



[Democratic Republic of Congo rebel Bosco Ntaganda, wanted by the International Criminal Court for a string of alleged atrocities, has surrendered to the US embassy in Kigali, US and Rwandan officials said on Monday. Ntaganda asked to be sent to the ICC, the world's permanent independent war crimes court, said US State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland. Nuland's comments confirm an earlier statement by Rwandan foreign minister Louise Mushikiwabo that the rebel general had "presented himself" at the US embassy in Rwanda's capital.]

BURUNDI :

**Burundi : le chef de l'Etat rend hommage aux militaires tombés dans les opérations de maintien de la paix en terre étrangère**

( Xinhua )/19.03.2013

Le chef d'Etat burundais Pierre Nkurunziza a rendu hommage lundi aux militaires burundais qui sont tombés dans les opérations de maintien de la paix en terre étrangère, à l'occasion d'une cérémonie d'ouverture de l'année académique 2012-2013 pour l'Institut Supérieur des Cadres Militaires (ISCAM).

Le président Nkurunziza, qui dirigeait cette cérémonie en qualité de Commandant Suprême des Forces de Défense et de Sécurité, a encouragé tous les militaires à garder le moral et continuer à représenter dignement le pays sur la scène internationale afin de garder jalousement l'estime que la communauté internationale a placé en eux.

"Aujourd'hui, la communauté internationale se joint à nous pour saluer le travail combien noble et louable accompli par nos militaires partout où ils sont déployés, particulièrement au sein de la Mission de Maintien de la Paix en Somalie", a-t-il dit.

Certains d'entre eux ont accompli leur mission jusqu'au sacrifice suprême en y laissant leur vie et leur oeuvre est considéré comme une bénédiction par le peuple somalien, a-t-il ajouté.

C'est pour cette raison, a poursuivi le président Nkurunziza, et à grâce à l'image que la Force de Défense Nationale (FDN) s'est créée sur l'échiquier international, que le Burundi a une fois de plus été sollicité pour apporter son appui à la Mission Internationale de Soutien au Mali (MISMA), déjà à l'oeuvre pour ramener la paix et la sécurité au Mali.

M. Nkurunziza a profité de cette occasion pour remercier "les partenaires et amis étrangers" pour leur apport important dans les réalisations de l'ISCAM au cours de l'année académique 2011-2012, en citant les Etats-Unis, les Pays-Bas, la Belgique, la Chine, l' Ethiopie et les pays de la Communauté Est-Africaine (CEA), pour leur appui substantiel dans la formation des cadres militaires supérieurs burundais.

Le Commandant de l'ISCAM, le colonel Aloys Bizindavyi, a indiqué auparavant que cette institution est appelé à servir de centre de rayonnement de la CEA pour dispenser aux officiers une formation de haute qualité.

L'effectif des lauréats de cet établissement d'enseignement supérieur militaire depuis qu'il a vu le jour en novembre 1975, a-t-il rappelé, se chiffre aujourd'hui à 1530 sur 2200 recrues, soit un taux global de réussite de 70%.

Quant aux défis auxquels cette institution fait face, il a relevé notamment la vétusté des infrastructures et le manque de professeurs permanents. Au palmarès des perspectives, l'établissement ambitionne diversifier les domaines de formation, pour jouer le rôle de centre d'excellence au sein de la CEA.

RWANDA :

**Congo ICC war suspect surrenders at U.S. Embassy in Rwanda**

By Jenny Clover/Reuters/Mon Mar 18, 2013

KIGALI

(Reuters) - Fugitive Congolese warlord Bosco Ntaganda walked into the U.S. Embassy in Rwanda on Monday and asked to be transferred to the International Criminal Court, where he faces war crimes charges racked up during years of rebellion.

By surrendering in Kigali, where an embassy official said staff were "shocked" by his sudden arrival, Ntaganda ended a career that saw him fight as a rebel and government soldier on both sides of the Rwanda-Congo border during nearly 20 years of conflict in Africa's Great Lakes region.

Ntaganda's whereabouts had been unknown after hundreds of his fighters fled into Rwanda or surrendered to U.N. peacekeepers at the weekend following their defeat by a rival faction of M23 rebels in the mineral-rich eastern Congo.

"He specifically asked to be transferred to the ICC in the Hague," U.S. State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland told reporters in Washington.

"We are currently consulting with a number of governments, including the Rwandan government, in order to facilitate his request."

ICC spokesman Fadi El-Abdullah said the court would put in place all necessary measures to ensure a swift surrender.

Ntaganda faces charges of conscripting child soldiers, murder, ethnic persecution, sexual slavery and rape during the 2002-3 conflict in the Ituri district of northeastern Democratic Republic of the

Congo.

But according to a U.N. panel of experts, Ntaganda, nicknamed "The Terminator", was most recently a leader of the M23 rebellion, which has pursued a year-long insurgency that embarrassed Kinshasa and U.N. peacekeepers by seizing the capital of North Kivu province, Goma, in November.

The experts said the rebellion was backed by Rwanda and Uganda, both of which deny sending troops to aid the insurgency.

Born in Rwanda, Ntaganda grew up in Congo before fighting alongside Rwandan Tutsi rebels who seized control of the small central Africa country, ending the 1994 genocide in which over 800,000 people died.

Ntaganda then returned to Congo, where he took part in a series of rebellions but also served temporarily as a senior general and made a name for himself smuggling minerals.

#### TRAIL OF ATROCITIES

Congolese government spokesman Lambert Mende said Ntaganda had crossed into Rwanda on Saturday with help from the Rwandan army.

"We'd prefer to have him judged here, but if he is sent to The Hague, that's no problem either," Mende told Reuters. "The most important thing is that justice is served."

Neither Rwanda nor the United States has an obligation to hand over Ntaganda to The Hague-based ICC since they are not parties to the Rome Statute that established the court.

Asked whether Rwanda would support Ntaganda's transfer to The Hague, Rwandan Foreign Minister Louise Mushikiwabo said "Rwanda has nothing to do with that decision: General Ntaganda is on U.S. territory."

Shortly after she was officially named special envoy of the U.N. secretary-general to the Great Lakes region, Mary Robinson on Monday called for countries to cooperate with the ICC.

Ntaganda's apparent defeat at the hands of rival rebel commander Sultani Makenga on Saturday came after weeks of infighting within the ranks of the M23, the latest Tutsi-led rebellion to take up arms against the distant government.

The M23 insurgency in resource-rich North Kivu was partly triggered by President Joseph Kabila's plan to arrest Ntaganda on the international charges. Ntaganda was integrated into the Congolese army alongside other insurgents as part of a 2009 peace deal.

The ICC has been seeking Ntaganda's arrest since 2006 but Kabila had resisted acting on the warrant until April last year, saying Ntaganda was a linchpin in the fragile peace.

"For over 10 years now, Ntaganda has left a trail of atrocities across eastern Congo, leading his troops to murder, rape, and pillage," said Ida Sawyer, researcher at Human Rights Watch.

"The U.S. now needs to make sure he faces justice for these alleged crimes by immediately sending him to the ICC in The Hague."

(Additional reporting by Louis Charbonneau and Michelle Nichols in New York, Arshad Mohammed in Washington, Jonny Hogg in Kinshasa and Thomas Escritt in The Hague; Writing by Richard Lough and David Lewis; Editing by Alison Williams)

### Bangladesh, Nepal, Rwanda top India in reducing poverty - study

By Nita Bhalla/AlertNet/in.reuters.com/Tue Mar 19, 2013

NEW DELHI (AlertNet) - Nepal, Bangladesh and Rwanda are "star performers" in reducing the number of poor in their countries compared to larger economies such as India, according to an Oxford University study published on Monday.

All three could be on track to eradicate poverty in 20 years if they keep up their current rate of progress, the data showed.

The study, based on research in 22 countries, said the three nations had the strongest decreases in poverty as recorded by its Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) which looks at various indicators including health, education and living standards.

"The success of Nepal and Bangladesh in reducing poverty despite their relatively low income highlights the effectiveness of social policy investments combined with active civil society engagement," said Sabina Alkire, Director of the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI).

Researchers found Nepal's poor dropped to 44.2 percent of the population in 2011 from 64.7 percent in 2006 - that is 4.1 percentage points per year. While in Bangladesh, poverty rates decreased by 3.2 percentage points per year between 2004 and 2007 and Rwanda by 3.4 annually from 2005 to 2010.

"Countries managed to reduce multidimensional poverty through tackling a range of different deprivations, with no single formula for success emerging from the study," said an OPHI statement.

"Nepal did the best in areas like nutrition, child mortality, electricity, improved flooring and assets. Rwanda showed the biggest improvement in sanitation and water, and Bangladesh did best in improving sanitation and school attendance."

