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UGANDA :

Uganda to contain external debt rise

By Umaru Kashaka/newvision.co.ug/Date: Oct 07, 2013

The Government has established a new debt strategy to contain Uganda's growing external debt currently standing at \$3.8b (about sh9.5 trillions).

This was revealed recently by the state minister for finance in charge of planning, Matia Kasaija, while meeting the parliamentary committee on national economy over reports by the Auditor General that the ministry signed 13 new loan agreements equivalent to sh1.3trillion without parliamentary approval.

The minister, who was accompanied by the Bank of Uganda governor, Tumusiime Mutebile, informed the committee that the new strategy for 2013-2018 was developed following the expiry of the debt strategy of 2007- 2012.

The new strategy will guide the Government in current debt stock, as well as future borrowing in both external and domestic debt.

“The strategy provides guidelines to ensure that Uganda’s borrowing is geared towards promoting rapid economic growth and ensures that most borrowing is contracted for projects that will yield high rates of return while maintaining Uganda’s debt sustainability,” the minister told the committee chaired by Buliisa MP Stephen Mukitale.

“The 2013 debt sustainability and risk analysis showed that Uganda can start considering alternative non-concessional financing options to meet its significant infrastructure development financing needs that may not be fully met by concessional external borrowing.”

The alternative financing options, the minister said, include domestic debt issuance, public private partnerships and sovereign bond issuances to finance infrastructure development.

Mutebile said by the end of last financial year, disbursed and outstanding external public debt stood at \$3.8b, 18.1% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), while disbursed and outstanding domestic debt stood at sh7.5trillion (13.4% of GDP).

He said the Government has since signed commitments for an additional \$2.8b (about sh7 trillion) of external public debt, equivalent to 13.2% of GDP, adding that this has not been disbursed.

“There are no definitive thresholds for the sustainability of total public debt in frontier markets such as Uganda, but a ceiling of 50% of the Net Present Value of debt to GDP is probably prudent,” Mutebile noted.

According to the finance report on loans, grants and guarantees for financial year 2012/13 that was presented to Parliament in June, the highest debt service payment (\$18.9m) was made to the World Bank’s International Development Agency, which accounted for 33.8%, followed by European Investment Bank,

China and African Development Bank with 19.0%, 12.7% and 8.3% respectively and equivalent to \$10.6m, \$7.1m and \$4.6m respectively.

What analysts say

Prof. Augustus Nuwagaba, an economist, is optimistic that the strategy, if implemented, will go a long way in enabling the Government meet its financing requirements at the minimum cost possible.

“The strategy will also facilitate government plans to increase investment in projects with high returns for growth and socioeconomic development, while maintaining a high degree of debts sustainability,” he added.

Niwagaba, however, cautioned that the Government needs to take a strong stance against corruption or else the country will continue witnessing huge sums of money being swindled by public officials.

“Uganda should borrow a leaf from South Korea, which by 1962 was at the same level of development with most African countries, including Uganda. But over the years, the country has grown by leaps and bounds because of its zero-tolerance to corruption and a clear economic transformation policy,” he added.

The commissioner Treasury Services in the finance ministry, Isaac Mpoza, noted that the formulation of the new strategy will enable Uganda take advantage of favourable domestic and external credit-market developments.

“This will be in an organised manner that is consistent with government’s primary debt policy objective of

ensuring that the level of public debt remains sustainable, both in the medium and long-term, while being mindful of the future generations," Mpoza noted.

Rwanda, Uganda tell U.N. envoys peace in Congo is not their problem

By Michelle Nichols/Reuters/Tue Oct 8, 2013

KIGALI/KAMPALA |

(Reuters) - The presidents of Rwanda and Uganda told U.N. Security Council envoys on Monday that their countries were not responsible for bringing peace to neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo's volatile east, which has long been mired in conflict and is bristling with armed groups.

Envoys from the 15-member council met with Rwandan President Paul Kagame in Kigali and then President Yoweri Museveni in Kampala after spending two days in Congo visiting the United Nations' largest peacekeeping operation.

Millions of people have been killed by violence, disease and hunger since the 1990s as rebel groups have fought for control of eastern Congo's rich deposits of gold, diamonds, copper, cobalt and uranium.

