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BURUNDI :

RWANDA :

RDC CONGO :

UGANDA :

As HIV rises, Uganda activist tries to stop AIDS

By RODNEY MUHUMUZA Associated Press/01/12/2014

KAMPALA, Uganda • A reformed thief and onetime drug peddler, Hood Katende is now an anti-AIDS activist respected in his Kampala slum. He urges young men to wear condoms if they can't avoid premarital sex and encourages teenage girls to reject the sexual advances of older men with money.

“At night you find boys waiting for girls to rape, and I go to them and I try to talk to them not to do it,” said the dreadlocked 26-year-old. “I used to be with them, smoking weed the whole day in the ghetto and moving around at night. I was a member of a gang, but now they see that I have changed day and night.”

As World AIDS Day is marked today, Katende is trying to stem a troubling resurgence in Uganda of HIV, which now infects more than 500 young women between the ages of 15 and 24 each week, according to the Uganda AIDS Commission. Between 2007 and 2013 the number of Ugandans infected with HIV rose from 1.2 million to 1.6 million, according to Uganda's Ministry of Health.

Uganda's HIV prevalence rate now stands at 7.4 percent, up from about 6 percent a decade ago, raising concerns among AIDS activists who want President Yoweri Museveni's government to step up the old prevention campaigns that in the 1990s made Uganda a global leader in controlling the spread of HIV. The deteriorating situation is also being watched by Western donors who contribute substantially toward the cost of AIDS treatment for poor Ugandans.

More than 250,000 Ugandans have reliable access to AIDS treatment through the U.S. government.

Ugandan researchers say the virus has been spreading particularly fast among married couples, fueled by the phenomenon of “side dishes,” the popular term here for secret lovers or mistresses. Many of those mistresses tend to be vulnerable teenagers who are targeted by wealthy, but often HIV-infected, men.

For Katende, the activist, those most in danger are girls in Kampala's Kamwokya slum who have to scavenge for everything, including food and clothing. Many girls he knows well have been repeatedly raped, and others have sought the services of crude abortionists because of unwanted pregnancies, he says.

Katende walks through his neighborhood, observing quirks of behavior among teenagers with the curious intensity of a researcher.

Katende is now widely seen as a “change agent” within his neighborhood because of his activism, and he is paid to perform at functions sponsored by the U.N. children's agency, raucous events where singers on a moving truck belt out rap to encourage voluntary HIV testing. Last year Katende led an event in which hundreds of men were circumcised, a procedure research has shown can reduce HIV transmission rates.

Lawrence Mukiibi, the youth coordinator of Treasure Life Center, a group whose recording studio is operated by Katende and other artists, said activists with street credibility and a compelling story are needed to reach out to young people in a community where violent crime and poverty leave many exposed to HIV. The group, which is funded by local and foreign donors, is increasingly focusing on what it calls “edutainment,” public activities like dramas through which young people can be enlightened as well as entertained about reproductive health.

“Infections are going back up again, and we need to get back to the drawing board as young people

and see what relevant techniques we could use if we are going to a school outreach," Mukiibi said. "That's the reason why we are working with (Katende). If you don't integrate music, if you don't integrate drama into the message you are trying to carry out forward, some people may not realize how grave the situation is."

Uganda cannot dictate on Zziwa case - minister

Date: Dec 01, 2014/newvision/By Mary Karugaba

Uganda as a state cannot direct the East African Legislative Assembly on the suspended Speaker Margaret Zziwa, the Minister of East Africa Community Affairs Shem Bageine has said.

Quoting the East African Community Treaty, Bageine said the Assembly is independent and cannot be directed on any matter by any member state.

Speaking on phone, Bageine said, any problem in the assembly is supposed to be resolved by the Assembly itself using the rules of procedures or taken to the East African Court of Justice for interpretation.

"People should understand the working of the community. This is not a Uganda matter and therefore we cannot direct the Assembly on what to do. As an independent organ of the community, they are mechanisms on how issues are resolved using the rules of procedure," he said.

"Imagine if each state directed the assembly on issues that affects it, how would it operate? Whereas we can directly participate in Bills, questions, we cannot direct on the suspension of the Speaker," he added.

Last week, EALA Members of Parliament passed a resolution to suspend Zziwa, for 21 days pending investigations into her conduct. she is accused of abuse of office, incompetence and intimidation.

The resolution was arrived at during a special sitting presided over by Chris Opoka-Okumu, a Ugandan, which also saw the committee on legal affairs called upon to handle the investigations.

32 of the 44 EALA members, sponsored the motion for suspension of Zziwa, which is more the required two-thirds.

But Zziwa protested the suspension saying it was illegal. "I do not accept what was done. It was outside the law," Zziwa said last week.

Contacted again yesterday, Zziwa said, "I am thinking of legal redress on the matter. I am going to consult different Attorney Generals on the matter and then seek legal redress," she commented.

Meanwhile the East African Community Heads of State summit which had been scheduled to take place yesterday in Nairobi was postponed to next year.

Edith Mwanje, the Permanent secretary ministry of East Africa Community Affairs said the summit was postponed because the Tanzanian Head of State Jakaya Kikwete was unwell. "Kenya is supposed to hand over the chairmanship to Tanzania. But since the Head of state was not around, the secretariat decided to postpone the summit to another date most probably early next year," Mwanje said.

The summit was scheduled to consider among others; Annual Report of the Council of Ministers for

the period December 2013 to November 2014, report of selected priority matters.

Other issues on the agenda were negotiations for the Admission of the Republic of South Sudan into the EAC, verification of the application of Somalia to join the Community, initiation of a Constitution-making process and a road map for the EAC Political Federation and progress towards the establishment of a one area telephone network for East Africa.

Uganda Leads Spain in Tourism Poll

By Alon Mwesigwa/The Observer (Kampala)/30 November 2014

Uganda is leading Spain by a wide percentage in an ongoing online opinion poll over which of the two countries is a favourite destination for tourists.

By Saturday, the poll conducted on the Guardian, UK's website, Uganda had polled 79 per cent against Spain's 21 per cent.

The poll was prompted after President Yoweri Museveni hinted on the fact that Uganda was better than most European countries, including Spain, in what it offered to tourists.

"The biggest problem with tourism is poor promotion," Museveni said. "In Europe, people go to the Mediterranean coast. I visited Spain; it is very hot and humid in summer. I think Uganda would be a better destination than some of those destinations."

Museveni said Uganda was a "good place on the globe where you go and have a nice life."

It is not the first time that Spain and Uganda have taunted each other. In 2012, Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy kicked off a storm when he sent a text message to his finance minister, compelling him to stand firm in the quest of better terms amidst the bailout package negotiations, reminding him that

"We're the number four power in Europe. Spain is not Uganda."

