



[Dans une nouvelle vidéo diffusée lundi 12 mai, le chef de Boko Haram, Abubakar Shekau, affirme avoir converti à l'islam les 223 lycéennes nigérianes enlevées à la mi-avril, en montrant des jeunes femmes lors d'une prière collective. Le leader exige, en échange de leur libération, celle de prisonniers du groupe islamiste aux mains du gouvernement. Le ministère de l'intérieur nigérian a refusé cette proposition, affirmant qu'il « n'est pas question d'échanger une personne contre une autre ». « Ce n'est pas à Boko Haram et aux insurgés de poser leurs conditions », a résumé un responsable.]

BURUNDI :

RFI: une envoyée spéciale séquestrée au Burundi

Pana 12/05/2014

Les professionnels des médias condamnent la séquestration d'une envoyée spéciale de RFI au Burundi - Le conseiller principal à la présidence de la République, chargé de la presse et la communication, Willy Nyamitwe et le président de l'Association burundaise des radiodiffuseurs (ABR, indépendante) ont sorti, lundi, un communiqué de presse conjoint qui condamne énergiquement des entraves administratives à la mission de service de l'envoyée spéciale de Radio France Internationale (RFI), Sonia Rolley, en compagnie de Serge Nibizi, journaliste à la Radio publique africaine (RPA, privée), samedi dernier à Kirundo, une province du Nord du pays qui vit sous la menace de la famine consécutive à la sécheresse.

Les signataires se réjouissent, par contre, de l'interpellation du maire de la ville de Marangara, Venant Sibomana, toujours en province de Kirundo, qui a commandité la séquestration, 'pendant plusieurs heures' de la soirée de samedi, des deux journalistes malgré leur identification précise.

La presse et les pouvoirs publics vivent en lune de miel depuis les premières assises nationales des médias qui ont eu lieu du 5 au 7 mai dernier à Gitega, une ville du centre du Burundi.

Le communiqué intervient comme un rappel du pacte qui a été scellé entre les médias, surtout indépendants et les pouvoirs publics habituellement enclins à se regarder en chiens de faïence.

La 'restauration d'un climat de confiance entre les autorités publiques et les médias, le droit d'accès à l'information publique' ou encore 'l'exercice responsable de la profession' figurent en bonne place parmi les recommandations des assises de Gitega.

C'est encore dans ce cadre qu'un comité de suivi, réunissant les médias et les autorités publiques, a été mis en place pour veiller à l'application de ces recommandations et être un espace de dialogue pérenne, peut-on toujours lire dans le communiqué qui salue, une fois de plus, l'interpellation du responsable administratif et de ses acolytes en cause dans la séquestration des deux journalistes.

Le comité voit dans ce geste des pouvoirs publics, une volonté à 'défendre l'exercice libre' de la profession.

RWANDA :

RDC CONGO :

VIDEO. Congo : au moins 15 morts dans un match de football à Kinshasa (Regardez)

Lundi 12 Mai 2014/leral.net

Le «Tout puissant» est en deuil après le drame qui vient de frapper Kinshasa. Au moins 15 personnes sont mortes et 21 autres ont été blessées dimanche dans la capitale de la République démocratique du Congo (RDC) quand un match de football opposant l'ASV Club et le Tout Puissant Mazembe, deux équipes populaires, a dégénéré en violences, selon un bilan provisoire officiel.

«Le bilan à l'heure actuelle» est de 15 morts et 21 blessés, a déclaré à la presse le gouverneur de Kinshasa, André Kimbuta, qui s'est rendu avec le ministre de l'Intérieur, Richard Muyej, à l'hôpital Mama Yemo, où 14 morts et 11 blessés ont été transférés.

Les deux clubs se rencontraient lors de la sixième et dernière journée du play-off de la première division. «Les supporters de L'ASV club (...) n'ont pas digéré la prestation de leur club et le succès de Mazembe sur leur équipe. Ils ont alors commencé à lancer des projectiles sur l'aire de jeu, poussant l'arbitre à interrompre la rencontre de temps à temps», rapporte Radio Okapi, parrainée par l'ONU.

Pluie de pierres et bousculade mortelle

La rencontre «s'est soldée par une pluie de pierre, suivie par d'une bousculade dans les trois dernières minutes» de la deuxième mi-temps, «alors que le Tout Puissant Mazembe menait par un but à zéro», a indiqué dans son journal la Radio-Télévision nationale congolaise.

RDC-Angola : un accord de coopération douanière sera signé en juillet 2014 à Luanda

Source : Le Phare/mai 12, 2014

C'est fait. Les administrations douanières angolaise et rd congolaise ont levé l'option de conclure un Accord d'Assistance Mutuelle Administrative, (AAMA). La signature proprement dite interviendra en juillet prochain, dans la capitale angolaise, Luanda. C'est la décision qui a sanctionné les travaux de la réunion des experts de l'administration douanière de la République Démocratique du Congo et celle de la République d'Angola. Ces travaux, débutés le lundi 5 mai 2014 au centre d'événements Romeo Golf, ont été clôturés le jeudi 8 mai et dans le même cadre. Leur objectif était de finaliser les échanges, débutés en mai 2013 à Luanda, préalables à la signature d'un Accord d'Assistance Mutuelle Administrative entre les deux administrations douanières, dans le cadre de la facilitation du commerce transfrontalier. Cinq moments forts ont marqué la cérémonie de clôture de la réunion mixte des experts douaniers des deux pays. A savoir : la lecture des recommandations ayant sanctionné les travaux de Kinshasa, leur signature par les responsables des deux administrations douanières respectives, le discours de Mme le Directeur général adjoint du Service National das Alfandegas d'Angola (douane angolaise), le discours de clôture du Directeur général de la douane congolaise, et enfin la remise par le Directeur général de la douane congolaise des cadeaux aux membres de la délégation angolaise ayant participé aux travaux. Au total, huit recommandations ou résolutions ont sanctionné la réunion mixte de Kinshasa. Il s'agit, entre autres, d'accélérer le processus de l'approbation de l'Accord d'Assistance Mutuelle Administrative entre la douane de la République Démocratique du Congo et celle de la République d'Angola, échanger les informations et renseignements sur les mouvements transfrontaliers des personnes et des biens entre la RDC et l'Angola, renforcer la collaboration entre les deux administrations douanières au niveau des postes frontaliers, accélérer le système informatique, effectuer des patrouilles mixtes le long de la frontière commune, améliorer les procédures relatives aux mouvements des voyageurs et de leurs bagages, etc. Il importe de rappeler que la République démocratique du Congo partage une longue frontière avec l'Angola, allant de la province de Bandundu à celle du Katanga, en passant par le Kasai-Occidental et le Bas-Congo. Parmi les postes-frontaliers, on a : Lufu, Yema, Banana, Ango-Ango, Soyo, Dundu, Nioki, Kimbata, Kamako, Dilolo, etc. Après lecture du rapport final, les responsables des deux administrations douanières ont procédé à la signature des recommandations-résolutions des experts. Il s'agit de Deo Rugwiza Magera pour la République Démocratique du Congo et de Mme Maria Conceica das Santos Matos pour la République d'Angola. La numéro deux de la douane angolaise a, dans son intervention, tenu à remercier les dirigeants de l'administration douanière de la Rdc, avant de rappeler le but de sa visite de travail à Kinshasa. Rendez-vous à Luanda, en juillet Dans son discours de clôture des travaux, le Directeur général de la douane congolaise a rappelé à l'intention des participants que la réunion de Kinshasa était suite logique de la dernière rencontre tenue à Luanda du 13 au 17 mai 2013, dans le cadre des échanges préalables à la signature d'un Accord d'assistance mutuelle administrative (AAMA). Saluant le travail abattu par les participants, Deo Rugwiza a fait savoir que celui-ci constitue désormais le cadre formel d'échange de renseignements et d'informations sur les mouvements transfrontaliers des personnes et des marchandises entre l'Angola et la République Démocratique du Congo. «Il s'agit exactement du texte harmonisé de l'Accord qui sera signé à Luanda, en Angola, au mois de juillet 2014, ainsi que du plan d'actions à mettre en œuvre en attendant la signature dudit accord ». Par ailleurs, a-t-il indiqué, ledit accord sera axé sur : - l'échange mutuel des renseignements sur les mouvements transfrontaliers des marchandises, des personnes et des moyens de transport en vue de prévenir, lutter et réprimer la fraude douanière ; et de ce fait, contribuer à l'accroissement des recettes et à la protection de nos populations respectives ; - la recherche des infractions à nos législations douanières; - les échanges d'expériences entre les fonctionnaires de nos deux administrations ; - les visites mutuelles des fonctionnaires des douanes angolaises et congolaises ; - l'assistance technique mutuelle et le renforcement des capacités des fonctionnaires de nos douanes ; - l'organisation des

opérations frontalières conjointes. Un certain nombre de mesures sont également mises sur pied. Elles visent le renforcement de la coopération douanière et les mécanismes de contrôle au niveau des postes frontaliers. Ces mesures visent notamment à établir des points focaux aux postes frontaliers de Luvo, Noqui, Kimbata, Soyo, Dundo, Yema et Luau, afin de rendre efficace l'échange d'informations recherchées ; tenir des rencontres bilatérales entre les fonctionnaires au niveau local dans le but d'échanger les expériences ; évaluer les besoins en infrastructures frontalières adéquates ; accélérer le processus de comptabilité et de connexion des systèmes en vue d'un échange des informations aux postes frontaliers ; améliorer les processus concernant les mouvements des personnes, des marchandises, en ce compris ceux des minéraux et des carburants. «Votre visite à la Direction Générale des Douanes et Accises de la République Démocratique du Congo constitue un prélude à une coopération douanière durable et efficiente, susceptible de contribuer au développement socio-économique de nos pays respectifs », a déclaré en substance Deo Rugwiza au chef de la délégation angolaise, Mme le Directeur général adjoint du Service National das Alfandegas d'Angola. Avant de regagner leur pays, les douaniers angolais devaient effectuer une visite au poste frontalier de Lufu par où transite actuellement une quantité importante de marchandises et se pose également des problèmes qui exigent des solutions urgentes. Dom Source : Le Phare

UGANDA :

Ugandan troops to stay in South Sudan

Date: May 12, 2014/By Raymond Baguma/newvision.co.ug

Uganda has protested a United Nations (UN) report accusing it of using cluster bombs in the war in South Sudan.

