



[Chinese President Xi Jinping has promised to cooperate with African nations on the basis of equality, a pledge aimed at easing African concerns about Beijing's growing influence on the continent. In a keynote speech to Africans in Tanzania's economic hub of Dar es Salaam Monday, Xi said China insists on "equality among all countries irrespective of their size and strength." He also expressed opposition to what he called the practice of "the big bullying the small and the strong lording over the weak."]

BURUNDI :

RWANDA :

RDC CONGO :

République démocratique du Congo: "Terminator" comparait devant les juges de La Haye  
26.03.13/Source: ATS

Bosco Ntaganda dit "Terminator" en République démocratique du Congo comparait devant la Cour pénale internationale (CPI) à La Haye.

Soupçonné d'atrocités dans l'est de la République démocratique du Congo (RDC), le chef rebelle Bosco Ntaganda doit comparaître en fin de matinée devant la Cour pénale internationale (CPI) à La Haye. L'homme a créé la surprise en se rendant de façon volontaire pour être détenu.

Surnommé "Terminator" car réputé sans pitié, le charismatique chef rebelle aura l'occasion de

s'exprimer à la fin de l'audience qui doit débiter mardi à 11h00. Celle-ci est destinée à vérifier son identité et s'assurer qu'il a été informé des crimes qui lui sont imputés.

Officiellement, Bosco Ntaganda se trouvait depuis le 18 mars à l'ambassade américaine de Kigali, où, selon Washington, il s'était présenté "de lui-même" pour demander à être remis à la CPI. Il était ensuite arrivé dans la nuit de vendredi à samedi au centre de détention de la Cour.

Cette reddition surprise d'un des seigneurs de guerre les plus recherchés de la région des Grands Lacs a suscité de nombreuses questions. Notamment sur la manière dont il a été en mesure de traverser la frontière rwando-congolaise et de rejoindre l'ambassade américaine sans se faire repérer.

Le chef rebelle est soupçonné de crimes contre l'humanité et crimes de guerre, dont meurtres, viols et pillages. Ceux-ci ont été commis par les Forces patriotiques pour la libération du Congo (FPLC), dont il était chef d'état-major, dans l'Ituri (est de la RDC) en 2002 et 2003.

#### Mandats d'arrêt

Il a "planifié et commandé de nombreuses attaques militaires coordonnées contre les populations Lendu et d'autres tribus non-Hema" dans le but de les exclure du territoire de l'Ituri et de les "éliminer", selon le procureur, cité dans un des deux mandats d'arrêt délivré contre le suspect. Au moins 800 civils ont été tués et plus de 140'000 autres déplacés de la sorte, selon la même source.

Des ONG l'accusent en outre de crimes similaires dans la province minière du Nord-Kivu (est de la RDC), où il était présumé diriger dernièrement la rébellion du M23 qui a explosé en deux factions rivales fin février.

#### Groupes armés

Né au Rwanda, Bosco Ntaganda a fait ses armes au sein du Front patriotique rwandais (FPR) du président Paul Kagame à l'époque où cette rébellion rwandaise mettait fin au génocide contre les Tutsi au Rwanda en 1994.

Certains analystes estiment que Bosco Ntaganda pourrait faire d'embarrassantes révélations sur le rôle de Kigali dans l'est de la RDC. Le Rwanda est en effet accusé, notamment par des experts de l'ONU, d'y soutenir des groupes armés pour y maintenir ses intérêts (fonciers et miniers), ce qu'il nie depuis une décennie.

Thomas Lubanga, l'ex-chef de la milice de l'Union des patriotes congolais, dont les FPLC étaient la branche militaire, avait été reconnu coupable et condamné à 14 ans de prison en 2012 pour avoir utilisé des enfants soldats dans la guerre civile en Ituri en 2002 et 2003.

Source: ATS

#### **RD Congo : des milliers de Centrafricains se réfugient en RDC**

Source : Radio Okapi/25 mars 2013

Le porte-parole du gouvernement congolais, Lambert Mende, annonce aujourd'hui que des milliers de Centrafricains ont traversé la rivière Oubangui pour se réfugier en RDC depuis le début des violences, le 23 mars dernier. « Ne sont entrés au pays que des personnes sans armes. Et nous ne pouvons pas refuser l'asile humanitaire à des personnes non armées. La demande d'asile est une procédure réglementée par le droit international. Nous recevons des gens sur une base humanitaire,

nous ne pouvons pas renvoyer des gens vers un endroit où ils craignent pour leur sécurité ou pour leur vie », indique le ministre congolais, avant de préciser que les autorités congolaises et le HCR contrôlent tous les migrants en provenance de Centrafrique pour s'assurer qu'ils ne portent aucune arme sur eux. M. Mende a par ailleurs noté que la famille du président centrafricain déchu, François Bozizé, a été prise en charge par la RDC, sans mentionner le lieu où ils sont actuellement hébergés. (Source : Radio Okapi)