The remark left many Ugandans incensed, with some saying that Uganda enjoyed better Gross Domestic Growth figures than Spain.

Last week, the Guardian's website decided to put the contest to travellers, asking a simple question:

"Uganda or Spain: where would you prefer to go on holiday?"

Many people who commented on the poll said while Uganda was a good destination, its stance against gays had tainted the country's image.

"I'd probably go to Uganda if they changed their policies toward LGBT people," said one of the readers.

In 2012, a reputable online tour magazine, Lonely Planet, ranked Uganda number one among the top ten countries to visit.

The journal said: "After all, this is the source of the river Nile - that mythical place explorers sought since Roman times. It's also where savannah meets the vast lakes of East Africa, and where snow-capped mountains bear down on sprawling jungles."

However, it also warned tourists of the country that is 'so homophobic' and that it had tough laws against gays.

Last year, tourism became Uganda's biggest export earner after it fetched \$1.4bn in financial year 2013/2014, up from \$1.1bn the year before, according to Bank of Uganda. The sector surpassed diaspora remittances and coffee.

Kenyan, Ugandan governments reach agreement to end traders' boycott

BY Patrick Beja/standardmedia.co.ke/Monday, December 1st 2014

A two-week transit cargo clearance boycott at the Port of Mombasa has threatened to strain good relations between Kenya and Uganda. Ugandan traders had from November 14 boycotted clearing their cargo to protest the introduction of pre-pay taxes by Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) without consultation. Uganda bound cargo accounts for over 70 per cent of total transit goods through the Port of Mombasa and most of that cargo has been lying at the facility for the last two weeks. Through the Kampala City Traders Association, the traders had last Thursday issued a two-week ultimatum to KRA to rescind its decision or they revert to the Port of Dar es Salaam or alternatively put pressure on the Ugandan Government to block Kenyan goods from accessing the country's market. Ugandan newspapers quoted the association chairman Everest Kayondo protesting against the decision by KRA seen as going against the spirit of East Africa integration and the Single Customs Territory. Speaking in Mombasa yesterday, the traders said President Yoweri Museveni was personally concerned about the pre-pay tax move that led to the stand-off. Yesterday, KRA Assistant Commissioner for Marketing and Communications in the Southern Region Fatma Yusuf said the matter was resolved last Friday following a meeting of customs chiefs from Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi in Bujumbura. However, she did not elaborate on the deal arrived at. See Also: KCB takes land suit to Supreme Court storage charges "We are going to issue a comprehensive statement tomorrow (today)," Ms Yusuf said. Ugandan clearing and forwarding agent William Kidima, who is based in Mombasa, said the stand-off has resulted in huge costs since cargo stuck at the port attracted storage charges. He said even trucks which were loaded could not be allowed to leave the port because of the dispute and hence attracted charges since they are only allowed to load for six hours.

Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) Public Relations Manager Bernard Osero said there was no congestion yet although any overstretched delay in cargo off-take constrains the fluidity of operations at the port terminal as there was incoming consignment everyday.

SOUTH AFRICA :

South Africa to mark world AIDS day

By Sapa/déc. 01, 2014

South Africa, which continues to have the highest prevalence of HIV/AIDS infection in the world, will mark World Aids Day on Monday with a variety of activities including a reunion of activists.

"The reunion, hosted in Johannesburg, will involve many individuals who had played a key role in our struggles for better health and treatment," said civil rights organisation the Treatment Action Campaign.

Among those attending would be Constitutional Court Judge Edwin Cameron, former health minister Barbara Hogan, struggle icon Ahmed Kathrada, social justice activist Jay Naidoo and performer Pieter Dirk-Uys.

Earlier this month, the organisation launched a fundraising campaign, saying it was in financial difficulty, and was hoping to raise R10 million by Monday.

Last Tuesday, the organisation said it had thus far raised nearly R1.5 million.

The civil rights organisation said it would also be celebrating the 10 year anniversary of Antiretroviral (ARV) treatment in the country.

The SA National Aids Council said the focus on World Aids Day in South Africa this year would be on "zero stigma" and zero discrimination"; as well as working towards "zero new HIV infections and zero AIDS-related deaths".

Over the weekend, Ramneek Ahluwalia, programme director for HEAIDS, a health programme directed at tertiary institutions, urged South Africans "not to become complacent.

"It is critical that we turn off the tap of new infections," said Ahluwalia in a statement.

"Every day about a thousand South Africans -- most of them young women -get infected with HIV."

Meanwhile, the City of Cape Town, said more men needed to be tested, "especially since unprotected sex remains a very real concern".

Ahead of the day, the National Union of Mineworkers spokesman Livhuwani Mammburu said mineworkers remained "particularly vulnerable" to the spread of HIV.

World Aids Day is commemorated across the globe every December 1 in a bid to highlight awareness of the disease, show support for those living with it and remember those who have died from the illness.

South Africa's Illovo Sugar Profit Declines on Weaker Prices

By Kevin Crowley /bloomberg.com/December 01, 2014

Illovo Sugar Ltd. (ILV), South Africa's second-biggest producer of the sweetener by market value, said profit declined 10 percent as a glut of supply globally pushed down prices and bad weather affected output.

Net income declined to 789 million rand (\$71 million) in the six months to Sept. 30 from 878 million rand a year earlier, the Mount Edgecombe, South Africa-based company said today in a statement.

"We have had a mixed season so far with lower sugar prices across our regional and export markets, variable weather conditions and the effects of industrial action," said Managing Director Gavin Dalgleish in the statement.

The average sugar price of about 17 U.S. cents a pound in the period is half the commodity's 15-year peak of about 35 cents a pound in 2011. Four years ago, countries including Brazil and Australia started investing heavily in production, leading to a global surplus. That glut is likely to

reverse over the next year as current prices are “well below the cost of production of most international sugar producers,” Illovo said.

Import tariffs imposed by the South African government this year will lower Illovo’s exposure to the global sugar price, the company said.

Bad weather also affected the company’s profit, with the total crop harvested down 8.5 percent to 4.3 million metric tons in the six-month period. South Africa, the biggest-producing country out of six where Illovo operates, received late summer rainfall following a dry winter, it said.

London-based Associated British Foods Plc (ABF), owner of the Primark budget-clothing chain, holds 51 percent of Illovo’s stock, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. Illovo declined 1.5 percent to 26.59 rand by 9:14 a.m. in Johannesburg.

TANZANIA :

Tanzania: In Unison, Bunge Wants Action

Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)/29 November 2014

Dodoma — IN an unprecedented move, the Speaker of the National Assembly, Ms Anne Makinda on Friday called off Parliament pending consultations after a fierce debate in the House on the Escrow account saga.