A report by the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) said it found evidence on use of cluster munitions in Bor town which under the control of Uganda's army – the UPDF – and South Sudan government forces.

Ugandan state minister for foreign affairs Henry Oryem Okello has said the report is “rubbish and unfounded”.

He said: “It's unfortunate and sad that the UN wants to malign the Government of Uganda. The last time, we challenged UN on M23 rebels, we were right and UN was proved wrong.”

The minister said Uganda is a signatory to the UN convention against the use of cluster munitions and cannot violate the convention.

He expressed dismay that Ugandan troops are protecting UN bases in South Sudan which is the work of UN peacekeepers, yet the UN keeps maligning Uganda.

Meanwhile, the minister has said that the Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF) troops will remain in South Sudan until the regional bloc IGAD deploys the proposed Protection Force.

Oryem said: “The UPDF will remain in South Sudan until such a time when the South Sudan government will say that we can leave. We are not going anywhere and nobody has the right to tell us to leave.”

His statement comes after a peace agreement was signed between President Salva Kiir and rebel leader Riek Machar in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa on Friday.

In a separate interview, Samuel Luete Lominsuk who is South Sudan's ambassador to Uganda said that when the regional IGAD force deploys, UPDF will move to hunt for LRA leader Joseph Kony, in line with the bilateral agreement of 2008.

Ambassador Lominsuk said the deployment of Ugandan troops in South Sudan was a rescue mission that averted the danger of ethnic cleansing.

"UPDF was invited to protect key installations from being vandalized," said the envoy.

"We should be happy with what Ugandan forces did. When war erupted, Ugandan forces secured Juba International Airport and foreign planes were able to evacuate their nationals who included Kenyans, British and the US.

"When Americans went to Bor their aircraft was shot and they came back with casualties. Ugandan forces are there to protect and they listen to the President who invited them," said the ambassador.

Torment to Tyranny: Persecution in Uganda Now That the Anti-Homosexuality Act Is Law
05/12/2014/huffingtonpost.com

Earlier this year a woman contacted Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG), the organization of which I'm director, forwarding a letter from her landlord. It read, "You are a wonderful woman as well as a tenant who hasn't given me any trouble over rent whatsoever," but added that "[d]ue to what is going on in the country ... I am sorry but I think you are a depraved person who I can no longer tolerate in my house. I also cannot fight against the government."

This is just one of the 162 cases of persecution since the passing of the Anti-Homosexuality Act that have been highlighted in "From Torment to Tyranny," a report recently published by SMUG and the National LGBTI Security Team. When Uganda's parliament -- the legislative body that should represent all the people of Uganda, including this woman -- voted for this Act in December 2013, it declared open season on Uganda's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) communities. In my country there's now a culture of extreme and violent homophobia whereby anyone is free to persecute LGBTI people with impunity. Incidents of violent attacks, arbitrary arrests, blackmail, evictions and a concerted effort to drive LGBTI civil society underground are being reported every day.

The Act, which was signed into law by President Museveni in February, is draconian and persecutory in both content and intent; there's no question of this. It creates new crimes of "aggravated homosexuality," carrying a life sentence; "the promotion of homosexuality," carrying a five-year sentence; and "aiding and abetting homosexuality," carrying a seven-year sentence.

Simple activities such as renting a property to an LGBTI person, running an organization that promotes the health or human rights of LGBTI people or showing any form of intimacy toward someone of the same sex could now be characterized as serious crimes. Under the Act, two people of the same sex purporting to marry one another commit an offense that carries a life sentence.

The 162 cases that we have collated and substantiated to the best of our ability probably represent only the tip of the iceberg. Most incidents of harassment or intimidation, for example, are not reported, and there may have been other serious cases that we have not been alerted to or have been

unable to verify. Even so, our report shows that there has been a staggering increase in persecution. Nineteen cases were reported in 2012, and only eight in 2013. The 162 cases reported since Dec. 20, 2013, therefore represent an increase in persecution of up to 19 times compared with previous years, an increase that can only be laid at the door of the Anti-Homosexuality Act and the virulently homophobic atmosphere it has engendered in Uganda.

The day after the Act was signed by the president, the Ugandan tabloid Red Pepper printed the names of 200 Ugandans, including mine, under the headline "200 Top Homos," leaving us open to harassment, abuse and attacks. A number of other media outlets, including a local Ugandan radio station, have similarly exposed LGBTI people and fomented a climate of fear, hatred and violence. Only a handful of the people exposed by the media in this way have approached SMUG and reported what has happened to them as a consequence. For the rest, the intimidation seems to have forced them into silence.

By far the most frequent story to emerge from the report involves someone being thrown out of or asked to leave their home, often by their own family. It's hardly surprising, because knowingly allowing a gay person to live on your property and failing to report them to the police could now be a criminal offense. As the story referred to above shows, homosexuality has become a reason to evict someone whether or not an actual offense has been committed under the Act.

Most worrying is the number of cases reported that involve either the threat of violence or actual physical attacks. Perhaps the greatest fear is of mob violence. According to SMUG's report, one man survived a lynching by a mob of youths only to find himself arrested and detained by the police. Since then, we have lost contact with him. The same report describes how a woman, after being attacked by a mob and having her house burned down, was also arrested. Random threats of violence are becoming commonplace. An increase in suicides and attempted suicides since the passing of the Act has been noted, particularly among the young. One 17-year-old boy was reported to have swallowed rat poison in April of this year.

Organizations are also feeling the pressure. SMUG has been threatened with closure. On April 3, 2014, the Walter Reed Project, a not-for-profit AIDS foundation working in Uganda, was raided by police. As a result, the U.S. Embassy made the decision to shut it down, depriving many Ugandans of access to antiretroviral medication and condoms. As the closure of the Walter Reed Project shows, HIV/AIDS outreach programs servicing Uganda's LGBTI communities are under threat as a direct result of the Act, which criminalizes "aiding and abetting" homosexuality.

One solution for Uganda's LGBTI community might be asylum. Our report highlights 25 cases of asylum in the first few months of 2014. But when you're forced to seek asylum in countries that also criminalize homosexuality, like Kenya, this doesn't look much like an option. I, like many others, don't want to leave Uganda; it is my home, and I would rather seek other solutions, but I completely understand the fear that those who do leave live under.

Ultimately we must seek solutions through political and legal forums: building bridges with Ugandan parliamentarians and ministers, finding resources to help those in prison or facing prosecution, and, ultimately, challenging the legality of the Anti-Homosexuality Act itself. We must also support those who have been made homeless, and those who are working to improve the lives of LGBTI people in Uganda but who face daily threats and intimidation. More than 26 mainstream civil society organizations that SMUG was working with have now withdrawn most of their support to the LGBTI community. This has to change because, in the end, mainstream NGOs are crucial allies; it's through them that the LGBTI community in Uganda is able to communicate effectively with government and ultimately educate the general population to accept us as full and equal citizens.

SOUTH AFRICA :

Procès Pistorius: Le parquet va demander une expertise psychiatrique

13/05/2014/20minutes.fr

JUSTICE - Il souffre d'un trouble d'anxiété selon une psychiatre...

Le Parquet va demander un examen psychiatrique du champion paralympique sud-africain Oscar Pistorius, accusé d'avoir assassiné sa petite amie en 2013, après l'affirmation d'une psychiatre citée lundi par la défense qu'il souffre d'un «trouble d'anxiété généralisé».

Le procureur Gerrie Nel a estimé que le sportif devrait subir trente jours de tests pour vérifier les conclusions de la psychiatre Meryll Vorster, selon qui son état peut l'avoir rendu plus peureux avant qu'il ait abattu sa petite amie, qu'il aurait pris pour un cambrioleur.

«Je vais faire la demande» d'un tel examen, a-t-il dit à l'issue d'un débat acharné avec l'avocat de la défense Barry Roux et le Dr Vorster.

Le trouble aurait pu affecter sa conduite la nuit du drame

«C'est mon opinion, Madame, que M. Pistorius souffre d'un trouble d'anxiété», une affection qui se caractérise par un état d'inquiétude permanent et excessif, avait déclaré Meryll Vorster lundi au début de la huitième semaine de procès, s'adressant formellement à la juge Thokozile Masipa

L'avocat de la défense Barry Roux l'avait appelée pour témoigner sur les sentiments de vulnérabilité de Pistorius, un facteur qui peut lui avoir fait croire que sa petite amie Reeva Steenkamp était un intrus, quand il l'a abattue le 14 février 2013.

«S'il avait peur d'un intrus, alors certainement avoir un trouble d'anxiété généralisé pourrait avoir affecté la façon dont il a réagi à cette peur», a relevé la psychiatre.