UGANDA :

SOUTH AFRICA :

### **Troop Deaths Complicate South African Peace Bid**

By PETER WONACOTT in Pretoria and ALEXIS FLYNN in London/online.wsj.com/March 25, 2013

Clashes with rebels in the Central African Republic have left 13 South African soldiers dead, President Jacob Zuma said Monday, a blow for the country's military that could set back Pretoria's ambitions to broker solutions to the continent's conflicts.

The casualties came amid heavy weekend fighting that drove Central African Republic President François Bozizé to flee the country. The nation's security situation remained volatile on Monday, as sporadic gunfire rang out across the capital Bangui and rebels moved to put in place a new government.

The South African casualties came after the rebels, from the disparate Seleka alliance, attacked the base where the troops had been housed since arriving in January to help shore up Mr. Bozizé's government. South African troops successfully defended the base, but in heavy fighting over the weekend, 13 soldiers were killed and 27 injured, with one soldier still missing, Mr. Zuma said.

"They fought a high-tempo battle for nine hours defending the South African base, until the bandits raised a white flag and asked for a cease fire," Mr. Zuma said. "Our soldiers inflicted heavy casualties among the attacking bandit forces."

The bloodshed raised questions about why South Africa intervened in a country where Pretoria didn't appear to have vital interests and whose government was on the brink of collapse. South Africa had about 250 troops in the Central African Republic.

"All in all, South Africa got it wrong," said Paul-Simon Handy, research director of the Institute for Security Studies in Pretoria.

The South African National Defence Force Union, which represents soldiers in labor talks, criticized its government for leaving ill-equipped troops in a country after the president "jumped ship like a coward."

The union called for Mr. Zuma to withdraw troops immediately, "even it entails launching a military offense to relieve our troops in distress." Mr. Zuma said the troops would remain for now.

South Africa's intervention in the Central Africa Republic is already the bloodiest for the country's military since the end of South Africa's white minority apartheid government in 1994. The worst casualties the South African army had previously sustained were in a short, violent incursion into tiny Lesotho in 1998, when nine soldiers died.

In recent years, Pretoria has stepped up involvement in crises far beyond southern Africa, under the slogan "African solutions for African problems." The results of its mediation—from Madagascar to Ivory Coast to Libya—have been mixed.

Still, South Africa has sought to buttress the continent's fledgling democracies. In 2007, South Africa signed a military cooperation agreement with the Central African Republic for training, logistics and infrastructure support. The two countries renewed the agreement in December 2012, and South African troops arrived in January.

By then, Mr. Bozizé's government had come under pressure from a coalition of rebel groups. A January peace deal with the rebels proved short-lived.

As rebels entered the capital over the weekend, Mr. Bozizé fled. He was believed to be in Cameroon on Monday, a senior United Nations official said. That left South Africa to bear the brunt of the rebel attack.

Mr. Zuma said the South African government was in contact with the Central African Republic's prime minister, who was at the airport in an area of the capital controlled by French troops. A number of South African soldiers also have been received in the sector of Bangui airport, according to Col. Thierry Burkhard, a spokesman for the French army.

Over the weekend, France sent 300 troops into the Central African Republic, in addition to the 250 already stationed in the country, according to the French defense ministry. Soldiers from Chad, Gabon, the Republic of Congo and Cameroon are also in the country as part of a regional peacekeeping force.

Michel Djotodia, the leader of the Seleka rebel alliance, intends to become president, according to Eric Massi, the Seleka spokesman. He said the prime minister, Nicolas Tiangay, would retain his position in a government that eventually will pave the way for new elections.

"The duration of his term will depend on how long it takes to secure the country and lay the foundations for a durable political system," said Mr. Massi.

The African Union on Monday suspended the Central African Republic's membership and said it was imposing sanctions on Seleka's top leadership, including Mr. Djotodia.

### Google taps 'white spaces' for broadband in South Africa

by Steven Musil/news.cnet.com/March 25, 2013

The Web giant hopes to prove that unused TV broadcast spectrum can be utilized without interfering with licensed spectrum.

In an effort to show the potential of the unused frequencies in the broadcast TV spectrum, Google has launched a trial program that will tap the so-called white spaces to provide wireless broadband to schools in South Africa.

The Web giant announced today it will use the unused spectrum to provide Internet access to 10 schools in the Cape Town area. The goal of the trial is to show that wireless broadband can be provided over white spaces without interfering with licensed spectrum.