Britain's U.N. Ambassador Mark Lyall Grant said both Kagame and Museveni described an 18-month rebellion by the M23 guerrilla group as just a symptom and not a cause of Congo's problems, which were much more deep-seated in issues such as a lack of governance.

"(They said) it was really up to (Congolese President Joseph) Kabila to resolve those issues. The international community could still help, but it wasn't the responsibility of Rwanda and it wasn't the responsibility of Uganda," Lyall Grant told reporters.

"They felt that Kabila had made a lot of mistakes and that he didn't have control of his own troops and that was the fundamental issue - not anything else about cross-border interference," he said.

U.N. experts have accused Rwanda of supporting M23, which is led by ethnic Tutsis, a charge that Kigali has rejected. The roots of the rebellion in the region lie in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, where Hutu troops killed 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

Some Security Council envoys described Kagame as defensive during the meeting. He told them that Rwanda, where Tutsis and Hutus have reconciled after the genocide, should not be lectured on what was needed to bring peace to eastern Congo.

"It's going to be the people and the countries in the region who determine whether or not there is peace," U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power told reporters after the meeting with Kagame.

"The armed groups need to be eliminated and every country in the region needs to use whatever leverage it has to get rid of those groups," said Power. "That's the only hope the people in the region have."

'WE ARE NOT HAPPY'

During a visit by the ambassadors to the eastern Congolese city of Goma on Sunday, U.N. officials said while M23 had captured global headlines, just as great a threat was posed by the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and the Islamist group Allied Democratic Forces (ADF).

M23 has accused the Congolese army of receiving military support from the FDLR, an accusation

Kinshasa rejects.

Civil society leaders in North Kivu, where Goma is the capital, told the council envoys that the Congolese government controlled only about 25 percent of the province, while the rest was in the hands of dozens of armed groups.

African leaders signed a U.N.-mediated regional accord in February aimed at ending two decades of conflict in eastern Congo. Rwanda and Uganda both said they were committed to implementing the pact, U.N. diplomats said.

Museveni said he had to deploy more troops on the Ugandan border with Congo because of the threat posed by the ADF. The Ugandan government says the ADF is allied to elements of Somalia's al Shabaab movement, an al Qaeda-linked group.

Congolese forces, with the help of a new U.N. Intervention Brigade that has a mandate to neutralize armed groups, successfully pushed M23 fighters away from Goma - a city of one million people - in August. The military defeat forced M23 to return to peace talks being brokered by the Ugandan government.

During the meeting with Museveni, Lyall Grant said envoys were told "that there was a real chance of reaching agreement in the next few days," but diplomats were wary of that prediction because there were still outstanding issues to be resolved.

The United Nations said on Saturday that a third of child soldiers who had escaped from M23 were lured from Rwanda with promises of cash, jobs and education.

The United States, which has called on Rwanda to drop its support for the M23 rebels, stepped up pressure on Kigali last week by moving to block military aid over the recruitment of M23 child soldiers in its territory.

"I don't expect you to hear me say that we are happy, we are not," said Rwandan Foreign Minister Louise Mushikiwabo. "Rwanda does not tolerate children being enrolled in any way near armed groups, not in our own army, and that's Rwanda's position."

"Our belief is that once this crisis (in Congo) is resolved, once we get rid of these armed groups then there will be no longer the issue of child soldiers," she told reporters.

(Reporting by Michelle Nichols; editing by Christopher Wilson)

SOUTH AFRICA :

South Africa's gross reserves rebound slightly

by Maarten Mittner/bdlive.co.za/ 07 octobre 2013

SOUTH Africa's gross reserves are again at the \$50bn level, after foreign exchange reserves rose due to the Treasury's \$2bn bond issue.

Figures for September, released by the Reserve Bank on Monday morning, show the international liquidity position improved slightly as a result of the sharp rise in gross reserves.

Gold and foreign assets rose by \$2.073bn to \$50.02bn in September, from \$47.947bn in August.

Foreign exchange reserves were up \$2.305bn to \$41.9172bn in September from \$39.613bn, while gold reserves declined \$266m to \$5.360bn from \$5.626bn in August.

The international liquidity position rose by \$165m to \$45.753bn, from \$45.588bn in August.

The forward position and government deposits declined over the month.