MPs were debating on the recommendations tabled by Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee (PAC) on the transaction until around 11 pm but failed to reach a consensus on the matter.

Premier Mizengo Pinda was expected to adjourn Parliament after the debate by legislators last evening but that was not to be.

However, in a rare show of non-partisan unity, both ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) and opposition Members of Parliament (MPs) recommended punitive action against all those to be found culpable in the over 300bn/- Escrow account scandal.

The legislators last night called on various security agencies such as the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) and Directorate of Criminal Investigation (DCI) to take immediate action against all those involved to answer charges of anti-money laundering, tax evasion and economic sabotage.

Those recommended by the lawmakers to be taken to task include individuals and institutions. The saga revolves around funds held in an escrow account opened jointly by state-run power utility Tanzania Electric Supply Company (Tanesco) and Independent Power Tanzania Limited (IPTL), which were later paid to the current IPTL owner, Pan African Power Solutions Tanzania Limited (PAP) in 2013.

Contributing to PAC which tabled its report on the matter in the National Assembly, MPs also resolved that while they had no qualms with VIP Engineering and Marketing Limited, a former IPTL share holder, for selling its stake in the company but wanted everyone who benefitted from the funds should return the money.

The legislators had earlier given varied opinions on the matter. Minister of State in the President's Office (Special Duties), Prof Mark Mwandosya said money that is kept at BoT is always public money and can never be private money.

Bunge also resolved that since the money paid to various individuals came from the Escrow account through PAP, who has been established as not being the legitimate owner of IPTL, then the transaction should be viewed as corrupt.

They proposed that disciplinary and legal action should be taken against political leaders who benefitted from funds. The MPs also said that the Escrow account saga also involved money laundering activities as hinted by PCCB and recommended that the Bank of Tanzania (BoT) to list the financial institutions involved in transferring the funds as banks of money laundering concern.

Parliament also asked the government to take over IPTL operations or hand them to another competent entity.

Tanzania: Observe Business Laws, Manufacturers Told

By Ashery Mkama/Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)/29 November 2014

MANUFACTURERS have been called to observe business laws and principles to provide consumers confidence on the quality of goods, thus assuring them sustainable business and market.

Fair Competition Commission Director General, Dr Frederick Ringo, made his remarks in Dar es Salaam yesterday after officiating a seminar to Kariakoo business community over competition issues, consumer advocacy and control of counterfeit goods.

He said the government for its part has an obligation to protect and provide service to customers as well as the interests of businessmen to ensure that the industry becomes sustainable and efficient in its operation.

"The purpose of setting performance management of the market economy will not prevent doing business, but it ensures that the same conditions are mostly shaped in commercial operation in order to provide opportunities for small entrepreneurs to benefit from available opportunities without affect competition," he said.

Dr Ringo urged other governmental agencies to work closely with Tanzanian business community to improve efficiency of the business environment in the country and enable businessmen to reach EAC, COMESA and SADC markets.

"Those markets include the East Africa, COMESA and SADC which together plan to form a Tripartite Common Market Area in order to boost interaction of trade among them.

"If you learn better about these markets, Tanzania could be like 'Dubai of East and Central Africa' due to favourable geographic caring environment," Dr Ringo told more than 50 business people.

He advised that in order to be assured of sustainable business, they should review and determine that they are all victims of challenges in doing bad in the market.

"You all know much about counterfeits products which bring instability in our economy and the public in general and insisting that the problem needs a joint cooperation to all stakeholders," Dr Ringo explained.

The Fair Competition Commission (FCC) is an independent government body established under the Fair Competition Act, 2003 (No. 8 of 2003), to promote and protect effective competition in trade and commerce and to protect consumers from unfair and misleading market conduct.

Tanzania mining giant changes name

busiweek.com/By Andrew Zablon/Sunday, November 30th, 2014

MWANZA, Tanzania – African Barrick Gold (ABG), Tanzania’s biggest mining investor, officially changed its name to Acacia Mining Plc recently.

According to Bradley Gordon, ABG Chief Executive his company has been seeking to change the name, “to reflect the new ABG culture and strategic direction since the beginning of the year,” he said.

Gordon said the company’s ambition is that through the adoption of a new name, all the people and external stakeholders recognize and become aligned with the new corporate identity.

Already Africa Barrick Gold (ABG) has shifted its headquarters from Johannesburg to Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. ABG says relocation aims at improving operations and encourage of more local expertise. Johannesburg will remain as ABG sub-office.

In Tanzania, ABG operates three major mines of Buzwagi, North Mara and Bulyanhulu, a world-class deposit. All the three major mines located in the Lake Victoria Zone.

Tanzania’s Minister for Energy and Minerals Prof. Sospeter Muhongo confirmed to East African Business Week that ABG has shifted its headquarters from Johannesburg to Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Muhongo said ABG has shifted their headquarters from Johannesburg to Dar es Salaam to ease company’s operations.

According to Gordon the decision to change the name has not been taken lightly as it has some complications and has taken a long time to choose a name that not only appropriately reflects company’s ambitions, but is available for the company to use. The changes need the approval of the ABG shareholders and was approved on November 27, this year. “The Acacia tree is a tree familiar to many and is seen as an iconic part of the African landscape, something we are also aiming to be,” said Gordon.

Gordon is optimistic that with the new approach, the company will create a successful and sustainable business in Tanzania that could expand into other African countries, much like the tree.

“I believe the relevance is stronger than that though -the Acacia tree is hardy and resilient and thrives in tough environments,” he said.

The new name would be launched in December, 2014. The company remains an independent miner listed on both the London Stock Exchange and the Dar es Salaam Stock Exchange. Signs bearing the name ‘African Barrick Gold’, or ‘Barrick Gold’ would now be removed from walls and offices and replaced with Acacia. This would be followed by a replacement of all signs, templates and email addresses and PPE would follow.

Tanzania: Why 16 Days of Activism Against GBV Must Make Impact

By Deus Ngowi/Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)/1 December 2014

Moshi — TOWARDS the end of last month activists started the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence (GBV) that, according to UN plans run from November 25 to December 10.

The campaign provides a rallying point for the Government, Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and other stakeholders to mount events aimed at raising awareness, influencing behaviour change and securing high level political commitment to end gender violence.

In that spell, there are key dates, to start with, November 25 is an International Day of No Violence Against Women, December 1 is a World Aids Day, December 3 is an International Day for the Disabled while the last day of the campaign is Human Rights Day.

This year Kilimanjaro hosts the campaign for the Northern Zone regions - Arusha, Manyara and Tanga. The campaign started amid horrifying cases in GBV, most of those affected being women, children and the disabled.