«Si quelqu'un souffrant d'un trouble d'anxiété possède des armes, cela fait-il de lui une personne dangereuse?», a interrogé le procureur.

«Oui», a répondu Meryll Vorster.

L'audience a été levée tôt, de façon à ce que le procureur Gerrie Nel puisse étudier son rapport, avant de revenir mardi au contre-interrogatoire de Mme Vorster et faire sa demande formelle d'un examen de l'accusé.

Depuis le début du procès le 3 mars, la défense s'est appliquée à décrire un Oscar Pistorius obsédé par sa sécurité, alors que les taux de criminalité sont effrayants dans le pays. L'accusation l'a volontiers montré paranoïaque.

L'enfance difficile de Pistorius évoquée

Citant de nombreux facteurs de stress dans la vie du champion, Mme Vorster -qui a également interrogé la famille proche et des amis de Pistorius pour compiler son rapport-, estime que les troubles de l'athlète double amputé ont commencé quand ses parents l'ont poussé à être normal, quand il était petit. «Au fil du temps, ça a pu entraîner de l'anxiété», selon elle.

Les enfants Pistorius n'ont pas été «apaisés» par leur mère Sheila, qui dormait avec une arme sous son oreiller et «abusait occasionnellement de l'alcool», a poursuivi la psychiatre.

«Les enfants ont été élevés pour voir leur environnement extérieur comme une menace», a déclaré le Dr Vorster, pour qui la mère de Pistorius «a ajouté» à l'anxiété de ses enfants.

A la mort de sa mère alors qu'il était encore adolescent, Oscar Pistorius a perdu son seul modèle, selon elle. Ses parents étaient divorcés.

Quand il a pris son indépendance financière à 21 ans, le jeune sportif «a coupé tous les liens avec son père», a-t-elle poursuivi. Peu de temps après, il achetait une arme à feu.

«Les personnes souffrant d'anxiété travaillent dur pour contrôler leur environnement», a relevé Meryll Vorster. «En quelque sorte, son programme d'entraînement rigoureux et son régime l'ont aidé à atténuer ses niveaux d'anxiété.»
avec AFP

Stevenson University Students Robbed At Gunpoint In South Africa

May 12, 2014 /baltimore.cbslocal.com

STEVENSON, Md. (WJZ) –Stevenson University students on a trip to South Africa are now on their way home after a terrifying encounter with armed robbers on their tour bus. Also on board was Baltimore's former police commissioner Fred Bealefeld.

Investigative reporter Mike Hellgren has more on how it unfolded and the concerns from some who say this is not the first incident.

According to several sources, students on the same trip three years ago were robbed in their hotel rooms. In both cases, no one was hurt.

Former commissioner Bealefeld says the students remained calm.

The five-week South African trip has become a tradition for Stevenson University criminal justice students, but this year a chilling armed robbery cut it short just hours after the 30 students arrived in Pretoria.

Dean Jim Salvucci, of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, recounts what happened on their tour bus—with chaperones, including current faculty member and Bealefeld on board.

“There were four motorcyclists who pulled the bus over. One of them had a handgun, held the people at the front of the bus at bay using the handgun. The others went through the bus with cash, jewelry, electronics—anything they could get their hands on,” Salvucci said.

No one was injured. Salvucci said this when asked if they'd had problems on the trip in the past:

“No, nothing of any great significance,” he said.

But several people—who asked to remain anonymous because of their connections to the school—contacted WJZ and claimed money, laptops and phones were stolen from the students' hotel during a 2011 trip. They say students were threatened at knifepoint in a hotel room.

Here is their account:

“When she woke up and confronted the person, ‘what are you doing?’ this particular person actually had a knife.”

“It was pretty traumatic for them because their child was thousands of miles away. Stevenson did a great job getting answers and seemed to get things under control.”

“Knowing that the crime that’s in that country and what has taken place prior, did they take any steps? You know, should there have been guards or security with them on this particular tour?”

“Students or families or parents should have been told of prior instances that took place rather than saying an incident like this has never happened in the past when it has.”

The university reiterated to WJZ there have never been any major incidents before, saying safety is a priority.

After the armed robbery, a heavy police escort kept a close eye on the group while administrators made the difficult decision to send everyone home.

“We don’t want them to be alone 8,000 miles away. We want them home where they’re safe and sound. They’re with their families. They’re with their friends, and they’re much more secure,” Salvucci said.

Even those who spoke to us about past incidents believe the trip is worthwhile and very educational, but they’d like to see a reevaluation of security measures. The school tells us no decision has been made over whether to continue with the South African trip next year.

TANZANIA :

India’s OVL to submit bids for oil, gas blocks in Tanzania

By: Ajoy K Das/miningweekly.com/13th May 2014

KOLKATA (miningweekly.com) - India’s ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL) is gearing up to bid for offshore oil and gas blocks in Tanzania as part of its strategic plan to increase its energy footprint in Africa.

The company has completed the examination of the blocks on offer and based on the assessment of the blocks, OVL would put in bids for one or two of the blocks before the May 15 deadline for submissions, a company official said.

However, the official refused to disclose whether OVL would make a bid for the blocks alone or in collaboration with an overseas partner, claiming that both options were open and it would be finalised on the last date for submission of bids.

The Tanzanian government has offered seven deep offshore blocks and the Lake Tanganyika North Offshore block. However, these did not include Block 1B and 1C, which have been reserved by the government for development by the Tanzanian Petroleum Development Corporation, in

collaboration with an overseas partner.

The bidding process for the Tanzanian blocks had been pending since 2011, when the government had initially offered nine offshore blocks but the bidding had been cancelled and subsequently revived for seven blocks, officials said.

OVL was aggressively scouting for oil and gas resources across geographies to double production from overseas assets by 2017 and was particularly focused on Africa considering that it already had a footprint on the continent and experience gained would enable the company to secure both exploratory as well and producing assets, the official said.

OVL, the overseas arm of ONGC Limited, India's exploration and production major, had drawn up a prospective plan to ramp up overseas production from 8.6-million tonnes of oil equivalent to 20-million tonnes of oil equivalent by 2017, and 60-million tonnes of oil equivalent by 2030.

However, in December last year, OVL's overseas plans suffered a setback after it was forced to evacuate its assets in South Sudan in the wake of internal strife in the newly independent nation.

OVL has an equity stake in two oil blocks in South Sudan, through its 25% equity stake in Greater Pioneer Operating Company, producing 37 000 barrels a day, and another 25% in Block 5A producing 4 600 barrels a day.

However, the South Sudan assets have not been abandoned as the Indian government's External Affairs Ministry was holding talks with officials in South Sudan for early restoration of law and order in the region around the blocks to enable OVL to restart operations, officials said.

Edited by: Esmarie Swanepoel

KENYA :

Kenya: End Abusive Round-Ups

May 13, 2014/hrw.org

Detainees Describe Mistreatment, Lack of Access to UN Agency

(Nairobi) – Kenyan authorities should immediately end ongoing harassment, arbitrary detentions, forced relocations to refugee camps, and summary deportations in a round-up operation that has affected both foreigners and Kenyan citizens.

The government should also give the UN refugee agency full access to all detainees to identify registered refugees, asylum seekers, and anyone seeking protection, regardless of when they came to Kenya.

The round-up operation, which began on April 1, 2014, has been riddled with abuses, Human Rights Watch found. Government security forces have raided homes, buildings, and shops; looted cell phones, money, and other goods; harassed and extorted residents; and detained thousands – including journalists, Kenyan citizens, and international aid workers – without charge and in appalling conditions for periods well beyond the 24-hour limit set by Kenyan law.

“Kenyan police and security forces are using abusive and discriminatory tactics in the name of

national security, targeting entire communities,” said Daniel Bekele, Africa director at Human Rights Watch. “This crackdown clearly violates basic rights of Kenyans, refugees, and other foreign nationals and does nothing to improve security.”

Human Rights Watch interviewed 21 refugees who had been detained at various police stations in Nairobi, including Pangani, Shauri Moyo, Kamukunji, Kasarani, and Gigiri stations.

Operation Usalama Watch began following grenade and gun attacks in Mombasa and Nairobi by unknown perpetrators on March 23 and March 31 that killed 12 and injured at least eight. On April 5, Interior Minister Joseph Ole Lenku announced that 6,000 police had deployed to Nairobi’s Eastleigh neighborhood to arrest foreign nationals who were in the country unlawfully and anyone suspected of terrorist links.

The operation has particularly affected Somalis, ethnic Somali Kenyans, Ethiopians, South Sudanese, and Kenyan Muslim populations in Nairobi’s Eastleigh and “South C” neighborhoods, Mombasa’s Likoni area, and in other towns in central Kenya and the coast region.

Authorities have detained thousands of people in police stations without charge. On April 9 Lenku announced that almost 4,000 had been arrested and since then arrests and releases have continued, with many people transferred between places of detention. Some have been held for more than three weeks, Human Rights Watch found.

On March 26 Lenku announced that all urban refugees should be relocated to Kenya’s refugee camps. The move is in clear breach of a 2013 High Court order quashing the authorities’ previous attempt to move people into camps. Kenyan lawyers have challenged the latest order.

Witnesses have described that security forces have routinely confiscated or destroyed documentation, and frequently extorted large sums of money in exchange for release. Residents of Eastleigh told Human Rights Watch they paid between KES500 to 5,000 (USD\$5.88 to \$8.80) to avoid being detained, or up to KES40,000 (\$470) to secure their release. Police have confiscated both expired and valid UN refugee documents, and in some cases have torn them up.

