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BURUNDI :

La biodiversité dans les aires protégées en régression au Burundi suite aux feux de brousse
Vendredi 6 septembre 2013/Xinhua

BUJUMBURA (Xinhua) - Le Burundi a enregistré au cours de la saison sèche 2013 (juin à août) une perte de la biodiversité dans les aires protégées suite aux feux de brousse, a déclaré à Xinhua jeudi le directeur technique de l'Institut pour l'Environnement et la Conservation de la Nature (INECN) du Burundi, Jean Marie Mugishawimana.

Le Parc National de la Ruvubu (est), la plus grande aire protégée du Burundi, avec plus de 50.000 hectares a déjà perdu 33. 000 hectares, dévastés par le feu, a-t-il affirmé, ajoutant que d' autres localités du forêt, la seule qui héberge les buffles, continuent à brûler.

Cette pyromanie est imputable aux braconniers dont certains Tanzaniens et les éleveurs, dont certains Rwandais vivent en Tanzanie.

Pour lui, la saison sèche 2013 aura été marquée par une sévérité des feux de brousse et plus de 60% de la forêt de Vyanda (sud) d'une superficie d'environ 4.000 ha, sont partis en fumée.

Pendant environ 10 ans, cette aire protégée, peuplée par les chimpanzés et surplombant le lac Tanganyika, n'a pas pris feu.

De plus, 1.500 ha du Parc National de la Kibira (ouest) de 40. 000 ha, caractérisé par une richesse de la biodiversité, ont été rasés par ces feux dont l'origine fut les activités de l' apiculture, a-t-il encore déploré.

Cette situation s'est produite malgré la multiplication des séances de sensibilisation de la population riveraine de ces aires protégées pour la lutte contre les feux de brousse, dans le cadre d'un projet appuyé par le Programme des Unies pour le Développement(PNUD) a-t-il fait remarquer.

Par ailleurs, les dégâts auraient été minimisés si l'INECN disposait assez de moyens de déplacement, de communication, des ressources humaines notamment les gardes, de moyens financiers, a-t-il mentionné.

Le manque de collaboration avec certains administratifs à la base, les actions de sabotage, la non-poursuite judiciaire des contrevenants, la pression démographique figurent parmi les facteurs à la base de ces feux de brousse, a-t-il ajouté.

M. Mugishawimana recommande un engagement des décideurs et l'augmentation du budget alloué à l'environnement, un secteur clé pour la promotion de l'économie verte et de développement durable.

RWANDA :

RDC CONGO :

Le M23 prié d'arrêter "toute activité militaire" en RDC

Le Monde.fr / 05.09.2013

Deux exigences ont été formulées jeudi par les chefs d'Etats de la région des Grands Lacs, à l'issue du sommet de Kampala, la capitale de l'Ouganda. D'abord, ces derniers ont sommé la rébellion congolaise du M23 d'arrêter "toute activité militaire et cesser la guerre et les menaces de renverser le gouvernement légal de République démocratique du Congo".

Ensuite, les onze chefs d'Etat présents ont exigé que les négociations entre le M23 et la République démocratique du Congo (RDC) reprenne "dans les trois jours".

Le dialogue, suspendu depuis mai, devra être "conclu dans une période maximale de quatorze jours", précise le communiqué final du sommet. Une requête à laquelle a accédé le M23. Jeudi soir, son président, Bertrand Bisimwa, a déclaré que la rébellion était "prête" à reprendre les pourparlers avec Kinshasa.

LE RWANDA ET L'OUGANDA POINTÉS DU DOIGT

Durant ces quatorze jours, "les forces belligérantes sur le terrain sont exhortées à exercer le maximum de retenue pour que les pourparlers soient rapidement conclus".

Le sommet demande également à la nouvelle "brigade d'intervention [de l'ONU] d'exercer sans relâche une pression sur le M23 et toutes les autres 'forces négatives'", terme qui désigne les groupes armés qui pullulent dans l'est de la RDC, notamment la rébellion rwandaise des Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR).

Cette nouvelle brigade de l'ONU, dont le mandat est d'éradiquer les groupes rebelles actifs dans l'est

de la RDC, a épaulé l'armée congolaise à la fin d'août pour déloger le M23 de Goma, capitale du Nord-Kivu, à la frontière avec le Rwanda.

La RDC et l'ONU accusent le Rwanda de soutenir militairement le M23, mais le pays concerné dément formellement. L'Ouganda, hôte du sommet, est également soupçonné d'aider les rebelles.