At national level, the campaign is coordinated by Women in Law and Development (WiLDAF) while at zonal level, it was coordinated by Kilimanjaro Women Information Exchange and Consultancy Organization (Kwieco).

Some of the organizing committee members, Mr Hillary Tesha and Regional Head of Gender Desk, Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Grace Lyimo say this year campaign that goes by a theme; 'Open up, Disclose Sexual Violence for Public Health' sees various topics and incidents discussed, aimed to stop GBV.

Mr Tesha says the situation in Kilimanjaro is not good in as far as GBV acts are concerned, because from January to November this year 123 people were raped, 31 molested, 46 injured, 17 pupils eloped while 127 children also eloped. What is the cause of these acts?

Mr Tesha and his committee think that extreme poverty, due to the fact that many women have not been able to be part of formal system of labour and resource ownership.

Another reason is excessive use of illegal narcotic drugs as well as alcohol, noting that with introduction of many types of spirits and konyagi in the name of 'kiroba' some people have made it the order of the day to consume them, leading to GBV, especially at homes.

Mr Tesha who works with Kwieco says development information technology and social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram and others have facilitated violence system as it is easier to communicate, albeit in bad faith.

Development of new social networks has brought in new form of GBV that involves posting of photos online to humiliate one gender against the other. He thanks Government for its efforts in the war against GBV, specifically Ministry of Health and Social Welfare for formulating a policy guideline in Health Sector in order to overcome challenges in the war.

However, he implores Police Force to strengthen gender desks that have been introduced in different police stations, increase human resources and have from time to time training to those manning the desks as well as make sure they get enough budget.

"May the Government through its respective organs control the uncalled for increase of types of liquor that have no required standards that increase violence in the society. We would urge respective organs also to control superfluous use of technological devices in media such as blogs and other social networks," says Mr Tesha.

ASP Grace Lyimo says some steps have been taken to end gender-based violence, some being that at every Government hospital in all six districts of Kilimanjaro region there are special doctors attending victims of such incidents so as to ensure justice is served.

The staff officer says that stakeholders in the region have initiated a pilot project in Hai district, putting in place a one-stop centre that houses a doctor, a police officer and a community development officer so as to ease for victims troubles of moving from one place to another after being subjected to ill-fated incidents.

The 16 days campaign in Northern Zone involves other organizations such as Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP), The Tanzania Police Female Network (TPF-Net), Network Against Female Genital Mutilation (Nafgem), Women Against Aids in Kilimanjaro (Kiwakukki), Amani Centre for Street Children, Medicos del Mundo, Pamoja Tunaweza, Mawenzi Regional Referral Hospital and Moshi Municipal Council.

Launching of the campaign was very colourful, bringing together people of all walks of life, men and women, young and the old who met with common purpose. Police Brass Band unveiled the occasion on November 25 by leading procession from Kwieco Headquarters to Manyema Grounds, with bodaboda riders joined with others in uniforms, carrying banners with different messages against GBV.

Regional Medical Officer (RMO), Dr Mtumwa Mwako says she is impressed by the way private sector partners with the Government institutions in fighting GBV, expressing her hope that a day will come when all such acts will be history. The 16 days activism is an international campaign that started in protest of murder of Mirabel sisters in Dominican Republic way back in 1960.

They were opposing the dictatorial regime of a military strongman Rafael Trujillo who was assassinated a year later. Northern Zone has not been exceptional to such acts, because people, especially women and children, have been subjected to GBV, some of which lead to their demise.

The Head of Tusonge Community Development Organisation, Ms Agnatha Rutazaa speaking at her capacity as Kilimanjaro regional representative in the campaign, says the region has witnessed beatings, molestation of school children, women and that even married couples forcing others in molestation.

She says there is an incident in which a man discharged acid to his wife's genitals on the grounds that she had sexual relationship with another man, while in fact she was watering tomatoes in the garden.

Ms Rutazaa says there are some married couples who live without any communication between them, sometimes engaging in dangerous relationship with other people and do not provide for their families' needs.

She says a research carried in Moshi Municipality, with a random sampling of 1,835 as a targeted number, from 15 wards and 18 households. It shows that there are children who enter in prostitution at the age of 14 years.

There was a shock revelation that outcome of the research shows that 50.7% of the respondents engage in extramarital relationships. Ms Rutazaa says the research revealed that 23% of parents have children out of wedlock, an increased sense of lack of communication between partners to the detriment of children.

The research further showed that 10.9% of women have been subjected to sexual activities by partners without their consent, while there are many cases of family abandonment once a disabled child is born.

The activist says that 15.6% of wives were married forcefully to their current husbands, while 37.5% of women have been subjected to beatings with severe injuries. She says the reasons behind the GBV are outdated culture, superstitious beliefs, poverty, Aids/Hiv and drunkenness.

Apart from other reasons mentioned as reasons behind GBV acts, there are political clashes, tribal misunderstandings, lack of employment and blunt policies that do not provide for basic needs to marginalized groups that have led to stress, insecurity, unsafe abortions, deaths of children and even of the victims.

Ms Rutazaa says there is little or no law enforcement in regard to wife beatings, as that has been an order of the day to some people, while Marriage Act 1971 restricts a partner from beating their fellow.

She says the trend is horrifying in beatings, molestation of school children, mistreatment of house girls that leads them to retaliate by penalizing young children. Manyara representative, Ms Mwadawa Ally hits out on politicians and police over an increase of GBV acts as well as hatred between farmers and pastoralists, saying there is no political will.

She urges lawmakers and Government leaders to do more in order to curb the acts that are on the rise despite efforts taken by NGOs. She says there was political and personal tricks employed in fuelling crisis that has led to death of several people in the region.

She alleges that there is limited cooperation given to activists from Police Gender Desk in Manyara. She says the situation is made worse by lack of awareness among the victims, in spite of the fact that they have been educating the public on GBV issues, reaching out to house girls, supply of leaflets, running radio programmes and bringing together victims to form entrepreneurship groups.

Ms Ally says they cooperate with Hanang' Women Counselling Development Association (Hawocoda) and Kiteto Women Counselling Association (Kiwocoa) and says she is happy with the way the campaign is carried out at zonal level.

Tanga representative, Ms Evelyn Matzunguluka says the region suffers from GBV due to moral decay, lack of respect, love and human being values that has led to beatings, rapes, molestation as well as abandonment of children, bringing the number of such acts to 112 this year in the region.

The sad truth is that one in three women experience gender-based violence in her lifetime. The violence knows no class, religious, or racial boundaries. And it comes at a terrible cost - not only for a woman or a girl, but for families, communities, and entire countries.

Preventing GBV is the only way to achieve a future of peace, stability, and prosperity. End of the campaign should change the situation positively and a review should be conducted to establish how helpful the campaign has been since its establishment.

