



[Un attentat à la voiture piégée. Un véhicule a explosé mardi matin devant l'ambassade de France en Libye, à Tripoli. Deux gendarmes français sont blessés. Un grièvement, l'autre n'a que des égratignures. D'après des témoins, le quartier est méconnaissable. Le bâtiment abritant les locaux de la chancellerie a été fortement endommagé et une partie du mur de l'enceinte a été détruite. Deux voitures garées devant l'ambassade étaient calcinées.]

BURUNDI :

Le Fnuap exhorte le Burundi à réduire l'indice de fécondité

Lundi 22 avril 2013/Xinhua

BUJUMBURA (Xinhua) - Le Fonds des Nations Unies pour la Population (Fnuap) encourage le Burundi à réduire l'indice de fécondité d'ici l'horizon 2025, selon un communiqué de la Fnuap publié lundi à Bujumbura.

D'après ce communiqué, le Burundi connaît un niveau de fécondité élevé avec une moyenne de 6,4 enfants par femme et figure parmi les pays africains les plus densément peuplés avec une moyenne passant de 314 habitants par km² en 2011 à 324 habitants par km² en 2012.

De ce fait, précise-t-on, le Fnuap exhorte le Burundi à réduire l'indice de fécondité à 3 enfants par femme d'ici 2025.

La réduction de cette indice synthétique de fécondité est en effet l'un des objectifs que le Burundi s'est fixé à travers la vision 2025 et la Déclaration de la Politique Nationale de la Démographie adoptée en 2011.

Selon le Fnuap, le Burundi a enregistré des progrès encourageants en matière de réduction de la mortalité maternelle, Le ratio de mortalité maternelle a diminué à un rythme de 30 décès maternels sur 100.000 naissances vivantes par an, soit une réduction globale de 54,5% entre 1990 et 2010.

En outre, le taux d'accouchements assistés par un personnel qualifié est passé de 17,8% en 2000 à 68 % en 2012 et le taux de prévalence contraceptive estimé à 25,3% en 2012 était de 2,7% en 2000.

En dépit de ces résultats encourageants, le Burundi doit mener des efforts pour réduire la disparité dans l'utilisation des services de la santé de la reproduction en général et de la planification familiale en particulier, souligne le Fnuap.

RWANDA :

RDC CONGO :

UGANDA :

SOUTH AFRICA :

South Africa bus strike set to intensify on Tuesday

by Khulekani Magubane/Sapa/22 April 2013

THE strike in the transport sector is spreading and will affect luxury buses as well. On Monday the Transport and Omnibus Workers Union (Towu) said passengers using Springbok Atlas Luxury Charters and the Unitrans Group (Greyhound, Magic Bus, Mega Coach, and Citiliner) would have no bus services from Wednesday.

"Towu had an urgent shop stewards' national council on Monday, and a decision has been taken to compel the employers to agree to the workers' demands that resulted in a deadlock at the bargaining council," spokesman Malinge Plaatjie said.

The South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (Satawu) stopped work last week after wage negotiations deadlocked.

On Monday thousands of commuters in major cities — such as Johannesburg and Cape Town — were stranded as bus drivers from Reya Vaya and MyCiti went on strike.

Reya Vaya said in a statement on its website that the bus service would not be operating on Monday.

The strike also brought services operated by Putco and Gautrain in to a standstill in Gauteng.

The Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (Prasa) head of communications Moffet Mofokeng said that the strikes had also affected Autopax operations. Autopax is a subsidiary of Prasa.

"Autopax operations have come to a complete halt due to the strike and none of the Translux and City to City services are operational at the moment," Mr Mofokeng said.

He said Prasa was willing to engage with the unions but that the unions had rushed to go on strike without even considering the proposal from the mediator.

All Translux and City to City services, had been suspended indefinitely as a result of the strike and about 8,000 passengers were affected each day, Mr Mofokeng said.

The South African National Taxi Association said taxi ranks were more active than usual on Monday as commuters turned to minibus taxis.

Public transport analyst Paul Browning said the strikes may present minibus taxis with the opportunity to provide services to regular bus commuters, which may have serious implications for the bus services model.

"The taxi industry must be benefiting from the strike, although I am not sure of the extent of this. It would be interesting to see over the next few days whether the taxis will absorb passengers who would otherwise commute by bus. If they are able to cope with the demand, it may weaken the case of bus companies trying to get millions to keep their operations afloat," Mr Browning said

Satawu Gauteng chairman Chris Nkosi said while he could not give exact numbers, all members of Satawu were on strike.

"I know Rea Vaya is part of it, but their Satawu membership is quite small," Mr Nkosi said.

Satawu is calling for an 18% increase. Employers offered 2.5% leading to a deadlock and the strike.

South African Municipal Workers union (Samwu) regional chairman in Johannesburg Dion Makhura said Samwu members were striking salary progression.

"We are saying you must progress after two to five years. There must be a second band and for those working five years and above must be a max band. So we are asking employers to agree in principle to different payment categories," Mr Makhura said.

The Commuter Bus Employers Organisation said the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation, and Arbitration had invited employers and the unions to reconvene talks.

Spokesman Barry Gie said the commission had asked all involved to meet in Johannesburg on Tuesday.

With Sapa

Prepare for blackouts this winter

April 23 2013/By Brendan Roane and Sapa

Johannesburg - Switch off or face an icy-cold winter with rolling black-outs. This was the message from Public Enterprises Minister Malusi Gigaba at Eskom's Megawatt Park headquarters in Joburg on Monday.

He said repairs to several of Eskom's power stations could wait no longer and that stations receiving

maintenance would mean a lower output of electricity.

In addition, Eskom's 8 percent electricity tariff hike had "changed the game" for power in South Africa.

"While the National Energy Regulator of South Africa's (Nersa) decision... is welcomed, the implications of the lower tariffs and revenue approved on Eskom's operations and overall business sustainability are currently being investigated.

"This decision is surely going to have far-reaching implications."

He said the regulator's decision was fair to consumers, but not to Eskom. On February 28, Nersa granted Eskom an 8 percent electricity tariff hike each year for the next five years. The parastatal had applied for a 16 percent rise in each of the next five years.

Gigaba said that Eskom's power stations were at a stage where plant reliability could no longer be compromised by delaying maintenance.

Repairs normally took place during summer to maintain maximum capacity for the cold weather but this year would be the first time Eskom planned for long-term repairs of up to 120 days in winter.

Electricity usage also increases drastically during winter and Gigaba was anticipating an "extremely cold" season, based on recent temperatures. "Within this peak time, South African electricity demand rises by more than 3 000 MW which is larger than all SADC (Southern African Development Community) countries combined."

A 3 000 MW increase represents nearly 10 percent of Eskom's most recently reported peak demand of 33 628 MW on April 18.

"I would like to urge the country to continue supporting our efforts of keeping the lights on, especially as we go into winter which will be even more challenging."

In January 2008, rolling black-outs hit the entire country as Eskom could not cope with demand - a consequence of a lack of power stations and crumbling infrastructure. At the time - the mass load-shedding months of January to March - coal stocks stood at an average of 13 days.

Currently, coal reserves were at 47 days, down slightly from an all-time high of 49 days during February, said Eskom chief executive Brian Dames.

He also revealed that they had outdone their prediction in reducing consumer and industrial demand. Demand decreased by 585 watts for the 2012/2013 year, beating the utility's mid-year prediction of 447 watts.

The majority of this decrease was driven by residential and municipal reductions, which accounted for nearly 60 percent of the total.

The industrial and mining sector decreased their usage by almost 20 percent, followed by the commercial sector.

Eskom said that since it began its drive to reduce demand in 2005, it had resulted in a saving of 3 586 MW, almost the equivalent of the output of a power station.

The state of the system report forecast that usage would increase up until July 15 at the peak of demand, 36 885 MW, and the parastatal said the system would be “extremely tight” over the next few months.

Gigaba also listed stations that had under-produced recently, including the Songo substation in Mozambique that was damaged during the floods in January. This more than halved the capacity of the station, from 1 500 MW to 650 MW, which is imported to South Africa.

One of Koeberg’s units had also experienced an unplanned outage which put “added strain” on coal-powered stations.

“So too, are the prevailing poor coal quality, resulting in significant load losses at some of the power stations, particularly at Tutuka,” said the minister.

How to lower electricity output to stop blackouts:

In heeding Eskom and Public Enterprises Minister Malusi Gigaba’s call to cut their electricity consumption to avoid blackouts and load shedding, geysers should be households’ first concern.