Some refugees moved from Nairobi to the remote refugee camps as the only way to avoid paying bribes to stay out of detention. A 25-year-old Somali refugee told Human Rights Watch in the Dadaab camp that he relocated there after his relatives paid KES35,000 (\$408) for his release from the Pangani police station and police confiscated his Kenyan government-issued “alien certificate.” “I came as I didn’t have any more money to pay bribes if they came again,” he said. “I have no options.”

Human Rights Watch saw detainees being whipped at the Pangani station, and former detainees said police kicked, beat, pushed, and threatened to shoot or deport them during the raids and arrests.

At least two people have died during round-ups. On April 13, a 6-month-old baby girl died in her crib three days after police arrested her mother, a registered refugee, and refused to allow her to bring her baby to the police station, leaving the baby alone, according to neighbors. Local media also reported that a pregnant woman died after police officers pushed her off a police truck during a round-up.

Detainees described unsanitary conditions and complained of insufficient food. Many said they would go for days without food. At the Pangani police station, they said, only relatives who could bribe police officers with KES100 (\$1.16) were able to get food to detainees in the cells.

“The cells were full beyond capacity,” a former detainee told Human Rights Watch. “We sat on each other inside, or else one had to stand straight to fit. The toilets next to the cells were overflowing and human waste would flow back to the cells where we were. No one could go to the toilets, so we helped ourselves on the floor inside the cells and then we all ended up trampling on it.”

In the operation in Nairobi, detainees said they were typically held until authorities at the Kasarani stadium screened them to establish whether they are lawfully present in Kenya, in what appears to be a slow and nontransparent process. After screening, detainees are either charged with unlawful presence, deported, released, or ordered to relocate to refugee camps.

“People are languishing in dirty, cramped cells, without being brought before a magistrate, as required by law,” Bekele said. “The authorities should release or charge these people and ensure basic standards of care while they are in detention.”

Two weeks after the screening began, Lenku announced that just 1,136 had been screened, of whom 225 would be deported and 412 relocated to camps. On April 22, he announced that 313 would be tried on immigration charges. It is not clear how authorities are deciding whom to deport without charges and whom to charge, Human Rights Watch said.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) says the Kenyan authorities have denied UNHCR access to detainees in police cells, at the Kasarani stadium, and at the airport to identify registered refugees and asylum seekers or people who wish to claim asylum because they fear serious harm in Somalia.

“The Kenyan authorities appear to be making decisions that violate detainees’ due process rights and that risk unlawfully returning large numbers of Somalis to their country,” Bekele said. “They should immediately allow UNHCR access to all detention facilities, including the stadium where people’s residence status is being verified.”

Since mid-April, hundreds of refugees have relocated from urban areas to the overcrowded Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps. Many have never before lived in the camps. In some cases parents were forcibly separated from their children, who remain in the cities.

Yusuf, a 20-year-old refugee registered in Nairobi, relocated to Dadaab after he was arrested at his home in early April, spent six days in Pangani and Kasarani stadium, and was only released after his uncle paid KES9,000 (\$105) to a policeman at Kasarani. He told Human Rights Watch shortly after his arrival in Dadaab: “This is when I came to the camp, the government was saying all refugees should come to the camps. I don’t have close relatives here. But there are problems in Somalia so I can’t go there either.”

The urban refugee relocations to camps appear to violate Kenyan law. A July 2013 ruling by Kenya’s High Court concluded that a December 2012 plan to relocate urban refugees to camps violated refugees’ rights and dignity.

Since April 9, 2014, authorities have also deported 261 peoples by air to Mogadishu: 83 on April 9, 91 on April 17, and 87 on May 3. UNHCR was not given access to the deportees at Nairobi’s international airport before they were removed from Kenya.

Mariam, a 32-year-old registered refugee who was arrested while visiting Nairobi, was among the 83 people deported on April 9 after Kenyan authorities refused to accept her refugee status document. Her children, ages 5, 10, and 15, are living in Kenya’s Kakuma refugee camp with her elderly father. “I hope the government of Kenya will let me go back to my family,” she told Human

Rights Watch in Mogadishu. “The only home I have is that refugee camp.”

In another case, two children, ages 16 and 14, who had been born and brought up in Kenya, were separated from their family and deported on April 9, despite holding refugee and school identity documents.

Kenya should stop summarily deporting Somali nationals, which risks violating its obligations under Kenyan and international law not to return anyone to situations of persecution or generalized violence. Any undocumented individuals should be given the opportunity to lodge asylum claims and UNHCR should be given access to detainees to identify such people, Human Rights Watch said.

Forcibly returning someone to a threat of persecution or to a place where a person would be at real risk of torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment is refoulement and is prohibited under international law.

UNHCR has called Somalia “a very dangerous place,” and said no Somali should be forcibly returned there unless assured that they would not risk persecution.

UNHCR’s role in identifying registered refugees and asylum seekers and those who want to claim asylum is all the more important after Kenya suspended all services to urban refugees, and stopped registering new asylum seekers in the cities in December 2012, Human Rights Watch said. The move followed suspension of all refugee registration in refugee camps in October 2011.

Kenyan authorities are carrying out collective punishment under the guise of fighting terrorism,” Bekele said. “This abusive operation violates the fundamental rights and freedoms of Kenyans and non-Kenyans alike, and risks making the country more divided and insecure.”

Kenya Ties With China Go Up Another Level After PM Visits

12 May 2014/East African Business Week (Kampala)

Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang was in Kenya over the weekend for an official visit in what was expected to further cement the growing bi-lateral relations between the two countries.

The highly publicized visit comes at a time when the country is in the spotlight over increasing incident of terrorist attacks especially orchestrated by the Somali ragtag and Al-Qaeda affiliate, Al-Shabaab.

During the two-day visit that ended Sunday, Kenya and China are set to sign a number of trade agreements on areas focusing on trade, infrastructure, science and technology among others.

Kenyatta visited China last August when several deals were struck.

The Chinese premier will also be visiting Ethiopia, Nigeria and Angola.

Keqiang's visit also happens at a time when there is growing concern over business dealings between the Kenya government led by President Uhuru Kenyatta and Chinese government fronted companies.

The furore on the local scale is as a result of indigenous companies that have lost lucrative infrastructure deals to Chinese companies. Kenya's formerly strong allies in the West are growing concerned about Chinese dominance not only in Africa but across the world.

According to Dr. Morrison Ekaale, an International Relations specialist and celebrated Kenyan scholar, the visit by the Chinese Premier will attract much concern especially from Kenya's traditional western allies among them the United States and the countries that make up the European Union.

"In essence, the visit seems to be a strong statement that Kenya is keen on doing business with China and the East as opposed to the traditional West. When viewed in light of the fact that no senior government official from the West has visited Kenya since President Uhuru's inauguration, the visit carries a lot of political and economic connotations," Dr. Ekaale said.

But the Kenya Investment Authority Managing Director Moses Ikiara said the visit indicates that Kenya is determined to go on with investment and development strategies despite insecurity, among other challenges.

Ikiara was quoted said this will also demonstrate China's support for Kenya as the latter deals with the terror threats, to not only protect its citizens but its economy too.

"The fight against terrorism is not for Kenya alone; we only happen to be in the frontline of the battle now. Other countries need to join China and show solidarity as we fight the challenge. This is not the time to sit on the sidelines," Ikiara said.

ANGOLA :

Angola: China, Angola Vow to Boost Win-Win Cooperation

10 May 2014/ Xinhua

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos held talks here Friday and pledged concerted efforts to further promote bilateral relations and cooperation.

During their talks, Li said Beijing is willing to work with Luanda to further strengthen the role of the two governments in coordinating and leading bilateral cooperation, enhance cooperation in development planning, and sign a bilateral investment protection agreement as soon as possible.

The two sides, Li said, should steer their cooperation into an industry-driven mode, continue to expand the program of preferential loans, and deepen practical cooperation in energy, infrastructure, finance, agriculture, urbanization and manufacturing.

The premier also suggested that China and Angola explore the possibility of building an Angola-centered regional aviation network so as to improve regional interconnectivity.

The Chinese government encourages Chinese enterprises to invest in Angola, and hopes that Angola will continue to facilitate Chinese investment and ensure the safety of Chinese institutions and personnel, Li said.

China is also ready to promote closer people-to-people exchanges and increase mutual understanding between the two peoples, added the premier.

Meanwhile, Li said China highly values its ties with Angola, and views the African country as a

close friend and important partner within China-Africa cooperation.

China, he added, supports Angola's national governance plan focusing on development, stability and employment, and stands ready to increase exchanges between the two countries' political parties and share experiences in national governance.

Additionally, China is willing to maintain closer coordination with Angola in regional and international affairs, Li said.

For his part, dos Santos said China is an important force in safeguarding the peace and development of Africa and the world, and a reliable friend and partner for Africa.

Noting that the two countries have enjoyed fruitful cooperation in the past and share broad prospects in the future, the Angolan president said that strengthening bilateral cooperation is vital to the sustained development of Angola.

Angola thanks China's long-standing support, and stands ready to further expand mutually beneficial cooperation and enhance unity and coordination with China in regional and international affairs, said the president.

Angola welcomes more investment from China as well as active participation of Chinese enterprises in the African nation's economic and social development, said dos Santos, pledging that his country will facilitate such investment.

After their talks, the two leaders witnessed the signing of a series of cooperation deals on economy, technology, health care, finance and personnel exchanges.

