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BURUNDI :

RWANDA :

At UN, Rwanda blocks role for Criminal Court

April 16, 2013/By Peter James Spielmann/dailystar.com.lb

UNITED NATIONS: Rwanda won a behind-the-scenes battle Monday to keep the U.N. Security Council from recommending any role for the International Criminal Court in solving conflicts, violence and human rights abuse in Africa, saying the Hague-based court "condemns crimes committed by some but not others."

Rwanda is angry that the ICC has indicted Bosco Ntaganda and Laurent Nkunda, M23 rebels in eastern Congo, who are reported to be backed by Rwandan President Paul Kagame.

Analysts have speculated that Kagame may not want to see Ntaganda testify at The Hague court because of his knowledge of military deals and illicit mineral extractions between Congo and Rwanda.

The Security Council held a broad general debate Monday over ways that the U.N. system and other

global players can help solve Africa's problems, but Rwanda opposed adoption of a non-binding statement that would recommend that the Hague-based International Criminal Court be part of the solution. Council statements must be adopted unanimously, and Rwanda blocked consensus.

French Ambassador Gerard Araud said that "The International Criminal Court must be able to punish perpetrators of the most serious crimes. There can be no peace without justice. And that is why we regret the absence of a reference to the International Criminal Court" in the council's statement. He had led six other council nations in trying to laud the ICC for ending impunity for global crimes.

Rwanda presides over the Security Council this month, and Rwandan Foreign Minister Louise Mushikiwabo came to New York to steer the debate.

She told reporters after the debate that the ICC is "a court that is not practicing justice, but more politics. We believe that the time for Africa to be subjected to a wagging finger, punishing finger from the West, is over."

She told the council: "We do not believe that the International Criminal Court, as it operates today, fulfills a constructive role in preventing conflict. Rather than delivering justice and preventing impunity, the practice is that the International Criminal Court has shown itself subject to political manipulation from outside conflict zones, as well as between vying factions within them. We cannot therefore support an International Criminal Court that condemns crimes committed by some but not others, or imposes itself on democratic processes, or the will of sovereign people."

She issued a similar denunciation last month after eastern Congo's M23 rebel leader Ntaganda surrendered to the U.S. Embassy in Rwanda. He later was flown to The Hague to stand trial for crimes against humanity at the International Criminal Court.

A United Nation panel of experts last year said that both Rwanda and Uganda commanded and supported Congo's M23 rebels. Both countries deny the charge.

ICC investigation of the links could lead to charges against Kagame himself.

The ICC, the world's first permanent war crimes tribunal, came into being in 2002 and the treaty that created it has been ratified by 121 nations. Prosecutors have so far indicted suspects in seven different countries, all of them in Africa including Congo, Sudan, Kenya, Libya and Ivory Coast.

Rwanda: Nyaruguru District - the Tale of a Reconciled Community

15 April 2013/News Of Rwanda

Eulade Musonera, in his mid-forties, stands up amid over 1,000 grey-scarved people in a playground within the Kibeho Catholic Church compound in Nyaruguru district, Southern Rwanda, narrating harrowing accounts of how, in the same month of April in 1994, he and his fellow Tutsi had sought sanctuary right here and put up a self-defense campaign with stones and sticks before machetes, guns and grenade-wielding militias out-powered them, killing thousands of them and just a few like him surviving the Genocide after fleeing to neighbouring Burundi.

"Roadblocks were set up everywhere to prevent us from fleeing. Corpses were almost everywhere, too. And the killers looted and ate up our cows", Musonera recalls as Nyaruguru district and the rest of Rwanda ended the week-long Genocide commemoration last Saturday.

But Musonera, who now owns a mini-hotel in Kibeho sector, says he has managed to move forward with hope - not allowing the sorrow of the Genocide to engulf him.

Bertin Muhizi, head of IBUKA - an umbrella organisation of Genocide survivors – in Nyaruguru district backs up Musonera's frame of mind.

"We have to keep commemorating the Genocide [against the Tutsi] through building a spirit of hope [among Genocide survivors] towards a bright future and strive for reconciliation. And for that to happen, we don't have to be engulfed with sorrow", said Muhizi.

Unity and Reconciliation follow suit:

Just like Musonera, 53-year-old Fidèle Seburinkaho is a Genocide survivor, too. 19 years after the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, Seburinkaho says his community has reconciled and now he doesn't mind living side by side with Genocide convicts.

"Life has come back to the normal. I can share beer with them [Genocide convicts] in a pub and even Genocide survivors can marry girls from those whose parents took part in the Genocide and vice versa", said Seburinkaho, a resident of Nyange cell in Kibeho sector, whose father and four siblings were killed during the Genocide.