Eskom said that a household geyser makes up about 40 percent of electricity usage of common appliances in the average home.

This is followed by space heaters (16 percent), pool pumps (11 percent) and lights (6 percent).

* Geysers: Turn your geyser down to 60°C and switch it off when you leave for work, and insulate your geyser and pipes with specialised blankets. Take a shower instead of a bath and only use warm water if it is necessary. Install solar geysers and heat pumps, which can cut your water heating costs by up to 67 percent.

* Lighting: Switch to energy-saving bulbs, which use about 80 percent less electricity and last between six and eight times longer than traditional bulbs. Use motion-sensor security lights instead of leaving a light on all night.

* Appliances: Switch off appliances at the wall, as standby on certain electronics such as TVs or DVD players can use up to half the electricity they would if they were switched on.

* Kitchen: Ensure your oven door is closed until the food is done and switch off hot plates before the food is done as they retain enough heat to finish cooking. Only boil as much water as you need in the kettle, and let hot food cool down before refrigerating it. Replacing the seals on the fridge will make the appliance use less energy, as well as making sure the fridge is not packed to the brim.

* Heating: Use a blanket or jersey instead of using heaters where possible, but heaters with a short warm-up time and a built-in thermostat are recommended if needed. Only heat the rooms that you are going to spend time in. Ceilings that have not been insulated are the result of up to 40 percent heat loss from a home.

* Laundry: Only use the washing machine for full loads of dirty clothes, as this appliance uses the same amount of electricity no matter how full it is. Use the warm water setting and reduce the temperature from 90 to 60°C when washing bed linen to cut back on the amount of electricity you use. You can also skip the prewash cycle for clothes that aren’t particularly dirty. This can cut down hot water usage by up to 20 percent.

* Pool Pumps: Only run the pump outside of peak times (6-9am and 7-10pm) and use a pool cover, especially during winter. Cleaning your pool pump filters keep the pump operating efficiently.

The Star

TANZANIA :

Tanzania: 47 Districts Face Food Shortage

By Rose Athumani/Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)/23 April 2013

Dodoma — FORTY seven districts face serious food deficit, despite 12 per cent surplus recorded during the 2011/2012 harvests in the country, the National Assembly was told here yesterday.

The Minister for Agriculture, Food Security and Co-operatives, Eng. Christopher Chiza, said food output reached 13.34 million tonnes, including 7.44 million tonnes of cereals and 5.90 million tonnes of non-cereal crops.

Eng. Chiza said in January, this year, the ministry conducted an assessment on 2011/2012 season harvests and a survey on 2012/2013 food availability. The minister was moving his ministry 2013/2014 budget estimates in the House, where he asked for the approval for 328.13bn/- to be spent on recurrent and development votes.

He told the House that Tanzania's annual food demand stood at 11.97 million tonnes, meaning that the country's supply would be fulfilled by 112 per cent in 2012/13. The minister, however, noted that the surplus in the country has been adversely affected by famine that was experienced in some neighbouring countries, following the government decision to lift export ban on food exports.

He further said that 47 districts in 19 regions including Arusha, Kilimanjaro, Manyara, Morogoro, Lindi, Tanga, Mtwara, Coast, Iringa, Mbeya, Kagera, Mwanza and Singida face acute of food shortage. He said production of main cash crops rose in 2012/2013 season, where sugar output increased from 260,054.70 tonnes in 2011/12 to 286,380 tonnes, Cotton from 225,938 tonnes to 357,000 tonnes in the same period.

Tobacco output dwindled due to a number of reasons, including fluctuation of prices in international markets, unreliable rains and disruption of inputs distribution systems. The Minister has directed the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) to inspect the tobacco input distribution system which involves cooperatives and a special committee has been formed for the task in Tabora Region.

"In addressing challenges of global price fluctuations of cash crops, the ministry in collaboration with various stakeholders is preparing modalities to establish Price Stabilization Fund, to assist farmers when global prices go down," he explained. Challenges recorded in distribution of maize and rice inputs prompted the government to issue short term, low interest, input loans to farmers through co-operatives.

The challenges recorded included late delivery, theft and embezzlement. He said the government will continue to put in place strategies that will ensure irrigation contributes 25 per cent to food needs in the country. The minister said low participation of the private sector was among challenges in the country's agricultural revolution.

In addressing this, the ministry through Big Results Now has identified plans to increase sugar production by 150,000 tonnes, maize 100,000 tonnes and rice 290,000 tonnes in new farm lands for large and small farmers. The investment is expected to increase the area under irrigation by 389,000 hectares by 2015/16. Currently irrigation covers an area of 450,392 hectares.

The Chairman of the Agriculture, Food and Water Parliamentary Committee, Prof Peter Msolla said the ministry's budget was inadequate. "The government should take deliberate measures to increase the agriculture sector budget to reach levels agreed by the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) member countries of 10 per cent of the national budget, for the sector to contribute effectively," Prof Msolla explained.

He said the government should re-allocate some funds to areas that have a small budget allocations such as the Tanzania Fertiliser Regulatory Authority (TFRA) and increase input subsidy to 66.3bn/- if the voucher system will be used and 108.5bn/- if the government will use the loan system.

He added that the government should also increase the retention in the Plant Health Services (PHS) from 62 per cent to 92 per cent. The Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Food and Cooperatives - Ms Rose Kamili (Special Seats - Chadema), said more investment was needed to boost the sector's performance.

"Application of improved-seeds, pesticides and fertilisers has been a challenge due to unstable price of inputs, the distance from vendors to farm areas has increased the burden to small-scale farmers in the country," she said.

Ms Kamili described the Southern Agriculture Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT) as another design of misusing land calling for caution in implementing the plan. She explained that various reports from India have shown that big companies such as Mosanto have turned small scale farmers victims of unsustainable seeds.

Tanzania: Kikwete Blames Colonial Legacy for Africa's Conflicts

By Alvar Mwakyusa/Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)/23 April 2013

PRESIDENT Jakaya Kikwete has slammed policies of former colonial masters for most of present internal and cross-border conflicts in Africa, noting, however that the continent is better-off at present than it was in the past two decades.

"Boundaries drawn by the colonialists between African countries and policies such as divide and rule have resulted into quarrels along tribal, ethnic and religious lines," Mr Kikwete said in Dar es Salaam yesterday.

The president made the remarks in his address to the 368th African Union (AU) ministerial meeting on the Peace and Security Council held to discuss the political situation in Madagascar, ahead of elections slated for that country in July.

"There are people of same culture and background but still kill one another because of trivial matters and this is because they were divided by the colonialists," Mr Kikwete noted with concern. He also blamed what he described as a class of politicians in Africa who because of greed for power and wealth, collaborated with the former colonialists to fuel conflicts on the continent.

Mr Kikwete was bitter that the class of politicians was willing to sell their people for power and wealth and subject the population in their respective countries to sufferings. Nevertheless, the

president was happy that almost all conflicts in the continent are either under resolution or being managed at various levels.

"Africa is better today than it was over the past two-decades, military coups that were the order of the day during that time as well as unconstitutional and undemocratic change of power are at present not tolerated," he noted.

At the same occasion, the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra, hailed Tanzania for its contribution to the liberation struggle. "Equally, Tanzania still plays an active role in the solving and resolution of conflicts in Africa.

I would also like to commend President Kikwete for his commitment to solving conflicts in the continent," Ambassador Lamamra said. He cited the clashes in which President Kikwete had a role in solving as the post-election violence in Kenya after the 2007 General Election in that country as well as unrests in the Comoros and Ivory Coast, among others.

And as the AU is set to mark the 50th Anniversary next month, Amb. Lamamra said the Golden Jubilee should be used to consolidate peace and manage ongoing conflicts in Africa. The predecessor of AU, the then Organisation of African Union (OAU) was formed in 1963. Regarding Madagascar, he said all stakeholders have been engaged in mediation, noting, however, that despite progress which has been attained there are still challenges which need to be addressed.

Speaking earlier, Foreign Affairs Minister, Mr Bernard Membe, who is also the current Chair of the AU Peace and Security Council, said the meeting was among interventions by the AU to finding a lasting solution to political stalemate in Madagascar. The meeting will be briefed by former Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano on the progress of ending disputes among conflicting parties in that country.

Chissano has been a mediator in the conflict under the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Established in the year 2004, the council is charged with prevention, resolution and management of conflicts in the African continent.

