31 December 2012.

The length of the second commitment period will be eight years.

The agreement came two days after Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs Edna Molewa delivered South Africa's country statement in which she urged delegates to use the Doha talks to find a global solution to the current climate change crisis.

"South Africa views the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol as the cornerstone of the Doha agreement. This agreement is important to South Africa and all developing countries," said Molewa.

Governments have agreed to speedily work toward a universal climate change agreement covering all countries from 2020, to be adopted by 2015, and to find ways to scale up efforts before 2020 beyond the existing pledges to curb emissions so that the world can stay below the agreed maximum 2 degrees Celsius temperature rise.

In order to achieve this, countries will hold meetings and workshops next year to prepare the new agreement and to further ways to raise ambition; to submit information, views and proposals on actions, initiatives and options to enhance ambition to the UN Climate Change Secretariat, by 1 March 2013; and that elements of a negotiating text are to be available no later than the end of 2014, so that a draft negotiating text is available before May 2015.

From the onset South Africa was clear that a strengthened international climate regime was needed to ensure that global reductions in GHG emissions, in accordance with what is required by science, to ensure that the impacts of climate change do not undermine development of the country and the African continent through, amongst others, drought, floods, water scarcity, health impacts, job losses, and sea level rise.

Governments also agreed at the Doha summit on the completion of new infrastructure to channel technology and finance to developing nations and move toward the full implementation of this infrastructure and support.

The Republic of Korea has been endorsed as the location of the Green Climate Fund and the work plan of the Standing Committee on Finance. The Green Climate Fund is expected to start its work in Songdo in the second half of 2013, which means that it can launch activities in 2014.

In terms of long-term finance, and to ensure that there is no gap in continued finance support, developed countries were encouraged to increase efforts to provide finance between 2013-15 at the average annual level with which they provided funds during the 2010 - 2012 fast-start finance period.

Governments will in the meantime continue a work programme on long-term finance during 2013 under two co-chairs to contribute to the on-going efforts to scale up mobilisation of climate finance and report to the next COP on pathways to reach that target.

Germany, the UK, France, Denmark, Sweden and the EU Commission announced concrete finance pledges of an estimated US\$6 billion for the period up to 2015.

Countries also agreed on support mechanisms in support of developing countries. Part of the support is a registry that will record developing country mitigation actions that seek recognition or financial support. The registry will be a flexible, dynamic, web-based platform.

Parties will meet again at the next UN Climate Change Conference - COP19/ CMP9 - in Warsaw, Poland, at the end of 2013.

UN chief warns of crisis across Africa's Sahel

Tuesday, December 11, 2012/zeenews.india.com

United Nations: Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has warned that political turmoil, terrorist activity, drug trafficking and arms smuggling are spilling over borders in Africa's Sahel region and threatening peace and security.

The UN chief told the Security Council yesterday that the crisis in Mali, where Islamist groups allied with al Qaeda now control the north, is part of "a sustained, systemic crisis across the entire Sahel region."

"The warning lights for the Sahel region continue to flash," Ban said. "Extreme climatic conditions and fragile economies only add to this toxic brew of vulnerability."

This year, Ban said, an estimated 18.7 million people in the region don't have enough food and over one million children under the age of five are at risk of acute malnutrition.

The secretary-general said the challenges in Mali can't be addressed effectively unless the international community also confronts challenges affecting the broader region, which also includes Mauritania, Niger, Burkina Faso and southern Algeria.

Romano Prodi, the UN envoy for the Sahel, said he is working to organise global support to promote humanitarian aid and long-term development in the region, and to help reunite Mali. He warned that the Sahel crisis "may spread if not tackled in time."

Prodi stressed that nothing can be done on the humanitarian and development fronts "without restoring the unity of Mali in a peaceful Sahel."

Mali was plunged into turmoil in March after a coup in the capital of Bamako created a security vacuum. That allowed the secular Tuaregs, who have long felt marginalised by Mali's government, to take half the north as a new homeland.

But months later, the rebels were kicked out by Islamist groups allied with al Qaeda, which have now imposed strict Shariah law in the north.

Prodi said what must happen immediately is preparations for "transparent and free democratic elections as soon as possible."

PTI

US/AFRICA :

Business group forms council to help U.S. compete in South Africa

Mon Dec 10, 2012 /Reuters

WASHINGTON |

(Reuters) - A leading U.S. business group on Monday said it was creating a new body called the U.S.-South Africa Business Council as part of a broader effort to respond to increased competition throughout Africa from China, Europe and others.