"In fact, there is no problem among us. What happened [the Genocide] is over now and we are moving forward", 43-year-old Domitilla Mukarutabana, Seburinkaho's wife, jumped in as saying. Mukarubayiza Odette, 63, and not a Genocide survivor, agrees with her two neighbours - Mukarutabana and Seburinkaho - that life has come back to the normal.

"Our girls are getting married by Genocide survivors", Mukarubayiza said straightforward as one of the many indicators of reconciliation. According to the Rwanda Reconciliation Barometer report released in 2012 by National Unity and Reconciliation Commission, 80 percent of the country's 10.5 million population have so far reconciled after the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.

Call for "self-reliance"

Presiding over the function to mark the end of the Genocide commemoration week in Nyaruguru district last Saturday, Rwanda's Southern Province Governor, Alphonse Munyantwali, said that reconciliation, among others, is feasible today because the current Rwandan Government values all Rwandans and strives for their "self-reliance".

"Today, Rwandans can strive for self-reliance because they have value", said Governor Munyantwali, adding that unlike in the past regimes, there is no more room for "divisionism" and "nepotism" in Rwanda.

"Let's keep striving for self-reliance and ensure that we give due attention to those most in need of assistance", he urged.

The end of the Genocide commemoration week last Saturday means, among others, that the national flag is now flying normally - no longer at half-mast.

Nevertheless, other Genocide commemoration programmes including decent burials of recovered remains of those killed during the Genocide, are expected to carry on for 100 days just in the memory of slightly over three months - from April to July 1994 - that the Genocide lasted and claimed over a million lives according to Rwanda's official statistics or over 800,000 people

according to the UN account.

RDC CONGO :

UGANDA :

SOUTH AFRICA :

South Africa: Elephant in national park overturns vehicle carrying tourists, injuring 1
April 15, 2013/Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG – South African officials say an elephant has overturned a vehicle carrying two tourists, injuring one of them.

A statement from Kruger National Park says the tourists are of "Chinese origin."

The statement says an elephant in the park attacked the vehicle on a road at 6:30 a.m. Monday, and a medical team in a helicopter rushed to help the injured male driver. He was taken to a hospital for further treatment.

Park spokesman William Mabasa says it is unclear why the elephant became aggressive. But he is appealing to the public to be alert in the park and try not to get too close if they see an elephant approaching on the road.

The vast Kruger park lies in South Africa's northeast, next to Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

South Africa: Battling unemployment
15 Apr 2013/oxfordbusinessgroup.com

South Africa |

The local economy is struggling to overcome twin hurdles – an inflated unemployment rate that siphons off state funding for social services and a lack of skilled workers to fill the many positions that are currently vacant.

On March 19, Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) issued its employment report for the last quarter of 2012, showing there had been a 0.3% rise in employment numbers, with some 22,000 positions added to the formal, non-agricultural sector. This took the total employment figure for the sector to 8.46m, with the rise continuing a trend over the preceding three quarters, creating around 82,000 jobs.

The increased pace of hirings did not make a significant impact on the unemployment rate,

however, which edged down to 24.9% at the end of 2012 from the 25% recorded in the third quarter. Youth unemployment, covering jobless South Africans aged 15 to 24, remains far higher, accounting for around one-half of this age bracket, and it is estimated that up to 4.5m people are actively seeking work.

There were also concerns that the increase in employment in the final quarter of 2012 could be reversed. Many of the new jobs added in service sectors, such as hospitality and tourism, are traditionally more active in the late spring and summer months, but are prone to shedding jobs as the weather cools.

Merina Willemse, an economist with the Efficient Group, a local financial services firm, says the way to ease unemployment is to address another of the economy's concerns, the skills deficit. "Jobs growth has not been sustainable thus far and there is not much guarantee that it will be sustainable," Willemse told Business Times on March 20 after the employment figures came out. "The focus should really be on skills development. This is the only way to create jobs, given that our economy is not growing strongly."

According to a report prepared by international consultancy firm Grant Thornton, the skills deficit in South Africa is widening, with the gap likely to impact economic growth in the future. The study, which was released in mid-March, said 83% of South African businesses reported a shortage of technical skills when it came to recruitment. This was well above the 61% average of the other BRICS member countries, Brazil, Russia, India and China, or the global average of 64%.

Ian Scott, the CEO and managing partner at Grant Thornton's Cape Town branch, said that some of the largest sectors were among those struggling to bridge the skills gap. "When the data is split according to sector, we note that South Africa's mining industry is finding the shortage of technical skills the most challenging," Scott said on March 18. "South Africa urgently needs to address the enormous dichotomy between the skills shortage and unemployment."

The lack of skilled personnel is also hurting the construction industry, according to Werner Franck, managing director of Vertias, a construction management and property services firm.