C'est la septième fois depuis juillet 2012 que les chefs d'Etat de la région des Grands Lacs se réunissent pour tenter de trouver une solution à la crise persistante dans l'est de la RDC, sans succès notable jusqu'ici. A chaque reprise des affrontements, le M23 et Kinshasa se renvoient systématiquement la responsabilité des combats.

UGANDA :

Congo, Rwanda Leaders Meet in Uganda Over Rebels

By RODNEY MUHUMUZA /Associated Press/September 5, 2013

JOHANNESBURG

The presidents of Congo and Rwanda on Thursday called for peace talks to quickly resume between the Congolese government and a rebel movement that is widely believed to be backed by Rwanda.

The summit organized in Uganda's capital marked a rare opportunity for Congolese President Joseph Kabila and Rwandan President Paul Kagame to hold face-to-face meetings at a time when their countries are on edge over Rwanda's alleged military involvement in eastern Congo.

The negotiations between the Congolese government and the M23 rebels have repeatedly stalled since late last year.

In a statement issued late Thursday, the presidents and other regional leaders called for peace talks to resume within three days' time "and conclude within a maximum period of 14 days during which maximum restraint must be exercised on the ground to allow for talks to conclude."

In August, Congolese troops backed by U.N. forces battled M23 rebels near the eastern city of Goma, home to nearly 1 million people along the Rwandan border. Rwanda accused the Congolese military of firing missiles across the border and warned that "this provocation can no longer be tolerated."

Then the M23 rebels last week declared a unilateral cease-fire following a week of heavy fighting with the Congolese troops, saying they wanted to "give peace a chance," although Congo's government said it wants M23 disbanded.

Congo's government now will be less keen on the talks as its army and a newly strengthened U.N. intervention force appear to have the upper hand in the most recent clashes with the rebels, according to Jason Stearns, a Congo expert who runs the Usalama Project, a think tank that researches Congo's armed groups.

"The primary drive to get back to the negotiating table is coming from Uganda and Rwanda," he said. "They (Congo's government) feel that they are in a position of strength."

Congo's government would be interested in talks that can lead to "the decapitation of M23," he added.

Thursday's meeting in the Ugandan capital of Kampala was called by Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni "to stop the fighting and get back on the negotiating table," according to James Mugume, the permanent secretary at Uganda's Foreign Ministry.

The summit in Kampala was organized under the banner of a regional bloc called the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. It also was attended by United Nations special envoy Mary Robinson, who has urged a political solution to a crisis that recently threatened to spill over Congo's borders.

In their statement Thursday, the presidents said they "strongly condemn" the deaths of civilians on both sides of the border and also urged M23 to stop its threats.

"M23 should put an end to all military activities, and stop war and threats of overthrowing the lawful government of (Congo)," said the statement signed by the presidents including Rwanda's Kagame.

Rwanda denies backing the rebels despite multiple U.N. reports citing evidence to the contrary. One U.N. report said Rwandans join M23 in small groups, hiking across footpaths into Congo. Rwanda also has supplied the rebels with arms and sophisticated equipment, including night vision goggles, the report said.

In the latest fighting, however, Congolese troops were boosted by a special intervention brigade of U.N. troops who, unlike the other 17,000 peacekeepers stationed in the vast nation, have a mandate to attack the rebels. The U.N. brigade shelled rebel positions with artillery as Congolese troops engaged the rebels in hand-to-hand combat, support that may have pushed the rebels to retreat and declare the cease-fire.

It stood in stark contrast to last November, when the U.N. troops were unable to stop the M23 rebels from briefly overtaking Goma before withdrawing under international pressure.

M23 is made up of hundreds of Congolese soldiers mostly from the Tutsi ethnic group who deserted the national army last year after accusing the government of failing to honor the terms of a deal signed in March 2009. Even before the creation of the M23 in 2012, eastern Congo's forest-covered hills were crawling with other rebel groups, ethnic militias and renegade units of the regular army.

SOUTH AFRICA :

South Africa: 27 Killed in Road Collision

September 6, 2013 /(AP)/Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG

South African authorities say 27 people have died in a road collision in the eastern part of the country.

South African media say the accident happened when a truck crashed into several vehicles on

Thursday evening in Pinetown, west of the coastal city of Durban. The South African Press Association quotes a medical responder as saying about 80 people were injured.