"We need to elevate the business community's game in the continent. We have American investment there, but we have fallen behind frankly in the last 10 years," Myron Brilliant, senior vice president at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said.

The initiative is the latest U.S. effort to make up lost ground in Africa, which this year is home to many of the fastest-growing economies in the world.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton visited the continent in August and acting Secretary of Commerce Rebecca Blank just returned from a trip to South Africa and Kenya.

It also comes at a time when South Africa continues to struggle with high employment and widespread poverty, two decades after the end of the apartheid era that lifted people's hope for a better life.

"The goal of both countries is create jobs, among other things. Jobs and economic growth," U.S. Under Secretary of State Robert Hormats told Reuters. "We really see this (new council) as part of a two-way win-win process where we can strengthen trade ties and investment."

U.S. companies that invest in the South Africa, the biggest economy on the continent, will be in a better position to compete throughout Africa, Hormats said.

Charter members of the U.S.-South Africa Council include U.S. beverage giant Coca-Cola, engineering and construction firm Black & Veatch and drug manufacturer Eli Lilly and Co, as well as smaller firms such as Solar Reserve, a solar energy project development company.

U.S. companies see business opportunities in sectors such as mining, finance, communications, energy, transportation and infrastructure development, said Scott Eisner, vice president for African affairs at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

"There has been in shift in thinking in corporate America towards Africa. The Chinese owned the better part of the last decade when it came to investment there" and got the attention of U.S. corporate and government leaders, Eisner said.

The U.S. business community will use the new council as a vehicle to get into other emerging markets in Africa, such as Mozambique with its plentiful natural gas resources and Botswana with its huge coal reserves, he said.

(Reporting By Doug Palmer; Editing by Eric Walsh)

U.S., France differ over how to deal with "explosive" Mali

By Michelle Nichols/Reuters/Mon Dec 10, 2012

UNITED NATIONS

(Reuters) - Northern Mali, plagued by Islamist extremists and gripped by an aid disaster, is "one of

the potentially most explosive corners of the world," the United Nations warned on Monday, as the United States and France differed over how to tackle the crisis.

Almost 350,000 Malians have fled their homes, with about 40 percent of those sheltering in neighboring countries, said the United Nations. This has exacerbated a humanitarian crisis in the Sahel - a belt of drought-stricken land spanning nearly a dozen impoverished countries on the southern rim of the Sahara from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea.

"Protection concerns are growing, with widespread reports of serious human rights violations from sexual violence and child recruitment to stoning and mutilations of criminal suspects," U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres told the U.N. Security Council. "Northern Mali ... (is) one of the potentially most explosive corners of the world."

Mali descended into chaos in March when soldiers toppled the president, leaving a power vacuum that enabled Tuareg rebels to seize two-thirds of the country. But Islamist extremists, some allied with al Qaeda, have hijacked the revolt.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon cautiously recommended last month that the Security Council approve an African Union military operation to take back northern Mali, contingent on political, human rights, training and operational benchmarks being met.

France has circulated a draft resolution to approve such a mission, but the United States has countered with a proposal that the operation be split into two missions that would be mandated separately by the 15-member council, diplomats said.

The United States would like the Security Council to first approve a mission focused on training the Malian army and pursuing a political process before then mandating an international military intervention to retake the north of Mali from the extremists, diplomats said.

France, which has seven nationals held hostage in the desert region, opposes the idea of mandating two missions and wants the council to adopt a single resolution this month, diplomats said.

One senior Security Council diplomat, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said that the United States was "highly skeptical about the way the French want to go" and have strong doubts about whether a military mission could be successful.

"The U.S. was completely unsatisfied with the state of planning by (West African regional body) ECOWAS for the mission; there's little trust in the African troop contributors that they can do the job, and little trust in the Malian army," he said.

"We are at the beginning of a very long and maybe winding and difficult road toward a resolution," the diplomat said.

Diplomats said the United States believes ECOWAS cannot provide appropriately-trained troops to take on the battle-hardened militants in a desert combat zone.

'TOXIC BREW'

ECOWAS has agreed to commit the 3,300 troops for an international force in Mali. The troops would mostly come from Nigeria, Niger and Burkina Faso, but other African countries like Chad may contribute troops as well. The European Union is expected to help with the training.