KENYA :

Blast rocks Kenyan market

December 1 2014/Reuters

Isiolo, Kenya - An improvised explosive device wounded one person on Sunday in a market in the eastern Kenyan town of Garissa, close to the border with Somalia, police said.

The attack comes amid heightened tensions across Kenya.

Last Saturday, suspected al-Shabaab militants from Somalia killed at least 28 people in northern Kenya's Mandera County after ambushing a passenger bus.

Kenya has been targeting al-Shabaab positions in Somalia as the country pursues the militants who have carried out the bus attack. Kenya first sent troops into Somalia in October 2011.

Police Commander Musa Yego told Reuters by phone that local intelligence officials believed al-Shabaab militants had staged the attack in Garissa.

He said the police force was on "high alert".

Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility last year for an attack on Nairobi's Westgate shopping mall in which at least 67 people were killed, and for attacks in the Lamu region in June and July in which at least 65 people died.

The group, whose leader Ahmed Abdi Godane was killed in September, has vowed to drive Kenyan and other African Union peacekeeping troops out of Somalia. - Reuters

Kenya: Fear, Stigma and Graft Mar HIV Response

The Star (Nairobi)/1 December 2014

TODAY is World Aids Day. The worldwide focus on Ebola has placed Aids on the back burner, and yet Kenya has the world's fourth highest Aids epidemic, with 1.6 million people living with HIV in this country

Huge steps have been made in the measures aimed at a national HIV response in Kenya over the past decade, but much remains to be done. Among the success stories is that of antiretroviral treatment (ART); between 2003-2013, it grew from 6,000 Kenyans to more than 600,000.

Among the horror stories are the corruption and bad governance factors that have seen a number of major donors delay, or refrain from, investing in desperately needed mass treatment, care and support programmes.

The number of Kenyans who still do not know their HIV status has been described by AVERT, an international HIV and Aids charity based in the UK that has worldwide outreach, as "unacceptable".

The cost factor is also daunting. AVERT reckons that, "The cost of the HIV response in Kenya is

expected to increase by 114 per cent between 2010 and 2020 . . . a funding gap of \$1.75 billion".

Stigma and discrimination, even among families and health workers, make too many Kenyans living with HIV suffer in secrecy and go to an early grave.

Kenyans have a great deal of work ahead of them in combating Aids on multiple fronts.

Quote of the day: "I have never yet met a healthy person who worried very much about his health, or a really good person who worried much about his own soul." -- Scottish scientist John BS Haldane died on December 1, 1964

Kenya: Digital switchover deadline confirmed

01 December 2014 /itwebafrica.com

As of midnight on December 31 analogue TVs in Nairobi will no longer work.

In a recent development regarding the country's migration to digital, ICT authorities in Kenya have confirmed the deadline for analogue signal switch-off.

The Star in the East African country reports that the Nation Media Group, Royal Media Services and Standard Group have received licenses to distribute their own digital television signals.

Francis Wangusi, director general of the Communications Authority of Kenya (CAK), has been quoted as saying the migration to a digital signal will be completed over three phases, the first beginning in December, the second in February 2015 and the third in March.

Each phase will involve specific areas, with Nairobi the first in line for the switch-over.

"The authority has fully liberalised the supply of set top boxes and as a result over 60 vendors have been licensed to retail the devices," The Star writes.

Set Top Boxes are required to convert analogue signal to digital.

The ITU (International Telecommunications Union) has set June 2015 as the global deadline for digital migration.

ANGOLA :

AU/AFRICA :

Early trials of Ebola Vaccine make people hopeful

By Peter Alexander/frontlinedesk.com/November 30, 2014

An experimental Ebola vaccine made by GlaxoSmithKline caused no serious side effects and produced an immune response in all 20 healthy volunteers who received it in an early-stage clinical

trial, scientists reported on Wednesday in the New England Journal of Medicine.

The trial, which began on September 2 and will monitor the volunteers for 48 weeks, is primarily aimed at assessing how safe the vaccine is. But the immune response offered hope that it would also be effective.

“The safety profile is encouraging, as is the finding that the higher dose of vaccine induced an immune response quite comparable to that which has completely protected (lab) animals from Ebola,” said Dr Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), which is conducting the trial in Bethesda, Maryland.

The intramuscular vaccine was developed at NIAID and Okairo, a biotechnology company acquired by GlaxoSmithKline. It contains genetic material from two Ebola strains, Zaire, responsible for the current outbreak in West Africa, and Sudan, but no virus, so it cannot cause the disease.

Because it is unethical to expose volunteers to Ebola, researchers assess the effectiveness of candidate vaccines by whether they trigger production of anti-Ebola antibodies and immune-system T cells.

The trial enrolled volunteers ages 18 to 50. Half received a lower dose and half a higher dose. All 20 developed anti-Ebola antibodies within four weeks, with those on the higher dose producing more.

Dose also affected production of T cells; seven of 10 people on the high dose produced one crucial kind of T cell, but only two on the low dose did. The higher the dose required to trigger immunity, the more challenging and expensive it will be to produce large quantities of vaccine, manufacturers say.

Dr Daniel Bausch of Tulane University, who wrote an accompanying commentary, called the results promising but cautioned that there are many more challenges ahead before the vaccine’s safety and efficacy are established.

Egypte : la grande désillusion presque 4 ans après la révolution
déc 1, 2014/afriqueinside.com

Près de quatre ans après le début de la révolution en Egypte, la fatalité règne. Entre la présidence autoritaire d’Abdel Fatah al-Sissi et la libération prochaine d’Hosni Moubarak, le pays semble avoir fait un bond en arrière.

L’Egypte a décidément renoué avec le passé si l’on en juge par la situation actuelle. Au Caire on est bien loin de la Révolution d’il y a presque quatre ans et qui avait apporté un vent d’espoir que le pays n’avait pas connu depuis des décennies. C’est la fatalité qui règne désormais. Alors que l’ancien président déchu Hosni Moubarak, qui a régné d’une main de fer pendant près de trente années a été innocenté par la justice, 78 adolescent qui manifestaient ont, eux, été condamnés à de la prison. Un coup de boutoir supplémentaire du régime contre les droits de l’Homme.

L’ancien chef de l’Etat âgé aujourd’hui de 86 ans, était jugé pour son rôle dans la répression des manifestations de début 2011 qui ont mis fin à son règne et qui ont officiellement provoqué la mort de 846 personnes. Dans les faits néanmoins, certains experts s’accordent à dire que 1 000 à 2 000 Egyptiens auraient perdu la vie à cette période. Plus de 9 000 manifestants avaient été blessés et

près de 12 000 emprisonnés dont certains torturés. Hosni Moubarak qui a été lavé des accusations de complicité de meurtre devrait très probablement bénéficier d'une libération anticipée dans les prochaines semaines. Il était jusqu'alors en détention dans un hôpital militaire du Caire après une condamnation à trois ans de prison.