"With an increasing number of small and medium-sized enterprises emerging in the construction sector, it becomes increasingly challenging for authorities to regulate the level of skills and training of the country's construction workforce," Franck wrote in an article carried by trade daily Bizcommunity on March 4. "Added to this is a lack of skills at management level, where a shortage of skilled project managers often has significant consequences for building projects."

Eddie Majadibodu, chairperson of the National Skills Authority (NSA), an agency of the Department of Labour tasked with helping to develop strategies to boost skills levels in the workforce, said more emphasis had to be put on providing skills that were in demand by the labour market.

"We should now be able to identify the new labour trends in the information technology, finance or agriculture industries. We will then have enough time to develop the people," Majadibodu told The New Age in early March. "We need career guidance for youth on several scales to identify what the economic shift will be. We have to guide the youth where the scarcity in the labour market is in order for them to find jobs."

South Africa is making headway in this regard and is working to identify new avenues for training up skilled staff, according to Hlengiwe Mkhize, the Deputy Minister of Economic Development. "It is a challenge that we are now giving a lot of attention as a country," she said on March 27.

Speaking on the sidelines of the 5th BRICS (Brazil-India-China-South Africa) Summit in Durban in late March, Mkhize said South Africa would borrow from Brazil's model to help bridge the skills gap, citing that country's network of state-funded technical institutes, a contributing factor in the Brazilian economy's recent growth and rapid industrialisation.

While growth is expected to remain sluggish in 2013, the South African economy is forecast to gain momentum in 2014, with GDP tipped to increase by 3.4%. However, this rate of growth may not be enough to lower unemployment figures; many estimates say the country needs to see at least 6% growth for that to happen. Nevertheless, if the country is to shorten the jobless queues, some skilful bridging of the talent gap will be needed.

TANZANIA :

Rebels urge Tanzania to scrap sending UN troops to RDC

Date: Apr 16, 2013/newvision

KINSHASA - The rebel M23 movement has asked Tanzania to scrap plans to contribute troops to the future UN intervention brigade which is designed to fight armed groups in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

The M23 rebels, who deny UN expert claims that neighbouring Rwanda and Uganda support them, "have consistently prevailed over much larger and better equipped forces," the movement's political leader Bertrand Bisimwa warned in a letter to Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete dated April 11.

"The same will happen to the Intervention Brigade if your wisdom does not prevail to intervene and stop this dangerous adventure in its tracks," Bisimwa wrote.

"For this reason the M23 invites the parliament and the people of Tanzania to carefully re-consider this situation and prevail upon the Tanzanian Government... not to send the sons and daughters of this noble nation to engage in an absurd war against their Congolese brothers," he said.

The M23 warned Friday that they would retaliate if attacked by the intervention brigade which would be part of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission tasked with protecting civilian populations.

On March 28, the UN Security Council unanimously approved the creation of a brigade of more than 2,500 troops with a mandate to conduct "targeted offensive operations" against rebels in eastern DR Congo, a mineral-rich area that has been gripped by conflict for more than two decades.

The new UN force in the east is due to consist of three infantry battalions, an artillery company, a reconnaissance company and "special forces".

The troops are being mustered by South Africa, Malawi and Tanzania.

It marked the first time that UN peacekeepers were given a mandate to conduct offensive operations. Many rebel movements and armed tribal militias are active in the east of the country.

M23, named for a peace deal with the government signed on March 23, 2009, emerged out of an

ethnic Tutsi mutiny in the army in April 2012, on the grounds that Kinshasa was not upholding the pact. The rebels briefly seized the North Kivu provincial capital Goma in November last year.

In a letter dated April 3, the M23 had already urged the South African parliament to not contribute troops to the brigade.

The Congolese foreign minister Raymond Tshibanda said the brigade would be deployed by the end of April, but the United Nations expects it to be operational in several weeks.

KENYA :

Kenya Supreme Court to Explain Election Ruling

Peter Clotey/[voanews.com/April 15, 2013](http://voanews.com/April%2015,%202013)

Kenya's Supreme Court judges plan to give details on Tuesday of their ruling that confirmed the victory of Uhuru Kenyatta in last month's presidential election.

"The Kenyans are really waiting [for] what explanation the Supreme Court is going to give, because this explanation will actually determine whether in 2017 [vote], anybody will want to file a petition in the Supreme Court," said James Mwamu, president of the East Africa Law Society.

"If a good explanation is not going to come from the Supreme Court, I foresee that in 2017 people will say we will not go to that court at all," Mwamu said.

The Independent Electoral and Boundary Commission (IEBC) declared Uhuru Kenyatta, the son of the country's founding leader, president-elect with 50.07 percent of the March 4 vote, enough to avoid a runoff.

But former Prime Minister Raila Odinga's Coalition for Reforms and Democracy (CORD) challenged the election results, citing what it said were voter irregularities. Odinga, however, accepted the ruling of the court after all of the six judges unanimously upheld Kenyatta's victory.