"White space has the advantage that low frequency signals can travel longer distances," Fortune Mgwili-Sibanda, the public policy manager for Google South Africa, explained in a company blog post. "The technology is well suited to provide low cost connectivity to rural communities with poor telecommunications infrastructure, and for expanding coverage of wireless broadband in densely populated urban areas."

In the U.S., the Federal Communications Commission has been working to free up spectrum for wireless carriers, which complain they lack adequate available spectrum to keep up with market demand for data services. However, TV broadcasters have resisted the idea of unlicensed use, worried that allowing others to use white space, which is so close to the spectrum they occupy, could cause interference.

The FCC approved new rules in 2010 for using unlicensed white space that included establishing databases to track clear frequencies and ensure that devices do not interfere with existing broadcast TV license holders.

Google revealed earlier this month that it had begun testing a new database that would allow unlicensed TV broadcast spectrum to be used for wireless broadband and shared among many users. The new database is intended to keep track of the TV broadcast frequencies in use so that wireless broadband devices can take advantage of the unlicensed space on the spectrum.

"White Space technology is gaining momentum around the world," Mgwili-Sibanda concluded. "We hope the results of the trial will drive similar regulatory developments in South Africa and other African countries."

### South Africa's action in central Africa marks a new era

by David Hornsby/bdlive.co.za/mars 26 2013

SOUTH Africa woke up on Monday morning a different place. Thirteen dead soldiers, one still missing and 27 wounded out of a contingent of about 200 in the Central African Republic (CAR). Many are wondering what happened, who authorised the deployment and how it got to this point.

These are valid questions and deserve apposite responses.

But stepping back from the tragedy of the loss of life, South Africa's presence in the CAR signifies a new era for South Africa on the continent. In the past, it has been a reluctant intervener in African conflict. Canada tried to persuade South Africa to deploy troops to the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1996 but South African officials demurred and instead offered relief assistance to refugees displaced to Rwanda. Recent examples expound a similar trend — South Africa preferred not to send troops into the Cote d'Ivoire and Mali conflicts, instead committing humanitarian assistance. This all speaks to regional politics and South Africa's difficult history on the continent.

So what's different with the CAR's case? Are there geopolitical, economic, terrorism or even humanitarian reasons guiding this action? The CAR falls outside South Africa's regional area of influence as it is part of the Economic Community of Central African States. Trade between the two countries accounts for only 0.2% of the CAR's total trade. So pure economic considerations don't

seem relevant. Speculation is mounting that South Africa has "mining rights" in the region, although these are unconfirmed and the trade data do not reflect this. In addition, it would be another first for post-1994 South Africa to use troops to protect its economic interests.

Concerns over the spread of extremism are not a factor. The Seleka coalition of rebels are not religious fundamentalists but a group disappointed that the government is not distributing resources evenly across the region, and not honouring commitments to integrate former rebels into the military.

From a humanitarian perspective, the conflict has displaced more than 170,000 people to other parts of the country and into Chad and Congo. But it seems the rebels do not aim to engage in genocidal behaviour, the fighting has not targeted civilians and the rebel leader is calling for a unity government prior to elections. And South Africa is not fulfilling an African Union (AU) or United Nations (UN) mandate in the CAR. These factors negate a humanitarian justification for South Africa's presence.

So what is the motivation for South Africa?

Beyond the training and capacity development argument forwarded by the government, South Africa's engagement and its backing of the internationally recognised government implies that the African National Congress government has reconsidered its position on intervention in conflict in Africa and that it is aligning itself with the AU's Peace and Security Architecture. The 2004 Solemn Declaration on a Common African Defence and Security Policy privileges the idea of sovereignty and regime security, rather than the Right to Protect doctrine advocated by the UN.

Until now, South Africa has considered the AU policy to mean peaceful mediation and negotiation of conflict. But as the CAR example demonstrates, armed intervention in support of regime security now appears to be legitimate. This new interpretation is only reinforced when considering that South Africa will play a central role in the UN peace enforcement brigade set to be deployed in Congo, which will result in combat and inevitable casualties.

The effect of this new interpretation is twofold. First, it gives weight to the African Peace and Security Architecture that has struggled to have any influence over conflicts in the region by declaring that African problems can also have African solutions. South Africa has an interest in advancing this framework as it now leads the AU Commission, the functional end of the AU, and it is keen to demonstrate that it is an organisation that can implement its policies. Second, it allows South Africa to assert leadership on the continent at a moment when others believe that its role is diminishing. This signals South Africa is not willing to fade into the background when it comes to tackling continental affairs and that it is trying to find other ways to be relevant.