Tanzania: Local, Foreign Investments Accelerate Economy

23 April 2013/Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)

Dodoma — TANZANIA has benefited immensely from local and foreign investments, including increase of employment opportunities and foreign marketing for local products, the Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (Investment and Empowerment) Dr Mary Nagu has said.

She told the National Assembly here yesterday that other benefits include increase of capital and expertise, new technology in the sector, increases of tourists, foreign currency revenue and the increase of government's revenue, thus accelerating the country's economy.

For example, the minister said, "foreign capital increased from 520 million US dollars in 2005 to 1.1 billion US dollars in 2001." She further said that such investments led to the improvement of local expertise, increased capability of operation and management of big projects in different economic sectors.

The minister was answering a basic question by Kombo Khamis Kombo (Magogoni-CUF), who had wanted to know what gains the country had benefited from investments. The legislator also sought to know kinds of investments that have brought more benefits to Tanzanians.

Dr Nagu further unveiled that the country has also benefited from investments through increase value of local products, thus increasing competition of the products in the market and increase of business in and outside the country.

The minister also told the august House that between 2000 and 2012, the Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC) registered a total of 7, 012 projects worth 60 billion US dollars that offered 1,029,737 employment opportunities to Tanzanians. According to her, the industrial sector led the chart by having more projects.

She said 2,095 projects worth 9,776.06 US dollars were registered in the sector, thus offering 229,269 employments to Tanzanians. The government mission, the minister said, was to attract profitable investment from in and outside the country through the TIC.

She said the government has established a department within the TIC to deal with any short falls in the sector. In another question, the opposition MP had wanted to know whether there was any investor who faced investment obstacles in the country. The minister said that currently there was no any information that suggests that investors who show interests to invest in the country faced any resistance.

KENYA :

Kenya Parliament Committee to Vet Cabinet Nominees

Peter Clotey/voanews.com/April 22, 2013

Kenya's parliament plans to form a committee Tuesday that will begin vetting President Uhuru Kenyatta's cabinet nominees.

The committee will have two weeks to conclude the vetting process.

Justin Muturi, speaker of the National Assembly (parliament) is expected to be the chairman of the 28-member Select Committee.

The committee also is expected to include the deputy speaker as well as the majority and the minority leaders of the National Assembly, according to Aden Duale, majority leader in parliament.

The process of publicly vetting cabinet nominees will be the country's first such procedure since Kenya gained independence in 1963.

Gideon Ochanda, a member of the National Assembly said expectations are high among Kenyans about the vetting of the nominees.

Officials say the vetting process could be broadcast live on television and radio, as well as on social media platforms.

"Now the committee meetings are public so it means the Select Committee might want to conduct particularly, maybe interviews, or the process of selection in public. It is allowed now," said Ochanda.

He expressed confidence that the committee will be thorough in vetting the cabinet nominees.

“There is quite a bit of anxiety, partly caused by the time it has taken a bit longer before President Uhuru [Kenyatta] brings up the list. So, this has been upping up the excitement generally,” said Ochanda. “Besides that they will want to be very careful because the entire lot would have to be subjected to the Plenary of the House.”

Ochanda says parliament will consider information from the public about the cabinet nominees as part of the vetting process.

“The public can complain; they can bring in their own issues to the committee. The process is not very new to the country, because something related to this or closer to this we’ve been doing since last year for various appointments. [But] not necessarily the ministers,” said Ochanda.

Officials say Mr. Kenyatta will soon present his list of nominees to parliament to begin the vetting process.

Kenya: Garissa Security Chief Dismissed After 11 Officers Assisted Al-Shabaab

22 April 2013/Sabahi (Washington, DC)

Kenyan police leadership dismissed the head of criminal investigations in Garissa on Sunday (April 21st) after it was discovered that 11 security officers in the area had been helping al-Shabaab commit violence in Kenya, Kenya's Daily Nation reported.

An area chief was also dismissed after team of security leaders learned of connections between government officials and violent al-Shabaab-linked business cartels.

Several police and customs officials stationed at the Kenya-Somalia border were told to stay home to facilitate ongoing investigations.

"Whoever is involved will go home irrespective of the rank," said Inspector General of Police David Kimaiyo. "Investigations are going on to establish the officers who were compromised."

Those being dismissed will receive official letters to this effect from the National Police Service Commission on Monday, he said.

Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Interior Mutea Iringo said any officers with links to al-Shabaab would be immediately banned from the force. He announced a reward of up to 100,000 shillings (\$1,200) for anyone providing information leading to the arrest of suspects.

Kenya Pushes Technology Into Overdrive

22 April 2013/South Sudan News Agency

The country that gave the world two groundbreaking innovations in technology: M-Pesa, a mobile banking system, and Ushahidi, a platform for crowdsourcing information during disasters, is now taking its technological talents to new heights. The East African nation of Kenya has just started construction on a 5,000-acres piece of land in Konza, about 60km south of Nairobi, to turn the savannah area into "the most modern city in Africa".

Using the same company that designed Brooklyn's Barclays Center in New York City, SHoP

Architects, Kenyan authorities want to transform Nairobi's Konza City into Africa's technology hub, dubbed Silicon Savannah, similar to California's Silicon Valley. The designers told the UK's Financial Times that "the scale of the project compares with creating another Manhattan, central London or inner-city Beijing."

The Konza techno city project is the brainchild of Bitange Ndemo, Kenya's permanent secretary in the ministry of information and communications. "Rather than echo a smattering of tech parks and business centres starting up on the continent," says the Financial Times, "Kenya envisions a broader city-from-scratch to bring research universities, industry and government together, along the lines of Silicon Valley".

The Wired magazine reported that Konza's development "plan is extremely ambitious" and is "not just seen as a way of attracting investment from international tech companies and inspiring domestic entrepreneurs, but also as a way of reducing the corruption that has been endemic in the nation for several decades."

Konza is expected to cement Kenya's role as a regional technology leader in Africa. With a well developed technology sector, Kenya became the first country in Africa to open its government to the public by making millions of pages of internal governments documents available online. The country's M-Pesa cell phone banking service is now being used all over the world for purchases and money transfers, and according to the US Time magazine, Ushahidi has been used "in 128 countries to map everything from [the 2010] earthquake in Haiti to [the] Japanese tsunami and the Arab Spring."

The unveiling of the Konza project is being seen as a natural progression of Kenya's aspirations to attract corporate investments in technology. In 2012, IBM set up its first African research lab in Nairobi, joining renowned American companies like Google, Microsoft and Intel that have their regional headquarters Kenya. Konza is heavily-influenced by similar "new cities", like Cyberjaya in Malaysia, Cyber City in Mauritius and Egypt's Smart Village, says the Wired.

The project is expected to cost \$10 billion and create more than 200,000 jobs when completed in 2030. There are plans for an electronic manufacturing plant, an international financial centre and a convention centre. The government is offering tax breaks to companies as an incentive to move and invest in Konza.

Amid the euphoria and excitement over the prospects for Silicon Savannah, there have been some voices of caution. Technology experts at the Mobile Web East Africa conference held in Nairobi in February warned Kenya's technology industry against copying the Silicon Valley business model. Their concern was that most of the companies being formed in Kenya were based on a single app or software programme.

"Kenya should be more of a 'Digital Savannah' and not 'Silicon Savannah', says TMS "Teddy" Ruge, co-founder of Project Diaspora USA/Uganda, an organization that mobilizes resources from Africans in diaspora to invest in Africa, "We are yet to manufacture things here, and most of the companies we have here are based on digital solutions."

Kenya's reputation as a technology leader in Africa suffered an embarrassing setback during the March national elections when both a biometric ID system designed to avoid multiple voting and an electronic transmission system to speed up vote counting broke down. The country's independent electoral body was forced to switch to counting votes manually, slowing down the process and causing national anxiety.

Notwithstanding, Konza appears to be proving skeptics wrong. So far, more than a dozen companies are expected to start setting up operations in Konza.

"Konza will become a game-changer in Kenya's socio-economic development, spurring massive trade and investment across the entire region," said President Mwai Kibaki at the groundbreaking ceremony held in January at the proposed new city.

ANGOLA :

Angola: Ambassador Calls for Calm to Angolans in Venezuela

22 April 2013/AngolaPress

Caracas — The Angolan Ambassador to Brazil, Nelson Cosme, has advised urged the national community in Venezuela to be calm, regarding the future of that Latin American country, after the death of president Hugo Chavez and the holding of the elections won by Nicolas Maduro Mouro.

The diplomat passed this message in Caracas, Veneuela, after witnessing on Friday, the inauguration ceremony of Nicolas Maduro, as President of that country.