Nedbank Capital said in a note that uncertainty in financial markets and unfavourable growth prospects would contain the Reserve Bank's ability to accumulate reserves in the months ahead.

Gross reserves have been under pressure for most of the year, falling to about \$45bn.

Although gross reserves did improve in September, \$50bn is still lower than some economists had expected. The Standard Bank research team forecast a figure of \$50.134bn, mainly in response to the higher gold price.

Nedbank Capital says foreign exchange reserve figures have little direct implications for monetary policy in the short term. "We therefore expect the monetary policy committee to maintain the current policy stance into late 2014."

Indian investors not 'scared' of South Africa coal challenges

by Brendan Ryan/bdlive.co.za/08 octobre 2013,

INDIAN industrial and mining companies are taking an increasing interest in coal-mining developments in South Africa and are "not scared of the challenges", according to Manus Booysen, partner and head of mining, energy and natural resources at legal firm Webber Wentzel.

But he said the uncertainty being created by the proposed amendments to South Africa's mining legislation in terms of the Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Amendment Bill — in particular how these could affect coal — was not conducive to attracting investment. He was also critical of the "uncooperative" role being played by Transnet in providing the infrastructure needed to match export coal rail capacity to the existing port handling capacity at the Richards Bay Coal Terminal.

He believed Transnet's attempts to promote black economic empowerment (BEE) were not being carried out "in a proper manner" and the approach taken by the state-owned utility, "to some extent, as far as BEE is concerned, is being driven by political ideology".

He said: "We all understand the need for — and the importance of — BEE and we are all a part of this process but it must be done in a proper manner.

"It is not correct for Transnet to reserve the right to allocate a certain percentage of rail capacity to BEE companies irrespective of whether those companies have export allocations at the ports.

"It does not appear to me that Transnet is aiming at the same objectives as the coal producers and the Richards Bay Coal Terminal when it comes to fully utilising the country's export potential," Mr Booysen said.

He was speaking in Johannesburg after attending the McCloskey Indian Coal Markets conference in New Delhi at the end of last month.

He said India needed to import increasing volumes of coal for its power stations and South Africa was the obvious supplier after Indonesia and Australia. "Indonesia is the closest supplier but they have a problem with coal quality. Australia has a problem with their high cost of production.

"SA is well placed to benefit from this business if we could get the coal out of the country — which we cannot because of the rail bottleneck."

Indian companies such as Jindal Steel & Power and the Atha Group had already bought into South Africa, he said, and others such as Dalmia Cement were looking at getting involved.

Regarding the Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Amendment Bill, Mr Booyesen said the key issue for investors was the uncertainty that would result if coal were declared a strategic mineral and the minister of mineral resources were given the power to decide how much of a coal company's production would have to be sold domestically, at what prices, and how much could be exported.

"If you know what the risks are, you can decide whether to accept them and how to deal with them. You cannot take such decisions if there is uncertainty about those numbers. "

TANZANIA :

Shoot elephant poachers on sight, says Tanzania's tourism minister

Jerome Starkey/The Times/theaustralian.com.au/ October 08, 2013

TANZANIA'S minister of tourism has sparked outrage from human rights groups - but won muted praise from conservationists - by arguing that poachers behind an elephant slaughter should be executed "on the spot".

Khamis Kagasheki was speaking at the end of an International March for Elephants, which took place in 15 countries including Britain, to raise awareness of the poaching crisis.

An elephant is killed every 15 minutes, according to the iWorry campaign, which says the African elephant could be wiped out in the wild by 2025.

"Poachers must be harshly punished because they are merciless people who wantonly kill our wildlife and sometimes wardens," Mr Kagasheki said. "The only way to solve this problem is to execute the killers on the spot."

Rights groups warned that Mr Kagasheki's comments would encourage police abuses and extra-judicial killings, but conservationists said they understood his position and the desperate circumstances that led him to it.

"The stakes are so high now that unless the poachers know the risks that are involved, then they're not going to stop," said Dominic Dyer, from the UK-based charity Care for the Wild International.

Mr Kagasheki said that new laws would prescribe harsher punishments for people caught poaching. Officials said the law was unlikely to include provisions for poachers to be summarily executed, but it might offer rangers a freer hand.