Mwamu says Kenyans also are expecting to know how the biometric voter identification system failed during the general election.

"I will want to see how the Supreme Court is going to justify this issue of free and fair [election], when their own audit revealed that there were a series of anomalies in the manner in which the elections were conducted, yet they came out with a verdict that it was free and fair," said Mwamu.

He says the explanation needs to be credible following media speculations that some of the justices were either threatened or bribed ahead of the ruling.

Some analysts contend that the explanation of the judges will be an academic exercise, since it will not change the outcome of the presidential vote. Mwamu disagreed saying, the explanation will be significant in how Kenyans view the credibility of the judiciary.

"If the ruling is not credible, people are going to look at the judiciary and say, 'is this the new judiciary we were expecting to serve the country?' The other significance this is going to have is, going forward will anybody be able to put their cases to the judiciary and say, 'I have trusted this

institution that it is going to be an impartial and independent arbiter of the cases that we have?” Mwamu asked.

He says Kenyans would want to have faith in the Supreme Court’s ability to be independent and impartial when the judges rule on cases brought before the court.

“We want to be proud to know that our Supreme Court delivered one of the rulings that can be relied upon by other countries in the years to come,” said Mwamu.

“But, if they deliver a ruling which could have been written by a first year law school student,” he added, “then we would be able to say that really they let us down.”

Kenyan Entrepreneur Stands To Make Millions After Sale To L’Oreal

4/15/2013/forbes.com

L’Oreal, the world’s leading cosmetic company has acquired the health and beauty division of Interconsumer Products, one of Kenya’s largest manufacturers of personal care and beauty products.

The deal was closed on Friday April 12 and was announced only today by Wang’ombe Kariuki, the Director General of Kenya’s Competition Authority. Meanwhile, the Kenyan founder of Interconsumer Products, Kenyan businessman Paul Kinuthia, is expected to earn tens of millions of dollars from the acquisition.

The entire details of the deal still remain sketchy, but according to a transaction adviser on the deal who spoke to Business Daily, Kenya’s largest business newspaper, the transaction is worth billions of shillings. The shilling currently trades at Ksh 84.5 to the dollar, so a deal in the multi-billion shilling bracket would be worth at the very least, Ksh 3billion (\$35.3 million).

“We closed the deal on Friday at 11am and all I can say for now is that the transaction is worth billions of shillings. All the details will be made public on Monday (today) and it’s a great Kenyan story for a man who started the business in Kariobangi and has now joined the billionaires’ club,” said the advisers in the transaction who asked for anonymity because L’ Oreal is yet to clear the acquisition with regulators in France and London where it is listed.

According to the terms of the deal, L’Oreal would acquire only the health and beauty business of Interconsumer Products from Paul Kinuthia. Kinuthia will still continue to own and run the non-health and beauty businesses of the group like the diapers and sanitary division.

Interconsumer Products is a Kenyan persona care and beauty products company, which manufactures everything from baby lotions to powder, Shampoos, Hair gels, body and facial creams and relaxers. The company was founded in 1995 as a sole proprietorship by Paul Kinuthia, a relatively unknown Kenyan businessman.

Kinuthia has a remarkable story. In 1995, he started off manufacturing shampoos and conditioners from a makeshift apartment in Nairobi with start-up capital of Ksh 3,000 (\$40). He made these products manually using plastic drums and a huge mixing stick and heating oils, delivering his products by handcart to local salons and hairdressers. In the beginning, commercial banks refused to fund his venture while mainstream salons, beauty parlours and large retail outlets refused to stock his product because it was too native.

As the demand for his products grew, Kinuthia moved the business into bigger premises in

downtown Nairobi and expanded his product range to include hair gels and pomades. While the bigger, sophisticated salons and supermarkets snubbed his products, they were very popular with street side local hairdressers because of their availability and significantly lower prices in comparison to the products on the shelves of the big retail outlets. As the products became more popular with local hairdressers, Kinuthia ploughed back his profits into moving into an even bigger place, financing growth, increasing his production capacity and extending his product range. In 1996, he incorporated a limited liability company and went on to produce body lotions and hair treatments. The new company set up better operational strategies, laying emphasis on quality and improving its packaging. By the late 90s, the company's products were commercially available across Kenya's mainstream retail and wholesale chains and were already commanding a sizable market share. By 2001, the company was already exporting its products to neighbouring Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda.

As revenues shot through the roof, Kinuthia and his team continued to innovate, diversifying their product range to include diapers, soaps and baby jelly. It is now East Africa's dominant manufacturer of personal care and beauty products and owns some of Kenya's most revered brands like Nice & Lovely, Queen Elizabeth, Clarion and Bouncy. In Kenya, Interconsumer Brands is rivalled only by Tiger Haco Industries, a leading manufacturer of body lotions, hair products, ballpoint pens and food products.