### INDIA SLOW ON POVERTY?

The MPI is seen as a more holistic approach to measuring poverty rates than income alone. It is based on 10 indicators such as malnutrition, education and sanitation. If people are deprived in three or more areas, they are identified as "MPI poor".

India, which is home to around 40 percent of the world's one billion people living below the poverty line, cut poverty by an average of only 1.2 percentage points annually between 1999 and 2006, said the study.

Nepal, Rwanda and Bangladesh were followed by Ghana, Tanzania, Cambodia and Bolivia. Countries where there had been no statistically significant reduction in poverty were Madagascar, Senegal, Jordan and Peru.

In India, the study said the least progress had been made in the most under developed areas such as Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal - and among the most

marginalised communities such as Muslims, tribals, lower castes and female-headed households.

Even India's best-performing regions - Kerala and Andhra Pradesh - progressed little more than half as fast as Nepal or Bangladesh in reducing multidimensional poverty.

"If Nepal and Bangladesh continue reducing poverty at the current rate, they will halve MPI in less than 10 years and eradicate it in 20," said OPHI research officer José Manuel Roche.

"Based on the same assumptions, it will take India 41 years to eradicate acute poverty as measured by the MPI."

RDC CONGO :

**RD Congo : Mary Robinson, nouvelle Envoyée spéciale de l'ONU pour la région des Grands Lacs**  
18 mars 2013/(Source : AFP)

RD Congo : Mary Robinson, nouvelle Envoyée spéciale de l'ONU pour la région des Grands Lacs

Le porte-parole adjoint de l'ONU, Eduardo del Buey, annonce aujourd'hui que le Secrétaire général de l'ONU, Ban Ki-moo, vient de nommer l'ancienne présidente irlandaise, Mary Robinson, au poste d'Envoyée spéciale de l'ONU pour la région des Grands Lacs. « Mme Robinson jouera un rôle essentiel pour soutenir l'application de l'accord-cadre sur le conflit en RDC, signé par onze pays à Addis Abeba en février », déclare M. del Buey. Mme Robinson a de son côté fait savoir qu'elle se rendra dans les semaines à venir dans la région afin de rencontrer les signataires de l'accord-cadre et travailler à leurs côtés dans l'application de leurs engagements. Cette nouvelle intervient alors que l'ancien chef militaire du M23, le général Bosco Ntaganda, est arrivé aujourd'hui à l'ambassade américaine du Rwanda après avoir fui la RDC. (Source : AFP)

**Wanted DR Congo rebel surrenders to US embassy in Kigali**  
AFP/Mar 19, 2013

KIGALI: Democratic Republic of Congo rebel Bosco Ntaganda, wanted by the International Criminal Court for a string of alleged atrocities, has surrendered to the US embassy in Kigali, US and Rwandan officials said on Monday.

Ntaganda asked to be sent to the ICC, the world's permanent independent war crimes court, said US State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland.

"I can confirm that Bosco Ntaganda... walked into the US embassy in Kigali this morning. He specifically asked to be transferred to the ICC in The Hague," she told reporters in Washington.

Nuland's comments confirm an earlier statement by Rwandan foreign minister Louise Mushikiwabo that the rebel general had "presented himself" at the US embassy in Rwanda's capital.

Nuland said that Washington was in contact with the ICC and the Rwandan government, adding that the United States "strongly (supports) the ICC and their investigation on the atrocities committed in the DRC".

DR Congo government spokesman Lambert Mende said Sunday that Ntaganda had fled to

neighbouring Rwanda, which has been accused by Kinshasa and the United Nations of masterminding, arming and even commanding M23 rebels in resource-rich east of the vast country.

Ntaganda, a former general nicknamed "The Terminator" and widely seen as the instigator of the M23 group's rebellion against Kinshasa last year, is wanted by the ICC on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity including rape, murder and recruiting child soldiers.

Neither Rwanda nor the United States are signatories to The Hague-based ICC's founding document, the Rome Statute, and therefore would not be obliged to hand Ntaganda over to the tribunal.

However, his presence in the embassy raises thorny diplomatic issues for both Washington and Kigali.

Kinshasa earlier demanded that Kigali refuse to give asylum to the Rwandan-born Ntaganda.

ICC spokesman Fadi el-Abdallah told AFP late Monday that the court was trying to confirm Ntaganda's surrender.

"If this information is confirmed, the court will make the necessary arrangements for the transfer of Ntaganda to The Hague," he said, adding that "nothing prevents a state which is not a signatory of the Rome Statute from cooperating with the court on a voluntary basis."

Fighting between the M23 -- mainly ethnic Tutsi army mutineers -- and Congolese forces in the eastern province of North Kivu has displaced 500,000 people since last May, according to the UN refugee agency.

Over 25,000 Congolese fled to Rwanda, according to officials in Kigali.

Mushikiwabo on Sunday had scoffed at Kinshasa's claims that Ntaganda had entered Rwanda, but said that 600 fighters from the M23 had crossed into the country, including its former political leader Jean-Marie Runiga.

Runiga -- seen as loyal to Ntaganda -- has been fighting rivals within the M23 under the group's military chief Sultani Makenga.

Kigali, which accuses Kinshasa of sheltering and supporting Rwandan rebel groups thought to include perpetrators of the 1994 genocide, signed a deal aimed at ending the crisis along with other regional countries last month.

That accord aims to encourage the reform of weak institutions in the troubled former Belgian colony and calls for countries in the region to stop interfering in each other's affairs, but its signing coincided with a rupture within the M23.

Earlier on Monday, Ugandan Defence Minister Crispus Kiyonga, mediator of talks between the DR Congo government and the M23, said talks would resume in Kampala in one week, following a delay caused by the vicious infighting between the rebel factions.

The alleged atrocities the feared Ntaganda has been charged with were committed in the Ituri region in the northeastern DR Congo in 2002-2003.

But Ntaganda, who is believed to be in his 40s, is accused of having once again recruited under-age

fighters in the North Kivu region during the rebellion last year.

According to UN investigators, Ntaganda has managed to amass considerable wealth by running a large extortion empire in North Kivu, running rogue checkpoints and taxing the area's many mines.

Neighbouring states have regularly been accused of meddling in the eastern DR Congo to gain control of its valuable minerals.

UGANDA :

### Uganda: Mutesi Checkmates Bill Gates

By James Bakama/The New Vision/18 March 2013

IT'S one of those headlines that got many people off guard. Uganda's Phiona Mutesi was due to take on the world's richest man- Bill Gates in a game of chess.

It was indeed big news. Meetings with the owner of the world's largest software company don't come that easy.

A story goes of an African head of state who once travelled in the same plane with Gates. Eager to interest the billionaire , the President is reported to have struggled to market his nation.

The efforts were futile. "In which part of the US is that town found?," Gates, who completely had no idea of the location of the African state, is reported to have asked.

Well, someone this time doesn't have to struggle to interest Gates. I gather it is the billionaire who this time round wants to know everything about Uganda. That's the power of sport.

But even more catching, is the powerful story behind Mutesi. Mutesi, an orphan, has after a childhood of poverty and squalor in Uganda's biggest slum-Katwe emerged as one of Uganda's best female chess players ever.

At 16 years, Mutesi has represented Uganda at the Chess Olympiad in 2012 where she earned the title of Woman Candidate Master for the Grand Master (GM) title.

Big media houses like CNN and BBC are scrambling for Mutesi, who also has American writer Tim Crothers writing a book " The Queen of Katwe: a story of life, chess and one extra-ordinary girl's dream of becoming a grandmaster"

But there is even more to Mutesi's story. It is yet another strong reminder of the vast sports talent that abounds in Uganda.

Barely a mile away from the makeshift communal chess venue that brought forth Mutesi, is another slum Kisenyi where boxer Sharif Bogere was bred.

Bogere, who like Mutesi and Olympic champion Stephen Kiprotich, did not have the comfort of being nurtured in well- structured talent development programs, narrowly missed out on a World Boxing Association title a fortnight ago.

Former world boxing champion Ayub Kalule, who like Mutesi was initiated into the Sweet Science

in Katwe slum, observes that the tragedy of growing up with no proper sports facilities, is that most talents never realize their dreams.

Bogere, Kiprotich and Mutesi form that rare breed of talents have soared above all odds to sparkle.

At 16, there is still much more to expect from Mutesi. Her chess game with Bill Gates provides yet another of those rare opportunities to again prove that besides corruption and disease, there is also the good side of Uganda.

It's a point Mutesi should easily prove by checkmating the billionaire.