Nicolas Maduro replaces Hugo Chaves who died last March victim of a disease.

On the occasion, the new president said that he is ready to rule all the Venezuelan citizens, having into account the constitution, as well as co-operate with the opposition led by Henrique Capriles, thus putting to an end the violence and hatred in Venezuela.

Angola: Two Anthologies Due for Release Tuesday in Luanda

22 April 2013/AngolaPress

Luanda — The book Anthology of Angolan tellers will be released Tuesday by the National Institute of Cultural Industries (INIC), under the world day of book and copywriters, April 23, Angop has learnt.

A press note from the Ministry of Culture said that on the occasion will also be presented the book Anthology of traditional narratives.

The Minister of Culture, Rosa Cruz e Silva, will witness the two acts.

AU/AFRICA :

New revolution in Africa is wrought by oil, gas industry

by Phillip van Niekerk/bdlive.co.za/April 23 2013

FROM the giant floating platforms of the Gulf of Guinea to the new energy ports of East Africa, sub-Saharan Africa is about to be reshaped by a hydrocarbons revolution. The continent's oil and gas outputs have steadily grown in recent years. Taken together, Nigeria, Angola and lesser

producers already account for about 7% of world oil production. But the potential explosion of production in the deep waters of the Gulf of Guinea, East Africa's emergence as a crude producer, the natural gas discoveries off the coast of Tanzania and Mozambique and the exploration that is under way even in formerly no-go areas such as Somalia, are changing the game.

Across the continent, this activity will dwarf investment opportunities in other industries or sectors for some time to come. Foreign direct investment in infrastructure – exploration and drilling equipment, pipelines, dredging and construction of deep-water ports, liquefied natural gas (LNG) plants and offshore floating platforms — could top \$150bn over the next decade. Investment in LNG plants in Mozambique alone could be three or four times the country's annual gross domestic product.

While new producers have drawn most of the attention, and the trend is towards diversification in the number of producing countries, existing players still lead. Nigeria could add up to 12 new offshore fields with at least 1-billion barrels each in reserves if it can get the long-delayed Petroleum Industries Bill into law and reach a deal with the majors on the fiscal terms for the deep offshore. Jockeying ahead of an Angolan sub-salt licensing round appears substantial.

Oil's outsize contribution can be seen in trade figures with China. They are growing, but only if we take into account that two-thirds of China's imports from Africa are crude oil, chiefly from Angola and Sudan, and that if China stopped buying African oil, the trade figures would be very deflated.

The importance of oil and gas to Africa increases with the decline of minerals such as iron ore and copper, which once were economic mainstays. Gains from new technologies have also contributed significantly to Africa's coming hydrocarbons boom. Angola's sub-salt drilling successes — which have opened up substantial new acreage — followed technological breakthroughs in the Tupi deposits in Brazil that almost doubled that country's offshore reserves. Gabon also has considerable sub-salt potential, which could reverse its declining outputs.

The African oil and gas boom comes when energy markets are shifting dramatically, making for a more dynamic investment climate. The revolution in shale gas, due to horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing, or 'fracking', has converted the US from an importer to a potential exporter of natural gas. This is transforming the natural gas market globally and will ensure that the discoveries off the coast of Mozambique and Tanzania will mostly find their way to East Asia, where demand has surged.

At the same time, US demand for African oil is waning. US purchases of African crude fell by 27% in 2011, with further cuts last year. Imports from Nigeria were worst affected, with North Dakota's shale oil displacing Nigeria's similarly light, sweet crude from the Gulf Coast refineries.

This contradicts overhyped views that the US and China are in a geopolitical scramble for Africa's resources. If China displaces the US as a consumer of African oil, it will be as a result of market forces, not because of an ideological great game.

China's three state-owned oil companies, all active in Africa, generally operate according to the same rules as everybody else. CNPC, CNOOC and Sinopec's engagement is often structured through sharing risk and teaming up with western companies. In East Africa, for instance, CNOOC partners with Ireland's Tullow Oil and France's Total.

African oil and gas exploration and production, once dominated by the supermajors, is now opening up to new players and investors. The discoveries of the natural gas reserves offshore East Africa and new oil finds in Ghana, Uganda, Sierra Leone and northern Kenya have been made by mid-level

independents such as Anadarko, Tullow Oil, Cobalt International and Ophir Energy.

The majors do maintain the technological edge in deep water, where most development potential lies. Ghana experienced this first hand when, after it blocked Exxon's attempt to buy into its Jubilee field in 2009, the field suffered design failures and production stoppages under Tullow Oil, which was rolling out its first deep-water production. The explosion and spill at BP's Deepwater Horizon rig, which devastated the US's gulf coast, is an object lesson in the dangers of outsourcing deep water to smaller operators.

All of this constitutes a diplomatic, environmental, governance and — ultimately — democratic challenge for Africa's political leadership. The diplomatic challenge arises from potential disputes over hydrocarbon rights across poorly demarcated maritime boundaries. If it is managed well, these disputes could offer an opportunity for creative ways of working together through, for instance, joint development zones. A proposed pipeline in East Africa could link Southern Sudan, Uganda and northern Kenya to Mombasa or the new port of Lamu, an exercise in co-operation that will bind East Africa closer together.

The biggest challenge of the coming boom will be to ensure that benefits reach ordinary Africans. This is dependent to some extent on how assertive political leaders are in setting the terms, running the auctions and negotiating supply and production sharing contracts with the oil companies. Laws containing fiscal terms are being reworked, most notably in the long-running debate around Nigeria's Petroleum Industries Bill. Loopholes that allow for tax avoidance through transfer pricing and nonpayment of capital gains are also under attack in some places.

Though outcomes are uneven, several countries have mounted ambitious drives to boost local content. Indigenous players are transforming Nigeria's business environment, both as operators of oil blocks and as emerging oil services contractors.

As the number of oil-producing states grows, governments and operators will need to do more to protect oil wealth from plunder. Though oil-based corruption is far from vanquished, the international terrain is more difficult. The days when autocrats such as Omar Bongo and Sani Abacha could park hundreds of millions of plundered dollars in Swiss bank accounts have passed. The banks have tightened up, as have the antibribery sanctions on foreign multinationals such as the US's Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) and the UK's Bribery Act.

Five of the 10 highest FCPA settlements to date — totalling fines of more than \$1.58bn — have been imposed on companies paying bribes to win or retain business in the African oil and gas sector.

African leaders have committed themselves, with varying degrees of seriousness, to anticorruption initiatives such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.

Ultimately, the most important constituency for good governance and transparency measures is ordinary Africans themselves. There are few things that would test Africa's new democracies more, and render them more meaningful, than holding leaders accountable for what they do with Africa's new oil wealth.

- Van Niekerk is managing partner of Calabar Africa, a strategic consulting and analysis company.

Go into Africa ETFs, with money and time

April 23, 2013/By John Prestbo/marketwatch.com

Commentary: Seeing a hopeful future for a challenged continent

NEW YORK (MarketWatch) — A recent vacation trip to southern Africa opened my eyes to the tremendous potential this continent has for economic growth. The visit also made clear that many challenges must be surmounted for this potential to become reality.

For investors, there are some exchange-traded funds focused on Africa. While the vehicles are ready to go, investors should climb aboard only if equipped with ample supplies of patience.

Africa's northern tier of countries, including Egypt, Algeria and Libya, are in various states of upheaval. Only Morocco offers relatively stable political and business conditions. Then comes the Sahara, an economically neutered wasteland. South of the desert, in sub-Saharan Africa, is where most of the potential currently lies.

Economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa "remained robust at 4.6% in 2012, notwithstanding the slowdown in the global economy," according to the World Bank. Strong domestic demand, increasing flows of foreign direct investment and increased exports from countries with new mineral discoveries are among the factors "expected to underpin a return to the region's pre-crisis growth rate of 5% over the 2013-2015 period."

That is, if everything works out fine. A significant part of the African economy is based on commodities and raw materials. Slower growth in China and ongoing fiscal consolidation in Europe and the United States could disrupt Africa's prospects. Declines in gold and oil prices are slamming several African markets these days. Persistent poverty, health issues and political instability also could threaten the growth scenario.

Expansive ETFs

African companies constitute 7% to 10% of the broad emerging markets indexes and ETFs. They carry more weight in "frontier market" and Middle East-North Africa funds — roughly 20% to 30% — but the latter's holdings are concentrated in Egypt and Morocco. There are two single-country ETFs, Market Vectors Egypt EGPT +1.91% and iShares MSCI South Africa EZA -0.80% .