"We are really concerned," said Rodrick Maro, from the Tanzania-based Legal and Human Rights Centre. "He is advocating that poachers should be killed; it is a gross violation of human rights." Rangers in Kenya adopted a shoot-to-kill policy during the previous poaching crisis in the 1980s.

Mr Kagasheka was unrepentant. "But let's face it, poachers not only kill wildlife but also usually never hesitate to shoot dead any innocent person standing in their way," he added.

Sally Jewell, the US Interior Secretary, said the illegal wildlife trade had doubled in value since 2007 to \$10 billion. "It's now estimated to be the fourth-largest transnational crime in the world," she said.

The Times

KENYA :

Kenya names Westgate mall suspects

05/10 /euronews.com

As Kenya named four men said to have been involved in the deadly Westgate shopping mall raid, CCTV footage has been aired showing attackers on the prowl in what looks like a storeroom and a supermarket.

At least 67 people died in the assault two weeks ago. A further 39 are missing, according to the Red Cross. Al Qaeda-linked group al Shabaab says it carried out the attack in revenge for Kenya's military campaign in Somalia.

Named by Kenya as Sudanese Abu Baara al-Sudani, Omar Nabhan, a Kenyan of Arab origin, Somali Khattab al-Kene and Umayr, whose nationality is unknown, the four are all said to have died in the standoff.

There was no mention of a woman, despite speculation about Briton Samantha Lewthwaite, the widow of one of the London suicide bombers of 2005.

Meanwhile, amid militant reports that one of their bases in Somalia had been raided by Western forces, any link with the mall attack in Nairobi was unclear.

Targets of US Raids Planned Terrorism in Kenya

October 7, 2013 /(AP)/By JASON STRAZIUSO and ADAM GOLDMAN Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya

U.S. interrogators headed to an American warship in the Mediterranean to question a suspected Libyan al-Qaida operative linked to the bombings of U.S. embassies in Africa, as new details emerged Monday about plots planned by a Kenyan militant who escaped a U.S. raid in Somalia.

The two operations, thousands of miles apart in Africa and approved by President Barack Obama, signaled an American readiness to go after militants in nations where authorities are unable to do so, even years later.

The suspect captured in Tripoli is under U.S. federal indictment but was being held in military custody

aboard the USS San Antonio in international waters — detained under the laws of war as an enemy combatant.

A computer expert known as Abu Anas al-Libi, he is accused of using an early-generation Apple computer to assemble surveillance photographs in Nairobi ahead of the deadly 1998 bombing of the U.S. Embassy, according to a former U.S. law enforcement official.

The surveillance information was presented to Osama bin Laden, who approved the bombing, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to speak about the case.

Meanwhile, a Kenyan intelligence report asserted the country had foiled attacks plotted by Abdulkadir Mohamed Abdulkadir, the Kenyan militant who eluded capture by a team of U.S. Navy SEALs in a pre-dawn raid in Somalia on Saturday. Also known as Ikrima, he was identified as the lead planner of a plot by the al-Qaida-linked al-Shabab militant group targeting Kenya's parliament building and the United Nations office in Nairobi in 2011 and 2012.

The report by Kenya's National Intelligence Service, which was leaked to The Associated Press and other media in the wake of the Sept. 21 terror attack on Nairobi's Westgate Mall that killed more than 60 people, lists Samantha Lewthwaite — a Briton dubbed the "White Widow" — as one of several "key actors" in the plot, which also targeted Kenyan military installations and top Kenyan political and security officials.

Lewthwaite, who was married to one of the suicide bombers in the 2005 attack on London's transit system, escaped capture when she produced a fraudulently obtained South African passport in another person's name. Late last month, Interpol, acting on a request from Kenya, issued an arrest warrant for Lewthwaite.

The report makes no mention of Abdulkadir in relation to the Nairobi mall attack, though in an entry dated exactly one year before the start of the four-day siege, it said al-Shabab operatives in Nairobi were planning to mount "suicide attacks on an undisclosed date, targeting Westgate Mall and Holy Family Basilica."

Frank Cilluffo, director of George Washington University's Homeland Security Policy Institute, said the Navy SEALs operation in Somalia underscores the threat posed by the convergence of insurgent groups, particularly al-Shabab and the Yemen-based al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula.

While Ikrima may not be a household name, he said, "you have someone who is truly a go-between between al-Shabab, AQAP and probably al-Qaida central."