Regardless of how South Africa handles the situation in the coming days, President Jacob Zuma has stated he is committed to ensuring that peace and democracy return to the CAR and is not withdrawing the remaining troops. It seems a new era for South Africa has begun — one that backs policy and rhetoric with action.

[Shark diver details South Africa cage attack caught on camera](#)  
03/26/2013/10news.com

Bryan Plummer's video reaches 2M views on YouTube

SAN DIEGO - A man who filmed a video of a close encounter with a great white shark is sharing



new insight into the frightening moments.

Photos emailed to 10News show Bryan Plummer out of the water after a stint inside a shark diving cage off South Africa on March 21.

He then grabbed his phone to shoot some video when a great white shark swims by the tuna bait and slams through the cage.

Amid the shouts, there is what appears to be blood.

"It was just panic and a lot of confusion," said Plummer, who spoke to 10News via Skype from South Africa.

Plummer then uttered an unusual curse. Seconds later, it becomes clear that the man in the cage, who was on his honeymoon, is OK and shouts of relief are heard.

The blood may have come from the shark's mouth as it thrust into the cage.

"It was really quick thinking; he was able to get underneath and hold his breath," said Plummer.

Plummer posted the video on YouTube. Four days later, it's received some 2 million views.

Some experts who've seen the video say the shark had gone into a feeding frenzy.

A local shark diving operator said the shark may have simply missed the bait.

"If they have the momentum and miss [a] target, they keep going straight. It's very rare, but it happens," said Doc Anes, owner of San Diego Shark Diving.

San Diegan Suzi Woodruff Lacey's daughter is dating Plummer, the man who shouted the curse heard 'round the internet.

"I found it hysterical. Now that's trending. His curse words are trending," said Woodruff Lacey.

"I still get red-faced every time it comes up," said Plummer.

Minutes after the encounter, Plummer decided to go back into the cage to cap off his first shark dive.

"I figured what are the chances it would happen a second?" said Plummer.

TANZANIA :

**Xi visited Chinese experts cemetery in Tanzania**

English.news.cn/2013-03-26

DAR ES SALAAM, March 25 (Xinhua) -- Chinese President Xi Jinping, accompanied by his Tanzanian counterpart Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, on Monday visited a cemetery burying 69 Chinese experts who lost their lives when they were on assistance missions to Tanzania over four decades

ago.

Standing in front of a memorial, the two heads of state paid a silent tribute to the dead.

More than 40 years ago, over 50,000 Chinese experts, technicians, and workers came to Africa. Together, they worked with the people of Tanzania and completed the Tanzania-Zambia Railway (TAZARA), Xi said, adding that more than 60 Chinese died in the process.

They interpreted the great spirit of internationalism with their lives, and, just as the TAZARA, they will be remembered by both the Chinese and Tanzanians, he said.

Today, China and Tanzania are working together to open up a beautiful future for their comprehensive strategic partnership, Xi said, adding that the precious traditional friendship between China and Africa should be cherished.

He also said the two sides should work to make China-Africa cooperation even more fruitful.

For his part, Kikwete said the Chinese experts buried here are regarded as heroes by the people of Tanzania and Zambia, adding their spirit will encourage the Tanzanians and Zambians to carry on the friendly cooperation between China and Africa.

Tanzania is the second leg of Xi's first overseas trip after assuming the presidency. He had already visited Russia.

Later on Monday, the Chinese leader arrived in South Africa for a state visit. In the country, he will also attend the fifth BRICS summit in the port city of Durban on March 26-27, the first to be held on the African continent.

Xi will wrap up his maiden overseas trip as China's top leader in the Republic of the Congo.  
Editor: Mu Xuequan

KENYA :

**Kenya court: Partial recount in presidential vote**

By Tom Odula and Jason Straziuso/ Associated Press/Tuesday, March 26

NAIROBI — Kenya's Supreme Court on Monday ordered a recount of votes in some constituencies in the country's March 4 presidential election.

The court heard arguments from civil society groups and the legal team of Prime Minister Raila Odinga over what they call failures by the election commission to conduct a free and fair election.

The court will decide Tuesday where and how the recount of votes will be done. The petitioners and the respondents are to elect 10 people each to act as observers.

Kenya's electoral commission has been accused of a lack of transparency by the opposition.

The court ordered the recount in 22 of the country's 291 constituencies to see if any of the tallies



exceed the number of registered voters, one of the complaints from Odinga's team. The court also ordered scrutiny of the 33,400 forms that were used to record results.

More than 12 million Kenyans voted March 4 in the country's first presidential election since a 2007 vote sparked weeks of tribal violence that killed more than 1,000 people. Kenyan officials have pleaded with the public not to react to this year's election with violence. So far only minor instances of election-related violence have been reported.