Only one ETF offers a diverse portfolio of stocks with African exposure: Market Vectors Africa Index ETF AFK +0.56% , whose assets have grown to \$109 million since the fund was launched in July 2008. It tracks the Dow Jones Africa Titans 50 Index, which imposes a couple of rules that favor diversification over reflecting the market exactly as it is.

First, weightings are limited so that South Africa — the continent's largest economy with the largest companies — doesn't dominate the index. The weight of each country is capped at 25% and the ceiling for each component stock is 8%. Stocks listed in South Africa, Egypt, Nigeria, Morocco and Kenya qualify for consideration if they have at least \$200 million of market capitalization and an average daily trading volume of \$1 million for one year.

Second, non-Africa-listed stocks also are eligible, provided the companies generate the majority of their revenues in Africa. Thus, United Kingdom companies make up 17% of the index's float-adjusted market cap. For example, Tullow Oil PLC UK:TLW 0.00% is the fund's second largest holding. Canada accounts for 4%. Norway and Australia also are represented.

By contrast, the one other regional ETF offers little diversification. The SPDR S&P Emerging Middle East & Africa ETF GAF -0.87% is weighted 90% in South African companies, plus 3.5% in Egyptian and 3% in Moroccan stocks. This ETF is more than a year older than the Market Vectors fund and has \$73.8 million in assets.

The performances of these ETFs share a common trait: Occasional periods of scrumptious returns are interspersed among interludes of treading water or steep declines. Emerging and frontier markets are vulnerable to vicious volatility as investment capital sloshes in and out.

ETF	2012	2011	Yr thru 3/31	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years
AFK	25.98%	-24.06%	- 3.13%	6.52%	1.53%	NA
EGPT	44.69%	-51.72%	-11.76%	-4.68%	-14.68%	NA
EZA	21.06%	-15.73%	-10.80%	-4.30%	4.89%	6.21%
GAF	21.50%	-16.36%	- 9.27%	-2.74%	3.10%	4.40%

Source: Morningstar Inc.

This boom-bust cycle might tempt some investors to try tactical timing to reap the fat returns and duck the disasters. But if market timing is a fool's game with U.S. stocks, it's sheer insanity for a whole region, and an unfamiliar one at that. Africa cries out for long-term investment, and my prediction is that in time those providing it will be rewarded.

There are two ways to play this forecast. The first is simply to make sure Africa is part of a broad emerging markets portfolio and let the growth happen when it will. The downside of this approach is that the big South African companies, plus maybe an Egyptian stock or two, soak up Africa's allotted market cap. The result is a concentrated bet on a couple of countries out of a continent with 58.

The second is to supplement an all-encompassing emerging markets holding with a more diversified Africa vehicle. The Market Vectors Africa ETF would fill this role nicely. Or, augment African exposure through a frontier markets ETF. For instance, iShares MSCI Frontier 100 Index Fund FM +0.27% has a 20% weight in Nigerian and Kenyan stocks.

Just don't forget to pack your patience.

John Prestbo is retired as editor and executive director of Dow Jones Indexes, now part of S&P Dow Jones Indices, in which Dow Jones & Co., publisher of MarketWatch, holds a small interest.

Women and Political Leadership in Africa: A demand In South Sudan transitional democracy

By Beny Gideon Mabor/sudantribune.com/Monday 22 April 2013

April 22, 2013 - This policy brief tries to underline the importance of women in our society and in particular their role in the journey of nation building whether in the government or outside. Yet, there are many challenges facing them in their evolution to the surface of nation building specifically the prevailing exclusion or limited participation of women in politics and governance. The norms, customs and traditions of our society that have been largely recognized and became source of legislation vehemently disadvantaged women.

In this Paper, the author attempts to hold the Government at all levels to account in order to design inclusive techniques and putting forward proposals on how South Sudanese women can be fully supported, in order to flourish and function without sense of exclusion. It also calls on women including rural women to play a central role in the national development pursuits of the country and the building of a better South Sudan. For this ideal to be achieved, women's participation in politics, governance and all walks of specializations needs to be promoted.

The research findings were result of numerous consultative seminars and workshops and finally the recent workshop organized by network of civil society orgainsation on the women participation in the constitutional making processing at Juba Civic Engagement Centre from 18-19 Aril 2013. This national consultative process attended by 17 organizations and supported by Justice Africa mark the launch of this opinion. Finally, the purpose of this paper is to analyze the current level of women's political participation in South Sudan with allotted 25 % affirmative action, how practically it has been implemented or otherwise, and to highlight the main challenges facing women in accessing political structures, and to suggest strategies for overcoming these unfolding challenges.

1. Introduction

The Republic of South Sudan since independence on 9 July, 2011 is a youngest member state at some regional and international organizations including United Nations and African Union respectively. By such implication, the young republic still lack true democratic principles and system of governance that guarantee an equal participation of women in political leadership and other sphere of public life.

For record sake, there has been a list of 13 female leaders in Africa both Head of State and government, amongst them are former leaders and others are currently warming highest chairs of their countries. Congratulations to such women leaders who have resisted political turbulences and proved the contrary that women can do. Similarly, the aspiring women leaders in South Sudan at any institutional capacity should borrow a leaf from their counterpart in those African countries and beyond to make it a reality in South Sudan.

According to an edited opinion written by my senior colleague Mr. Dele Meiji Fatunla, a distinguished writer on African affairs and Editor for the Royal African Society online journal; he said "the continued dominance of political life in Africa by men is not good for men, it's not good for women and it's not good for the continent. I therefore add my voice that it's not good for men and women in South Sudan and the region. The youngest state is surely owned by women and youth and their majority votes during self-determination referendum on 9 January, 2011 gave birth to the Republic of South Sudan.

According to 2008 Sudan fifth population and housing census, the women population is 3,973,190 and youth including young women represents 72% of total population. Certainly, we are confident that this situation of women domination in politics and governance must change too, in South Sudan and the political leadership under Salva-Administration must adhere to the principles of equal opportunity for all in the direct management of the affairs of South Sudan.

During a celebration of International Women's Day on 8 March 2013, in South Sudan, on the challenges facing them in the 21st century worldwide, the country's ruling party Sudan Peoples, Liberation Movement SPLM organized a one day workshop in its party headquarters for recognition of women rights. The party Secretary General Mr. Pag'an Amum announces party plan to increase women participation quota to 35 % affirmative action at all levels of government in South Sudan. This is good news and the SPLM-led government must keep its promise in letter and spirit.

A month later, the network of civil society organizations hosted by the Voice for Change and South Sudan Law Society organized two days workshop on women participation in the constitutional making process from 18-19 April 2013 at Juba Civic Engagement Centre. The Workshop communiqué recommends many proposals to be included in the forthcoming permanent constitution. Chief amongst them includes increase to 50 % participation of women at all levels of government but not a language of an affirmative action.

The women-led civil rights group with some men including the author rejected and stresses that affirmative action is a provisional arrangement or delegation of powers by the appointing authority. It is not governed by a separate legislation to have effective force of law in its self and therefore, women are aware of the subsequent outcome of delegated powers. A case in point is the withdrawal of delegated executive competence to the Vice President Dr. Riak Machar, which has educated the public on implication of delegated powers.

At continental level, it is evident that African women have made remarkable progress in democratic intercourse and become part of governance. Today, women cling on the political leadership and occupy the presidency in Malawi and Liberia headed by H.E. Joyce Banda for the former and H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf for the latter. There are number of Vice Presidents and Deputy Prime Ministers in Africa such as Joyce Majuru of Zimbabwe; Dr. Aja Isatou Njie-saidy of Gambia; Fernando da Piedade Dias of Angola and Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma heading the African Union for the time since its establishment in 1963. At key institutional level, women are now the leaders of key ministries such as Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is the Minister of Finance for Nigeria; Linah Moholo is the central governor of the Bank of Botswana as well as Parliamentary Speakers for Ghana and Uganda are women.

Generally, the African female leaders both current and former must be thanks for their valuable role in shaping the position of women in Africa as integral stakeholders in governance equally with men. In fact, there are unique leadership qualities in women leaders unlike men. A topical example is late Agathe Uwilingiyimana, former Prime Minister of Rwanda who allowed herself to be brutally murdered in 1994 Rwandan genocide, in order to save her children after her 15 guards were slaughtered during the genocide. May God rest her soul in peace!