Le régime est de plus en plus autoritaire

La libération prochaine de Moubarak et l'emprisonnement sans réserves de militants des droits de l'Homme ou de manifestants illustrent très bien le durcissement du régime. Déjà lors de sa prise de pouvoir après la chute de Mohamed Morsi, seul président élu démocratiquement, le maréchal al-Sissi avait ordonné à la police de tirer à balles réelles sur les manifestants accusés de faire partie de la confrérie des Frères musulmans, placée depuis sur la liste des organisations terroristes. Depuis, l'appartenance au parti de l'ancien et éphémère chef de l'Etat est devenue une accusation récurrente pour permettre d'emprisonner les opposants.

La situation sécuritaire très dégradée a également, et paradoxalement, permis au pouvoir d'instaurer toute une série de lois d'exception qui permettent très facilement de faire arrêter et emprisonner les citoyens. Le groupe terroriste le plus actif en Egypte, Ansar Beït al-Maqdess qui a annoncé avoir prêté allégeance aux djihadistes de l'Etat islamique a poussé les autorités à mettre en place un véritable arsenal législatif. La multiplication des attentats est un véritable échec pour le pouvoir qui peine à mettre fin aux attaques. C'est principalement depuis que l'armée a destitué et arrêté le président islamiste Mohamed Morsi que ces attentats ont eu lieu.

La prise de pouvoir par le maréchal al-Sissi, puis son élection, ont cependant très largement contribué à mettre le feu aux poudres dans un Sinaï sous tension. Depuis juillet 2013 les attentats sont très réguliers en Egypte et la répression n'a pas apporté le changement que le pouvoir espérait, bien au contraire. L'armée a pourtant, à plusieurs reprises, lancé de vastes offensives dans le nord du Sinaï pour tenter d'endiguer l'insurrection des djihadistes, sans pour autant faire cesser les attaques meurtrières.

L'espoir déçu

Alors qu'il y a seulement quelques années des millions de personnes étaient descendues dans les rues du pays pour réclamer la fin du régime dictatorial de Moubarak, son acquittement a été accueilli dans une indifférence presque surréaliste. Hormis quelques manifestations sporadiques rassemblant plusieurs centaines de personnes et très vite dispersées, la population semble aujourd'hui résignée et lassée. Après plusieurs années de troubles sécuritaires et économiques, les égyptiens souhaitent désormais, pour la plupart, tourner la page et surtout s'assurer que leur pays puisse se stabiliser. C'est d'ailleurs sur le thème du retour à l'ordre que le maréchal al-Sissi avait fait campagne en avril dernier en vue de la présidentielle.

Aujourd'hui l'armée a repris le contrôle total du pays et al-Sissi a bien l'intention d'étouffer la moindre contestation naissante. Les espoirs et les rêves de toute une génération sont désormais relégués aux oubliettes. L'actuel président avait affirmé il y a quelques mois que son pays n'était pas prêt pour la démocratie et qu'il fallait l'instaurer progressivement. Reste désormais à savoir si comme il l'a promis, il prendra l'initiative d'une libéralisation de la vie politique progressive dans les prochaines années. Rien n'est moins sûr.

Ebola Fears As Infection Deadline Missed
Monday 01 December 2014/news.sky.com

Only Guinea meets a World Health Organisation target of isolating 70% of those infected and burying 70% of victims.

A World Health Organisation deadline to halt the deadly Ebola outbreak in West Africa has only been met by Guinea, according to latest figures.

In October, the organisation launched its plan to isolate 70% of those infected and safely bury 70% of the victims in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone by 1 December.

But in Liberia, only 23% of cases are isolated and 26% of the needed burial teams are in place.

In Sierra Leone, around 40% of cases are isolated and 27% of burial teams are operational.

The Ebola outbreak was first reported in Guinea in March, and has spiralled out of control since a public health emergency was declared in August.

Dr Bruce Aylward, who is directing the WHO response to Ebola, said: "If we don't do it in 60 days and we take 90 days - number one, a lot more people will die that shouldn't; and number two, we will need that much more capacity on the ground to be able to manage the caseload."

The number of cases in Liberia and Guinea has declined or stabilised in the last few weeks, but the area around Sierra Leone's capital Freetown has seen a surge in cases.

Anthony Banbury, who is heading the UN response to the outbreak, said: "There are still going to be many people who catch the disease and many people who die from it."

The disease has infected more than 16,000 people, with nearly 7,000 people dying, according to WHO figures.

Last month, the US announced it was scaling back the size and number of Ebola clinics it had promised to build in Liberia.

The WHO aimed to isolate all Ebola patients and provide safe burials for all victims by 1 January.

AU chairwoman Dlamini-Zuma failing to lead

by Adekeye Adebajo/bdlive.co.za/01 décembre 2014

WHEN SA's 65-year-old former minister of foreign and home affairs, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, was elected chairwoman of the African Union (AU) Commission in July 2012, it sparked much controversy.

The first round ended in a stalemate, and although 37 of the 54 members eventually voted for Dlamini-Zuma, 17 countries had voted against her in the acrimonious contest. So she needed urgently to heal serious political divisions with Nigeria, Ethiopia, central Africa and many Francophone countries.

She also needed to have a clear strategy to reform the treacherous AU bureaucracy. Despite often glowing praise from several South African analysts — often based more on fiction than fact — it is important to assess five recurring criticisms of Dlamini-Zuma's tenure halfway through her first four-year term in office.

First, Dlamini-Zuma, who had entered office touting her reformist zeal and administrative skills, has been criticised for lacking a clear strategic vision for the organisation. Though AU summits are now better run, many have struggled to get a sense of where she wants to take the organisation, and there has been talk of a triumph of symbolism over substance. Dlamini-Zuma's "Vision 2063" for the AU envisages a borderless, prosperous, peaceful Africa that promotes people-driven inclusive development, democratic governance and a common cultural heritage. The problem with a 50-year vision, however, is that its proponents will not be alive to be held accountable for its potential failure.

Second, Dlamini-Zuma has not been able to enact many of the admittedly difficult institutional reforms she had promised. She has been accused of seeking to micromanage the organisation, slowing decision-making and alienating some of her fellow commissioners. The failure to reform the AU's finances has been particularly singled out.