The cause is under investigation.

Cabinet minister Jeff Radebe is standing in for President Jacob Zuma while the latter attends the G20 summit in Russia. In a statement, Radebe says there have been three road collisions claiming many lives in recent days, including one that killed seven young girls returning from a traditional ceremony. He is appealing to drivers to exercise caution on the roads.

TANZANIA :

EAC integration moves on without Tanzania, Burundi

Thursday, 05 September 2013/Written by Sulaiman Kakaire/observer.ug

Presidents Museveni (Uganda), Uhuru Kenyatta (Kenya), and Paul Kagame (Rwanda) have strengthened their resolve to fast-track the East African political federation without two principals Burundi and Tanzania, emerging details from last week's summit in Mombasa show.

The meeting had been called to discuss infrastructure projects among the three countries, but at the sidelines of the meeting, the three leaders resolved to leave out their more cautious neighbours Tanzania and Burundi. But the state minister for East African Community Affairs, Shem Bageine, downplayed fears that the exclusion of Burundi and Tanzania would cause a diplomatic row in the region.

“That was a consultation. It is not true that the member states agreed to move leaving out others,” he said of the Mombasa meet.

“What I know is that they were discussing infrastructure projects and the political federation issue came as a by-the-way.”

Referring to Article 7(e) of the East African Treaty, Bageine told us that the three leaders had a right to meet and take such decisions using the principle of flexibility, which allows some of the members to progress faster.

However, sources privy to the Mombasa meeting, say the three presidents agreed not to use the formal structures to push their agenda. Instead, the meeting resolved on a draft constitution for a federation. That task was assigned to ministers, not holding the East African Affairs docket.

“Whoever is denying that is not in the know or is keeping it a secret for selfish reasons known to themselves,” said one source privy to the developments.

These same sources indicate that the idea of a federation is least popular in Tanzania compared to the three partner states now pushing the idea.

In 2011, experts released a report “Addressing the fears, concerns and challenges of the East African Federation”, which found that differences in the land tenure systems of partner states and possible loss of land due to free movement of people and rights of establishment within the EAC partner states, were still major concerns. The report recommended that the states take an active role

in resolving the concerns.
Concerns within EAC

The desire to fast-track the regional political federation is not new. However, observers have noted that Tanzania is more cautious. This attitude has frustrated some presidents like Museveni.

While visiting an agricultural show in Kenya last week, he drop a hint when he said: “we have been suffering from a sort of political anemia on the issue of integration, but with the election in Kenya of these young gentlemen — Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto — we have got new blood supply.”

Dan Kidega, one of Ugandan representative in the East African Legislative Assembly, is among observers who are concerned about the turn of events.

“If what is reported in the media is true, then it will be bad because if the political federation is to move, it has to get the blessing of all partner states,” he said.

Kidega, who in principle disagrees with the three member states moving ahead without Tanzania and Burundi’s input, said what he knows is that the federation can only happen following the formal structure of the EAC Treaty.

“The federation can only happen following the formal process as envisaged by the treaty,” Kidega said. Kidega insists that these matters must be discussed by all five partner states, and not just three.

In line with Article 123 of the EAC Treaty, the Partner States are mandated to establish a common foreign and security policy, before they agree on the formation of a political federation. The matter is first discussed by a council of ministers and then sent to the summit, which then determines whether to adopt the matter.

Procedure

The deputy secretary general in charge of the Political Federation at the EAC secretariat, Charles Njoroge, told The Observer that there was a lot to be done before a federation could realized, including institutions that are not yet in place.

By press time, the Legal, Rules and Privileges committee of the East African Legislative Assembly, chaired by Uganda’s EALA representative, Dora Byamukama, had convened at Imperial Royale hotel in Kampala to consider the final draft constitution of the proposed political federation.

KENYA :

Kenya MPs vote to withdraw from ICC

5 September 2013 /bbc.co.uk

Kenyan MPs have approved a motion to leave the International Criminal Court (ICC) following an emergency debate.

A bill to this effect is expected to be introduced in the next 30 days, after opposition MPs boycotted the vote.

The ICC has charged President Uhuru Kenyatta and Deputy President William Ruto with crimes

against humanity, which they both deny. Mr Ruto's trial is due to start in The Hague next week.

The ICC said the cases would continue even if Kenya pulled out.