2. Current Analysis of Women Participation In Governance

The women's participation in politics and governance and access to decision-making can be crystal clear as the key indication of gender equality in a democratic society. The simple question may be what is actually meant by gender equality such proposers cause a lot of headache? And the simple answer too is that when both men and women are in the position to make or influence public decisions on the same footing without discrimination. Where are we in South Sudan to that effect? Is South Sudan gender-g geared political entity?

Despite the said 35 % quota promised by the ruling party and the newly proposed equal share of 50% participation of women in decision making by civil society organizations; the legitimate question on the implementation of existing 25 % affirmative action for women representation at all level of government remain a big challenge. To what extent did the government and appointing authority in particular fulfils the 25 % affirmative action for women in South Sudan? In a detailed research data released by another colleague Mr. Augustino Ting Mayai, a Research Director at the Sudd Institute, entitled "SPLM politics of gender equality", read together with my first hand research for the last two months, we concurrently found out a lot of gender disparities in the allocation of constitutional and civil services jobs.

In 2011, when the first post-independence government and the third reshuffle of the national government since 2005 was formed, only 5 women out of 29 ministers were appointed representing 17 % and marginally dropped to 14 % when Madam Awut Deng resigned and the ministerial post is not replaced to date. Out of 28 deputy ministers, 10 are women representing 34 %. The total representation in the ministries is 26.3 %. Therefore, I am of the opinion here that at least a fair representation has been done although it is strictly calculated not to exceed the minimum quota of affirmative action of 25 %. At the National Commission and Bureaus, the national government has 21 commissions and bureaus. The head of these institutions are political appointees and the data

showed that only 2 % are women, while in the National Legislature, there are 382 law makers from the bicameral Assembly with 332 member of the National Legislative Assembly and 50 members of the Council of state respectively. In the lower chamber, there are 96 women representing 28 % while the upper house has 4 women representing 8 % respectively. Still, women fall below the allocated 25% in the National legislature, while undersecretaries represent 13 %. The institution at the State level are far beyond this constitutional obligation and State governors only represents 10 % and county commissioners at 2 .3% according the report of the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare in 2013.

In conclusion, I totally agree with our senior diplomat and political scientist Hon. Apuk Ayuel Mayen, in her policy brief published by the same Sudd institute, which is almost equal with my argument only on different angles. The learned Ambassador in her research titled “women in Peace making process in South Sudan” underline that “25 % allotted for women participation as a measure of redress is an attempt to rectify historical imbalance created by generational war that could not allow women to study and compete with men on equal footing. Unfortunately, this policy is misinterpreted to 25 % for women and they cannot compete again in the remaining 75 % allegedly calculated for men.

In other jurisdictions, despite challenges facing women in transitional democracies, nevertheless, the government of the day in some African countries managed the issue of gender sensitive a priority. Countries such Senegal, South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique, Kenya and Rwanda all rank highly for their level of women’s representation in parliament. The only country in the world with highest number of women in parliament is Rwanda. Therefore, Rwanda must be applauded for that decision. It is imperative for South Sudan women parliamentarians at all level of Assemblies to visit Rwanda and South Africa and dialogue with their counterparts on how they managed it to the peak of the August house.

During the liberation movement against Khartoum regimes, women tirelessly fought side by side with men to liberate South Sudan by providing food and shelters to the gallant fighting forces, producing and caring for children to join arm struggle and caring for wounded heroes and heroines. Women even formed their own battalion named as ‘Katiba Banat’, meaning women battalion. With these equal role manifested in the struggle; it is clear that the development of our country requires the full participation of women, who constitute large portion of population.

3. Policy Recommendations

After having read through the findings, the paper strongly believes the continue dialogue around gender sensitive issue will definitely yield good fruit in their favor. Nevertheless, I do agree that women in South Sudan as elsewhere in the world have diverse interests, but there is one thing that united them and that is the- women. Therefore, the following key policy recommendations need urgent implementation by the women and policy makers.

First, in order to change social attitudes towards women’s participation in public life, brought about by customs and traditions that degrade the level of women to preparation of food and caring for siblings under absolute whim of man; there is a great demand of public awareness to take place. This should take a long term approach, and include public awareness raising around gender, knowledge of democratic values and practices, the roles and responsibilities of voters’ as well how to hold elected officials accountable.

There is a need for women rights group to conduct research on statistical evidence about educated women in South Sudan, including their political colors and non-partisans women. It is imperative now before 2015 expected general elections to map out potential aspiring women at all

levels of contestable offices. This exercise is significant for effective lobbying and policy change for aspiring women leaders to prove their alternative leadership, leading to the election and appointments into political leadership and other professional service.

Call on the donor community at all levels and other ambassadors of good will with financial capacity to fund civil society organizations and women group in particular to strengthening the capacity of such organizations mandated to address gender issues. Some NGOs in South Sudan so far have done good job and a lot is needed when funds prevail. The UN-women and other regional and international organizations on similar agenda need to organize women in the world youngest nation to fit uniform level of women participation in the world order.

Call on the national government to prepare a 'national gender capacity development plan' for civil servants, elected representatives, political parties, commissions and ministries. In practice, the same arrangements exist in Indonesia or pay a visit to that end and see applicable procedures. The women in Indonesia were facing similar exclusion in politics and governance more than South Sudanese women and now have raised their level of participation in national decision making process. Perhaps the government may be skeptical about why training women to compete men in government but human resource development is a primary role of every democratic state unless otherwise.

Call on the national government to immediately ratify CEDAW without any reservation and domesticate enabling legislation to ensure principles and objective of this legal instrument for the development of women in South Sudan. The principal law must procedurally ensure that CEDAW takes precedence over conflicting domestic laws.

Call on the national government to make provisions in the forthcoming permanent constitution, that vested the judiciary with competence to declare some customs and tradition invalid, null and void since the contradict to some provisions of the constitution and discriminate women not to come closer to the national decision making arena. This will be in line with the constitutional Bill of rights and international legal instruments South Sudan have acceded to or ratify such as CEDAW in the process of ratification. Unfortunately, the parallel existence of customary law and state law as independent legal system has weakened the justice sector in South Sudan.

Call on the national government to enact the family law on general principles and use South Sudan diverse cultures and traditions as exception to the general rule. The law will specifically define issues of marriage and marriageable age, inheritance, divorce, succession etc.. For example in the statutory court proceeding, the particular custom of an ethnic group can be the basis of a judgment but, if such custom of the party in question contradicts the state law and rule of natural justice, then the judge will have to declare such custom null and void and use general rule in the determination of case.

Beny Gideon Mabor is a Project Officer for Rule of Law and Human Rights, at South Sudan Human Rights Society for Advocacy (SSHURSA). The organization is tasked with mission to monitor, document human rights violations in South Sudan and train general public on the respect and importance of human rights, fundamental freedoms of an individual, democracy and rule of law to creating responsible, justice and good governance oriented South Sudan. Prior to joining SSHURSA, the author has worked for South Sudan Ministry for Justice, and a writer. His research interests include governance, human rights and social accountability. He can be reached at benygmabor@gmail.com

Nigeria: le président Jonathan ordonne une enquête après un bain de sang

AFP/ le 23/04/2013

Le président nigérian Goodluck Jonathan a ordonné l'ouverture d'une enquête après la mort de 187 personnes dans des affrontements entre armée et islamistes à Baga (nord-est), condamnés par Washington qui regrette "la mort de tant de civils innocents".

Le président du Nigeria - pays le plus peuplé d'Afrique et premier producteur de brut sur le continent- a décidé qu'une enquête approfondie devait être menée pour établir ce qui a conduit à tel bain de sang, le 19 avril à Baga, un village de pêcheurs sur les rives du Lac Tchad.

Il s'agit du bilan le plus lourd accusé en un jour depuis le début de l'insurrection dans cette région du nord musulman et pauvre du Nigeria, où des sauveteurs continuaient à fouiller les décombres en quête de blessés dans cette localité à moitié détruite par les flammes.

Le président Jonathan a "ordonné une enquête approfondie au sujet du bilan élevé de morts dans les affrontements entre soldats et des insurgés à Baga", selon un communiqué présidentiel.

Les violences ont éclaté vendredi à Baga - village reculé situé dans une région où est basé le groupe islamiste nigérian Boko Haram, responsable d'attaques sanglantes dans le nord et le centre du pays depuis 2009.