Speaking at a joint press conference afterwards, Li reiterated that Angola is an important partner of China and the two countries present each other with valuable development opportunities, adding that the two sides have agreed to set up a joint work group to chart the course of bilateral cooperation in key areas.

Citing Angola's huge demand in infrastructure construction and China's strength in production capacity, technology and foreign exchange reserves, Li urged the two sides to lift bilateral cooperation in relevant areas to higher levels by dovetailing with each other and making full use of the market.

China, said the premier, is also ready to share agricultural technology and experience with Angola in an unreserved manner, maintain closer people-to-people exchanges, and support the African nation in strengthening personnel training and expanding youth employment.

Noting that around a million Chinese nationals are working and living in Africa, and 260,000 in Angola alone, Li said China supports capable and reputable Chinese enterprises to invest in Africa and participate in Angola's economic and social development.

He asked Chinese enterprises and nationals in Angola to abide by local laws and respect local culture, and expressed the hope that the Angolan side will ensure their safety and provide more convenience for their work and life.

Angola is the third leg of Li's ongoing four-nation Africa tour, his first to the promising continent since he took office in March last year. He visited Ethiopia and Nigeria earlier in the trip, which will conclude in Kenya.

– Xinhua

Statoil farms out more interest offshore Angola

05/12/2014/By OGJ editors

Statoil ASA has farmed out 5% participating interest in the Eni SPA-operated Block 15/06 offshore Angola to Sonangol EP for \$200 million.

“This transaction is part of Statoil’s continued optimization process to maximize value and focus financial and organizational capabilities to core assets,” said Tove Stuhr Sjoblom, Statoil sub-Saharan Africa senior vice-president. “The transaction will allow Statoil to unlock capital and contribute to improved financial flexibility going forward.”

Statoil said the Angolan continental shelf is the largest contributor to its oil production outside Norway and is a key building block for the company’s international production growth.

Statoil’s equity production from Angola totaled 200,000 b/d in 2013. In addition to the ownership in four producing assets, Statoil also holds participating interests in several other licenses including exploration blocks in the Kwanza basin offshore Angola.

Statoil in April agreed to farm out 15% interest in Kwanza’s Block 39 to WRG Angola Block 39 Ltd. (WRG) (OGJ Online, Apr. 3, 2014).

AU/AFRICA :

Au Nigeria, Boko Haram veut un échange entre les lycéennes et des prisonniers

Le Monde.fr avec AFP/12.05.2014

Dans une nouvelle vidéo diffusée lundi 12 mai, le chef de Boko Haram, Aboubakar Shekau, affirme avoir converti à l’islam les 223 lycéennes nigérianes enlevées à la mi-avril, en montrant des jeunes femmes lors d’une prière collective. Le leader exige, en échange de leur libération, celle de prisonniers du groupe islamiste aux mains du gouvernement.

Le ministère de l’intérieur nigérian a refusé cette proposition, affirmant qu’il « n’est pas question d’échanger une personne contre une autre ». « Ce n’est pas à Boko Haram et aux insurgés de poser leurs conditions », a résumé un responsable.

Sur la vidéo, on peut voir une centaine d’adolescentes portant un voile couvrant tout leur corps, en train de prier dans un lieu non identifié. Trois d’entre elles sont interrogées : deux disent qu’elles étaient chrétiennes et se sont converties à l’islam, alors que la troisième déclare qu’elle était déjà musulmane. L’une des filles affirme, le regard fuyant et visiblement sous la contrainte, que les captives ne sont pas maltraitées.

« CES FILLES SONT DEVENUES MUSULMANES »

A aucun moment de la vidéo Aboubakar Shekau n’apparaît en compagnie des lycéennes. L’enregistrement n’a pas non plus été officiellement certifié.

« Ces filles dont vous vous préoccupez tant, nous les avons en fait libérées (...) et vous savez comment on les a libérées ? Ces filles sont devenues musulmanes », dit Aboubakar Shekau. « Nous ne les libérerons qu'après que vous ayez libéré nos frères ».

Il précise qu'un tel échange ne concernerait que « celles qui ne se sont pas converties » à l'islam, celles ayant accepté de devenir musulmanes étant devenues « des soeurs ». Dans une précédente vidéo diffusée le 5 mai, le chef de Boko Haram avait menacé de les vendre comme esclaves et de les marier de force.

MOBILISATION INTERNATIONALE

Après les Etats-Unis, le Royaume-Uni et la France qui ont envoyé ces derniers jours des experts au Nigeria pour aider les forces de sécurité à rechercher les jeunes filles, Israël a à son tour proposé son aide dimanche, comme l'avait fait la Chine vendredi.

Dimanche soir, François Hollande a proposé un sommet sur la sécurité au Nigeria, qui devrait rassembler samedi prochain à Paris, autour du président français, les dirigeants d'au moins cinq pays africains : le Nigeria et quatre de ses voisins, le Tchad, le Cameroun, le Niger et le Bénin. Le président français a également demandé aux Américains et aux Britanniques « de participer au sommet, « afin que nous puissions agir ensemble et de manière efficace ».

Très critiqué pour son inaction dans les jours qui ont suivi l'enlèvement des lycéennes, le président nigérian Goodluck Jonathan s'est dit « très optimiste » sur l'opération de recherche en cours, grâce à l'appui logistique de la communauté internationale.

Un rapport d'Amnesty International publié vendredi affirme que l'armée nigérienne avait été informée de l'imminence d'une attaque de Boko Haram contre le lycée de Chibok le 14 avril, mais n'avait pas réagi faute de moyens.

L'insurrection islamiste a fait des milliers de morts depuis 2009, dont près de 2 000 depuis le début de cette année. Initialement concentrées dans le Nord à majorité musulmane, où Boko Haram revendique la création d'un Etat islamique, les violences ont récemment fait des dizaines de morts à Abuja avec plusieurs attentats à la voiture piégée.

Chad closes border with CAR due to violence

13 May 2014/aljazeera.com

President Idriss Deby says border will remain closed until the crisis in the Central African Republic has been resolved.

Chad's President Idriss Deby has announced the country's border with the Central African Republic has been closed pending an end to intercommunal violence there that has killed thousands and forced nearly one million people to flee their homes.

Deby said the 1,000km frontier would remain open to Chadian citizens wishing to return home.

"From today our border with this country is tightly sealed," Deby said during a visit on Sunday to the town of Daha, 20km from the border.

"Barring that precise case [Chadians returning home], no one is authorised to cross this border until

the crisis in Central African Republic is resolved." His speech was posted on the website of the presidency on Monday.

Thousands of French and African troops have failed to stop the waves of killings that erupted after the predominantly Muslim Seleka rebel movement seized power in the majority-Christian former French colony in March 2013.

Seleka leaders were forced to resign under international pressure but Christian militias known as "anti-balaka" have intensified revenge attacks against Muslims.

Chad, previously at the heart of African efforts to stabilise the neighbouring country, withdrew its forces from the Central African Republic last month.

Chadian troops were accused by many in the Central African Republic of siding with the Seleka rebels.

Kidnapped Nigerian girls recount escape

11 May 2014 /aljazeera.com

Some of the 53 girls who escaped when the Boko Haram abduction took place in Chibok have spoken about their ordeal.

Some of the girls who managed to escape after being abducted last month from a school in northeastern Nigeria by the group Boko Haram have given harrowing accounts of their ordeal.

Standing alongside their parents, the students described how the gunmen commanded the hundreds of students at the Chibok Government Girls Secondary School to gather outside, before going into a storeroom and taking all the food.

"They then moved all of us to the main gate and brought their cars where they loaded the food they had taken and asked us to get in," one of the girls recalled.

"The girls that had no shoes on and were not wearing veils were told to go and fetch them as they started to set the school on fire."

More than 300 girls were abducted on April 15 from their school in Chibok in the country's remote northeast. Fifty-three escaped and 276 remain captive.

The escaped girls spoke to visiting Borno state officials on May 5. In the video, which was handed out by the Borno State governor's office, the women gathered at the school cried, as the students spoke of their ordeal.

Another girl recounted how she and her friend decided to run for their lives.

"I told my friend that it is better to be killed than to be taken to a place that we did not know," she said.

Parents of the girls still in captivity, pleaded for their rescue.

"Now we don't know if our children are eating, if they are sleeping on the floor, we do not know," said one distraught mother.

International outrage

The government's inability to rescue the girls nearly a month after they were abducted by Boko Haram has sparked worldwide outrage, protests and a social media campaign.

Rallies were held in several North American cities on Saturday to express outrage over the kidnappings.

Protesters held signs and chanted slogans in Atlanta, New York City and Toronto, all calling for the release of the girls and an end to human trafficking worldwide.

As further condemnation of the Nigerian abductions spread, Saudi Arabia's grand mufti Sheikh Abulaziz al-Sheikh said Boko Haram rebels who kidnapped the schoolgirls had "set up to smear the image of Islam".

Sheikh said Boko Haram had been "misguided" and should be "shown their wrong path and be made to reject it".

The US and other countries have sent teams of technical experts to assist the search effort.

Nigeria's defence headquarters said on Saturday that two divisions of the military were now stationed in the border regions close to Chad, Cameroon and Niger to work with other security agencies.

At least 10 army search teams were trying to track down the girls in the remote far northeast, border guards were on high alert and the air force had so far flown at least 250 sorties.

Cameroon Concerned About Boko Haram Violence

By Moki Edwin Kindzeka/allafrica.com/12 May 2014

Kidnappings, an influx of refugees and an increase fighting and criminal acts in Cameroon's border communities have raised concerns about Nigeria's Boko Haram insurgency.