SOUTH AFRICA :

### ANC Fires Leadership Of Youth League

By PATRICK MCGROARTY/online.wsj.com/March 18, 2013

JOHANNESBURG—South Africa's ruling African National Congress disbanded the leadership of its youth league, a once-potent voice in national politics whose influence has waned after the expulsion of its rabble-rousing leader Julius Malema.

The youth league's 35-seat national executive committee was dismissed for "ill-disciplined behavior" and would be replaced, Gwede Mantashe, the ANC's secretary-general, said on Monday. The decision was made at an ANC meeting over the weekend. No specific time frame was given for selecting new leaders.

Mr. Mantashe didn't specify what the youth league politicians had done to anger ANC leaders. But former Youth League head Julius Malema has called President Jacob Zuma a dictator and has continued to ridicule him after he was kicked out of the ANC last year for fomenting divisions within the ruling party. Mr. Mantashe said league deputies continued to toe Mr. Malema's line, even after his expulsion.

Mr. Mantashe said such political housecleaning was a sign of the ANC's good health, not bitter party divisions. "It's important not to paper over cracks in your house. If you do that it will collapse on you," he said.

A member of the youth league's disbanded executive committee, Thabo Kupa, declined to comment on the ANC's decision. The youth league's spokeswoman, Khusela Sangoni-Khawe, referred questions to the ANC.

The party over the weekend also dismantled its leadership in the northern Limpopo province, Mr. Malema's home and another base of his support within the party.

South Africa's National Prosecuting Authority has charged Mr. Malema with racketeering and improperly receiving about \$450,000 in connection with a government contract. Mr. Malema has called the charges nonsense. He is scheduled to appear in court in April.

Mr. Malema helped get Mr. Zuma elected as the ANC's leader in 2007, but the relationship between the two soured over the past few years. He grew increasingly critical of the president as labor turmoil last year racked the South African economy, Africa's largest, telling striking miners that Mr. Zuma didn't care about their grievances.



Mr. Malema also damaged South Africa's image among international investors when he blamed the country's economic woes on white capitalists and called for the government to respond by nationalizing mines and giving white-owned commercial farmland to impoverished blacks without compensation.

But removing Mr. Malema's allies from ANC leadership posts was less a sop to investors than a way to consolidate support for the president ahead of national elections next year, according to Mark Rosenberg, an Africa analyst at Eurasia Group.

"It's a nice coincidence for investors," Mr. Rosenberg said. "But this was purely internal politics, the purging of factions that had lined up against Mr. Zuma."

Write to Patrick McGroarty at [patrick.mcgroarty@dowjones.com](mailto:patrick.mcgroarty@dowjones.com)

### **NEWS ANALYSIS: South Africa must work harder at regional monetary integration**

by Lawrence Edwards and Mark Ellyne/[bdlive.co.za/mars](http://bdlive.co.za/mars) 19 2013

THE 2013 budget appears to place regional integration with the rest of Africa back onto the policy agenda. If line space in the budget speech is a measure of importance, integration with Africa ranks even higher than South Africa's trade relationship with the Brics nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa).

The sub-Saharan African market is extremely important for South Africa, as these countries are major export markets for South Africa's manufactured goods and services. The region's future also looks bright. Europe is in the doldrums, US growth is modest at best and still faces some serious challenges, and strong Asian growth only means exporting more raw materials from SA.

Sub-Saharan Africa is facing a long-term high growth boom with rising living standards, where consumer and industrial goods will be in high demand.

This is South Africa's backyard, where local companies know how to do business. Indeed, there are only a few countries in sub-Saharan Africa that do not have a South African bank; that do not sell South African Breweries beer; and do not love South Africa's retailers such as Shoprite or Game, not to mention the country's telecommunication and media services.

International investors are using South Africa as a hub, or gateway, to enter African markets. Thus, deeper regional integration and development of African supply chains will help the region and South Africa compete more effectively in global markets.

South Africa is no stranger to regional integration. It is a member of the oldest customs union in the world — the Southern African Customs Union (Sacu) — and manages the Common Monetary Area composed of itself and three other regional countries that link their currencies to the rand. This is no small achievement.

South Africa is also a member of the Southern African Development Community (Sadc), which has a regional integration agenda that goes from the free trade area to a customs union and then to a fully fledged monetary union with a common currency. The proposed Tripartite Free Trade Agreement between the East African Community, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (Comesa) and Sadc is also in South Africa's strategic interest.

Regional integration includes: trade policy, industrial policy, infrastructure development and monetary policy.

As noted in his budget speech, Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan has recognised the importance of regional infrastructure, but progress is needed on the other policy dimensions of regional integration.

Inevitably, there are inherent tensions over policies that are good for the region, but disadvantageous to an individual country. But theory and practice has shown that if all countries simply protect their own local interest groups, then we will all be worse off. And protection is not just about reducing tariffs.

Despite the free trade area in Sadc, many countries are still unable to get access to South Africa's market because of stringent and complex "rules of origin". Additionally, travel to neighbouring Sacu countries and you will notice long lines of trucks delayed at the border owing to excessive efforts to regulate and control internal trade flows. These "nontariff barriers" must also be addressed.

Deeper integration with Africa will require South Africa to make concessions with regard to its tariff and industrial policies, including opening up its market to more competition from African firms. This will be politically sensitive, as some African firms have a potential comparative advantage in labour-intensive industries such as clothing and footwear.

But regional integration is also about trade in services, where South Africa has a comparative advantage and stands to benefit substantially. Yet, there is no Sadc agreement for trade in services.

Johannesburg is one of the important international stock exchanges, and could be viewed as the "London" of Africa.

With such an important financial centre, does the Reserve Bank still need a book 4cm thick of exchange controls regulating inflows and outflows of foreign exchange transactions, which tend to disadvantage South African firms? Do you know that if you have travelled abroad recently and still hold foreign exchange after 30 days, you are committing a crime?

For South Africa to become the gateway to Africa for foreign and local investors, the excessive exchange regulations will need to be streamlined. South Africa must play a greater leadership role in the formation of the proposed Sadc monetary union. Sadc cannot form a monetary union without South Africa any more than the European Union could without Germany. Because South Africa and the rand-zone are responsible for about 65% of Sadc gross domestic product (GDP), the rand must be central to any Sadc strategy.

Full Sadc monetary union may not be at hand, but South Africa faces short-term decisions and opportunities with regard to the Common Monetary Area rand zone and Sacu.

Several regional countries, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zimbabwe, are desperate for monetary policy credibility. They could both benefit from joining the Common Monetary Area rand zone. Being a partner would not only reduce their import costs, but their inflation would converge to South Africa's and they would effectively be under Reserve Bank monetary policy.

Zimbabwe is an important and pressing case. It has lost its currency and basically adopted the US dollar, even though it is purchasing most of its imports from South Africa in rand. Moreover, the Zimbabwean diaspora in South Africa is believed to be recycling part of their incomes back to Zimbabwe. As most of Zimbabwe's imports come from South Africa (which adds to South Africa's

GDP) and Zimbabwe companies are earning US dollars, serious consideration should be placed on inviting them to join the Common Monetary Area and Sacu.

There is little doubt South African growth and employment stand to gain from a larger African market and an expanded rand zone. Greater regional integration is a win-win strategy for South Africa and its neighbours.

- Dr Edwards is Professor of Economics at University of Cape Town, specialising in trade policy; while Dr Ellyne is Adjunct Associate Professor of Economics at UCT, specialising in monetary policy.

TANZANIA :

### **BG and Ophir unveil Tanzania gas potential**

by Cathy Adams/cityam.com/March 19, 2013

OIL companies BG Group and Ophir Energy got a boost yesterday from a joint drilling programme offshore Tanzania, as they confirmed it had found good quality gas.

Finishing an appraisal programme, the drill stem test on the Jodari-1 well in the Jodari field – in which BG Group holds a 60 per cent interest and Ophir holds 40 per cent – flowed at a rate of 70m cubic feet of natural gas, with better-than-expected reservoir properties.

It also showed that the development wells could produce at higher rates, BG said yesterday.

The test is one of three successful wells in the field, in 1150 metres of water and around 39 kilometres off the coast of southern Tanzania.

Now the Jodari appraisal is complete, BG Group and Ophir will move to the adjacent Mzia-2 well.

BG Group has already produced seven natural gas discoveries offshore Tanzania.

Nick Cooper, chief executive of FTSE 250-listed Ophir Energy, said the company would continue to “chase the significant resource potential” of the field.

“This excellent flow rate is an important milestone in delivering Tanzania’s first LNG development,” he added yesterday.

“The test results confirm the Jodari reservoir’s world-class quality; and the potential for the field to underpin the LNG development.”

Separately, FTSE-listed BG Group announced its first production from the Everest East expansion project in the UK North Sea, marking the second of seven projects due to be brought on stream this year.