The charges against both Mr Kenyatta and Mr Ruto stem from violence that broke out after disputed elections in 2007, in which more than 1,000 people were killed and 600,000 forced from their homes.

Mr Kenyatta is to go on trial in November.

'Defend Kenya's sovereignty'

They were on opposite sides during the 2007 election but formed an alliance for elections in March this year, and analysts say the ICC prosecutions bolstered their campaign as they portrayed it as foreign interference in Kenya's domestic affairs.

The BBC's Gabriel Gatehouse reports from the capital, Nairobi that even though the vote does not halt the cases, it sends a powerful signal of defiance to The Hague - a sentiment that is becoming increasingly popular, in Kenya and across much of Africa.

No other country has withdrawn from the ICC.

Kenya's parliament is dominated by the Jubilee coalition formed by Mr Kenyatta and Mr Ruto.

The motion, tabled by majority leader Adan Duale, said the pair had been "lawfully elected" and the government should take steps to "immediately" withdraw from the Rome Statute, which established the ICC.

The sentence stating that Kenya would "suspend any links, co-operation and assistance" to the ICC was removed during the debate.

Mr Duale noted that the US had refused to sign the Rome Statute to protect its citizens and soldiers from potential politically motivated prosecutions.

"Let us protect our citizens. Let us defend the sovereignty of the nation of Kenya," Mr Duale is quoted as saying.

MPs from the opposition Coalition for Reforms and Democracy (CORD), led by former Prime Minister Raila Odinga, walked out of the debate, calling the motion "capricious" and "ill-considered".

Kenya's withdrawal would not bring "honour to the nation and dignity to our leaders", CORD said in a statement.

"Kenya cannot exist outside the realm of international law," it said.

'Disturbing'

ICC spokesman Fadi El Abdallah told the BBC's Newsday programme that Kenya's withdrawal would have no bearing on the cases against the two men.

"A withdrawal has an effect only for the future and never for the past," he said.

If Mr Kenyatta and Mr Ruto failed to co-operate, ICC judges "may decide to issue arrest warrants against these accused", Mr Abdallah added.

Amnesty International said the parliamentary motion was the latest in a series of "disturbing initiatives to undermine the work of the ICC in Kenya and across the continent".

"Amnesty International calls on each and every parliamentarian to stand against impunity and reject this proposal," said Netsanet Belay, the group's Africa programme director, in a statement.

Our reporter says that the withdrawal still has to pass at least one more parliamentary hurdle, and could take a year or more to come into effect.

Both Mr Kenyatta and Mr Ruto have repeatedly called for the cases against them to be dropped, saying the charges are politically motivated.

The ICC has refused and says it pursues justice impartially.

In May, the African Union accused the ICC of "hunting" Africans because of their race.

The ICC strongly denies this, saying it is fighting for the rights of the African victims of atrocities.

The ICC was set up in 2002 to deal with genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and the crime of aggression.

The court has been ratified by 122 countries, including 34 in Africa.

ANGOLA :

AU/AFRICA :

Cold comfort farms

Sep 4th 2013/by J. O'S./economist.com

JOHANNESBURG

IF POTENTIAL were edible, Africa would have the best-fed people on earth. The vast continent has 60% of the world's uncultivated arable land, most of it unfarmed. The land already under cultivation, mostly by small farmers, could produce far more. Crop yields in Africa are between one-third and one-half of the global average. The quality of soil is often poor, because of overfarming, but that could be fixed by fertilisers. With the right know-how and inputs, Africa's farmers could double productivity.

Yet Africa's huge potential clashes with a brutal reality documented in a new report from the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), a think-tank with headquarters in Kenya. Take the cost of fertiliser, for instance. Farmers in America pay a price on delivery of \$226 per tonne. But in Zambia the price is \$414. Shipping costs explain only a small part of the difference. The rest is

accounted for by port duties, bribes, storage fees, fuel costs, the importer's mark-up and the credit charges racked up as the fertiliser makes its tortuous journey from port to farm.

Farmers might bear the cost if they could be sure of selling their surplus produce at a good price. But the route to market is too precarious for most smallholders. Up to a fifth of surpluses is lost because of poor storage and roads. The shortage of credit forces small farmers to sell low rather than wait for the best seasonal prices. An agreed grading standard would help: banks might be willing to lend against produce that had been graded on receipt by a warehouse. Data on prices and stocks gathered in this way would also help farmers to judge better what to produce and when.