But Ban did not offer U.N. financial support for an initial combat mission in Mali. The African Union has said it would need "a U.N. support package funded through assessed contributions to ensure sustained and predictable support to the mission."

U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Susan Rice, told the council that the world body must be careful to address the crisis in Mali without destabilizing the entire Sahel region.

Ban's special envoy for the Sahel, former Italian Prime Minister Romani Prodi, told the council that while preparations must be made for a military operation in northern Mali, every effort must be taken to stop the violence and achieve democracy and aid access through peaceful means and negotiations.

"Any military effort in Mali must be undertaken after careful analysis and thorough preparation and that these efforts should be part of an agreed political process that tackles the roots of the conflict," Prodi said. "An extended military action brings always ... not only a humanitarian tragedy but enormous financial costs and an extended period of economic crisis."

Prodi and U.N. peacekeeping chief Herve Ladsous have said that any military action in northern Mali was unlikely to happen until September or October next year.

The EU is planning to send 200 troops to Mali to help with training. But like the United States and former colonial power France, which is the keenest of Western nations for military action, the EU has ruled out a combat role for itself.

Ban told the Security Council on Monday that the crisis in Mali could not be dealt with without addressing the problems of the Sahel, where about 18.7 million people have been affected by food insecurity this year.

"Political turmoil, terrorist activity, drug trafficking and arms smuggling are spilling over borders and threatening peace and security (in the Sahel)," he said. "Extreme climatic conditions and fragile economies only add to this toxic brew of vulnerability."

The Security Council issued a statement expressing serious concern over the insecurity and humanitarian crisis in the Sahel and condemning rights abuses including executions, hostage-taking, people trafficking and recruitment of child soldiers.

(Editing by Philip Barbara and Cynthia Osterman)

CANADA/AFRICA :

South Africa Airways Signs Code Share Agreement With Air Canada

Posted on December 11, 2012 /VENTURES AFRICA

VENTURES AFRICA – Star Alliance branded Airline, South African Airways (SAA) and Air Canada has signed a code share agreement that will make it substantially easier for customers to travel between Canada and South Africa.

The national flag carrier and largest airline of South Africa, SAA will code share on Air Canada-operated flights between London and Vancouver, London and Toronto, and New York's John F.

Kennedy International Airport and Toronto (including flights operated by Air Canada Express). Air Canada will in turn code share on SAA-operated services between London and Johannesburg, New York and Johannesburg, and Johannesburg and Cape Town.

The pact which will become effective as from Thursday, December 13, 2012, will allow customers connecting between the carriers in London or New York make seamless connections by booking a single itinerary.

” With flights coordinated to minimize connection times, plus the simplicity of a single itinerary, it will be easier than ever to fly between Canada and South Africa,” Vice President Alliances and Regulatory Affairs, Yves Dufresne said.

Meanwhile, Acting General Manager, Commercial for South African Airways, Manoj Papa explained that, “This code share agreement represents new and seamless travel options between two world-class airlines with a deep knowledge of their respective markets.”

He added that “Travellers based in Southern Africa and Canada will benefit greatly from the convenient travel choices now open to them, thereby increasing travel between the two regions.”

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

EU/AFRICA :

CHINA/AFRICA :

INDIA/AFRICA :

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

South African ambassador on 2013 BRICS summit

(People's Daily Online)/December 11, 2012

The fifth BRICS summit will be held in South Africa from March 25 - 27, 2013. As the host, South Africa has attached great importance to the summit. Ambassador Jerry M Matjila, Director-General of International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa, has visited Brazil, Russia, China and India to have better communication with the counterparts in each country concerning the fifth summit.

Recently, Ambassador Matjila came to China and was interviewed by People's Daily Online. Ambassador Matjila has talked about some issues under discussion and has shown great expectation to the summit next year.

People's Daily Online: We understand that you come here to talk about the summit next year with the Chinese counterparts. What have you discussed?

Ambassador Matjila: It's mainly about normal information. Now we have a theme called "BRICs and Africa-partnership for development, integration and industrialization." So far I am very satisfied with the meeting with Chinese counterparts. We have agreed on many issues. For years, China has been very active and supportive towards Africa. We have exchanged ideas about what could we achieve in the summit in Durban on March 27, 2013. There are a number of complete ideas of what we could achieve, like the development of banks and the launching of BRICS think tanks. Chinese counterparts have been very supportive. There will be interaction between business leaders, executive presidents, academics in the next summit. We may also invite some African leaders to dialog with BRICS experts. We believe we can achieve it in Durban in the fifth summit and we hope we can open the second round by the end of first round.