In 2011, L'Oreal opened up a regional office in Nairobi to get a slice of the country's burgeoning low-end cosmetic market. Analysts believe the French cosmetics giant has faced stiff competition from local players like Interconsumer Products and that it had targeted Interconsumer for a takeover since 2011.

Speaking on the deal, Patricia Ithau, L'Oreal East Africa's managing director said to Kenya's Business Daily: "A big opportunity presented itself and we cannot ignore it. There is a developed personal care market here that we are looking to further tap into. We have been in the market mainly through traders and a structured distribution network had been lacking."

The writer put a call through to Interconsumer to speak to Paul Kinuthia. He was not available.

Kenya to Address, Prevent Flooding Disasters

15 April 2013/Sabahi (Washington, DC)

Kenya has set aside 1.6 billion shillings (\$19 million) for relief for the thousands of people displaced by flooding, Kenya's Capital FM reported Sunday (April 14th).

Floods in Kenya have caused widespread destruction, displacing over 2,000 people and leaving 36 dead so far. While the rains have been worst along the coast and in western Kenya, a bridge partially collapsed just outside Naivasha, a market town in Rift Valley Province, and many there have had their homes flooded and lost property. [AFP] Play Video

Vice President William Ruto said 500 million shillings (\$6 million) would be spent on road repairs, 100 million shillings (\$1.2 million) on providing food and clothing, and 1 billion shillings (\$12 million) to address other emergencies.

President Uhuru Kenyatta also plans to establish a Disaster Management Authority to manage similar incidents in the future, Ruto said.

"I want to assure Kenyans that we are putting everything in place to contain floods among other

emergencies which might arise so as to eliminate guesswork," he said. "The government departments responsible for mitigation and management will ensure food [and] drugs are provided to the affected families, besides assuring that roads which have been destroyed by the floods are repaired to enable Kenyans to concentrate on their day-to-day activities."

Western parts of Kenya and Tanzania are expected to experience normal to above average rains through May, the Famine Early Warning Systems Network has predicted.

ANGOLA :

AU/AFRICA :

La justice égyptienne ordonne la libération de Hosni Moubarak, mais il reste détenu

Le HuffPost/AFP/15/04/2013

INTERNATIONAL - La justice égyptienne a ordonné lundi 15 avril la libération conditionnelle de l'ex-président Hosni Moubarak, poursuivi pour la mort de centaines de manifestants, mais il reste en détention dans le cadre d'autres affaires, a annoncé la télévision d'Etat.

"La Cour d'appel libère Moubarak dans l'affaire du meurtre de manifestants et il reste détenu dans (le cadre) d'autres affaires", a affirmé dans un bandeau la chaîne Nile News. L'avocat de l'ancien président, détenu depuis avril 2011, avait demandé sa libération au motif que son client avait dépassé la période maximale de détention préventive, qui est de deux ans, selon les médias locaux.

En dépit de la décision de la cour d'appel, Hosni Moubarak reste pour l'instant détenu, le parquet l'ayant récemment placé en détention préventive dans une nouvelle affaire de corruption.

Hosni Moubarak, contraint à la démission le 11 février 2011 par un soulèvement populaire, a été condamné en juin 2012 à la réclusion à perpétuité pour sa responsabilité dans la mort de manifestants pendant la révolte. La Cour de cassation a annulé ce verdict en janvier et ordonné un nouveau procès, dont la première audience a tourné court samedi 13 avril avec le retrait du juge, mis en cause pour l'acquittement de dignitaires du régime déchu dans un autre procès.

Iran: On Africa Trip, President Will Visit a Uranium Producer

By RICK GLADSTONE/nytimes.com/April 15, 2013

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran has started a three-nation Africa trip that includes a visit to Niger, a leading producer of uranium. Mr. Ahmadinejad, left, is also visiting Benin and Ghana. Iran's state-run media did not specify the purpose of the trip beyond a desire to advance relations with all three countries. But the stop in Niger aroused speculation that Iran, which is under international sanctions over its disputed nuclear program, might be looking for outside sources of uranium, despite its claims of self-sufficiency. Last week Iran said it had opened two new uranium mines, suggesting that its supply is running low. According to the World Nuclear Association, a London-based trade group representing the nuclear profession, Niger is the world's fourth-biggest uranium producer. Most of it goes by contract to Areva, a mining company based in France, the

former colonial power in Niger.

World Bank sees Africa growth speeding up

by Pascal Fletcher/Reuters/avril 16 2013

SUB-SAHARAN Africa's economic growth should accelerate to more than 5% over the next three years, far outpacing the global average, but the region had to do more to convert this into reducing poverty, the World Bank said on Monday.