Some bottlenecks are not easy to clear. To build a network of rural roads is hard. But small investments can make the whole difference. There are cases where a starving part of a country is cut off from another part with plenty of food for want of a bridge, says David Ameyaw, a Ghana-born American who edited the AGRA report. Money spent on research can also have a big pay-off as it helps governments to gauge which policies work best. Africa has just 70 agricultural researchers for every million people, says AGRA. The comparable figure for Latin America is 550; for North America it is 2,640.

Africa never seems short of policy drives, even if the patience to stick with them is often lacking. It can take between six and eight years to prove to farmers that a scheme works, says Mr Ameyaw. Most do not last so long. Yet some new initiatives show promise. Nigeria's agricultural policy is based on two principles: the government cannot displace the private sector; and farming should be treated as a business from seeds to storage. The state has given up supplying seeds and fertiliser directly to farmers, as this breeds corruption. Farmers now get credits on their mobile telephones that can be used to buy inputs from private suppliers.

Such schemes place trust in markets. All too often they are overridden. City folk can become restless when food prices rise: the temptation to cap prices, ban exports or subsidise imports can be too great for governments to resist. But agricultural markets are destroyed in the process. Smallholders are discouraged from producing surplus crops. And the huge potential of farming in Africa continues to go unrealised.

Le convoi du ministre de l'intérieur égyptien visé par une attaque

Le Monde.fr/ 05.09.2013

Le convoi du ministre de l'intérieur égyptien, Mohammed Ibrahim, a été pris pour cible au Caire, jeudi 5 septembre. Les images filmées par l'agence Reuters montrent une rue dévastée. Selon Mohammed Ibrahim, qui s'est exprimé à la télévision deux heures après l'explosion, un enfant ainsi que deux policiers ont été blessés, et quatre véhicules appartenant à ses forces de sécurité ont été détruits. Les autorités égyptiennes ne pouvaient pas dire si l'explosion a été commandée à distance ou si un kamikaze en était à l'origine.

Cairo Bomb Blast Can't Dent Rise of Egypt's Dictatorship-Era Security State

By Jared Malsin / world.time.com /Sept. 05, 2013

Cairo

Essam Tarek woke on Thursday morning when a bomb blast, targeting the Egyptian Interior Minister's convoy, shook his neighborhood, in Cairo's suburban Nasr City area. "I went to the balcony and I saw cars full of fire and people running scared. People crowded around here. Then there were multiple gunshots," says Tarek, 25, a medical doctor.

Thursday afternoon, Tarek looked on while a forensics team picked through the remains of burnt-out cars, including a large white Nissan with a burnt engine block, behind a cordon guarded by riot police and plainclothes officers with machine guns. A mangled motorcycle lay on the sidewalk. Chunks of rubber and metal and shards of glass crunched underfoot as much as 50 meters away from the blast site. On the second story of a building damaged in the blast, the windows of a clothing store had been shattered, but racks of bright colored women's blouses still hung inside.

Though there was no clear indication yet of who was behind the attack, nearly every onlooker blamed Islamists. "We're with the army and the Interior Ministry because they're against terrorism," says Samir Al-Iraqi, 38, another resident, standing on the same street corner.

The explosion injured at least 21 people, according to the Ambulance Authority, but the Interior Minister, Mohamed Ibrahim, survived and later appeared unhurt on state television, denouncing the blast as a "cowardly" assassination attempt. Muslim Brotherhood leader Amr Darrag issued a statement condemning the attack.

Since Egypt's military deposed Islamist President Mohamed Morsi in June following massive protests, Egypt's security apparatus has enjoyed an unprecedented level of public support. Unlike the three decades of authoritarian rule under President Hosni Mubarak, when the police were almost universally reviled, a significant chunk of the population now backs the security forces, even as their clampdown on Islamists has resulted in a staggering loss of life. Last month, after government forces dispersed two encampments of protesters loyal to Morsi, leaving hundreds dead, one poll found that 67% of respondents supported the bloody crackdown.

"It's an objective triumph for the return of the security state," says Mona El-Ghobashy, a political scientist at Barnard College and longtime observer of Egyptian politics. "Now it's returning with a swagger, too, the swagger of public support." The state and private media almost entirely supported the government. Banners appeared during television broadcasts declaring, "Egypt fighting terrorism." The government shut down nearly all the Islamist news networks, as well as Al Jazeera's Egypt affiliate.