The electoral commission named Uhuru Kenyatta the winner over Odinga with 50.07 percent of the vote. Odinga has asked the court for a new vote, citing numerous failures in the counting and voter verification systems.

One of Odinga's lawyers asked the court to order the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission to make computer server logs available to Odinga's team. The day after the vote, early electronic returns were broadcast on nearly every Kenyan TV station. Then, sometime around midday, the counts suddenly stopped, a problem the panel blamed on a crash of the computer servers.

— Associated Press

**Kenya Wildlife Service Arrests Two Poachers, Seizes 25 Kilograms of Ivory**  
25 March 2013/Sabahi (Washington, DC)/allafrica.com

The Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) arrested two suspected poachers and recovered four elephant tusks weighing 25 kilograms in the Chumvi area of Laikipia County on Saturday evening (March 23rd), Kenya's The Standard reported.

"We suspect they were on the way to sell off the tusks when they were accosted by our personnel," said KWS Assistant Director for Mountain Rift Conservation Area Aggrey Maumo, adding that the suspects are likely responsible for a recent spate of elephant killings in Laikipia North district. He said a third suspect escaped during the operation.

"We are working in collaboration with the police and the Criminal Investigation Department with the aim of arresting more suspects," he said. "We believe the suspects had left rifles which they use to kill elephants since they were going to source for a market for the tusks."

The arrests come one week after poachers killed a black rhino who had recently delivered a calf at Ol Pejeta Conservancy. The calf was airlifted to Lewa Conservancy for care.

ANGOLA :

AU/AFRICA :

**Egypt to Arrest Activists**  
March 25, 2013/online.wsj.com

By MATT BRADLEY

CAIRO—Egypt's public prosecutor issued arrest warrants for five prominent pro-democracy activists on suspicion of inciting violence during weekend rioting, raising fears of a crackdown against opponents of the politically dominant Muslim Brotherhood.

The warrants on Monday came one day after Brotherhood-backed President Mohammed Morsi, in a stern televised address, threatened to "do what is necessary to protect this nation." Rioting in front of the Brotherhood's headquarters on Friday left at least 200 people injured.

Mr. Morsi and his Islamist-backed government say the secular-minded opposition National Salvation Front has orchestrated the violence in league with secularist leaders of the ousted regime of former President Hosni Mubarak. NSF leaders have denied the accusation and condemned the violence.

Public Prosecutor Talaat Abdullah, a Morsi appointee, cited the use of social-networking sites as evidence in the arrests. The prosecutor also summoned a sixth activist for questioning.

The NSF, an umbrella group of political parties and former presidential candidates, has accused the Muslim Brotherhood of illegally trying to dominate politics.

Secularists complained that prosecutors responded quickly to complaints by a Muslim Brotherhood lawyer about the weekend riots, while being slow to respond to complaints about Islamist protests outside liberal-leaning news studios.

The Muslim Brotherhood said it wasn't directing the investigations or prosecutions of activists.

In his speech on Sunday, Mr. Morsi said, "I call on all political forces to not provide political cover for violence, rioting and attacks on private and public property."

After a string of violent confrontations between the two groups, the NSF pulled out of parliamentary elections scheduled for this spring. Many Brotherhood leaders say the opposition leaders are sore losers, eschewing a political process that has consistently voted against them.

"There is a wave of attacks against whoever criticizes the regime," said Bahey al Din Hassan, the director of the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies and a prominent liberal critic of Mr. Morsi's governance. "I think that we will witness in the coming days more and more escalation of such repressive measures by arrest or investigation or repressive legislation and so on."

Mr. Hassan complained that dissidents are increasingly facing the same sort of selective law enforcement that victimized pro-democracy activists and human-rights campaigners under the regime of former President Hosni Mubarak, whose ouster more than two years ago paved the way for Mr. Morsi's rule.

Egyptian newspapers on Monday reported that several prominent political leaders were called to give police testimony to Friday's violence. Though Mohammed Abul Ghar, the head of the Egyptian Social Democratic Party, was among the opposition figures listed, he said on Monday evening that he had yet to hear from prosecutors.

"I think it is a disaster," said Mr. Abul Ghar of the arrest warrants and questioning. "This will end any possible future stability of the country, a proper road to elections and stabilizing the economy."

UN/AFRICA :

#### UN threatens action after Africa violence

From: AAP/March 26, 2013

THE UN security council has condemned the killing of South African troops in the rebel takeover in Central African Republic and says it is ready to take "further measures."

The 15-nation council joined calls by UN leader Ban Ki-Moon for action to be taken against groups responsible for killings and human rights abuses in the huge African nation whose president fled on Sunday.