"What you're seeing is some of the pooling of these various entities and between various organizations," said Cilluffo. "And you are starting to see convergence of individual actors and of even planning and operations."

Cilluffo said the raid suggests that the U.S. is going after top-level terrorists who are targeting foreign and Western interests, rather than those focused on internal Somalia attacks.

Obama approved both operations independently, White House spokesman Jay Carney said Monday, saying it was "a coincidence" they happened at the same time.

As of Monday, the captured Libyan, al-Libi, had not been read his rights to remain silent and speak with an attorney.

It is unclear when he will be brought to the U.S. to face charges. The Obama administration has said it can hold high-value detainees on a ship for as long as it needs to. In 2010, a judge ruled the government could

prosecute a terror suspect in New York, despite holding him for five years in CIA and military custody because the government has the authority to do this during wartime.

Al-Libi was indicted in Manhattan federal court in 2000, accused of carrying out "visual and photographic surveillance" of the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi before it was bombed in 1998. He also participated in possible planning of attacks on British, French and Israeli targets in Nairobi, according to the charges.

Former U.S. intelligence officials and military files indicate al-Libi traveled in jihadist circles for decades, using his skills as a savvy computer expert for al-Qaida. He turned up in remote corners of the world: Peshawar, Khartoum and Kabul, mingling with other Libyan militants.

After the 9/11 attacks in 2001, he fled with other al-Qaida operatives to Iran. After several years, he managed to leave the country under murky circumstances and make his way to the lawless areas of northwest Pakistan, where al-Qaida had once flourished. He then went to Libya prior to the fall of Moammar Gadhafi's government and was reunited with his family, according to the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive case.

Al-Libi, the former officials said, had been involved in battling Gadhafi's forces. All the while the CIA and FBI tracked his movements, waiting for the opportunity to pounce.

Once the Gadhafi regime fell in 2011, the U.S. intelligence community began focusing on trying to capture al-Libi. The U.S. Army's Delta Force worked with local Libyans to apprehend him. One of the New York FBI's counterterrorism squads — CT-6 — played a significant role.

AU/AFRICA :

Glaxo Malaria Shot Protects for 18 Months in Africa Study

By Lena Lee/bloomberg.com/Oct 8, 2013

GlaxoSmithKline Plc (GSK)'s experimental malaria vaccine cut infections over 18 months in a late-stage study, moving researchers a step closer to making the first protective shot against the disease available as early as 2015.

The RTS,S candidate reduced infections by 46 percent in infants ages 5 months to 17 months, and by 27 percent for 6-to-12-week-old babies in the follow-up period after the first vaccination, the PATH Malaria Vaccine Initiative, which is developing the protection with Glaxo, said in a statement today. The trial involved more than 15,000 children in Africa.

The vaccine would help cut the fatalities from a disease that afflicts 216 million people annually and kills more than 600,000, mostly children under 5 years old in sub-Saharan Africa, according to the World Health Organization. Glaxo plans to submit the vaccine to the European Medicines Agency for approval next year, and the WHO has said it may in 2015 recommend RTS,S for use if safety and efficacy are satisfactory.

"The sheer number of children affected by malaria means that the number of cases of the disease the vaccine can help prevent is impressive," Andrew Witty, chief executive officer of London-based Glaxo, said in the statement. "These data support our decision to submit a regulatory application for the vaccine candidate."

RTS,S was more effective in the older group of children. Severe malaria cases were cut by 36 percent and

hospitalizations by 42 percent among older infants, the study showed. Reductions for babies weren't statistically significant.

While the vaccine was less effective compared with results after a one-year follow-up, it remained safe for the study participants, the trial showed.

More Data

RTS,S was given in three doses a month apart in this phase III trial. Further data from a 32-month follow-up and the impact of a fourth booster dose given 18 months after the first three shots are expected to be ready next year, according to the statement.

Glaxo has spent more than \$350 million on the development of the vaccine so far and expects to invest more than \$260 million through completion, the statement showed.

The nonprofit PATH Malaria Vaccine Initiative aims to accelerate development of vaccines against the disease and their availability in endemic countries, and has received more than \$200 million from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Egypte: autorités et pro-Morsi s'accusent mutuellement, les heurts se poursuivent

AFP/lundi 07 octobre 2013

International "La police a fait usage uniquement de gaz lacrymogènes, nous n'utilisons que des gaz", a assuré à l'AFP le général Ayman Helmi.