### **Tanzania: Africa Should Ignore Sinophobia Syndrome**

19 March 2013/Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)

FRIENDLY relations and co-operation between Tanzania and China can be traced back to more

than five decades ago, but later this week the nation is set to witness further growth of the historic ties.

Tanzania will host the new President of China Xi Jinping, who will be in the country for a three-day state visit from March 24 - 26. The fact that the Chinese top leader visits Tanzania just a few days after his election to the post earlier this month, speaks many volumes.

It should also be noted that Xi becomes the second Chinese president to visit Tanzania in hardly four years. His predecessor, President Hu Jintao, paid a state visit from February 14 - 16, 2009, which was the first ever by a Chinese president to Tanzania. Tanzanian leaders have repeatedly thanked China for its longterm, selfless assistance and staunch support.

In February 2009, President Jakaya Kikwete rightly indicated that Tanzania regards China as a great friend and indeed, the best friend. President Xi visit to Tanzania comes at the time when increased Chinese engagement in Africa has generated unprecedented attention among academics, diplomats and politicians globally, including those who have shamelessly demonstrated what can be described as "Sinophobia."

It is rather unfortunate that camps including some top and highly reputed diplomats from the West claim that China is just a neocolonist or a mere scrambler for African natural resources. Tanzania, like several other African countries have openly welcomed the growing Chinese economic influence on the continent.

Many Chinese companies are on the ground building roads and investing in the energy sector and are also very active in areas such as telecoms technology. According to data from Tanzanian Investment Centre (TIC), by the end of August 2012, there has been more than 300 Chinese companies investing in Tanzania's infrastructure, agriculture, manufacturing and SME development with a total registered capital of over 1 billion US dollars (about 1.6tr/-).

China has risen from the sixth largest foreign investor in Tanzania, one year ago to the second at present and Chinese investments helped to create over 80,000 jobs. In September 2011, Tanzania proposed to China a plan of building a 532-kms gas pipeline from Mtwara to Dar es Salaam with a total fund of 1.225 billion dollars.

China responded positively and provided concessional loans through the Chinese Exim Bank. The natural gas pipeline project is regarded as another milestone of China-Tanzania cooperation after the construction of TAZARA.

### **Tanzania: Govt Says No Going Back to Analogue Broadcasting**

By Alvar Mwakyusa/Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)/19 March 2013

THE government last week stated categorically that it would not tolerate talks of going back to analogue broadcasting, but media owners still want their plea to have analogue run alongside digital television broadcasting to be considered.

At a news conference in Dar es Salaam, Media Association of Tanzania (MOAT) Chairman, Mr Reginald Mengi, said owners of television stations were not against digital broadcasting. "We have invested millions of dollars in the new technology and we support it, what we are asking from the government is to give citizens more time to get prepared," Mr Mengi, flanked by other media owners, said.

He added: "Ours is a considerate government and we believe our request will be considered by the government." Mr Mengi noted that even as preparations for digital broadcasting started way back in 2006, it was not until 2010 that licences were issued to multiplex operators.

In separate interviews last week, the Deputy Minister for Communication, Science and Technology, Mr January Makamba and the Director General of Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority (TCRA), Prof John Nkoma, insisted that there was no going back to analogue.

"Even developed countries had a lot of time to prepare before migrating to the new technology and they did not hurriedly switch-off their analogue systems," Mr Mengi charged. Mr Mengi said a study conducted by MOAT has revealed that there are seven million television sets in the country of which 2.5 million are in Dar Salaam.

"Majority of people are not connected to digital broadcasting through satellite, cable or decoders and as a result access to television is now enjoyed by very few people," he explained. The Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority (TCRA) had in late 2009 and 2010 issued licences to three multiplex operators namely Basics Transmission, StarTimes and Agape Associates.

StarTimes and Agape have already started rolling-out their decoders save for Basics Transmission, a consortium of Independent Television (ITV) and Mwanza-based Star Tv. Defending the delay to roll-out the technology by Basics Transmission, Mr Mengi said the technology opted by the consortium is the newest in the market which can be acquired after one has placed orders.

"The DVB-T2 (Digital Video Broadcasting) that we will be using is not the one that you get from shelves but through orders and this is why it has taken us long to introduce it in the market," he said. Mr Mengi, however, pledged that all was going well and that Basics Transmission will in the near future introduce its decoders for the market.

The current multiplex operators use DVB-T, a technology said to be on the brink of being phased-out to give way for more advanced DVB-T2. Tanzania is the only country in the region to have switched-off analogue broadcasting in some regions as it prepares itself for the global deadline of 2015 'set by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

### **Tanzania: EU Tobacco Curbs Set to Hurt Developing Nations**

19 March 2013/Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)

TOBACCO exporters from Least Developed Countries (LDCs) including Malawi and Tanzania are likely to lose traditional markets after plans by the European Union (EU) to make cigarettes less attractive to new smokers.

The measures are expected to impact negatively on the sector's growth which according to a 2010 World Trade Organisation (WTO) survey provides more than 60 per cent of the foreign earnings of a country like Malawi.

However, a reliable source from the government told the Business Standard on the condition that he should not be named that the EU market size has started reducing imports even before the decision due to its declining smokers' population. Instead, the fast growing Asian market for tobacco products was offering new prospects to maintain the income and the badly needed foreign exchange earnings for the LDCs.

"There is growing demand for tobacco products from the Asian countries, a situation that gives

confidence to local producers over the threat of losing the traditional western markets," stated the source. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), Tanzania employs a three-specific tax structure for cigarettes.

It levies lower tax on tobacco products that contain more than 75 per cent locally produced tobacco to protect domestic production. For example, for cut rag or cut filler, the tax rate is 17,736/- per kg while other tobacco taxes are 30 per cent ad valorem on cigars, 35 per cent duty on imports from outside the East African region and 18 per cent VAT.

The real average price of cigarettes has been falling and the economy is growing, resulting into greater affordability of cigarettes in the country. The steady total consumption with growing population resulted in slight decrease in per capita cigarette consumption.

The retail price of most sold brand of cigarette is highest in the EAC region. However, the tax share in the retail price is the lowest indicating greater industry profit in the region. The LDCs are deeply concerned over the proposed Tobacco Products Directive (TPD) which is inconsistent with the EU's binding obligations under the TBT (technical barriers to trade) Agreement.

The EU policy proposals came after Australia, last December, enforced a ban on cigarette logos and required packets to be plain olive green with graphic health warnings. To bring in the world's toughest rules on tobacco packaging, it had to win a court fight against major cigarette makers British American Tobacco, Imperial Tobacco, Philip Morris and Japan Tobacco.

The Australian law was seen as a precedent for other countries considering a similar move, including India, Norway, South Korea and Canada. But it could still face an upset at the WTO, where Ukraine, Dominican Republic and Honduras have launched litigation in a bid to force Australia to overturn it.

The EU's draft tobacco law, which aims to prevent young people from taking up smoking, was published in December, just weeks after Australia's rules came into force. It needs to be approved by EU governments and the European Parliament, which could take two years.

The EU needed to provide scientific evidence to show that its plans would reduce tobacco consumption and not just introduce barriers to trade. It also cited WTO rules that require technical regulations "take account of the special development, financial and trade needs of developing country members" to avoid creating unnecessary trade obstacles for poorer countries.

KENYA :

**Kenya's Kenyatta urges ICC to drop charges**

18 Mar 2013/aljazeera.com

Hearing to consider war crimes charges facing president-elect comes a week after case against his co-accused collapsed.

Lawyers for Uhuru Kenyatta have argued that the International Criminal Court (ICC) should dismiss crimes against humanity charges against Kenya's president-elect over post-2007 election violence.

Lawyer Steven Kay asked a three-judge bench at The Hague-based court on Monday to scrap his

client's July trial date and send the case back to the pre-trial chamber, after prosecutors last week dropped all charges against Kenyatta's co-accused.

The evidence against top civil servant Francis Muthaura was critically undermined by the withdrawal of key witness testimony, and Kay said the five charges against Kenyatta, including rape and murder, should now also be reconsidered.

Should the charges against Kenyatta stand, he will become the first-ever president to have to go to The Hague to face a trial that could last at least two years shortly after taking office.

#### Pre-trial hearing

The case against Kenyatta, charged with crimes against humanity over deadly violence in the wake of Kenya's election in 2007, has been further complicated by his victory in a ballot which was held largely peacefully this month.

A status conference, or pre-trial hearing, has been called by judges in The Hague for 14:00GMT on Friday, and will look at the consequences of the withdrawal of the charges against Muthaura for the case against Kenyatta.