In its latest Africa's Pulse analysis of prospects for the region, the bank saw increased investment, high commodity prices and a pick-up in the global economy driving this expected growth surge in the world's poorest continent.

It said foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows to Sub-Saharan Africa were projected to increase to record levels each year over the next three years, reaching \$54bn by 2015. This compared with \$37.7bn last year, a 5.5% increase in a year when FDI flows for developing countries fell on average 6.6%.

The Washington-based multilateral lender predicted Sub-Saharan Africa's growth would be 4.9, 5.1 and 5.2% for 2013, 2014 and 2015 respectively. Last year, the region's growth was estimated at 4.7%.

"If properly harnessed to unleash their full potential, these trends hold the promise of more growth, much less poverty and accelerating shared prosperity for (Africa) in the foreseeable future," said World Bank's Africa department lead economist, Punam Chuhan-Pole.

Compared with Africa's expected growth spurt, global gross domestic product was projected to expand 2.4% this year and gradually strengthen to 3% and 3.3% next year and in 2015.

The report said a decade of strong growth had reduced poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa, with provisional data showing that between 1996 and 2010, the share of Africans living on less than \$1.25 a day fell from 58% to 48.5%.

But World Bank economists cautioned that high inequality and a dependence on mining and mineral exports in many countries had dampened the poverty-reducing effect of income growth. "The aggregate hides a great deal of diversity in performance, even among Africa's faster growers," said Shanta Devarajan, the World Bank's chief economist for Africa.

Noting that higher growth does not automatically mean less poverty, the report said resource-rich countries such as Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and Nigeria performed worse than their less resource-blessed fellows.

The World Bank said better administering mineral wealth, development of agriculture and a careful managing of rapid urbanisation would help African governments seize the opportunity to lift more of their people out of poverty. "Better governance will need to underpin efforts to make growth more poverty reducing," the report said.

The bank added that continuing investment in infrastructure was critical to maintaining and strengthening growth.

Among the positive developments was the spreading energy exploration in East Africa that had led

to the opening of several oil and gas wells. In Southern Africa, Mozambique was expected to attract increased foreign investment in its huge coal deposits and offshore gas discoveries and Zambia would continue to see increased investments in its copper sector.

In West Africa, investment was likely to keep flowing into the minerals sectors of Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

But the bank saw some problem spots, singling out labour unrest in S A and political unrest in Central African Republic, Mali and Togo. Food price spikes could also be a cause for concern. Also on the risk side, the World Bank said a fragile global recovery, whether characterised by a deterioration of market conditions in the eurozone or a weaker pickup in the U S, could undermine the African outlook.

It added that with Chinese demand accounting for 50% of many industrial metals exported from Africa, a sharper-than- envisaged downturn there could lead to a slump in commodity prices, which would hurt resource-reliant African states.

Reuters

Africa: AU 50th Anniversary Celebrations Launched

14 April 2013/Addis Fortune (Addis Ababa)

The African Union (AU) officially launched the year-long celebration of the Organization Golden Jubilee on Monday, April 08, 2013.

Diamini Zuma (PhD), chairperson of the African Union and Tedros Adhanom (PhD), minister for Foreign Affairs who is also Chair of AU Executive Council, jointly lit a candle to mark the launch of the celebrations. The celebrations will be held under the theme of "Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance".

"The torches symbolise our desire to reverse the current story line of despair into the real narrative of opportunity and potential," said Zuma.

The celebrations will focus on twelve monthly themes addressing specific areas of progress and challenges on the continent, including women's empowerment, health, education, peace and security, governance and democracy, and food security, according to the press release posted on the Organization's official website. The event took place at the margins of the 14th Extraordinary Session of the AU Executive Council, which was convened to examine the Strategic Plan of the AU Commission for the period 2014 to 2017.

Tunisie : la fugue d'Amina, la Femen

Par Charles Carrasco/europe1.fr/ le 16 avril 2013

Cette activiste tunisienne des Femen était séquestrée par sa famille. Elle raconte.

L'INFO. Depuis plusieurs semaines, le sort de la jeune tunisienne Femen, Amina restait incertain. Des rumeurs faisaient état d'une disparition, ainsi que d'éventuelles représailles de groupes salafistes. En réalité celle qui avait publié sur Internet des photos seins nus à la manière du groupe féministe était bien recluse chez ses parents contre son gré comme l'avaient découvert plusieurs médias.

"Ma fille a quitté vendredi à notre insu la maison et nous ne savons pas depuis où elle se trouve", a assuré lundi la mère d'Amina, qui refuse d'être identifiée. "J'ai peur pour ma fille qui suit un traitement psychiatrique depuis six ans", a-t-elle ajouté, précisant qu'elle venait de demander conseil au médecin d'Amina à Tunis et qu'elle comptait aussi se rendre dans l'après-midi au ministère de l'Intérieur pour déclarer la fugue de sa fille.