The obliteration of the protest camps in Rabaa Al-Adawiya Square and Nahda Square on August 14 was the culmination of a showdown between the military-backed government and supporters of Morsi. Human Rights Watch reports that the security forces' use of live ammunition that day resulted in the most serious acts of mass killing in Egypt's modern history. According to the group's investigation, at least 377 people were killed in Rabaa alone. Based on rights groups' counts and official figures, least 800 people were confirmed killed in four days of violence.

The Mubarak regime made the police a central pillar of his authoritarian regime. He built the police, security forces, and related agencies into an empire with more than two million employees, larger even than the army, which stood at 400,000 troops in 2010. Now the country's military-backed rulers are deploying the police with a level of lethality that even Mubarak himself never dared. The Rabaa killings may come to be seen as a turning point in Egypt's political drama, marking the full resurgence of the security state.

The protesters who opposed Morsi's removal were the first victims of the police's crackdown. Since eliminating the sit-ins, security forces have arrested more than 1,000 people, according to Reuters, including top leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood. The military-installed government has declared a state of emergency and imposed a curfew in 14 provinces. On Tuesday, a military court sentenced 49 civilians to prison terms ranging from five years to life for participating in violent protests against the army. In the days after the crackdown, armored military vehicles ringed Tahrir Square,

the iconic center of the uprising that toppled Mubarak.

Under Mubarak, the police routinely collected bribes, beat protesters, and tortured detainees. But street protests were usually small, isolated, and overwhelmed by large numbers of black-helmeted riot police; shooting deaths of protesters were relatively rare. An emergency law enforced throughout Mubarak's presidency permitted indefinite detention and military trials of civilians and banned gatherings of more than five people.

"Under Mubarak's system, politics was kind of this farcical thing. There was a disconnected political class," says El-Ghobashy, "Real political struggles were fragmented. If you have a system like that, you don't need to use live fire on protesters. You just need to beat them up sometimes."

El-Ghobashy argues that the uprising that ousted Mubarak altered the balance of power between the state and society. Throngs of demonstrators succeeded in temporarily paralyzing the security forces after four days and nights of street fighting that left hundreds dead. Repeal of the emergency law, release of those detained without charge, and police reform generally were central demands of the uprising. Less than a month after the 2011 uprising, protesters stormed the headquarters of the State Security Investigations Service, an institution hated for its long and well-documented record of torture. For the first time, the public shed its fear of the police.

For most of the two and a half years between the 2011 uprising and the 2013 rebellion, the police faced an emboldened opposition. Security forces did clear Tahrir Square several times but other times the police were unable or unwilling to exert the force it would take to regain control of public space. The vast institutions of the security state, headquartered in the Interior Ministry's black-gated compound near Tahrir, were never reformed. During the period of military rule that followed Mubarak, and during Morsi's year in power, police torture, harassment of dissidents, and killings of protesters continued. According to some accounts, Morsi, presiding over institutions that Mubarak built, never had the power to rein in the police.

Then, in the weeks since the military removed Morsi this year, the new political dynamic produced a large and mounting number of fatalities. On July 8, security forces killed 51 Muslim Brotherhood demonstrators at a sit-in outside the Republican Guard headquarters. Three weeks later, at least 74 more people were shot dead outside the Rabaa Al-Adawiya Mosque. Then came the killings in Rabaa Al-Adawiya Square. "On the sheer willingness and capacity of the security forces using live fire, Egypt here is setting a standard in the most macabre way possible," El-Ghobashy says.

Government officials disagree. In a phone interview, Brigadier Hatem Fathy, director of the International Relations Department of the Ministry of Interior, says that the majority of the casualties at Rabaa were the result of bullets fired by gunmen among the protesters, not the police who were sent to disperse them. "This is what we think, because our police officers are well-trained," Fathy says. "They are professionals. They can aim at their targets. They cannot miss."

The Interior Ministry's claims go against much of the evidence still surfacing from Rabaa. In its investigation, of the sit-in dispersal, based on video footage and 41 interviews with demonstrators, doctors, and other residents of the area, Human Rights Watch found, "The vast majority of the protesters were unarmed, but some carried clubs and a few fired guns at the security forces." Though the rights group could not establish who shot first, it concluded, "The police unlawfully killed protesters who were clearly not engaged in any form of violence."