Kenyatta and former civil servant Muthaura were among six suspects initially charged by ICC prosecutors with orchestrating violence after the 2007 election, when some 1,200 people were killed.

On March 11, prosecutor Fatou Bensouda said the decision of a key witness to recant testimony had forced her to drop charges against Muthaura.

Bensouda said the decision would have no impact on Kenyatta's case.

Kenyatta's lawyers will call on Friday for the case against him to be dropped or at least postponed, said one lawyer who was familiar with the case, but did not want to be quoted by name.

"The collapse of the case against Muthaura has a profound impact on the viability of the prosecution's case against Kenyatta," the lawyer said.

The prosecutions are based to a large extent on similar evidence, with both men denying any wrongdoing.

#### Ethnic divisions

Kenyatta, 51, elected by a slim margin earlier this month, faces a big challenge in bridging Kenya's ethnic divides even without the court case.

His opponent, Raila Odinga, challenged the election result in court on Saturday, alleging widespread ballot rigging.

The prosecution would then have to show again that it has a strong enough case to go to trial.

Judges have not yet formally dropped the case against Muthaura.

The case is an important test for the Netherlands court, which was set up more than a decade ago as

the world's first permanent war crimes tribunal, but has so far only secured one conviction.

Source:Agencies

ANGOLA :

### Angola Singled Out As Stage of Rapid Economic, Social Changes

18 March 2013/AngolaPress

Benguela — The minister of Health, José Van-Dúnem, Monday, in Benguela, said that Angola is the stage of rapid change in all sectors of economic and social life in various regions, creating new gains and reducing asymmetries with reflecting trends in health.

José Van-Dúnem was speaking to ANGOP on the sidelines of the opening ceremony of the conference on the reform of the national health services and system and the XXII Consultative Council of the Ministry of Health.

According to the Cabinet minister, in light of these changes, the Ministry is committed to promoting a dynamic and comprehensive analysis and consultation, in order to strengthen their ability to overcome the challenges of the future.

He also stressed that this conference aims to share and discuss new methods of financing and runs to optimize the delivery of health care, as well as advancing proposals and solutions to the major challenges facing the health system.

He added that the advisory board that will follow the conference provides a meeting of health professionals from all provinces and all levels of attention from the national health system and other sectors, which will help in inventorying results, in the discussion of what is to be done to improve the sector.

AU/AFRICA :

### Al-Shabaab renews offensive in southern Somalia

By Abdulkadir Khalif (Monitor Correspondent)/Tuesday, March 19 2013

Hooded militants loyal to Al-Shabaab, the radical Islamist group, seized the town of Hudur, the capital of Bakol region, 420 km southwest of Mogadishu.

The militants entered the town late on Sunday when Ethiopian troops and accompanying Somali forces had abandoned the town earlier in the day.

Talking to the media on Monday, residents who disguised the identities for security reasons reported that the Ethiopians loaded their gears and weaponry on a number of trucks before heading westwards.

“By ten o’clock (on Sunday) there was no a single Ethiopian soldier in the town,” said a resident.

Indeed, heavily armed Ethiopian troops supporting Somali government forces captured Hudur town



on 22nd of March 2012. The development denied the fanatical militants the control of another regional capital after the fall of Baidoa town, 240 km south of Mogadishu, the capital of Bay region, a month earlier.

On Monday, the local people in Hudur town confirmed that many people fled the town in anticipation of repeated hostilities and revenge attacks by Al-Shabaab militants.

So far, the Somali government made no statement on the abandonment of the Ethiopians and its forces of Hudur town.

Other reports on Monday confirmed that Al-Shabaab fighters overwhelmed Somali government forces in Awdinle district, 30 km west of Baidoa, seizing the place after two days of bitter confrontations.

Fleeing government soldiers reportedly reached Baidoa on Monday morning.

Somali government forces had seized Awdinle from Al-Shabaab just three days earlier.

Meanwhile, Abdinasir Mohamed Ali Nuhurkey, a journalist working with Mustaqbal Radio, an independent broadcaster in the Somalia capital Mogadishu died as a result of a suicide blast on Monday.

Abdurashid Nur Ibrahim, another reporter with Mustaqbal Radio was badly wounded by the explosion in downtown Mogadishu that killed up to 10 people.

Dr Mohamed Yusuf, the Director of Madina Hospital, the largest referral facility of war casualties in Mogadishu, stated on Monday that four dead bodies and seventeen injured persons were admitted.

Sheikh Ali Mohamoud Raghe alias Sheikh Ali Dhere, the Chief Spokesman of Al-Shabaab, stated on Monday that his fundamentalist movement carried out the attack in Hudur town and the suicide mission at Ex-Fiore Area in downtown Mogadishu.

“A member of al-Istishaad (suicide) Brigade targeted a security service officer,” said Sheikh Ali Dhere. He claimed killing government officers without referring to the large number of civilian casualties including passengers in two public transport buses.

Indeed, General Ahmed Moalim Fiqi, the Chief of the National Security Agency (SNA), said in Mogadishu, “It was obvious that the anti-peace elements (a reference to Al-Shabaab fighters) targeted General Khalif Ahmed Ereg (the Commander of SNA in the city).”

He added that one security officer was killed by the blast, confirming that innocent civilians were badly affected.

[editorial@ug.nationmedia.com](mailto:editorial@ug.nationmedia.com)

### **Somali Capital Hit by Car Bombing That Kills at Least 10 People**

By Hamsa Omar/bloomberg.com/Mar 18, 2013

A car loaded with explosives blew up in Somalia's capital, Mogadishu, killing at least 10 people in an attack the country's al-Qaeda affiliate, al-Shabaab, said was an attempt to kill the government's spy chief.

The car hit a passenger bus traveling in Hamar Weyne, close to the presidential palace and national theater, Prime Minister Abdi Farah Shirdon said in an e-mailed statement. Another 15 people were wounded, according to the statement. Most were civilians, police officer Colonel Hassan Mohamed said by phone.

“One of our Martyrs’ Brigade targeted a suicide attack on the head of intelligence for the apostate government Khalif Ahmed Erig,” al-Shabaab said in a statement posted on the somalimemo.com website.

The al-Qaeda linked Islamist group has been driven from most of its main strongholds in the country by African Union and Somali soldiers. The combined forces started an offensive in 2011, to create the necessary security for a transitional government to become a permanent one.

The Horn of Africa nation in September elected Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud president, marking the 16th attempt to establish an effective national administration since 1991. Previous efforts failed to stem clan-based infighting, rampant piracy off Africa’s longest coastline and al-Shabaab’s insurgency, which has been fighting since at least 2006.

### **Somalia: Intelligence Official Targeted in Suicide Car Bomb Attack**

18 March 2013/Garowe Online (Garowe)

Mogadishu — A suicide bomber killed at least 7 people and injured dozens on Monday, in an assassination attempt of a regional intelligence director who was injured in the blast, Garowe Online reports.

According to government authorities, the National Security Director for Banadir Region, Col. Khalif Ahmed Ereg, sustained minor injuries in a car bomb in Mogadishu's Ex Fiore neighborhood, - where many returning musicians were residing at - and he is being treated at AMISOM hospital.

Col. Ereg spoke to BBC Somali service Monday afternoon and stated that he was in good health although he didn't specify his injuries. Sources tell GO that he will be held at the AMISOM hospital for an overnight stay.

The suicide bomber packed his car full of explosives and targeted a vehicle carrying the intelligence chief and soldiers. Some media reported that the bomber missed his target and hit a bus carrying passengers however security sources told GO that they were auxiliary casualties.

Reports say Col. Ereg's security personnel were killed and injured in the blast. Authorities have not issued the number of government casualties in the blast.

Media in Mogadishu reported that the heavy explosion injured people across the street sitting at tea shops.

With over 15 injuries and at least 7 people killed, residents who spoke to GO said it was one of the worst explosions they seen in a long period.

"The site was gruesome there were bodies mangled everywhere and people were just trying to rush the injured to hospital," said Fadumo Ma'alimo who rushed to the scene after hearing the explosion.

Somali Federal Government (SFG) Prime Minister Abdi Farah Shirdon tweeted, "My personal

condolences to the families of the victims."

Spokesman for the Police Col. Abdullahi Hassan Barre stated to media that there were 8 people killed including the bomber and 15 injuries in the blast.

Al Shabaab claimed responsibility for the gruesome attack and said that they were targeting Col. Ereg.

The blast comes two days after President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud stated that they were winning the war against Al Shabaab.

UN Special Representative to Somalia Augustine Mahiga offered his condolences and stated, "Today's assault was entirely unacceptable".

Mogadishu despite the recent display of bodies of young men on the streets has been relatively stable with a resurgence of business and tourism in the capital.