Selon la Croix-Rouge, "187 morts ont été enterrés, et 77 personnes sont hospitalisées". Des insurgés ont été tués, mais aussi des soldats et des civils, selon des témoignages d'habitants recueillis par un représentant des autorités ayant inspecté les lieux dimanche, qui a requis l'anonymat.

Près de la moitié de la localité a été détruite par des incendies à la suite des combats, a estimé lundi un responsable des services de secours.

Des insurgés équipés d'armes lourdes

Selon des habitants, les insurgés se seraient servis d'armes lourdes, mais peu d'informations ont pu être obtenues sur la nature des combats.

Le secrétaire général de l'ONU Ban Ki-moon s'est déclaré "choqué" par le bilan des victimes, a déclaré son porte-parole Martin Nesirky. Le patron de l'ONU a également appelé "tous les groupes extrémistes à cesser leurs attaques".

A Washington, le porte-parole du département d'Etat, Patrick Ventrell, a déclaré que les Etats-Unis condamnent ces violents affrontements et mis en garde les autorités contre le seul recours à la force armée.

Si Washington soutient Abuja dans sa lutte contre Boko Haram, les autorités nigérianes doivent comprendre que "l'extrémisme violent nécessite plus que la simple réponse sécuritaire" et doivent "répondrent aux problèmes des communautés vulnérables", selon M. Ventrell.

"Elles doivent le faire d'une façon qui n'est pas forcément brutale, mais efficace et qui se concentre également sur les besoins économiques et politiques légitimes dans le nord", a-t-il estimé, tout en rappelant que Boko Haram exploitait cette situation pour recruter.

Baga est situé à 150 kilomètres de la ville de Maiduguri, considérée comme le berceau du groupe Boko Haram. Mais de nombreux insurgés se seraient dispersés ces dernières années dans tout l'Etat de Borno du fait de la répression menée par les forces de sécurité dans la ville.

Depuis 2009, les attaques de Boko Haram dans le centre et le nord du Nigeria, et leur répression par l'armée, ont fait au moins 3.000 morts.

Le groupe est notamment responsable à Abuja d'attentats-suicide contre le siège des Nations Unies, le quartier général de la police et les locaux d'un des grands quotidiens du pays. Leurs cibles sont aussi les églises, souvent le dimanche et à l'occasion des grandes fêtes religieuses comme Pâques et Noël.

Ils ont tiré "sur tout ce qui bougeait"

Selon de premières informations, les combats ont commencé lorsque des soldats ont encerclé une mosquée où des insurgés étaient cachés.

Mais selon un habitant, les violences ont en fait éclaté quand des militants armés de Boko Haram ont voulu rentrer dans un centre où des habitants ont l'habitude de "regarder des matchs de football".

Les islamistes auraient ensuite tiré dans la foule paniquée qui tentait de fuir, toujours selon le récit de cet habitant. Des soldats qui se trouvaient à proximité sont intervenus avant de se replier face à des insurgés lourdement armés.

Des habitants ont affirmé que les hommes de Boko Haram étaient armés de lance-roquettes anti-char. Des soldats sont ensuite revenus avec des moyens militaires renforcés.

Ensuite, des soldats ont "commencé à tirer et à incendier les maisons. Ils ont ouvert le feu sur tout ce qui bougeait. Les femmes, les enfants et les personnes âgées n'ont pas été épargnés", a déclaré cet habitant sous couvert de l'anonymat.

La force conjointe de l'armée et de la police - déployée dans le Nord-Est pour combattre les islamistes - est régulièrement accusée d'exécutions sommaires et de violences envers les civils par diverses organisations internationales de défense des droits humains.

Nigeria: combats très meurtriers entre islamistes et militaires

22 avril 2013/ Par AFP

Près de 200 personnes ont été tuées au cours de violents affrontements entre des islamistes et l'armée, dans une localité du nord-est du Nigeria, sur les rives du Lac Tchad, qui a été à moitié détruite par les flammes, a annoncé lundi la Croix-Rouge.

«Jusqu'à présent, 187 morts ont été enterrés, et 77 personnes sont hospitalisées. Plus de 300 maisons ont brûlé», a déclaré à l'AFP un porte-parole de la Croix-Rouge, Nwakpa O. Nwakpa, un bilan beaucoup plus lourd que les «dizaines de morts» annoncées jusqu'ici par une source gouvernementale.

Les affrontements ont éclaté vendredi dans le village isolé de Baga, dans l'Etat de Borno, une région où est basé le groupe islamiste nigérian Boko Haram, responsable d'attaques sanglantes dans le nord et le centre du pays depuis 2009.

Des insurgés ont été tués, mais aussi des soldats et des civils, selon des témoignages d'habitants recueillis par un représentant des autorités ayant inspecté les lieux dimanche, qui a requis

l'anonymat.

Près de la moitié de la localité a été détruite par des incendies à la suite des combats, a estimé lundi un responsable des services de secours.

Environ «40% de la ville a été détruite par le feu. De nombreux habitants sont toujours portés disparus et pour le moment on suppose qu'ils ont fui dans la brousse», a déclaré ce responsable sous couvert d'anonymat.

Selon des habitants, les violences ont éclaté quand des militaires ont encerclé une mosquée où des islamistes armés étaient supposés s'être réfugiés. Dans les fusillades qui ont suivi, les insurgés se seraient servis d'armes lourdes, mais peu d'informations ont pu être obtenues sur la nature des combats.

Un porte-parole régional de l'agence nationale de gestion des situations d'urgence (NEMA), Abdulkadir Ibrahim, a indiqué lundi que ses émissaires étaient arrivés à Baga. Mais les communications avec eux sont difficiles et il est trop tôt pour mesurer l'ampleur des violences, a-t-il dit.

Le réseau de téléphonie mobile dans certains endroits de l'Etat de Borno avait été très sérieusement endommagé l'an dernier quand les islamistes avaient brûlé des pylônes de télécommunications.

Depuis 2009, les attaques de Boko Haram dans le centre et le nord du Nigeria, et leur répression par l'armée, ont fait au moins 3.000 morts. Le groupe est notamment responsable à Abuja (Centre) d'attentats-suicide contre le siège des Nations Unies, le quartier général de la police et les locaux d'un des grands quotidiens du pays. Leurs cibles sont aussi les églises, notamment le dimanche et au moment des grandes fêtes religieuses comme Pâques et Noël.

Les forces de sécurité nigérianes minimisent généralement le nombre des victimes dans les affrontements entre l'armée et le groupe islamiste radical. Les habitants au contraire ont parfois tendance à exagérer les bilans tout en accusant des militaires d'abattre sans discernement des civils durant leurs opérations.

La force conjointe de l'armée et de la police - déployée dans le Nord-Est pour combattre les islamistes - est accusée d'exécutions sommaires et de violences envers les civils par diverses organisations internationales de défense des droits humains.

Baga est situé à 150 kilomètres de la ville de Maiduguri, considérée comme le berceau du groupe Boko Haram. Mais de nombreux insurgés se seraient dispersés ces dernières années dans tout l'Etat de Borno du fait de la répression menée par les forces de sécurité dans la ville.

Le Nigeria - pays le plus peuplé d'Afrique, avec 160 millions d'habitants, et premier producteur de pétrole du continent - est divisé entre le Nord, à majorité musulmane, et le Sud, principalement chrétien. Boko Haram affirme combattre pour la création d'un Etat islamiste dans le nord du Nigeria mais ses revendications ont fréquemment varié.

Les dirigeants américains et européens ont demandé à plusieurs reprises au président nigérian Goodluck Jonathan de prendre des mesures sociales et d'investir dans l'économie du Nord, plus pauvre que celle du Sud.

Actuellement, le Nigeria étudie la possibilité d'une amnistie qui bénéficierait aux membres de Boko Haram, pour mettre fin à l'insurrection. Le président a formé un comité, le 17 avril, afin de réfléchir

à un tel accord.

Mais le chef présumé du groupe Abubakar Shekau, considéré comme un «terroriste international» par Washington a déjà rejeté l'idée d'une telle amnistie. «De manière surprenante, le gouvernement nigérian parle de nous accorder une amnistie. Qu'avons nous fait de mal ? Au contraire, c'est nous qui devrions vous pardonner», avait-il lancé le 11 avril.

UN/AFRICA :

L'Onu estime qu'il «est urgent de rétablir l'ordre» en Centrafrique
AFP/Lundi 22 Avril 2013

Le secrétaire général adjoint chargé des Affaires politiques de l'ONU Jeffrey Feltman a estimé lundi au cours d'une visite à Bangui qu'il était «urgent de rétablir l'ordre» en Centrafrique, où la coalition Séléka qui a pris le pouvoir le 24 mars peine à mettre fin aux violences et aux pillages.