Others blame Morsi for willingly preserving the security apparatus that recently killed hundreds of the deposed president's supporters. The current interior minister, Mohamed Ibrahim, was appointed by Morsi in January and retained his position under the new government. Hazem Kandil, a

sociologist at Cambridge University and author of a book dealing with the history of Egypt's security state, argues that the Brotherhood planned to enlist the police in the service of its own religious agenda. "The heart of Egypt's authoritarianism is the fact that it is a police state," he says. "The moment to challenge this police state has come and gone in 2011, two years ago, and it has largely come and gone because of the Muslim Brotherhood."

Kandil says Morsi's failure to reform the police contributed to the public's alienation that ultimately caused his demise. "Many Egyptians said, 'Well since we're going to be living under a police state anyway, then we better be living under a police state that we are used to, a kind of a secular police state rather than a police state that supports religious fascism,'" Kandil says.

Regardless of who deserves ultimate blame for the failure of security reform, the Brotherhood have now been definitively removed from power. And in their shared zeal to clamp down on the Islamists, the military and security forces, two separate institutions that have not always got along, appear to be aligned more closely than ever.

But in terms of political prestige, the security forces are still regarded by the public as secondary to the military, as El-Ghobashy put it, "junior partners" at best in the current ruling coalition. Government supporters are quick to point out that it was the police, not the military itself, who carried out the Rabaa crackdown. Nathan Brown, a professor of political science and international affairs who studies Egypt at George Washington University, says the view among the officer corps of the military was, "We're educated people who are dedicated to the security of the state, and we're there for Egypt no matter what. They're kind of uniformed goons who crack heads because that's all they know how to do."

In the aftermath of Thursday's bombing, Interior Minister Mohamed Ibrahim appeared undaunted. Asked whether the blast signaled the start of a possible wave of attacks, he said, "What happened today is not the end but the beginning."

Attentat au Caire: le gouvernement frappera d'une "main de fer"

AFP / jeudi 05 septembre 2013

International: Le ministre de l'Intérieur a été victime d'une attaque ce jeudi.

Le gouvernement intérimaire en Egypte a promis jeudi de "frapper d'une main de fer" quiconque menacerait la sécurité nationale, quelques heures après que le ministre de l'Intérieur a réchappé d'un attentat au Caire.

Cet "acte criminel", a indiqué le cabinet, "n'empêchera pas le gouvernement de faire face au terrorisme avec force et détermination et de frapper d'une main de fer quiconque menace la sécurité nationale. Et ce, jusqu'au retour de la stabilité" dans le pays, en proie à des violences depuis la destitution du président islamiste Mohamed Morsi par l'armée le 3 juillet.

Jeudi vers 08H30 GMT, une bombe a explosé au passage du convoi de Mohammed Ibrahim à proximité de son domicile au Caire. Deux heures plus tard, il est apparu à la télévision d'Etat, dénonçant une "lâche tentative" d'assassinat menée à l'aide d'une "bombe qui a explosé à distance" et détruit "quatre voitures" du convoi, faisant de "nombreux blessés" parmi les gardes l'escortant.

Faisant référence à la dispersion sanglante de rassemblements pro-Morsi le 14 août, il a déclaré: "j'avais prévenu avec la dispersion (des manifestants retranchés NDLR) sur les places Rabaa al-Adawiya et Nahda qu'il y aurait une vague de terrorisme, c'était prévisible".

La police, sous les ordres de M. Ibrahim, avait été en première ligne dans cette opération qui avait tourné au bain de sang et fait des centaines de morts parmi les manifestants le 14 août.

Un haut responsable du ministère de l'Intérieur a affirmé à l'AFP sous le couvert de l'anonymat qu'une voiture piégée avait explosé au passage du convoi de M. Ibrahim à proximité de son domicile dans le faubourg de Nasr City.

Mais un communiqué officiel du ministère a évoqué "une bombe".

Un journaliste de l'AFP a vu sur place une voiture entièrement détruite ainsi que la devanture d'un magasin et des véhicules soufflés.

Dix officiers de police ont été blessés dans l'attentat visant le ministre de l'Intérieur, selon des responsables des services de sécurité. Un haut responsable du ministère a affirmé à l'AFP que l'un des policiers avait perdu une jambe dans l'explosion.

L'agence officielle Mena a indiqué que les routes menant au ministère en centre-ville avaient aussitôt été bloquées par la police.

Il s'agit du premier attentat à la voiture piégée au Caire depuis de longues années.