"The members of the security council strongly condemned the recent attacks and the seizure of power" by the Seleka rebel coalition, said a statement released after emergency talks on Monday.

The council would "monitor closely the situation and, if required, to consider further steps," said the statement, which made no explicit threat of sanctions.

Seleka overran Bangui on Sunday forcing President Francois Bozize to flee and killing at least 13 South African troops in the battle for the capital.

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Diplomats said a proposal by France and other council members to threaten tougher action was rebuffed.

The council slammed the "violence and looting" which led to "the deaths of and injuries to soldiers from the South Africa training contingent deployed in the Central African Republic at the request of the government."

The council said the Seleka rebels had "jeopardised the precarious stability in the Central African Republic" and breached a January 11 peace accord.

It called for an end to violence against civilians, "including foreign communities."

Council members said those responsible for rights violations, rapes and the recruitment of child soldiers "must be held accountable" and reaffirmed a warning that the International Criminal Court could investigate.

US/AFRICA :

#### US, eyeing Xi tour, touts 'positive agenda' for Africa

(AFP)/25032013

WASHINGTON — The United States on Monday said it had a "positive agenda" for Africa to help lift its nations out of poverty as Washington watched a trip to the continent by new Chinese leader

Xi Jinping.

In a keynote speech Monday, Xi addressed leaders in Tanzania as "my dear friends" and spoke of Beijing's "sincere friendship" with Africa, saying its trade with China reached \$200 billion in 2012.

China plans to "intensify, not weaken" its relationship with the continent, Xi said, noting a commitment to provide a \$20 billion credit line to African nations over the next two years.

Asked whether Washington saw itself in competition with Beijing for ties in Africa, State Department acting deputy spokesman Patrick Ventrell said "our relationship is not necessarily defined by competition alone."

"We may have divergent interests in various spheres in Africa, but we continue to promote our positive agenda," he told reporters.

"We want partnerships with all of these countries, and we're looking to promote democracy and sustainable development," as well as "a new way forward for some of these countries to lift themselves out of poverty and to treat disease."

Xi is on his first foreign trip since being anointed president 11 days ago and was in Russia last week. Washington has had awkward ties with both Beijing and Moscow.

But State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said last week Washington was "completely relaxed" about Xi's visit to Russia, since he had already visited the United States last year before he was officially appointed.

CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

EU/AFRICA :

**EU eases Zimbabwe sanctions after referendum**

25 Mar 2013/aljazeera.com

Travel bans and asset freezes on 81 officials and eight firms suspended, but President Mugabe remains on sanctions list.

The EU has eased sanctions on Zimbabwean firms and officials after a referendum approved a new constitution that will curb presidential powers.

The bloc said on Monday that it would immediately suspend travel bans and asset freezes on dozens of officials and companies, however, President Robert Mugabe will remain on the sanctions list.

"The EU ... has today agreed to immediately suspend the application of measures against 81 individuals and eight entities," Catherine Ashton, EU foreign policy chief, said in a statement.

Ten people, including Mugabe, remain on the list, an EU source said.

Two companies, including state-run diamond miner, the Zimbabwe Mining Development Corporation, will also remain on the sanctions list.

The EU has been gradually easing its sanctions against Zimbabwe as part of a strategy to encourage political reform after 33 years of Mugabe's rule.

In a March 16 referendum, nearly 95 percent of voters approved the new constitution, bringing the southern African state closer to an election.

Ashton said the "peaceful, successful and credible" vote was a significant step in the implementation of an agreement that created an uneasy coalition between Mugabe and Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai following violent and disputed elections in 2008.

Presidential elections

Presidential elections are expected to take place later this year.

The decision comes on a day the country's high court released prominent human rights lawyer Beatrice Mtetwa on \$500 bail, after more than a week in prison in a case that has renewed criticism of President Mugabe's security forces.

High court judge Joseph Musakwa set aside an earlier decision by a magistrate to deny Mtetwa bail.

Mtetwa was arrested last week together with four aides of Mugabe rival prime minister Morgan Tsvangirai. Mtetwa was accused of shouting at and taking pictures of police officers who were conducting a search at the home of one of the aides.

But Tsvangirai and civic rights groups fear Mugabe and his ZANU-PF party are already undermining the chances of a free and fair election.

The bail hearing for the four Tsvangirai aides is expected on Tuesday.

Source:Agencies

CHINA/AFRICA :

**Xi Tries to Ease African Concerns About China's Influence**

Michael Lipin/[voanews.com](http://voanews.com)/March 25, 2013

Chinese President Xi Jinping has promised to cooperate with African nations on the basis of equality, a pledge aimed at easing African concerns about Beijing's growing influence on the continent.