Le gouvernement égyptien a accusé lundi les manifestants partisans du président islamiste destitué Mohamed Morsi d'avoir attaqué des résidents dimanche dans les heurts qui ont fait au moins 50 morts tandis que les pro-Morsi affirment que les forces de l'ordre ont "tiré pour tuer".

Un responsable du ministère de l'Intérieur avait concédé dimanche soir que toutes les personnes tuées, dont la quasi-totalité au Caire, étaient des civils. Ces heurts se sont produits le jour des célébrations du 40e anniversaire de la guerre israélo-arabe du 6 octobre 1973, que les Egyptiens considèrent comme une victoire.

Les manifestants pro-Morsi "pacifiques" ont "été attaqués de sang-froid par les forces du coup d'Etat qui ont tiré pour tuer, atteignant des Egyptiens au coeur faisant exploser leurs têtes, dans des actions sanglantes planifiées par les chefs impitoyables et sanguinaires du coup d'Etat et leurs collaborateurs", lit-on lundi dans un communiqué de l'Alliance pour la Démocratie et contre le coup d'Etat, une coalition menée principalement par les Frères musulmans.

Au Caire, "des heurts ont éclaté entre des résidents et des Frères musulmans qui voulu gâcher les célébrations de la victoire du 6 Octobre avec des armes et de la chevrotine, faisant 47 morts", affirme au contraire le ministère de l'Intérieur dans un communiqué, ajoutant: "Les forces de sécurité ont réussi à s'interposer et contrôler" les affrontements entre résidents et islamistes.

"La police a fait usage uniquement de gaz lacrymogènes, nous n'utilisons que des gaz", a assuré pour sa part à l'AFP le général Ayman Helmi, porte-parole du ministère.

M. Morsi, premier président élu démocratiquement en Egypte, a été destitué et arrêté le 3 juillet par l'armée après que des millions de manifestants eurent réclamé son départ. Depuis le 14 août, les autorités mises en place par les militaires ont tué plus d'un millier de manifestants pro-Morsi et ont arrêté plus de 2.000 Frères musulmans, la confrérie islamiste du président déchu.

Des combats qui se poursuivent

Des attaques ont visé lundi la police et l'armée en Egypte faisant sept morts, tandis qu'un important centre satellitaire a été touché par des roquettes au Caire, au lendemain de manifestations meurtrières. Cinq soldats ont été tués à Ismaïliya (nord), où des groupes islamistes ciblent fréquemment les forces de sécurité depuis que l'armée a destitué et arrêté le 3 juillet Mohamed Morsi, premier chef de l'Etat élu démocratiquement en Egypte, selon une source de sécurité.

Dans la péninsule du Sinaï, deux personnes ont été tuées dans un attentat à la voiture piégée devant un commissariat de police, ont indiqué des responsables de la sécurité.

Selon des témoins, le véhicule avait été garé devant l'entrée principale du commissariat d'Al-Tur, dans le sud de la péninsule où les groupes islamistes sont également très actifs.

Dans la capitale, plusieurs roquettes tirées par des inconnus ont endommagé une gigantesque antenne de communication satellitaire, selon des responsables de la sécurité.

Ces tirs visaient un regroupement de plusieurs antennes dans le quartier huppé de Maadi, et l'une des roquettes a troué l'une d'elle qui sert à relayer les communications téléphoniques internationales.

Paris réagit

La France a condamné lundi "les actes de violence" en Egypte, où des heurts entre manifestants islamistes et policiers ont fait au moins 50 morts, et a appelé "au respect de la liberté de rassemblement et de manifestation".

"La France condamne les actes de violence qui ont fait plusieurs dizaines de morts ces trois derniers jours. Nous appelons au respect de la liberté de rassemblement et de manifestation et rappelons le devoir d'exercer ce droit pacifiquement", a déclaré le porte-parole du Quai d'Orsay Philippe Lalliot.

Paris rappelle "son soutien à un processus démocratique inclusif ouvert à tous les courants politiques qui rejettent la violence, en vue d'établir en Egypte, selon le calendrier fixé par la feuille de route, des institutions civiles démocratiquement élues", a-t-il ajouté.