UN/AFRICA :

US/AFRICA :

CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

EU/AFRICA :

**EN DIRECT. François arrive à l'église Saint-Pierre**

Le Point.fr /le 19/03/2013

180 évêques et patriarches, 1 200 prêtres et séminaristes et près de 200 000 fidèles sont attendus.

Le Point.fr (avec Dominique Dunglas, à Rome)

Cette messe de début de pontificat est très codifiée. Aux yeux de la chrétienté, elle est le signe définitif que le cardinal Bergoglio devient le pape François. Il lui sera remis tous les insignes du pouvoir spirituel et temporel dont jouit le Saint-Père. Des délégations venues de 132 pays se pressent dans la basilique Saint-Pierre de Rome. Parmi eux, on compte notamment Robert Mugabé, président du Zimbabwe, le roi des Belges ou le prince Albert de Monaco. Le Premier ministre Jean-Marc Ayrault et Laurent Fabius, ministre des Affaires étrangères, représenteront la France. Le Point.fr vous propose de suivre en direct la cérémonie.

9 h 05. Les officiels prennent place dans les tribunes pour assister à une messe de plein air. On

aperçoit notamment José Manuel Barroso, Herman Von Rompuy, plusieurs chefs d'États africain.

9 heures. François a endossé un habit blanc sans parement particulier et ne porte pas les chaussures rouges traditionnelles. Au cou, il a gardé sa croix pectorale de fer, renonçant à celle d'or liée à sa fonction. Autant de gestes d'humilité qui se sont multipliés depuis son élection.

8 h 55. Le pape François prend furtivement un enfant dans ses bras. Il descend aussi de sa Jeep pour saluer et bénir un infirme. Les fidèles sont réunis depuis 6 h 30 pour voir le souverain pontife.

8 h 50. La voiture du pape n'est protégée par aucune vitre blindée. Après avoir fait plusieurs fois le tour de la place Saint-Pierre, noire de monde, la véhicule du Saint-Père arrive au pied des marches de la basilique Saint-Pierre.

8 h 45. Le pape quitte la résidence Sainte-Marthe, où il a séjourné pendant le conclave et où il habite encore, en attendant que ses appartements pontificaux soient prêts. Il effectue le tour de la place Saint-Pierre baignée par le soleil debout dans sa papamobile. Tout sourire, il salue les dizaines de milliers de fidèles et officiels réunis dans ce haut lieu du catholicisme où des drapeaux de nombreuses nationalités sont agités.

### Crowds Gather for Installation of Pope Francis

By RACHEL DONADIO and ALAN COWELL/nytimes.com/March 19, 2013

VATICAN CITY — Crowds of well-wishers, pilgrims and sightseers gathered under bright blue skies on Tuesday for the installation of Pope Francis, an event that has drawn heads of state from lands across the world, from his native Argentina to Zimbabwe.

The pope arrived among the faithful gathered below the soaring facade of St. Peter's Basilica in an open-air vehicle rather than a covered version of the Popemobile before celebrating Mass in the basilica itself.

As he toured St. Peter's Square, the pope — who has projected himself since his election last week as a figure of humility and frugality — wore simple white robes, halted at one point to kiss a baby in the crowd and walked among the faithful.

The Vatican said on Monday that representatives of 132 countries and international organizations were expected to attend the installation Mass on Tuesday. One who is raising eyebrows is Robert G. Mugabe, the autocratic president of Zimbabwe. He is the subject of a travel ban by European countries because of Zimbabwe's human rights record, but exemptions allow him to travel to Vatican City, which is encircled by Italian territory, and to United Nations gatherings.

The Vatican spokesman, the Rev. Federico Lombardi, said the Vatican does not issue invitations. "Those who wish to come, can," he said. "No one is refused. No one is invited. We welcome those who want to come."

Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr., who is Catholic, will represent the United States at the Mass. The delegation also includes Gov. Susana Martinez of New Mexico; Representative Nancy Pelosi of California, the Democratic leader in the House; and John J. DeGioia, the president of Georgetown University, a Jesuit institution.

Francis is the first Jesuit pope and the first pope from Latin America.

At the installation Mass, Francis is expected to receive the fisherman's ring, which recalls how St. Peter fished for food and later for souls, and the pallium, a white woolen vestment that symbolizes the role of the pope as a good shepherd. The ring was made from gold-plated silver by an Italian jeweler, Enrico Manfrini.

Pope Francis met privately on Monday with Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, the president of his native Argentina, with whom he had clashed over social issues like Argentina's legalization of same-sex marriage.

The two met for 15 minutes of private conversation before having lunch together, the Vatican said. It did not issue a statement, but in a news conference later in Rome, Mrs. Kirchner said she had found the pope, the former Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires, "calm, confident and at peace, tranquil."

"I could also say that he is occupied and concerned about the immense task not only to govern Vatican City State, but to change things that he knows need to change," she added.

She also said she had asked Francis to intervene in the dispute over the Falkland Islands, which Argentina claims as its own but whose residents just voted to remain part of Britain.

For many years, the relationship between Francis and Mrs. Kirchner has been depicted as mutually hostile, as it was between him and her husband and predecessor, Néstor Kirchner, who died in 2010.

Underlying the strains have been accusations — dismissed by the Vatican — of complicity between the church in Argentina and the military dictatorship of the 1970s and early 1980s in the so-called Dirty War, when as many as 30,000 people are thought to have been killed or "disappeared."

As the leader of Argentina's Jesuits for part of that time, Cardinal Bergoglio repeatedly disputed claims that he allowed the kidnapping of two priests in his order in 1976, accusations that the Vatican is calling a defamation campaign.

But the tensions sharpened more recently over doctrinal issues that reflect Francis' deep conservatism on the social issues that often divide Catholics.

Francis has been — and remains — a staunch supporter of the Vatican's positions on abortion, the ordination of women, same-sex marriage, adoption by gay couples and other major issues.

In 2010, he described a government-supported law in Argentina to legalize marriage and adoption by same-sex couples as "a war against God" and "a maneuver by the devil."

At the time, Mrs. Kirchner called his position "medieval."

Rachel Donadio reported from Vatican City, and Alan Cowell from Paris. Elisabetta Povoledo and Gaia Pianigiani contributed reporting from Rome.

CHINA/AFRICA :

Xi's four-nation tour to open new chapter for diplomacy

Xinhua/March 19, 2013

Chinese President Xi Jinping will kick off a four-nation tour Friday, the first by the top leader since last year's national congress of the Communist Party of China and the just-concluded "two sessions."

During the nine-day tour, Xi will pay state visits to Russia, Tanzania, South Africa and the Republic of Congo. He is also expected to attend the fifth leaders' summit of BRICS countries -- Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa -- in the South African city of Durban.

The upcoming tour has drawn worldwide attention as it will open a new chapter for Chinese diplomacy, which advocates peaceful coexistence and promotes win-win cooperation with others nations.

### All-round Diplomacy

Qu Xing, president of the China Institute of International Studies, a think-tank affiliated with the Chinese Foreign Ministry, said the tour, which spans Asia, Europe and Africa, demonstrated the country's comprehensive diplomatic strategy.

"The visit involves multiple factors and various fields, such as a world power and a neighboring country, developing nations and multilateral (cooperation)," he said. "It fully embodies China's all-round foreign policy of peace."

In addition, the visit will inherit the past and usher in the future for Chinese diplomacy.

China's development cannot be separated from the world, while global prosperity and stability is also strongly linked to China.

Thanks to the reform and opening-up policy carried out over the past three decades, China has entered a new stage in its economic and social development. In a bid to realize its goal of building a moderately prosperous society in an all-round way, the country needs to create a more favorable external environment.

Facing the in-depth development of world multi-polarization, economic globalization as well as scientific and technological progress, both Russia and African nations, as well as BRICS members and other countries, are seeking economic revitalization and a new path for development against the backdrop of the continued global economic downturn.

Moreover, China and Russia will coordinate and jointly deal with international and regional hotspot issues, with expected results in trade and economic cooperation and various people-to-people and cultural exchanges.

Liu Guijin, a former Chinese special representative on African affairs, described Xi's visit to the three African nations as "a trip of friendship and inheritance" that was expected to broaden cooperation and map out the future.

He said, in order to boost trade and economic cooperation between China and Africa, China should pay greater attention to Africa's peace and security, exchange experience in governance, increase investment in Africa's manufacturing sector, and stimulate employment and industrial upgrades on the continent by extending industrial chains.

As for the BRICS summit in Durban, the world is looking to the five leading emerging economies to forge a concrete mechanism for their cooperation.

People are also looking forward to tangible results from a scheduled meeting between leaders of BRICS countries and African nations.