Cameroonians in northern communities that share a boundary with Nigeria's Borno state, the base of the Boko Haram militant group, are worried the violent group has extended its reach into Cameroon.

Nurse Mary Nana, 31, told VOA she was preparing to leave the border locality of Fotokol after four Cameroonians were killed and some 3,000 Nigerians crossed over to her area following last week's attack on a market by suspected Boko Haram members.

"I am very much aware of the fact that they [Boko Haram] are here so the insecurity is just too much," she said. "I am very very afraid. I think if there is a possibility of leaving even this day as I am talking [I would be happy]. The insecurity is just too much."

Secondary school teacher John Che says insecurity has increased in North Cameroon where he works because of the belief that Boko Haram insurgents are in the area.

"The security situation of this region is questionable," Che said. "We don't know who is who because the Boko Haram guys are at our door steps."

Fonka Awah Augustine, the governor of Far North Cameroon, says the cause of the public's anxiety is apparent.

"Our problems come from our neighbors," he noted. " Each time the Nigerian army attacks, Boko Haram becomes destabilized and they are looking for a safe ground to settle, and each time Boko Haram equally attacks either the army or a particular community they cause the flow of the population in their thousands into our region. [far north Cameroon]."

Augustine says he banned movements from dusk to dawn on motorcycles, which are a widely used means of transportation in North Cameroon, because Boko Haram members have been using them to cause havoc.

"All the kidnappings and the attacks were done with the complicity of motorcycles," he said. "So we feel that motorcycles are really becoming a source of trouble and they are being used as an instrument to cause disorder and trouble in this region."

Saibou Issa, a lecturer at the University of Maroua, told VOA that concerns over public safety have stagnated economic activity between Cameroon and Nigeria.

"There are people who are killed, there is widespread suspicion, there is fear, there is more and more economic starvation, there is no more economic interaction between Nigeria and Cameroon through Maiduguri, Bama and so on and so forth," Issa said.

Rene Emmanuel Sadi, Cameroon's Minister of Territorial Administration, has been visiting border localities to advise the people on what to do in the face of the threats. He said collaboration with the Cameroonian military is vital.

"This Boko Haram thing is very serious and so I came to sensitize, to educate everybody and to tell them that we really need their contribution," he explained. "They should really get involved in this search, in this battle in this combat. It is then that we will succeed in overcoming the challenge before us, that is Boko Haram."

Cameroon is also suffering as a result of the conflict in the Central Africa Republic. Seleka rebels have attacked the east of the country nine times since the conflict started.

They reportedly killed Cameroonian soldiers and civilians in all of the attacks. Last week, the Cameroonian government announced it had freed 18 cattle ranchers kidnapped by Seleka rebels.

Cameroon is also under threat from armed groups said to come into the country from Sudan through Chad to attack national parks. Three hundred elephants have been reported slaughtered and their tusks sold in Asian countries.

Cameroon has been calling on all its citizens to cooperate with the military and administrative authorities by reporting all suspected people and strangers in their regions.

Jordanian ambassador freed after Libya kidnap

13 May 2014 /bbc.com

Jordan's ambassador to Libya has been freed after being abducted by gunmen in the capital, Tripoli, last month.

Fawaz al-Itan was released unharmed and was on his way home on Tuesday, Jordanian officials said.

The kidnappers had reportedly demanded the release of a Libyan Islamist militant in exchange, but it is unclear whether this was granted.

Diplomats have been the targets of a number of abductions in Libya in recent months amid continuing instability.

The central government has struggled to assert its authority over the armed groups and tribesmen who helped end Muammar Gaddafi's 41-year rule in 2011.

'Doing well'

Mr Itan was kidnapped in the Libyan capital on 15 April when masked gunmen shot at his car, wounding the driver.

Libyan state media quoted Jordan's Foreign Minister, Nasser Judeh, as saying he was already on his way back to his homeland after his release on Tuesday.

"The ambassador is doing well and he is now making his way back to his country," Mr Judeh was quoted as saying.

He gave no further details about the circumstances of the release.

Investigators earlier said the kidnappers had demanded the return of Mohamed Dersi, a Libyan militant who was jailed for life in 2007 for plotting to blow up an airport in Jordan.

There were conflicting reports about whether this demand had been met.

Most of the targets of abductions since the revolution have been Libyan officials, including senior members of the government and their families.

However, in January gunmen detained six Egyptian diplomats and embassy employees for a few days following the arrest of a Libyan militia commander in Egypt.

There have also been attacks on Westerners.

In January, the bodies of a British man and a woman from New Zealand were discovered near the coastal area of Mellitah, in the west of the country, while an American teacher was shot dead in the eastern city of Benghazi in December.

LRA's Kony hunted in Central African Republic

By EDITH M. LEDERER, Associated Press/May 12, 2014

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — African troops searching for Lord's Resistance Army leader Joseph Kony are concentrating on the Central African Republic although the notorious rebel commander indicted for war crimes keeps moving in and out of Sudan, South Sudan and Congo as well because he knows he's being tracked, a U.N. envoy said Monday.

About Moussa, the U.N. special representative for Central Africa, told reporters after briefing the

Security Council that he thinks the capture of Kony is "coming pretty soon the way we are going."

Last month, African troops captured an LRA lieutenant known as Charles Okello and rescued about 10 civilians, including seven children, who had been abducted by the rebels. In February, Uganda's military said Okot Odhiambo — who was the LRA's No.2 commander behind Kony — likely died after an attack late last year in Central African Republic, known by its initials CAR.

A presidential statement approved by all 15 council members took note of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's latest report which said senior LRA leaders are believed to be based in northeastern CAR. It said "credible sources" indicated that Kony and senior commanders recently returned to seek safe havens in Sudanese-controlled areas of the disputed Kafia Kingi enclave on the border between CAR, South Sudan and Sudan.

Moussa said Kony may have been seen in Kafia Kingi but his method of operation is to spend today there, and go to South Sudan or elsewhere tomorrow, and keep on the move because "we have troops who are tracking him on a daily basis."

He added that he had spoken to Sudan's U.N. ambassador who said "they are not harboring Kony" and that Kafia Kingi "is no-man's land."

The LRA, which originated in Uganda in the 1980s as a popular tribal uprising against the government, has waged one of Africa's longest and most brutal rebellions. Its fighters are accused by the U.N. and human rights groups of cutting off the tongues and lips of innocent civilians and kidnapping thousands of children, forcing them to be soldiers and sex slaves.

In 2005, Kony became the first suspect to be indicted by the International Criminal Court on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Military pressure forced the LRA out of Uganda in 2005, and the rebels scattered across parts of central Africa. The LRA insurgency and the Ugandan government's response have left at least 100,000 people dead, and the Security Council said in 2011 that more than 440,000 people across the region have been displaced.

Kony became well known to the international community in 2012 when an American-based advocacy group, Invisible Children, produced a video seen by nearly 100 million people on YouTube that described atrocities committed by the LRA.

Moussa stressed the parallels between Boko Haram, which kidnapped nearly 300 Nigerian schoolgirls a month ago, and Kony, who abducted children, and in the early years maimed and poured acid on schoolgirls.

U.S. Ambassador Samantha Power said that "in stealing children Boko Haram is mimicking tactics first used in the region by the Lord's Resistance Army."

While LRA activities have decreased, the rebel group remains active.

According to the U.N. humanitarian office, 65 presumed LRA attacks were reported in the first quarter of 2014 in CAR and Congo, resulting in 93 abductions and two deaths. This was a significant decrease in deaths compared with the first quarters of 2012 and 2013.

The Security Council welcomed the African Union's recent stepped-up operations against the LRA, which it said have increased pressure on the rebels' command structure and resulted in several

significant defections. The African troops are backed by U.S. military advisers, whose contingent recently doubled to 250.

At the same time, the council expressed concern at insecurity in conflict-torn South Sudan and Central African Republic and the impact of fighting in both countries on operations against the LRA.

Ban's report said senior LRA leaders are believed to be based in northeastern CAR, "exploiting the country's current internal instability to regroup." It's also suspected that some former Seleka rebels — who overthrew the government in March 2013 and were ousted from power in January — "may be in collusion with the LRA" and providing them with information on operations by the African troops.

Africa is rising – but much remains to be done – WEF

May 13, 2014/businessdayonline.com

Africa is on track to achieve the 5.5 percent economic growth in 2014 predicted by the International Monetary Fund, but it must create jobs, improve infrastructure, foster intra-African trade, fund the agri-business revolution and find new pockets of industrialization.

This was the consensus of panellists at the closing plenary of the 24th World Economic Forum on Africa.

"I want us to drive quality, inclusive growth that creates jobs," said Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Coordinating Minister for the Economy and Minister of Finance of Nigeria. She pointed to the housing sector and agriculture, which holds huge potential. "Agriculture matters and is three times as effective in reducing poverty. It is important for young people to understand that farming is "cool", she added.

With the right infrastructure, enormous growth can be achieved from agriculture, said Hendrik du Toit, Chief Executive Officer, Investec Asset Management, United Kingdom. "This is where long-term capital is needed if you want to exploit the agri-business revolution," he added. "One of the most momentous changes from a business point of view is that Africa is integrating itself, particularly via China. It is not just an African local market, but it is Africa in the world," he explained.

Agriculture featured prominently at this meeting. The Forum's Grow Africa Initiative partners doubled their commitments for agriculture and food security to \$72 billion. So far, \$970 million has been invested, resulting in 33,000 new jobs and support for 2.6 million small farmers.