Two years after she pledged to reform the AU, more than 95% of its peace and security budget and half of its annual \$278m budget are still funded by external donors. A high-level panel to raise alternative sources of funding from tourism and other levies has failed so far to win the support of the AU's leaders. Dlamini-Zuma has also been accused of running the AU through a "kitchen cabinet" dominated by South Africans. Her response has been rather politically inept, noting that SA was paying for these staff members. This is scarcely a riposte one would expect from United Nations (UN) secretary-general Ban Ki-moon, if he was accused of filling his office with South Koreans.

Third, the critical security relationship between the AU and the UN has been rocky, and the personal relationship between Dlamini-Zuma and Ki-moon is one that diplomats have described as tinged with hostility. The AU had asked the UN for a peace-enforcement mandate in Mali as well as a logistical and financial package for African peacekeepers to be deployed there. Both requests were declined. The UN also refused the AU's request to appoint former Burundian military leader Pierre Buyoya as its special representative in Mali.

There was further tension between the two organisations over the peacekeeping mission in the Central African Republic (CAR). Dlamini-Zuma had come into office calling for a reduction in French influence in Africa. The Gallic nation has, however, continued to dominate military interventions in Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and the CAR, even as the AU has struggled to establish a promised rapid reaction force.

Fourth, there has been criticism of Dlamini-Zuma's failure to build viable personal relationships with key actors. The AU's powerful permanent representatives' committee of ambassadors in Addis Ababa had frustrated Malian AU commission chair Alpha Konaré between 2003 and 2008. Dlamini-Zuma's relationship with the plenipotentiaries has similarly been difficult amid complaints that she has denied them access to her office. Foreign donors in Addis Ababa have voiced similar complaints, and Dlamini-Zuma's absence from the Partner's Forum meetings with the AU's donors has been frowned upon.

The final complaint often heard about Dlamini-Zuma's leadership of the AU is that she is frequently travelling to SA to attend African National Congress (ANC) national executive committee meetings. *Jeune Afrique*, the leading francophone African journal, caused a stir last year by calling for Dlamini-Zuma not to seek a second term in office in 2016 due to what it perceives as preponderant South African dominance of AU decision-making.

There is a widespread belief that the ambitious Dlamini-Zuma is eyeing the ANC presidency in 2017. The question that her harshest critics are asking, however, is that, if she cannot run a

multinational bureaucracy of 700 staff, how will she run a complex country of 50-million citizens?

- Adebajo is executive director of the Centre for Conflict Resolution visiting professor at the University of Johannesburg.

World Bank pledges \$1.2 billion to East Africa

By: Elayne Wangalwa/cnbcafrica.com/01 December 2014

The World Bank has pledged a 1.2 billion US dollar loan to East African nations to improve integration within the region.

The financier also vowed to support infrastructure development and to boost the competitiveness in the East African Community (EAC) by providing additional resources for regional infrastructure in the next three to seven years.

"We are partnering with the EAC governments, other development partners and the private sector to invest in regional infrastructure and to help deepen policy integration and reduce barriers to trade in the EAC," said Philippe Dongier, World Bank country director for Burundi, Tanzania and Uganda.

"We are preparing investments to revive the region's inland waterways on Lakes Victoria and Tanganyika, and to enhance the capacity and efficiency of the two main EAC ports on the Indian ocean - Dar es Salaam in Tanzania and Mombasa in Kenya."

The funds will also be used to invest in particular transport links to enhance the connection of landlocked countries Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and South Sudan to the Northern and Central corridors. This will improve access to the ports of Mombasa and Dar es Salaam as well.

In conjunction with the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), the bank said it will focus on reforms and policies crucial to the development of regional integration through enhanced efficiency of infrastructure investment and financing.

Oumar Seydi, IFC director for Eastern and Southern Africa, said, "Working with private sector partners, IFC is already investing more than 1.0 billion dollars annually in sub-Saharan African infrastructure to spur economic growth and improve living standards."

"IFC intends to do more to support ports, power, rail, transport and other key infrastructure projects in the East African Community in the years ahead," he added.

The bank is already supporting the EAC's regional integration agenda with investments of 2.3 million US dollars in 17 regional projects in roads, railways, energy, information and communications technologies, finance and trade, among others.

UN/AFRICA :

Ebola crisis: Huge risk of spread - UN's Tony Banbury

1 December 2014/bbc.com

The head of the UN Ebola response mission in West Africa has told the BBC there is still a "huge risk" the deadly disease could spread to other parts of the world.

Tony Banbury declined to say if targets he had set in the fight against Ebola, to be achieved by Monday, had been met.

The targets were for the proportion of people being treated and for the safe burial of highly infectious bodies.

The UN boss was speaking in Freetown, one of the worst-affected areas.

On Sunday in Sierra Leone's capital, bulldozers were clearing large areas for a new burial ground.

At the clearance site, near a rubbish tip, car after car was arriving with bodies, and several hundred workers were digging graves.

In October, Mr Banbury told the UN Security Council that by 1 December, "70% of all those infected by the disease must be under treatment and 70% of the victims safely buried if the outbreak is to be successfully arrested".

This interim goal - the ultimate UN goal is zero Ebola deaths - was set to try to bend down the upward curve in the graph of cases.

Mr Banbury said the 70% targets were being met in "the vast majority" of areas in the three worst-affected countries - Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

"But in some areas", he said, "including here in Sierra Leone - especially in the capital Freetown and in the town of Port Loko - we are falling short. And it is in those areas where we really need to focus our assets and our capabilities".

In its latest report on 29 November, the World Health Organization said 6,928 people were now known to have died from Ebola. More than 16,000 have been infected.

Between 200 and 300 people are dying every week. Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone are by the far the worst hit countries.

But Mr Banbury said the situation would have been even worse if the UN had not intervened:

"Early on we adopted a strategy to get this crisis under control which involves treatment centres, safe burials and community mobilisation. That strategy is working."

The American UN boss added that, even so, "there is a huge risk to the world that Ebola will spread. It may spread around this sub-region, or someone could get on a plane to Asia, Latin America, North America or Europe... that is why it is so important to get down to zero cases as quickly as possible".

Ban: Progress in AIDS Fight, But Gains 'Fragile'

VOA News/December 01, 2014

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is praising the progress the world has made in combating AIDS, but warns "the gains remain fragile."

In a statement for Monday's World AIDS Day, Ban highlighted the importance of addressing gaps in access to treatment, particularly for children and young women who are not getting necessary care. He urged world leaders to do what is necessary to reach the goal of eradicating AIDS by 2030.

Worldwide, 35 million people are living with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. The U.N. said 19 million of them do not know they are infected, and used World AIDS Day to call for closing the gap in testing and the availability of antiretroviral therapies.

Sub-Saharan Africa still accounts for more than 70 percent of the HIV-infected population, but new infections there have declined by one-third since 2005.