Meanwhile, Xi's visit will have a far-reaching influence on the whole world as it will push forward China's relations with Russian and Africa and boost the development of the BRICS mechanism.

China needs to secure sound interaction and mutually beneficial results with other countries across the world.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has called Russia-China relations the model of a new relationship between two countries, highlighted by close high-level exchanges in their friendly ties.

The Chinese president's upcoming state visit to Russia was "a major event" in bilateral ties and Moscow expected substantial achievements, he said.

Higher-level, Broader Cooperation to Send Message to World

Xi's visit will look for higher-level cooperation, with major projects in the field of economic and trade cooperation.

With China and Russia reaching important consensus last month in energy cooperation, such as expanding their oil trade, significant breakthroughs are expected in such strategic cooperation areas as aviation, nuclear energy and natural gas. Xi's tour will further advance bilateral economic and trade cooperation.

The visit should produce new highlights and expand the cooperation realm.

Booming economic and trade cooperation between China and Africa is one of the most dynamic highlights in global economic growth.

Since the China-Africa Cooperation Forum was founded in 2000, the content of cooperation between China and Africa is increasingly expanding. Xi's visit to the three African countries is expected to accelerate China's pragmatic cooperation with Africa and push a broader implementation of the reached agreements between China and African nations.

Liu said, in the economic realm, China would reinforce its investment in Africa's infrastructure construction, pay more attention to peace and security in the region, and support its integration process.

In the field of governance, China and Africa would exchange views on those pressing issues of common concern, such as the development of rural areas, infrastructure facilities and the economy and society, Liu said.

Xi recently has said Africa's development creates opportunities for China as China's development offers opportunities for the African continent, which inspires wide expectations for his African tour.

The Chinese leader's visit will add new vigor to cooperation mechanisms between emerging economies. BRICS countries, as a new force which has contributed to more than 50 percent of global economic growth, are making the world listen to their common voice.<sup>8</sup> The long-awaited BRICS banking and monetary cooperation mechanism proposed at last year's BRICS meeting in Delhi, India, is ready to progress; the establishment of a BRICS business council and think-tank is

on the agenda; and the trade and customs facilitation measures between BRICS countries are coming into force.

Efforts made by China and other BRICS countries in developing the bloc's structure would inject vigor, strengthen its members' confidence and facilitate the mechanism to bring in more member countries, said Yao Shumei, director of the International Economic and Financial Research Division of the Foreign Economic Institute of China's National Development and Reform Commission.

The breakthroughs in the cooperation mechanism between BRICS countries bore great significance in boosting the sustainable development of the global economy, building a multiple world financial system and pushing both South-South and South-North cooperation, she said.

Xi's visit will spread friendship and bring souls closer. Interaction with the foreign public has an important place on Xi's agenda. Booming cultural and people-to-people exchanges will reinforce the friendship between China and the peoples of other countries.

China and Russia have successfully held such activities as the "China-Russia National Year" and the "China-Russia Year of Language," and are preparing to hold a Tourism Year proposed by leaders of the two countries.

Xi's visit to Russia is expected to provide a chance for the start of a new round of cultural and people-to-people exchanges between the two countries.

In Brazzaville, capital of the Republic of Congo, people are expecting Xi's visit to inspire a genial and fresh wind of "China Style" in the country.

On the beautiful and rich land of Africa stands the monument of traditional friendship between China and Africa, as well as various China-Africa cooperation projects. People expect Xi's visit to Africa to link up the past and the future of China-Africa friendship.

### **Standard Chartered Sees Xi Visit Driving China-Africa Trade**

By Bloomberg News/ Mar 19, 2013

Trade and investment flows between China and Africa will gain momentum this year as President Xi Jinping visits several nations on the continent during his first overseas trip, Standard Chartered Plc (STAN) said.

Xi, who took over from Hu Jintao last week, will visit Russia, Tanzania, South Africa and Congo from March 22 to March 30, according to the official Xinhua News Agency. Rising Chinese investments in Africa will continue, Stephen Priestley, the bank's head of origination and client coverage for the continent, said in an interview in Beijing yesterday.

Trade between China and Africa may have risen to a record last year after growing 20 percent to 163.9 billion yuan (\$26.4 billion) through October, according to China's Ministry of Commerce. Forecasts of a more stable economic environment will help drive trade and investment, Priestley said.

"There are fewer disruptions within Africa than there were in the last year and the year before," he said. "We just saw an election in Kenya, we just had an election in Ghana and there was a transfer of power and there's no disruption to the economy. It's a stable growth pattern."



Standard Chartered, with operations in 16 African countries, plans to invest \$100 million over the next three years, opening 110 branches on the continent and recruiting 950 consumer-banking staff. Revenue from Africa made up more than 8 percent of income last year, according to the London-based bank.

‘Substantial Goodwill’

Chinese investment in Africa totaled almost \$20 billion at the end of last year, creating jobs, tax revenue and training for local residents, Shen Danyang, spokesman for China’s commerce ministry, said at a briefing in Beijing today.

“China has built substantial goodwill in Africa over the years,” said Standard Chartered’s Priestley. “It now needs to make sure it balances that, making sure that certain companies ensure there are skills transferred and that they don’t replace the labor in these countries.”

Nigeria’s central bank governor Lamido Sanusi warned in a Financial Times article earlier this month that Africa must shake off its romantic view of China and accept that it is a competitor as much as a partner and that it’s capable of exploitation as much as Western nations.

“China is a major contributor to the deindustrialization of Africa and thus African underdevelopment,” Sanusi wrote.

INDIA/AFRICA :

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

South Africa: brics-from-below! Civil society gathering during the Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa summit

[links.org.au/March](http://links.org.au/March) 18, 2013

Whose turn to carve?

March 18, 2013 -- In Durban, South Africa, five heads of state meet on March 26-27, 2013, to assure the rest of Africa that their countries’ corporations are better investors in infrastructure, mining, oil and agriculture than the traditional European and US multinationals. The Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) summit will also include 16 heads of state from Africa, including some notorious tyrants. A new \$50 billion bank will probably be launched.

Given how much is at stake, critical civil society must scrutinise the claims, the processes and the outcomes of the BRICS summit and its aftermath. From March 22-27, from university to townships to the city centre, learn about social, ecological, political and economic concerns – and resistances – and join the brics-from-below strategy of rebuilding BRICS, bottom up.

Critical voices must now be heard

Civil society critics point to four groups of problems in all the BRICS:

socio-economic rights violations, including severe inequality, poverty, unemployment, disease, inadequate education and health care, costly basic services and housing, constraints on labour

organising, and extreme levels of violence, especially against women (such as the high-profile rapes/murders of Delhi student Jyoti Singh Pandey last December 16, and in South Africa, of Anene Booysen on February 2 in Bredasdorp, Reeve Steenkamp on February 14 in Pretoria, and countless others);

political and civil rights violations, such as widespread police brutality, increased securitisation of our societies, militarisation and arms trading, prohibitions on protest, rising media repression and official secrecy, activist jailings and torture, debilitating patriarchy and homophobia, and even state-sanctioned massacres (including in Durban where the notorious Cato Manor police hit squad executed more than 50 suspects in recent years);

regional domination by BRICS economies, including extraction of hinterland raw materials, and promotion of "Washington Consensus" ideology which reduces poor countries' policy space (for example, in the BRICS 2012 donation of \$75 billion to the International Monetary Fund with the mandate that the IMF be more "nasty", according to South African finance minister Pravin Gordhan, or in the desire of China, Brazil and India to revitalise the World Trade Organisation to maximise their trading power against weaker neighbours); and

"maldevelopment" based on elite-centric, consumerist, financialised, eco-destructive, climate-insensitive, nuclear-powered strategies which advance corporate and parastatal profits, but which create multiple crises within all the BRICS (as witnessed during the Marikana massacre carried out by police on behalf of Lonmin platinum corporation last August, and in South Durban where R225 billion (US\$25 billion) in white-elephant state infrastructure subsidies for chaotic port, freight and petrochemical industry expansion – and more labour-broking exploitation – are being vigorously resisted by victim communities).

Confusingly to some, BRICS regimes carry out this agenda at the same time they offered radical, even occasionally "anti-imperialist" rhetoric, accompanied by mainly trivial diplomatic actions. Yet the BRICS alliance is incoherent, as shown in the elites' debilitating disagreement over who would lead the IMF and World Bank in 2011-12. In the UN Security Council, BRICS countries seek greater power for themselves, not the collective: repeated bids for permanent membership by India, Brazil and South Africa are opposed by Russia and China. And recall the humiliation we suffered when Beijing told Pretoria's home affairs minister (now African Union chairperson) Nkozasana Dlamini-Zuma not to grant a visa to the Dalai Lama to attend Archbishop Tutu's 80th birthday party in 2011, or attend a 2009 Tibet solidarity gathering. We seem to have lost foreign policy autonomy to Chinese whims.