US/AFRICA :

Commando raids: Africa's 'arc of instability' reorienting US terror map

By Howard LaFranchi, Staff writer /csmonitor.com/ October 7, 2013

Weak or failed states in northern Africa, described as an 'arc of instability' by US officials, are emerging as a new epicenter of terror activity, the weekend commando raids indicate.

Washington

The two US commando raids carried out in Somalia and Libya over the weekend underscore how Africa and its weak or failed states are increasingly the focus of American counterterrorism activity.

The State Department added another focal point to that African counterterrorism campaign Monday with

the addition of Egypt's Muhammad Jamal Network and its founder Muhammad Jamal, an associate of Al Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri, to the US global terrorist list.

The Muhammad Jamal Network has close ties to Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and has established terrorist training camps in Egypt and Libya, according to the State Department.

That designation and the Somalia and Libya raids highlight how governmental breakdown and increased lawlessness across a swath of Africa from Egypt and Somalia to Mauritania have created the conditions for Islamist extremist groups to organize and thrive.

Increasingly the wide geographical region is referred to in congressional testimony and reports by Pentagon officials and diplomats as an "arc of instability" – a designation that caught on in January when Islamist militants associated with AQIM threatened to topple the government of Mali, while others raided a natural gas operation in southern Algeria, killing 40 foreign workers.

Somalia has been a failed state and a terrorist trouble spot for the US for decades – indeed, last week marked the 20th anniversary of the failed US military operation in Mogadishu in which 18 US soldiers died and two Black Hawk helicopters were shot down. But the Libya raid highlighted how the former police state of Muammar Qaddafi has become less stable with weakened government control over territory and militant activity.

The objective of the US raid in the Libyan capital of Tripoli was Abu Anas al-Liby (an alias for Nazih Abdul-Hamed al-Ruqai), an Al Qaeda operative who was wanted by the US in connection with the 1998 bombings of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.

US Special Operations forces grabbed Mr. Ruqai from his car without a fight in the neighborhood of his Tripoli home, Defense Department sources said.

Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel said in a statement that Ruqai's capture, along with the Somalia raid, sent "a strong message to the world that the United States will spare no effort to hold terrorists accountable, no matter where they hide or how long they evade justice."

But the Libya raid also highlighted how a terrorist with a \$5 million bounty on his head was able to live openly in Tripoli for some period of time, some counterterrorism experts note. Moreover, they say the Somalia operation – which apparently ended before the Navy SEALs conducting it could capture the high-value target they sought – targeted an Al Qaeda-affiliated terrorist organization, Al Shabab, that has demonstrated a surprising increasing ability to carry out complex, high-profile terrorist attacks.

In a statement Monday on the Somalia raid, the Pentagon said: "While the operation did not result in [the target's] capture, US military personnel conducted the operation with unparalleled precision and demonstrated that the United States can put direct pressure on Al Shabab leadership at any time of our choosing."

Al Shabab recently demonstrated its widening reach by carrying out last month's deadly assault on the Westgate Mall in Nairobi, Kenya.

The Westgate Mall attack surprised some terrorism experts by its painstaking planning and sophistication. Before the Sept. 21 attack, many international terrorism analysts believed that only Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula among Al Qaeda-affiliated groups could strike outside its immediate base. The Westgate Mall attack has led some analysts to warn that Al Shabab could be joining the list.

"The Westgate Mall attack was well-planned and well-executed, and involved sophisticated intelligence

collection, surveillance, and reconnaissance of the target ... skills [that] could be used for other types of attacks directly targeting the United States and its citizens,” said RAND counterterrorism expert Seth Jones in testimony to the House Foreign Affairs Committee last week.

Americans need to think about Al Shabab as something more than just a Somalia or Africa problem, Mr. Jones said, noting that the group “possesses a competent external operations capability,” that its leadership has “expressed an interest in striking US and other foreign targets in East Africa,” and that “perhaps most concerning, Americans from cities like Phoenix and Minneapolis have traveled to Somalia over the past several years to fight with Al Shabab.”

What the weekend raids also prompt Americans to think about is how a threat that since 9/11 was more associated with Afghanistan and Pakistan and parts of the Middle East may now have its epicenter in the weak or failed states across the north of Africa.

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