Meanwhile, infections have been rising during that period in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

World AIDS Day has been held on December 1 every year since 1988 as an occasion to show support for those living with HIV/AIDS, remember those who have died and focus on fighting the epidemic.

The U.N. has set a number of goals for 2015, including cutting the number of sexually transmitted HIV cases by half, eliminating new HIV infections among drug users and ensuring that all eligible people living with HIV get access to antiretroviral therapy.

US/AFRICA :

Africa still in the dark despite Obama's promises

by Joe Brock/Reuters/décembre 01 2014

BARACK Obama last year told a cheering crowd in Cape Town that a \$7bn plan to "Power Africa" would double electricity output on the world's poorest continent and bring "light where currently there is darkness".

A year later, the US president's flagship project for Africa has already achieved 25% of its goal to deliver 10,000MW of electricity and bring light to 20-million households and businesses, its annual report shows.

But the five-year plan has not yet delivered the power.

Power Africa has not measured its progress by counting actual megawatts added to the grid but promises of additional power made in deals it says it helped negotiate, according to sources inside the project and documents seen by Reuters.

Some projects facilitated by Power Africa — a programme operated by the US aid agency Usaid — were under way years before the scheme's inception, others are still in the planning stage. It is unclear how much of the \$7bn Mr Obama pledged has actually been spent, or if a further \$20bn in private sector investment commitments will materialise.

"Saying you've met targets on projects that might never happen or taking the credit for projects that have been worked on for years makes me uncomfortable," a source working on Power Africa said.

"It's misleading."

Mr Obama's pledge to double power generation in Africa within five years looked highly ambitious from the start. Per capita electricity output in sub-Saharan Africa has been flat for three decades because most promised power plants never get built.

"We're dealing with megawatts on paper, rather than on the grid," a second source working on the project said.

The first African-American US president, the son of a Kenyan father, Mr Obama has often been criticised for a lukewarm engagement in Africa, consisting more of words than deeds.

The 48 countries of sub-Saharan Africa, with a combined population of 800-million, produce roughly the same amount of power as Spain, a country of just 46-million. This constrains Africa's growth and keeps hundreds of millions in poverty.

Power Africa co-ordinator Andrew Herscowitz said there had been some confusion about the role of the programme.

It was always intended to "expedite transactions", facilitating private investment rather than handing out aid.

Mr Herscowitz said Power Africa was there to help the private sector deliver electricity and it had already negotiated commitments from companies worth \$20bn, although he did not know how much of this money had been spent.

"We're like a pharmacist, where people come to us, we reach out to people and figure out what is needed," he said.

"In some projects we may have a lot of involvement and in some we have very little involvement." Foreign companies sign billions of dollars of agreements with African governments to build infrastructure every year, although a large number are never built.

In April 2011, the US Millennium Challenge Corp, a state aid agency involved in Power Africa, signed a \$350m deal to "revitalise" Malawi's power sector. More than three years later, 1.7% of that money has been spent, the programme's website notes, without giving detail of progress on the ground.

Memoranda of understanding Power Africa signed this year with its six focus countries — Tanzania, Nigeria, Kenya, Ethiopia, Liberia and Ghana — contain less than \$100m of financial commitments targeted at specific countries, most of which is for consultants.

US consultancy Tetra Tech won a \$64m contract and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair's Africa Governance Initiative was given a \$3m deal.

As with many African aid projects, rights groups have criticised Power Africa as mostly being a vehicle to subsidise US companies.

Documents show that \$5bn out of the \$7bn pledged is for loans for US exports from the government's Export-Import Bank and Overseas Private Investment Corp.

"It's absolutely not true. Power Africa is an opportunity to turn on the lights for millions of Africans

by taking investment from all over the world," Mr Herscovitz said.

He rejected suggestions that Power Africa merely tapped into existing projects, highlighting a 5MW "NextGen" solar project in Tanzania and a 30MW biomass scheme in Kenya, which he said "didn't exist before Power Africa". However, the NextGen project website says a power purchase agreement for the solar project was signed in January 2013, six months before Power Africa was launched.

It is by no means guaranteed that the Power Africa programme, which has an initial five-year mandate, will continue or be seen as a priority when Mr Obama's final term ends in two years, US government sources said.

Meanwhile, corruption in the countries in which Power Africa operates is a problem. Nigeria's state oil company was accused last year by the then central bank governor of withholding \$20bn in oil funds due to the government. Tanzania's parliament is currently reviewing a report on graft in its energy sector.

CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

EU/AFRICA :

Gambia threatens to break EU ties

December 1 2014/Reuters

Dakar - Gambia's foreign minister said the West African country would sever all dialogue with the European Union and rejected what he said were attempts by the bloc to use its aid budget to force Gambia to revoke a tough new law against homosexuality.

Foreign Minister Bala Garba Jahumpa said that President Yahya Jammeh - a former military officer who seized power in a 1994 coup - would not allow foreign nations to use aid to impose policies on his government.

Jammeh signed legislation last month that introduced the crime of "aggravated homosexuality", making it punishable in some cases with life in prison.

The definition covers cases such as homosexual relations with someone under the age of 18, or a person with HIV having homosexual sex.

The crackdown comes as the European Union is due to decide in December whether to release 150-million euros worth of development aid to Gambia, a matter that has been up for debate because of its poor human rights record.

“Gambia's government will not tolerate any negotiation on the issue of homosexuality with the EU or any international block or nation,” Jahumpa told state television.

“We are no longer going to entertain any dialogue with the EU either directly or through sub-regional, regional and international blocks to which we are members.”

Jahumpa said homosexuality was “ungodly” and against African tradition, and said Gambia would work with other countries on the continent to oppose it.

Disapproval of homosexuality is widespread across most of socially conservative sub-Saharan Africa.

Lawmakers in Uganda have said they will pass a revised anti-gay law by Christmas that will punish gay sex with long prison terms, after an earlier version was quashed because of legal technicalities.

Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, has said Gambia's new law violates fundamental human rights and has called for its repeal. Rights watchdog Amnesty International says more than a dozen people have already been arrested under the law.

In a heated statement, Jahumpa accused European governments of allowing thousands of African migrants to die attempting to reach the bloc, dubbing it a “racist genocide”.

He said Gambia would not participate in the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) to open up West African economies to free trade with the European Union.

“The Gambia will never be a party to the so called Economic Partnership Agreement with the European Union as it is designed to continue the same exploitation and impoverishment of the African continent,” he said.

“We will rather die then be colonised twice.” - Reuters

CHINA/AFRICA :

INDIA/AFRICA :

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

EN BREF, CE 01 Décembre 2014... AGNEWS/DAM, NY, 01/12/2014