In a keynote speech to Africans in Tanzania's economic hub of Dar es Salaam Monday, Xi said

China insists on "equality among all countries irrespective of their size and strength." He also expressed opposition to what he called the practice of "the big bullying the small and the strong lording over the weak."

### Prioritizing Africa

Xi arrived in Tanzania the previous day at the start of a three-nation African tour, part of his first overseas trip since assuming the Chinese presidency earlier this month. He began the trip in Russia before heading to Africa.

In the speech to prominent Tanzanians, Xi vowed to boost relations with African nations, and he renewed a Chinese offer to provide them with \$20 billion in loans over the next two years. But he also downplayed China's role in Africa, saying the continent "belongs to the African people."

Xi has visited Africa five times before. He left Tanzania later for South Africa, where he will attend a summit of emerging economies known as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). The Chinese president is due to end his regional tour in the Republic of Congo.

### China's interests

Analyst J. Peter Pham of the Atlantic Council said Xi is trying to build on the Africa legacy of his two predecessors.

"Jiang Zemin began modern China's re-engagement with Africa after a period when [Beijing] was focused on internal reform," he said.

"Hu Jintao used China's foreign exchange reserves to expand Chinese investment in Africa even further, and shifted it away from being purely resource driven to [gaining market share in] services and industry."

China's fast-growing economy secures almost one-third of its oil imports from Africa. It also buys significant amounts of African minerals that are critical to sustaining Chinese industrial production.

In return for the natural resources, China has built infrastructure throughout Africa and sees itself as a positive force for the continent's development and livelihood. Bilateral trade reached about \$200 billion last year.

The rapid growth of China-Africa economic ties in recent years has led some Africans to accuse Beijing of ulterior motives.

### Brewing backlash

Writing in the Financial Times this month, Nigerian Central Bank Governor Lamido Sanusi said the Chinese practice of taking Africa's primary goods and selling it manufactured ones was "the essence of colonialism." Sanusi said Africa is "willingly opening itself up to a new form of imperialism" by a Chinese nation that should be seen for what it is: "a competitor."

Former U.S. Ambassador to Burkina Faso and Ethiopia David Shinn said the expression of such views by African government officials is unusual.

"Most of them have been very supportive of China's position on the continent," he said. "But the greater China's engagement is in Africa, I suspect the more you are going to hear this kind of

comment, because more activity usually generates greater criticism."

#### Chinese activity

Shinn, a professor of international affairs at Washington's Georgetown University, said an estimated 1 million Chinese have settled in Africa, some as long ago as the early 20th century.

"Most of [the Chinese] currently in Africa are those who have arrived more recently. They tend to be small Chinese traders and businessmen, and that number is growing very rapidly. In fact, it is creating issues in terms of competition with Africans. The number is quite large, certainly a larger presence than the American presence in Africa."

Chinese companies running development projects in Africa often fly in Chinese workers to do the labor, sometimes angering locals who want the jobs for themselves.

Patrick Chovanec, a former economics professor at Beijing's Tsinghua University, said there also is resentment among some Africans hired by the Chinese businesses.

"When Chinese have set up mining operations or other sorts of investments in Africa, there has been tension in the workplace," he said.

"There has been tension that has sometimes led to violence, in particular in Zambia - there have been confrontations between African workers and Chinese management because of the big culture gap between them."

Pham, director of the Atlantic Council's Africa Center, said a flood of cheap Chinese goods into African markets also has led to mass job losses in local industries such as textiles in northern Nigeria.

"Simply, the [Nigerian] businesses ceased to exist because they cannot produce at the rate and cost that Chinese firms are able to do. So in that sense, individual Nigerians may be able to buy cheaper cloth, but an entire sector has been wiped out."

#### Local benefits

Pham said some Chinese investments have produced direct advantages for African communities, such as roads and railroads designed for transporting minerals but also accessible to adjacent farmers.

He said President Xi is trying to ensure that China's interests in Africa enhance local economies rather than distort them - a challenge that also faces the continent's traditional partners, the United States and Europe.

#### China seeks to woo restive African states

March 26 2013/By Bloomberg/David Malingha Doya and Robert Mbakouo Dar es Salaam

Chinese President Xi Jinping will set out plans for mining and infrastructure development on a trip to Africa this week, as China seeks to reassure leaders on the continent who have voiced unease about its trade relations.

During his eight-day trip Xi stops in Tanzania, the Republic of Congo and South Africa, where he



will sign business co-operation deals and attend a summit of the Brics nations of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

Annual trade between Africa and China has doubled since 2007 to more than \$200 billion (R1.85 trillion) and Chinese investment stands at \$20bn, according to Standard Bank.