Cross-border payment systems; transregional and pan-African infrastructure developments; deeper financial markets across the continent; the free movement of people, capital and goods; and exploiting short-term wins are the most urgent action points, according to the panel.

Claver Gatete, Minister of Finance and Economic Planning of Rwanda, noted that money cannot be raised just from the banking system. "We need to develop and link to capital markets. We have been relying on public money. We must bring in the private sector, which requires structuring investment [deals]," he said.

"It is Africa's turn; Africa is rising and leadership and political will is emerging," said Pravin Gordhan, Minister of Finance of South Africa. "As Africa becomes more connected to Western

economies, there is optimism, but we must be aware of the risks of contagion and we must be aware of how to manage those risks," he said. Gordhan noted that it is important to find "new pockets of industrialization".

According to Julian Roberts, Group Chief Executive, Old Mutual, United Kingdom, "Huge progress has been made but to unlock Africa's potential, much work must be done ... Opportunities exist in each individual country, but the power will come in when the countries are working together."

Africa has a great opportunity to realize its potential, but must put its house in order, said Jin-Yong Cai, Executive Vice-President and Chief Executive Officer, International Finance Corporation (IFC), Washington DC. "We must fill the infrastructure gaps and make economies competitive by establishing competitive industry sectors," he added. To fast-track this process, Africa must ensure a supply of electricity and create a regulatory framework that allows investors to make money. "We need to work out the details and get rid of the perception of risk."

Results from this 24th World Economic Forum on Africa, the first to be held in Nigeria, prove that Africa is rising. Elsie S. Kanza, Director, Head of Africa, World Economic Forum, reported that partnerships forged in Abuja resulted in \$59 billion in an investment boost for the continent, which will create more than 230,000 jobs and support for 500 schools.

Li Keqiang, Premier of the People's Republic of China, unveiled a plan to invest \$42 billion in Africa, including \$10 billion in investment financing; \$30 billion extending credit lines; and an additional \$2 billion into the China-Africa Development Fund. Other commitments were provided by the private sector.

To reinforce solidarity with the government and the kidnapped girls, Nigerian business people pledged \$20 million to the Safe Schools Initiative, which will be equally matched by the government.

The initiative is a partnership involving government, media, civil society, young people, parents and teachers to pilot 500 safe schools in Northern Nigeria.

UN/AFRICA :

UN chief calls for tribunal on S Sudan crimes

13 May 2014 /aljazeera.com

Ban Ki-moon cites UN report showing gross human rights violations and atrocities conducted by both sides in civil war.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has called for a special tribunal for South Sudan, saying there are grounds to believe that crimes against humanity have been committed since widespread violence began five months ago.

The UN chief welcomed on Monday the ceasefire agreement signed by President Salva Kiir last Friday with his former vice president, Riek Machar, and demanded an immediate end to fighting, which flared over the weekend.

He called for "30 days of tranquillity" so farmers can plant crops in peace to avoid famine in the

world's newest nation.

"If the conflict continues, half of South Sudan's 12 million people will either be displaced internally, refugees abroad, starving or dead by the year's end," Ban warned the UN Security Council, the AP news agency reported.

Kiir fired Machar last July and accused him of trying to oust him in a coup in December, which sparked months of ethnic attacks and killings.

Fighting took place between troops loyal to Kiir, an ethnic Dinka, and those loyal to Machar, an ethnic Nuer.

Ban, who visited South Sudan last week, said that since the crisis began, "many thousands of South Sudanese have been killed, atrocities have been committed by both sides, more than a million people have been displaced and nearly five million more need humanitarian assistance."

'Atrocities by all sides'

A UN report last week said gross violations of human rights had been committed "on a massive scale" in South Sudan.

Ban said that report "underscores the level of atrocities committed by all sides" and "a special -or hybrid- tribunal, with international involvement should be considered."

UN human rights chief Navi Pillay said after meetings with Kiir and Machar last week that she had warned them "they will inevitably be the subject of international investigations regarding the extent of their knowledge of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by subordinates under their authority," and their failure to stop it.

Ban said his message to both leaders "was quite clear and loud that we have found crimes against humanity by both sides" and the perpetrators must be held accountable, AP reported.

Francis Deng, South Sudan's UN ambassador, who was Ban's special adviser on the prevention of genocide, told the council his country "has been experiencing one of the worst atrocities the world has seen in the last decades".

He expressed hope that "the specular accomplishment" of Ban and US Secretary of State John Kerry in getting Kiir and Machar to meet face-to-face "will usher South Sudan to a renewed commitment to peace, security, stability and dignity for all its people".

US/AFRICA :

US in aerial search for Nigeria schoolgirls
13 May 2014/aljazeera.com

US flying "manned" missions over Nigeria to track down more than 200 girls abducted by Boko Haram, Pentagon says.

The United States has been flying "manned" missions over Nigeria to track down more than 200

abducted schoolgirls, the Pentagon said, as experts pored over a new video, seeking clues to where they are being held.

"We have shared commercial satellite imagery with the Nigerians and are flying manned ISR (intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance) assets over Nigeria with the government's permission," a senior administration official told AFP news agency on Monday, asking not to be named.

It was not immediately clear what kinds of aircraft were being deployed, nor where they had come from.

A new video released by the Boko Haram group purportedly showing about 130 of the girls was being carefully studied by US experts in the hope it might yield vital clues as to where they are being held.

"Our intelligence experts are combing through every detail of the video for clues that might help ongoing efforts to secure the release of the girls," State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said earlier on Monday.

"We have no reason to question its authenticity," she added of the video.

Negotiations

In the video, the Islamic group's leader Abubakar Shekau said the girls may be released once Nigeria frees all the Boko Haram prisoners it has in custody.

But that proposal has been rejected by the Nigerian government, and Psaki recalled that the US policy is also "to deny kidnapers the benefits of their criminal acts, including ransoms or concessions".

A 30-strong US team arrived on the ground last week in Nigeria to help growing efforts to find the girls aged between 16 to 18, snatched from their boarding school in the northeast of the country on April 14.

The White House said the team included five State Department officials, two strategic communications experts, a civilian security expert and a regional medical support officer.

Also on the manifest are 10 Defense Department planners already in Nigeria, seven extra military advisors from US Africa Command and four FBI officials expert in hostage negotiations.

"We are talking about helping the Nigerian government search an area that is roughly the size of New England," White House spokesman Jay Carney said, referring to the region in the US northeast.

"So this is no small task. But we are certainly bringing resources to bear in our effort to assist the government."

Psaki stressed the Nigerian authorities were "in the lead" during the investigation.

The girls' plight has triggered a storm of outrage across the US, and First Lady Michelle Obama on Saturday for the first time delivered her husband's weekly address to the nation to say they were both "outraged and heartbroken" by the kidnapping.

"This unconscionable act was committed by a terrorist group determined to keep these girls from getting an education - grown men attempting to snuff out the aspirations of young girls," she said.

CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

STAYWELL HOSPITALITY GROUP ENTERS A JOINT VENTURE DEAL WITH AFRICA'S MANTIS COLLECTION

travpr.com/13/05/2014

Australia's StayWell Hospitality Group (SWHG) has teamed up with South African based hospitality group, Mantis Collection to front the growth of its hotel brands throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

(TRAVPR.COM) UAE - May 13th, 2014 - Australia's StayWell Hospitality Group (SWHG) has teamed up with South African based hospitality group, Mantis Collection to front the growth of its hotel brands throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

In a move which will enable StayWell Hospitality Group to obtain more hotels and expand their network even further by establishing its Park Regis and Leisure Inn brands in some of sub-Saharan Africa's key cities, at prime properties to be procured by Mantis.

The key strategic move aligns StayWell with one of the most progressive hospitality groups in sub-Saharan Africa, one which has had over 20 years of experience, having had business dealings with multiple countries throughout the region.

"We have entered an important joint venture partnership to form a hotel management company that will operate all StayWell-branded properties in sub-Saharan Africa," said StayWell CEO and managing director, Simon Wan.

"It provides a vital platform for StayWell's expansion into a region that is accelerating in growth. It is widely recognized that Sub-Saharan Africa is outpacing North Africa in terms of development in the hospitality space which bodes well for the partnership. Using this platform, we will deliver proven hotel management, hospitality service and training skills, and position our new joint venture company to capitalize on lucrative opportunities as the regions hotel market grows and matures," he continued.

Sub-Saharan Africa serves as another interesting region with an incredible amount of potential, and will serve as the ideal launch pad from which to penetrate the region for the privately-owned Australian operator that started in 2006 with five hotels and now runs an international portfolio of 34 properties in Australia, New Zealand, India, Indonesia, Singapore, the Middle East and the UK.

"Sub-Saharan Africa is where India and China were 20 years ago in terms of development and opportunity; the timing of this joint venture between Mantis and StayWell couldn't be better",

commented the Chairman of Mantis, Adrian Gardiner. "The opportunities are abundant, and with our expertise we're looking forward to growing the Park Regis and Leisure Inn brands throughout the region – we already have a few propositions in the pipeline".

The African deal follows StayWell's recent hotel entry into China and its expansion in India, where it now has eight hotel agreements.

In early 2014, StayWell opened its first Indonesian property, Bali's new Park Regis Kuta, and it will soon open its first UK hotel, Park Regis Birmingham.

-ENDS-

EU/AFRICA :

East Africa: EU Gives U.S.\$3 Million for Shipping Security

12 May 2014/East African Business Week (Kampala)

Arusha — The European Union is scaling up its financial support to the EAC to fight maritime crime in the Indian Ocean.