BRICS in Durban: newest corporate carve-up of Africa

Meanwhile, the African continent has been overwhelmed by BRICS corporations. The rate of trade between Africa and the major emerging economies – especially China – rose from 5 to 20 per cent of all commerce since 1994, when apartheid ended. Destructive though it often is, one of Pretoria's leading objectives, according to deputy foreign minister Marius Fransman, is that "South Africa presents a gateway for investment on the continent, and over the next 10 years the African continent will need \$480 billion for infrastructure development."

"Resource Curse" maldevelopment often follows such infrastructure. This is also true, geopolitically, when it comes to facilitating BRICS investments. In January 2013, for example, Pretoria deployed 400 troops to the Central African Republic during a coup attempt because "We have assets there that need protection", according to deputy foreign minister Ebrahim Ebrahim. Allegations by a former South African official are that these mineral interests include uranium arranged via corrupt heads-of-state collaboration, and Ebrahim has confirmed that Pretoria sent

sophisticated arms to the brutal regime of François Bozizé.

Other extreme cases are the Democratic Republic of the Congo where Johannesburg-based mining capital (AngloGold Ashanti) paid off warlords in a region where 5 million people were killed, and Zimbabwe where Chinese firms and a military junta – along with South African businesses – prop up President Robert Mugabe's rule, together looting the country of billions of dollars worth of diamonds.

In 2010, 17 out of Africa's top 20 companies were South African, even after extreme capital flight from Johannesburg a decade earlier, which saw Anglo American, De Beers, SA Breweries and Old Mutual relocate to London. These firms' post-apartheid role as "new imperialists" was of "great concern" according to leading South African politician Jeff Radebe (now minister of justice):

There are strong perceptions that many South African companies working elsewhere in Africa come across as arrogant, disrespectful, aloof and careless in their attitude towards local business communities, work-seekers and even governments.

Just as in Cecil John Rhodes' day, the greed of South African business is backed by government officials, through the (failed) New Partnership for Africa's Development – praised as "philosophically spot on" by the Bush administration – and useless African Peer Review Mechanism. More recently, South Africa's National Development Plan conceded that there is a "perception of the country as a regional bully".

In bullying Africa, the traditional South African, US, European, Australian and Canadian corporations have been joined by major firms from China, India and Brazil. Their looting has mainly built upon colonial infrastructural foundations – road, rail, pipeline and port expansion – connected to mines, plantations, petroleum and gas.

For these reasons, will Durban 2013 be known as the logical successor to Africa's initial carve-up of Berlin 1885?

Climate crisis amplified by 'BASIC' polluters

Africa's fate depends upon halting greenhouse gas emissions; the Darfur conflict is considered the world's first war caused by climate change, and much more geopolitical upheaval will follow unless global warming is prevented. The climate crisis could kill 185 million Africans unnecessarily this century, according to Christian Aid.

Ignoring this extreme threat, South Africa's post-apartheid government increased the country's CO2 emissions levels to levels far higher than apartheid's, and is now building the world's 3rd and 4th largest coal-fired power plants. Pretoria also actively colluded with Washington to destroy effective global climate governance within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. In December 2009, in a small room in Copenhagen, Barack Obama and the leaders of the BASIC bloc – Brazil, South Africa, India and China – demolished the Kyoto Protocol. As Bill McKibbin of 350.org put it, they "wrecked the UN" by imposing a non-binding deal that will raise average temperatures 4 degrees Celsius this century, and far higher in Africa. How could this happen? WikiLeaks unveiled how US diplomats arm-twisted and bribed other countries to accept the planet-threatening "Copenhagen Accord".

As for the "Durban Platform" signed at the 2011 UN climate summit thanks to another last-minute deal between BRICS and Washington, it "was promising because of what it did not say", according to US State Department adviser Trevor Houser:

There is no mention of historic responsibility or per capita emissions. There is no mention of economic development as the priority for developing countries. There is no mention of a difference between developed and developing country action.

No one can dispute the fact that the Durban Platform has severely limited African countries' ability to defend against climate disaster, and that the name "Durban" is now a climate swear-word.

World financial crisis and a 'new' BRICS Bank

There is similar collusion with Washington when it comes to global finance: in July 2012, the BRICS treasuries sent \$75 billion in fresh capital to the IMF, which was seeking new funds for bailing out for banks exposed in southern Europe. Like Africa's experience since the early 1980s, the resulting austerity in Greece, Spain, Portugal, Cyprus, Ireland and other economies that continue unravelling does far more harm than good to both local and global economies. As for voting power within the IMF, the result of this BRICS intervention was that China gained many more votes (as dollars rule at the IMF), while Africa actually lost a substantial fraction of its share.

And when it comes to reforming world finance, Pretoria's representatives brag that they stand alongside the US government in opposing global financial regulation (such as the "Robin Hood tax" on financial transactions).

BRICS interventions to be discussed in Durban are more dangerous yet. A new BRICS Development Bank will exacerbate the human, ecological and economic messes caused by multilateral financing, given the deplorable track record of precedent institutions in Brazil, China and South Africa – including the Development Bank of Southern Africa, which in 2012 lost R370 million and was termed "shoddy" by its own CEO.

As a result, Africa could become an even more violent battleground for conflicts between BRICS firms intent on extraction. Specific BRICS companies have been criticised by their victims, and require unified civil society campaigning and boycotts to generate solidaristic counter-pressure, whether Brazil's Vale and Petrobras, or South Africa's Anglo or BHP Billiton (albeit with London and Melbourne financial headquarters) or India's Tata or Arcelor-Mittal, or Chinese state-owned firms and Russian energy corporations.

Why we need brics-from-below!

Building a bottom-up civil society network to analyse, watchdog and represent silenced voices of dissent has never been more important. To assist in building such a network, join us from March 22-27.

Friday 22 March: University of KwaZulu-Natal (Howard College)

- 12:30-2pm CCS Seminar on SA Oppressions and Resistances featuring Ashwin Desai and Kagiso Molohe
- 7-10pm UKZN Time of the Writer festival panel (Sneddon Theatre at Howard College Campus), with a focus on critiques of SA political economy and of our stunted transition, including Sampie Terreblanche and Andile Mngxitama

Saturday 23 March: Settlers Primary School, Wentworth, South Durban

- brics-from-below free morning, with space for meetings; reality walking tour of hated Engen oil refinery at 11am
- 1-6pm: Teach-Out, Teach-In in South Durban in Wentworth's Settlers Primary, aiming to educate brics-from-below visitors about adverse conditions in SA communities, and for visitors to educate SA about their struggles
- 6-10pm: cultural event to entertain brics-from-below and link our counter-hegemonic culture to brics popular traditions

Sunday 24 March: Durban 'Reality Tours' and meeting spaces available

- brics-from-below Reality Tours (various sites with inexpensive transport) and meeting sites – To Be Announced

Monday 25 March: Diakonia church centre in central Durban:

- Diakonia as venue for brics-from-below summit, Day 1 - specific eco-social-labour struggles within BRICS
- People's Dialogue panel sessions and other meetings

Tuesday 26 March: Diakonia church centre

- Diakonia as venue for brics-from-below Summit, Day 2 – the role of BRICS in Africa and at global scale
- a special series of talks will occur on the BRICS Development Bank arranged by Mais Democracia (Brazil NGO)
- flights from Durban to the World Social Forum in Tunisia leave as late as 7pm, arriving in Tunis at 1pm
- evening event (including WSF video link) with public debate between brics-from-below and BRICS leaders

Wednesday 27 March: from Diakonia to Durban City Hall to the ICC

- Diakonia as main morning site for brics-from-below meetings of visiting groups
- brics-from-below to visit International Convention Centre around lunchtime

Durban brics-from-below hosts:

groundWork, Friends of the Earth-South Africa (<http://www.groundwork.org.za>)

the South Durban Community Environmental Alliance (<http://www.sdcea.co.za>)

and the University of KwaZulu-Natal Centre for Civil Society (<http://ccs.ukzn.ac.za>)

Where are brics-from-below (and above)?

MARCH 22: UKZN CCS hosts "SA oppressions & resistances" seminar, and Sneddon Theatre hosts Time of the Writer

MARCH 23: SDCEA and Settlers Primary School host brics-from-below community teach-in/teach-out

MARCH 25-26: Diakonia

MARCH 27: City Hall and ICC (where you will find BRICS-FROM-ABOVE)

EN BREF , CE 19 Mars 2013... AGNEWS/DAM,NY, 19/03/2013