While African nations welcome the investment and the job creation that comes with it, leaders from Botswana's Ian Khama to Nigerian central bank chief Lamido Sanusi are asking whether the relationship has benefited Africa as much as it has China.

That is a shift in tone after officials welcomed China for taking a different strategy from the West by offering investment without demanding structural adjustments, open markets, democratic reforms or anti-corruption measures.

"There's a belief that since Africa got a raw deal from the colonial West, then the Chinese must be Africa's best friend," George Ayittey, a Ghanaian economist and president of the Free Africa Foundation based in Washington, said.

"But the evidence doesn't show that, and the main criticism is that they are building infrastructure in exchange for Africa's resources in deals that are structured to favour China."

Xi arrived in Tanzania on Sunday. He met President Jakaya Kikwete before the two signed 16 economic co-operation agreements worth as much as \$16bn. The country also signed a loan agreement with China Merchants Bank for a planned \$10bn port at Bagamoyo on the Tanzanian coast.

Xi will attend a two-day summit of leaders from the Brics countries that begins in Durban today. He arrives in the Republic of Congo on Friday for talks with President Denis Sassou-Nguesso.

Seven of the 10 fastest-growing economies are in sub-Saharan Africa, according to the International Monetary Fund.

That expansion contrasted with subdued growth in mature markets like the US and Europe and was attracting Chinese businesses looking to sell goods to emerging economies, particularly "highly populated and increasingly wealthy" ones in Africa, Standard Bank said in a research note last November.

More than half of China's imports from Africa last year were coal and oil, with iron ore and copper making up a further 14 percent, Jeremy Stevens, a Beijing-based economist at Standard Bank, said.

Its exports to the continent were mainly manufactured goods such as electrical equipment, machinery, vehicles and clothing, he said.

That has caused some concern among African leaders. Sanusi compared China's purchase of primary goods and sale of manufactured items to the continent to British colonial policies. He also criticised Chinese investment in African infrastructure that mostly failed to transfer skills to local communities.

"Africa must recognise that China, like the US, Russia, Britain, Brazil and the rest, is in Africa not for African interests but its own," Sanusi said in an opinion article in the London Financial Times on March 11.

Khama said last month that he was echoing comments voiced privately by other African presidents when he expressed frustration at government dealings with Chinese companies.

Botswana blames China National Electric Equipment for delays in building generators at the Moropule B coal-fired power plant that have resulted in outages

“We

have had some bad experiences with Chinese companies in this country,” Khama told Business Day. That’s a different tone from last year, when Ghana’s then vice-president, John Dramani Mahama, said China had become a “significant source of credit”, while borrowing from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank was “quite tiresome and comes with a lot of strings”.

China paid for and built the AU’s \$200m headquarters in Addis Ababa that was opened last year.

Last July, Xi’s predecessor, Hu Jintao, pledged \$20bn in new loans for African infrastructure and manufacturing. Since then, Chinese companies have faced labour disputes in Zambia and Niger, kidnappings in Sudan and Egypt, and the deaths of employees in attacks on projects in Nigeria and Cameroon. – Bloomberg

INDIA/AFRICA :

**French troops kill 2 Indians in Central Africa; Hollande regrets**

Tuesday, Mar 26, 2013/Agency: PTI

French troops killed two Indians and wounded six others when they opened fire on vehicles approaching the airport in the capital of the Central African Republic, as the strife-torn country was overrun by rebels.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh yesterday received a letter here from France's President Francois Hollande expressing regret for the tragic incident.

Two Indian nationals were killed and six others seriously injured by French troops at Bangui Airport in the Central African Republic this morning, the letter said.

French troops, were guarding the airport, when the incident took place. Around 300 French soldiers were dispatched to the Central African Republic over the weekend to reinforce troops already present in the capital Bangui, which was seized by rebels on Sunday.

While conveying his condolences, President Hollande assured Prime Minister Singh of his firm determination to investigate the tragic event and assured that the injured were under the care of French medical teams.

Singh expressed his deep distress at the loss of innocent lives. He has directed that all efforts be made to ensure the safety of approximately 100 Indian nationals in the Central African Republic, mainly in and around Bangui.

The Indian Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Congo, who is concurrently accredited to the Central African Republic, is making necessary arrangements for the return of the mortal remains of

the Indian nationals in accordance with the desires of their next of kin.

Singh yesterday arrived in South Africa on a four-day visit to attend the BRICS Summit here that could launch a development bank for the five-nation grouping.

The Prime Minister is leading a high-level delegation including Finance Minister P Chidambaram, Commerce Minister Anand Sharma and National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon.

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

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