In a deal signed in Arusha last week, the EU is providing euro 2.3 million (about \$3 million) to improve maritime security and create a favourable environment for economic development in the region.

The EU is supporting EAC efforts to fight piracy, drugs and human trafficking, arms smuggling, illegal fishing and maritime pollution. These are considered serious threats that can undermine peace and stability, deplete the natural resources, and increase the cost of doing business in the EAC region.

The EU Ambassador to Tanzania and EAC, Filiberto Sebgondi, said, "Improving maritime security is key to create favourable conditions for economic growth and social development. The Maritime Security (MASE) Programme will support the EAC in taking part in global and regional efforts towards a safer Eastern Africa."

The Maritime Security (MASE) Programme is part of a euro 37.5 million package to four regional organisations of Eastern and Southern Africa.

They include the East African Community (EAC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC).

The programme is expected to strengthen regional capacities to implement the Regional Strategy and Action Plan against Piracy and for Maritime Security adopted in 2010.

"The threat of piracy in the Indian Ocean has gone down considerably - thanks to the concerted efforts of international and regional partners in the last few years. However, other forms of criminal action at sea have become visible and we should not relent on in our efforts to continue strengthening the tools and capability to enforce law and order on the high seas. Today's cooperation agreement is part of this effort," Sebgondi said.

Jean-Claude Nsengiyumva, the Deputy Secretary General in-charge of Finance and Administration, signed on behalf of the EAC.

He commended the EU saying the support is timely and will improve the business climate in the region, leading to reducing poverty levels among the citizens of the EAC member states which now account for nearly 145 million people.

"No development can take place without a secure environment. The EU-EAC Maritime Security (MASE) Programme will emphasise the interdependence between security and economic development and tackles security threats jointly," he said.

Within the framework of the EU financial support the EAC has been entrusted to lead the efforts to strengthen capabilities for arrest, transfer, detention and prosecution of pirates, both at national and regional levels.

In particular, support will be provided to investigative capabilities, for example, via the support to a regional forensic centre. The EAC is also required to coordinate the activities related to prisons reform and capacity building to prosecutors and court staff. Cooperation is also expected from International organizations such as Interpol and UNODC.

Other components of the programme, the pact says, will be run by other regional organizations, be it COMESA, IGAD or OIC. Those notably will focus on implementing the Somalia Inland Action Plan, on disrupting piracy financial networks, and on improving coordination and information exchange between stakeholders.

In doing so, Sebregondi said, the MASE programme will also ensure a coordination with another EU continental programme called "Critical Maritime Routes" and further activities related to maritime information sharing system and networking.

Activities related to financial flows will also have to be coordinated with another project called "Law enforcement in East Africa", which focuses on effective pro-active investigation on piracy organizers and financiers.

According to the EU, the MASE programme falls under an EU comprehensive approach to fighting piracy. It complements other EU specialized missions such as EUCAP, Nestor for capacity building, EUNAVFOR/Atlanta for sea patrolling and the EU military training mission (EUTM) for Somalia.

CHINA/AFRICA :

How China-Africa relations are moving to a new level

May 13, 2014/Author: Dan Steinbock/businessdayonline.com

Recently, many investors have been spooked by China's decelerating growth. In reality, China is developing new foundations for sustained growth, even amid weak global demand, deleveraging, and struggle against corruption.

China's great transition does not mean the decline of Chinese-African cooperation, as some critics have argued. Rather, it is pushing both sides to expand, deepen and diversify collaboration.

China's rebalancing has begun

In 2014, China's growth target will remain around 7-7.5% to ensure adequate employment, whereas the 3.5% inflation target is paving way to further liberalization of energy and resource prices.

China's Premier Li Keqiang has re-characterized the current growth target as "flexible," calling for a "balanced" rather than "prudent" monetary policy. That does not mean a new stimulus package, but new fine-tuning measures and possibly the kind of mini-stimulus measures we have seen in the past. The government is prepared to loosen credit, but only and only if necessary.

In practice, Li hopes to create 10 million new urban jobs this year, while keeping urban unemployment rate at 4.6%. Amid its new urbanization drive, the government completed 5.4 million subsidized houses last year, while 7 million more will follow in 2014. As a result, the government is increasing social financing, which is paving the way for a nascent social model in the mainland and contributing to budget deficit, which the government seeks to keep at 2.1% of the GDP.

During the past year, Premier Li and President Xi Jinping began to push the largest reform agenda in China ever since Deng Xiaoping's great changes in the 1980s. The basic approach is now in place. The broad goal is to recalibrate and reduce the government's role in the economy. In particular, more private capital will be injected into state-owned enterprise sectors.

The core sectors of the ongoing reforms include finance, taxation, state assets, social welfare, land, foreign investment, innovation and good governance. Due to the ongoing industrial transformation, the service sector has surpassed the industrial sector, for the first time. In the past, China was seen as the "world factory," but now it is turning into a global R&D hub.

To overhaul the exchange rate, Beijing recently widened the daily float range of the yuan. In the coming years, it will liberalize the interest rate and fiscal system. The government also hopes to promote the establishment of small and medium-sized banks with private capital and to set up a bank deposit-insurance system.

Last summer, when Li struggled for the launch of the Shanghai Free Trade Zone (FTZ), he had to overcome strong, entrenched interests. But it paid off. The FTZ allows faster financial reforms, which are necessary to support the nascent social model. It is also unleashing comparable FTZs in other major Chinese cities and provinces.

But what do these great shifts mean from the standpoint of China-Africa relations in general and Chinese-Nigerian relations in particular?

Impact on China-Africa relations

After Xi Jinping was inaugurated as China's new president in March 2013, he came to Africa in his first overseas trip as the head of the state. The unprecedented visit reflected the new potential of bilateral relations.

In the Xi era, Beijing has increased its financing to Africa, by issuing more than \$10 billion loans to African countries; i.e., half of the proposed \$20 billion in 2013-15. In the past, China invested mainly in Africa's extractive industries. Now things are changing, however. Currently, Beijing's investment in African energy accounts for just 20% of the total. China is investing more in infrastructure, manufacturing, and agricultural industries.

At the same time, China has become more involved in Africa's security affairs. In late spring 2013, some 170 members from the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Special Force joined the UN peacekeeping mission in Mali. It was the first time China dispatched combat troops to a foreign country under a UN mandate. Beijing also engaged in open intervention in the South Sudan conflict through direct mediation.

China has also continued naval escort missions in the Gulf of Aden, while boosting security cooperation with the Djibouti government. Overall, these efforts are reflected in China's growing financial and security contribution to the African Union.

China's approach to Africa is driven by two main considerations. Historically, the bilateral relations stand on the legacy of Western colonialism, cooperation in the postwar decolonization era ever since Zhou Enlai's famous 10-country tour in Africa in the early 1960s, and China's subsequent support for anti-apartheid and liberation movements. Economically, bilateral cooperation has increased dramatically since the 1980s. In 1980, the bilateral trade volume was barely \$1 million. By 2000, it was \$10 billion; and a decade later, \$114 billion. Last year, it exceeded \$200 billion.

A year ago, I argued that China-Africa relations may be heading to a new level, despite occasional friction. After President Xi's first year, this conclusion seems valid. Today, we also have a clearer picture about the evolving China-Africa and Chinese-Nigerian relations.

Nigeria's role in China-Africa relations

In economic cooperation, the new Chinese leaders are promoting broader and deeper relations with Africa. Beijing's primary interest is no longer African energy. Rather, China seeks to expand and diversify its economic cooperation, trade and investment with Africa, especially in manufacturing industries.

On the security side, China seeks not only to protect its increasing economic stakes in Africa, but also to broaden and deepen its relations with African countries. In this scenario, Nigeria could play an increasing role.

First, scale matters. Nigeria has shown strong economic performance, received the largest portfolio inflows in Sub-Saharan Africa, while attracting huge amounts of foreign direct investment. More importantly, Nigeria's recent rebasing made it the largest economy in the region, raising the size of the GDP by a whopping 75%. With its almost 170 million people, it is morphing into an attractive marketplace.

Second, the rise in shale gas and oil has resulted in an increase in the US domestic energy production, which is likely to lead to self-sufficiency the turn of the 2020s. The US energy boom may lower energy prices, which would benefit oil importers while reducing the revenues of oil exporters, including Nigeria.

Between 2008 and 2012, Nigeria's oil exports to US more than halved from 46% to 19% of total oil exports. At the same time, the comparable figure with China grew 27-fold; from 0.2% to 5.3%. As China's most energy-intensive phase of development is peaking, Beijing is increasingly looking for energy sources outside Asia seeking to diversify its suppliers.

In the US-China-Nigeria triangle, the emerging status quo would not be a win-lose situation. While Nigeria's role as an oil exporter to the US is on decline, its attractive markets are of increasing interest to both US and Chinese companies.

Thirdly, improving competitiveness and productivity to generate inclusive growth in Nigeria will require wide-ranging structural reforms. In the coming years, Nigeria's most critical challenge is to deploy oil revenues to industrialize its economy and diversify its industrial structure. And it is precisely this challenge in which it could obtain great support from Chinese investment, particularly in building manufacturing industries.

Nigeria could use Chinese investment to complete its industrialization drive, but it would also serve to upgrade China's position in the global production networks while transferring its cost-efficient industries to Africa.

The stars are aligned for upgraded China-Nigeria relations. The challenge is to develop the right policies to manage the cooperation in the near term, amid Nigeria's impending elections, China's ongoing reforms, and fragile global landscape.

Dan Steinbock

INDIA/AFRICA :

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

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