La destitution et l'arrestation de M. Morsi par l'armée le 3 juillet ont déclenché un engrenage de violence qui a fait plus d'un millier de morts à travers l'Egypte, en grande majorité des manifestants islamistes. Dans le même temps, les attaques contre les forces de l'ordre se sont multipliées dans la péninsule instable du Sinaï principalement mais aussi dans d'autres villes du plus peuplé des pays arabes.

UN/AFRICA :

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EU/AFRICA :

G20 Talks Taxes: Why Africa Stands To Gain The Most From Global Tax Regulation Reform

By IBTimes Staff Reporter/on September 05 2013

Only the world's richest countries will be represented at the G20 summit this week in St. Petersburg, Russia, but the gathering could still have profound implications for some of the poorest nations on earth. Beginning Friday, officials there will discuss global tax regulation reforms that, if implemented, could have an outsized impact on sub-Saharan Africa -- even if South Africa is the only regional country included in G20's roster.

"Africa may have only one seat at the G20 table, but it accounts for 14 percent of the global population," wrote former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, a Ghanaian, in *The Guardian* this week. "With a young and rapidly growing population, Africa represents not just the world's largest untapped source of oil, gas, and minerals, but also a high potential consumer market."

Annan is the chair of the Africa Progress Panel, which published a progress report for the continent in May. It found that tax evasion has cut into African citizens' fair share of profits from the continent's abundant resources.

"The Africa Progress Panel finds it unconscionable that some companies, often supported by dishonest officials, are using unethical tax avoidance, transfer pricing and anonymous company ownership to maximize their profits, while millions of Africans go without adequate nutrition, health and education," the organization said in a statement.

Tax regulation is as dull a subject as they come. But reform in that area has the potential to improve millions of livelihoods -- for Africa especially. The continent is wracked by poverty -- 48.5 percent of the sub-Saharan population lived on less than \$1.25 a day in 2010 -- which is why billions of dollars of foreign aid pours into its countries on an annual basis. But if illicit outflows and tax-related corruption could be completely wiped out, it would contribute even more to the continent than foreign donors are currently spending.

That staggering fact was revealed in a report this year from the African Development Bank and Global Financial Integrity, a U.S.-based research organization. It found that net resource transfers out of the continent between 1980 and 2009, adjusted for inflation, amounted to between \$597 billion and \$1.4 trillion. These monies are lost in a variety of ways: embezzlement of funds that are stowed away in foreign accounts, tax evasions enabled by havens like the Cayman Islands or the British Virgin Islands, or purchases of expensive properties outside the continent.

The Africa Progress Report found that taxation losses alone amounted to \$38 billion every year.

The issue has lately been the focus of renewed attention, since the problem of tax evasion is global in scope. This July, the OECD launched efforts for an action plan that would lay out stricter rules for contemporary commerce. "International tax rules, many of them dating from the 1920s, ensure that businesses don't pay taxes in two countries -- double taxation," explained OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría. "This is laudable, but unfortunately these rules are now being abused to permit double non-taxation. The action plan aims to remedy this, so multinationals also pay their fair share of taxes."

When it comes to Africa, Annan recommends that regulations focus on tackling evasive maneuvers like transit mispricing, or fudging the numbers on the true values of imports and exports; organizational obfuscation, which entails using shell companies or multi-layered corporations that make it harder to follow the flow of funds; and a lack of cooperation from African governments,

which must be included in automatic information exchanges in order to benefit from reforms.

If taxation could be made more transparent, governments would not only receive more official revenues; they would also be held more accountable for the spending of those revenues. This would help to put a lid on shady behavior in some of the continent's most corrupt administrations -- in Zimbabwe, Kenya and Nigeria, to name a few -- and to encourage governments to spend more on measures to spur broad-based growth, like infrastructure, health care and education.

It would also hinder foreign investors' efforts to extract more profits than they should, which would make it easier for resources -- like Angola's oil, Mozambique's natural gas or Sierra Leone's diamonds -- to effect greater positive change for the general public.

To be sure, tax regulation is no cure-all for a continent plagued by conflict, food insecurity and poverty. But its importance should not be understated; the shady flow of monies and products is a root enabler of myriad problems. But solution cannot come from the G20 conference alone; it requires participation from African governments and civil society groups.

"With increased connectivity and education, Africa has lost its tolerance for exploitation by the rest of the world," said Annan. "Africa's people expect a fair share of the wealth beneath their soil and territorial waters."

CHINA /AFRICA :

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