Elle se trouverait dans un lieu sûr. Une information confirmée lundi à ParisMatch.com par Inna Shevchenko, cofondatrice du mouvement féministe. "Elle s'est enfuie par elle-même, mais nous l'avons aidée à trouver un endroit dans lequel elle serait en sécurité. Nous avons tenté de la persuader de quitter la Tunisie, mais elle nous a répondu qu'elle ne partirait qu'après y avoir manifesté seins nus !", a-t-elle affirmé.

"Des médicaments à haute dose". Un peu plus tard lundi, une vidéo de sa conversation avec Amina a été postée dans laquelle elle raconte sa captivité. "J'étais au café avec des amis lorsque mon cousin est entré. Il m'a attrapée et violemment poussée par terre. Ils m'ont poussée dans une voiture, pris mon téléphone portable et emmenée chez ma tante", raconte Amina dans cette conversation Skype. Elle aurait reçu des coups et aurait été obligée de suivre un examen de virginité chez sa grand-mère. "Ils m'ont obligée à lire le Coran. Ils m'emmenaient chez l'imam tous les jours", témoigne-t-elle. Puis elle a été emmenée dans un village où elle a reçu des "médicaments à haute dose".

"Je dois quitter la Tunisie". La semaine dernière, Amina avait été filmée par une équipe de Canal+ aux côtés de son père. La jeune fille semblait très diminuée, sûrement sous l'emprise de médicaments. Sa famille l'aurait forcé à lire le Coran et à rencontrer des imams pour la remettre dans "le droit chemin". Amina racontait aussi qu'à cause des photos postées sur Internet, elle ne pouvait plus retourner à l'école.

"Peut-être dans une école privée mais ce n'est pas sûr. Ils peuvent ne pas m'accepter", affirmait-elle face caméra. "Je dois quitter la Tunisie car j'ai reçu beaucoup de menaces de mort sur le téléphone et sur Facebook. J'ai peur pour ma vie et la vie de ma famille. On m'a dit : 'tu vas mourir et on va jeter de l'acide sur ton visage'", affirmait Amina à Canal + qui déplorait avoir été contrainte de rester chez sa famille.

Quelques jours auparavant, une journaliste de Marianne l'avait également rencontrée et, selon elle, elle "n'est pas libre de ses mouvements et de ses contacts, bien que majeure". La famille justifie cet "enfermement" à cause de sa "fragilité psychologique". "Des parties instrumentalisent l'histoire de ma fille au détriment de son intérêt (...). Il n'y a jamais eu d'histoire de kidnapping, nous essayons simplement de protéger notre fille en refusant de la laisser sortir toute seule par mesure de sécurité", s'est défendue la mère d'Amina, la voix étranglée.

Chad: Troops to Leave Mali

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/April 15, 2013

Chad's president says his country's troops are pulling out of Mali three months after the French-led mission to oust militants linked to Al Qaeda began, raising questions about how feasible the planned French pullout will be if France wants to maintain the progress made against terrorists in northern Mali. "Chad's army has no ability to face the kind of guerrilla fighting that is emerging in northern Mali," President Idriss Déby said in an interview with French journalists that was posted online on Monday. "Our soldiers are going to return to Chad. They have accomplished their mission." Mr. Déby said Chad already had begun pulling out a battalion, with the rest of its 2,000 soldiers to leave over time. He held out the possibility that Chad's troops could join an eventual United Nations

peacekeeping force in Mali. Chad's departure leaves the Malian and French forces with about 4,000 other troops from a number of other West African countries: Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo, though none have the same expertise on terrain similar to northern Mali as the Chadians.

UN/AFRICA :

Conflict prevention in Africa must address poverty, marginalization, UN warns

15 April 2013/un.org

15 April 2013 – The United Nations Security Council today held a debate on preventing conflict in Africa, with calls for top priority to be given to addressing underlying root causes such as poverty, hunger, human rights abuses, marginalization and impunity, especially with regard to sexual violence.

“Conflicts breed where there is poor governance, human rights abuses and grievances over the unequal distribution of resources, wealth and power,” Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told the 15-member body in an opening address, pledging continued UN support for efforts by regional African organizations to prevent conflict.

In a Presidential Statement, the Council also stressed that tackling the root causes of conflict are crucial to ensuring sustainable peace, in addition to partnership and cooperation between regional and sub-regional organizations in supporting conflict prevention and peace-building

It commended the “critical role” of UN peacekeeping operations in maintaining international peace and preventing and containing conflicts. The UN currently fields 14 peacekeeping operations around the world comprising nearly 93,000 uniformed and almost 17,000 civilian personnel.