Il a aussi lancé un appel à l'aide humanitaire, soulignant que seuls 20% des besoins étaient couverts. «Il est urgent de rétablir l'ordre public et la sécurité à travers le pays afin de pouvoir protéger les populations civiles contre les violences et abus. Les tueries, pillages, attaques contre les populations civiles, violations de droits de l'homme et violence contre les populations doivent s'arrêter», a affirmé M. Feltman dans un communiqué.

«Les violences sexuelles et les recrutements et utilisation d'enfants dans les groupes armés doivent s'arrêter. Ceux qui se sont saisis du pouvoir doivent assumer leurs responsabilités en contrôlant les éléments sous leur commandement», a-t-il souligné alors que la population accuse des éléments du Séléka de constituer l'essentiel des pilleurs et que des enfants soldats font partie de la troupe.

M. Feltman a rappelé que la Communauté économique des Etats d'AFrique centrale (CEEAC) avait promis d'étendre de 500 à 2.000 hommes, le nombre de soldats déployés sur le terrain tout en assurant: «On aura sûrement besoin de plus de soutien».

«Après la sécurité, les besoins humanitaires sont primordiaux en ce moment. Nous lançons un appel aux bailleurs de fonds afin qu'ils puissent augmenter urgemment leur contribution pour faire face aux besoins immenses et se préparer pour les interventions aussitôt que la situation sécuritaire le permettra», a-t-il précisé.

La situation en République centrafricaine (RCA) s'est considérablement dégradée ces dernières semaines après la chute du régime du président François Bozizé, renversé le 24 mars par la rébellion Séléka.

US/AFRICA :

CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

EU/AFRICA :

Le Parlement prolonge la mission française au Mali

mardi 23 avril 2013 /ouest-france.fr

Nécessaire après quatre mois d'engagement, le vote du Parlement a prorogé, hier, l'opération Serval. La sortie du Mali n'est pas pour demain.

C'était l'une des innovations de la réforme constitutionnelle de 2008. Rendre l'avis du Parlement incontournable pour tout engagement militaire, quatre mois après son commencement. Cette disposition avait été inaugurée en 2008, sur le dossier afghan. Hier soir, députés et sénateurs donnaient leur avis sur le maintien des troupes au Mali. « Une réussite politique et militaire », a souligné le Premier ministre dans son intervention.

Initiée le 11 janvier, cette opération s'est effectivement déroulée, jusqu'ici, selon les schémas annoncés. Il s'agissait alors de briser l'avancée sur Bamako des troupes jihadistes, et de conjurer ainsi la création d'un État voyou au coeur du Sahel. Objectif apparemment atteint. Il est bon de dire « apparemment » car les médias ont rarement été autant tenus à l'écart d'un conflit.

Ce succès de la première phase a permis au pouvoir politique et à l'état-major d'annoncer un début de retrait. Les soldats seraient actuellement au nombre de 4 000 sur le terrain (contre 4 500 au temps fort). Le calendrier évoqué au ministère de la Défense parle d'une réduction progressive. 2 000 hommes en juillet, 1 000 en décembre, resteraient sur le sol malien.

La menace islamiste n'explique pas tout

L'hypothèse d'un retrait presque total, donc d'une sortie de guerre, semble toutefois bien optimiste. L'armée malienne est au point mort, et si huit millions d'euros lui ont été promis, pas un centime n'est encore arrivé. La population, à Bamako, voit avec inquiétude le retrait français. La Misma, force africaine, poursuit bien son déploiement, mais sa capacité reste modeste. Paris mise sur sa mue, dans les prochaines semaines, en mission onusienne.

Le défi, en fait, n'est pas tant militaire que politique à présent. Or, la tenue d'une élection présidentielle, en juillet, paraît pour le moins prématurée. Retisser un dialogue avec le Nord du Mali et ses multiples composantes requiert un fort engagement et du temps.

Dans l'esprit de nombreux parlementaires, le sentiment que la mission française au Mali est destinée à durer est donc diffus. Sans faire injure aux forces africaines, et sans se méprendre sur le peu d'appétence de nos partenaires européens (qui traînent les pieds mais n'ont pas non plus tous les mêmes intérêts que Paris dans la région), tout porte à penser à la permanence des soldats français. Ne dispose-t-on pas d'une base stable au Tchad depuis 1968 ? Ou de bases mobiles au Burkina Faso depuis plus de dix-huit mois ?

La présence d'environ 45 000 expatriés français au Sahel, d'intérêts vitaux pour la France et ses entreprises (GDF, Total, Areva..) comme l'uranium du Niger, la grande bataille stratégique en cours avec la Chine et les États-Unis... Tous ces motifs sont autant de raisons de penser que le retrait du Mali sera difficilement intégral. La menace islamiste n'explique pas tout.

Laurent MARCHAND.

France's Libya embassy hit by car bomb

Kim Hjelmgaard, USA TODAY/April 23, 2013

France's embassy in the Libyan capital of Tripoli has been hit by a car bomb, Libyan security officials told the Associated Press.

Two guards were injured as a result of the attack and the blast caused extensive damage. The bomb set off a fire near the entrance to the embassy and two other nearby buildings also sustained damage.

"We think it was a booby-trapped car," an unnamed French official told the Reuters news agency. "There was a lot of damage," the official said.

French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius said from Paris that the bombing was an "abhorrent act" and that France would work to "quickly identify the perpetrators."

Foreign diplomatic missions have been targets in Libya since the country's former leader, Moammar Gadhafi, was removed from power in 2011.

The eastern city of Benghazi has also seen frequent attacks. An attack on the U.S. consulate on Sept. 11 left four Americans dead, including Ambassador Christopher Stevens, and there was an assassination attempt on Italian Consul Guido de Sanctis in January.

Contributing: Associated Press

Attentat contre l'ambassade de France en Libye

Par lefigaro.fr/le 23/04/2013

L'attaque à la voiture piégée a blessé mardi matin deux gendarmes français dont un grièvement, et provoqué d'importants dégâts matériels, à Tripoli.

Un attentat à la voiture piégée. Un véhicule a explosé mardi matin devant l'ambassade de France en Libye, à Tripoli. Deux gendarmes français sont blessés. Un grièvement, l'autre n'a que des égratignures. D'après des témoins, le quartier est méconnaissable. Le bâtiment abritant les locaux de la chancellerie a été fortement endommagé et une partie du mur de l'enceinte a été détruite. Deux voitures garées devant l'ambassade étaient calcinées. «Il ne reste plus rien de mon bureau», a déclaré une employée française de l'ambassade installée dans une villa à deux étages, située au coin d'une rue du quartier résidentiel de Gargaresh.

En raison de la puissance de l'explosion, deux villas en face de l'ambassade ont subi d'importants dégâts et les vitres d'un commerce, 200 mètres plus loin, ont été soufflées. Une Française, habitant à proximité de l'ambassade, a raconté sur Europe 1 avoir «entendu une première grande explosion. Puis une ou deux autres, moins massives». «C'est tout cassé, ici. Les vitrines... Il y avait beaucoup

de fumée», a-t-elle décrit. La rue devant la chancellerie a été inondée d'eau, vraisemblablement en raison de l'explosion d'un tuyau. Une habitante du quartier a confié à francetv info qu'une de ses amies «qui habite pile en face de l'ambassade a vu sa maison complètement soufflée, elle n'a plus l'électricité et tous les voisins se sont regroupés dans son jardin».

Premier attentat contre une représentation diplomatique à Tripoli

L'attaque «odieuse», selon les mots employés par le ministre des Affaires étrangères Laurent Fabius, n'a pas encore été revendiquée. C'est le premier attentat à toucher une représentation diplomatique à Tripoli. À Benghazi, la grande ville libyenne de Cyrénaïque aux mains des mouvements djihadistes, plusieurs missions avaient été visées. En septembre dernier, le consulat des Etats-Unis à Benghazi, dans l'est du pays, avait été la cible d'une attaque fatale à l'ambassadeur américain et à trois autres compatriotes.

Depuis son intervention au Mali, Paris est la cible de nombreuses intimidations islamistes. Fin janvier, la France et plusieurs pays occidentaux avaient demandé à leurs ressortissants de quitter Benghazi, suite à des menaces en représailles à l'offensive française contre les islamistes armés au Mali.

CHINA/AFRICA :

INDIA /AFRICA :

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

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