People's Daily Online: What issues will be talked in the next summit?

Ambassador Matjila: In Brazil, Russia, China, we think that maybe the leaders need to reflect on international issues. Because these five countries are of pure priors on global affairs. It's very important for the leaders of countries to find some consensus on issues.

We thought we can then reflect peace security in the world and the on-going financial crisis and to see how the five countries can make positive responds and contribute to global economic crisis, as the West is in problem, America is at budget problem. The five countries are very important role players in the regions. How can we help our region and neighborhood? In this way we can bring the collective energy, and then discuss issues about how can we unlock Africa potential.

We also think about issues of future. How do we as BRICS leaders shape the future, how does future look like, how do we participate in the global system of power relations, then contribute going forward. There will be a various topics that will be discussed by BRICS academics, as education, agriculture infrastructure, and telecommunication and how will all of these be dealt with in African countries. After talking about these issues, we come to meet the leaders of BRICS presidents.

People's Daily Online: There are only 3 months left before the summit, what kind of preparation has been done on the South African side?

Ambassador Matjila: What can be sure is the summit is going to be held in Durban, it is a beautiful costal port. We prepared five hotels, each BRICS country will stay in a hotel, and we also arrange the situation where the leaders can have bilateral discussion.

We are also going to hold a cultural show which contains mainly BRICS cultures on March 26, 2013. To make sure we can all watch the beautiful cultural talent of the BRICS countries. We also hope some of the leaders can come that day. I think we've prepared most advances. Before summit, there are some activists, such like academic forum, business workshop for finance ministers, trade ministers. I think it's going to be a great experience in managing big events and we try to contribute the harmony in the world. This is a major event held by Africa. We are looking for the five countries leaders to come the summit in the year of euro crisis, global financial crisis. When this five country

leaders meet, I believe this is going to be of significance to the whole world.

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People's Daily Online: What's your view of the status of South Africa in the whole Africa?

Ambassador Matjila: We are African, We are in African continent. We are always looking at our neighbors in the continent. We have very strong African inclination, we believe in united integrated peaceful and prosperous Africa. Now that we can belong to groups like BRICS, we will try to raise voices of other African countries and try to help them to set up the dialogs. We believe it is the right thing to do. The BRICS countries need very strong prospects of Africa. Additionally, China, India, Russia, Brazil can assist Africa, as they have no colonial history, they give us inspiration. What they want to do is solidarity, is friendship and cooperate as developing countries.

People's Daily Online: Since South Africa has become part of the BRICS system for two years, what do you think this system has brought to South Africa?

Ambassador Matjila: It has been a very good experience for South Africa. In the last three years, we have developed a sense of mutual understanding among the countries. I can see the sense of mutual respects. What is also encouraging is that these countries have been saying what Africa has been saying: we must reform the global system of governance, World Bank and IMF must be reformed to reflect the new reality. Secondly, respect other countries' policies. Allowing people to develop the way they want is very appealing to Africa. Thirdly, it is time for us to think of trading among ourselves. It is a pioneering thinking, issues of waking to increase trade to share technology among ourselves. We have similar challenges, like new population and new scientific development. There's so much we can learn from each other. It is a fresh experience to be in the BRICS project.

People's Daily Online: How do you evaluate trade between China and South Africa? And what do you think of the Western saying of "Chinese colonialism in Africa"

Ambassador Matjila: That's not true. We know what colonialism is. African people have long known China. China is an old friend of Africa. China does things based on respect, solidarity and equality. Secondly, when we have a dialog, we go for the formula, where you give I give, we respect mutual. Thirdly, China does not interfere how African want to run their governments. I think the West is not satisfied that Africa is now looking at China, we learn from China. There are so much in common between China and developing countries. We have similar challenges. It is easier to learn. And I think the West should get used to this new change.

The first time I came to China is 1988, it was not developed like now, and China has the ability to do more things. 15 years ago we normalize our relationship with China. The two way trade has come to 49 to 50 billion dollars. There's a huge explosion in many ways in 15 years.

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