Mr. Ban stressed that mediation efforts must not just be pacts between political elites that address the immediate political problem, but must also allow all stakeholders to participate. “Tensions simmer where people are excluded, marginalized and denied meaningful participation in the political and social life of their countries,” he said. “Unrest flourishes where people are poor, jobless and without hope.”

Noting that 20 African countries are holding elections this year, he said the recent “relatively peaceful” elections in Kenya were an example of how electoral disagreements can be handled through the legal process without recourse to violence, but warned that in other cases, elections can be a source of instability where parties may use them to continue the competition to divide the spoils of war.

He also stressed that agreements, once reached, must be fully implemented, monitored and enforced, noting that in the Central African Republic (CAR), the violation of previous accords by the parties contributed to the resumption of conflict and, eventually, the unconstitutional change of Government.

“The challenges are particularly acute when states are fragile and armed movements operate with impunity across porous borders, often with support from neighbouring states,” Mr. Ban declared, citing Mali as an example where this paved the way for transnational criminal organizations and terrorist networks to disrupt regional stability and compromise territorial integrity.

“Whether in the Horn of Africa or the Great Lakes, the continent is still afflicted by interconnected instabilities spreading from one territory to its neighbours,” he added. “That contagion has many vectors: economic despair, arms flows, massive population displacements, proxy conflicts triggered by relationships of mistrust, and regional rivalries. In our increasingly interconnected world, regional action to prevent or address conflicts is all the more important.”

He noted that in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), national authorities, regional leaders and the international community are coming together to not only deal with the manifestations of violence, but also address its underlying root causes.

“In all of our efforts across Africa, the United Nations benefits from reinvigorated regional organizations. They are playing a stronger and strategic role as key partners,” Mr. Ban stressed, citing the prompt reaction of the Economic Community of Central African States to the crisis in the CAR and the UN’s efforts to strengthen the Southern African Development Community’s conflict prevention and early warning architecture as well as its 10-year capacity-building partnership with the African Union (AU).

The Council Statement, read out by Foreign Minister Louise Mushikiwabo of Rwanda, Council president for April, delineated the entire spectrum of measures needed to prevent conflict, from early warning and response systems, preventive diplomacy, preventive deployment and mediation to practical disarmament measures, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building strategies.

It called for effective security sector reform programmes, strengthening of human rights and the rule of law, protection of civilians, ending all forms of discrimination and political exclusion, including against women and children and protection of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities.

It emphasized the fight against impunity for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, stressed the important role of women in conflict prevention and resolution and in peace-building, and underscored its concerns at the role played by the illegal exploitation of natural resources in fuelling conflicts. It noted that the UN can help States, while fully respecting their sovereignty, to prevent illegal access to those resources.

Speaking on behalf of the AU, Ethiopian Ambassador Tekeda Alemu highlighted the increasing role Africa itself was playing in resolving conflicts on the continent and the growing cooperation between the UN and the AU.

“More than any time in the past, Africa is ready to play its part for peace and stability in the continent, and it has the wherewithal to be a good partner for the United Nations and the Security Council for the realization of this objective,” he said.

US/AFRICA :

CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

EU/AFRICA :

Perquisitions dans les milieux islamistes soupçonnés d'envoyer des jeunes vers la Syrie: arrestation de Fouad Belkacem (Sharia4belgium)

Mardi 16 Avril 2013/sudinfo.be

Plusieurs perquisitions ont eu lieu, ce mardi matin, dans les milieux islamistes, dans plusieurs villes. La police cherche à en savoir plus sur les filières par lesquelles passent les jeunes qui partent vers la Syrie. Fouad Belkacem, le dirigeant de Sharia4belgium a été arrêté.

Le parquet fédéral a confirmé qu'une action d'envergure est en cours contre des personnes soupçonnées d'activités terroristes, plus précisément encore contre des groupes qui enrôleraient des jeunes Belges pour aller combattre en Syrie. Les enquêteurs ont mené des perquisitions à 46 adresses à Bruxelles et Anvers. Fouad Belkacem, ancien porte-parole de Sharia4Belgium, a été arrêté dans le cadre de cette action.

Le nombre exact d'arrestations n'a pas été précisé. La chaîne VTM rapporte qu'un jeune homme soigné à l'hôpital Brugmann après avoir été blessé en Syrie aurait également été arrêté mais le parquet n'a pas encore confirmé cette information.

Le blessé est rentré en Belgique par la Turquie après avoir été touché à la tête par une grenade. Son identité n'a pas encore pu être confirmée, mais il pourrait s'agir d'un sympathisant de Sharia4Belgium condamné après les émeutes survenues à Molenbeek-Saint-Jean en mai 2012 suite au contrôle de police d'une jeune femme portant le niqab.

CHINA/AFRICA :

INDIA/AFRICA :

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

EN BREF , CE 16 Avril 2013 ... AGNEWS/DAM , NY, 16/04/2013

