



(PRESIDENT Jacob Zuma, as head of the Southern African Development Community's (Sadc) organ on politics, defence and security, has appealed to the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) to comply with a call to surrender their arms. The FDLR operates in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).)

BURUNDI :

Massacre au Burundi: l'armée va parler

Par RFI /05-01-2015

Au Burundi, après avoir écrasé dans le sang un groupe armé non identifié entré dans le nord-ouest du pays en début de semaine en provenance de la République démocratique du Congo voisine, et dont on ne connaît rien ou presque jusqu'ici, l'armée burundaise va enfin s'expliquer publiquement ce lundi, alors qu'il y a beaucoup de spéculations autour de ce groupe.

Depuis le début, le gouvernement burundais se tait, et les militaires, en première ligne dans ce combat, pèsent chacun de leurs mots, une prudence qui inquiète de plus en plus la société civile.

Pour la première fois, l'opposition radicale regroupée du Burundi au sein de l'ADC-Ikibiri (Alliance démocratique pour le changement au Burundi) a condamné fermement cette attaque hier, dimanche 4 janvier. Elle a dit aussi sa crainte de voir le parti au pouvoir instrumentaliser cette histoire pour essayer de réduire l'opposition au silence, à cinq mois de l'élection présidentielle au Burundi.

Côté officiel, on s'en défend et on cherche à minimiser l'importance de ce groupe. « Ce n'est pas

nous qui allons donner un poids politique à un groupe armé qui n'a rien revendiqué », indique une source militaire.

Répression féroce

Ce n'est pas la première fois qu'un groupe inconnu attaque le Burundi, mais une chose semble se confirmer : ce groupe armé était composé de Hutus et de Tutsis, ce qui est plutôt inhabituel. Autre source d'étonnement, les forces de l'ordre burundaises ont fait peu de prisonniers, moins de 10 combattants, et plus d'une centaine de morts.

Pour mémoire, quelque 120 hommes, armés de fusils d'assaut, d'un mortier de 60 mm, de cinq lance-roquettes et de plusieurs mitrailleuses - selon des informations d'un haut gradé de l'armée - sont entrés dans le nord-ouest du Burundi à partir de la RDC, dans la nuit de lundi 29 à mardi 30 décembre. Après cinq jours d'une impitoyable chasse à l'homme, plus de 100 assaillants auraient été tués donc, dont une bonne partie exécutés, parfois à la machette, après leur reddition.

Des observateurs estiment que les autorités en savent certainement plus qu'elles ne le disent actuellement, alors que les méthodes employées par les forces de l'ordre sont en question. Elles sont accusées de nombreux cas d'exécutions extrajudiciaires au cours de ces six jours de combats.

Tournée diplomatique délicate pour la Belgique au Rwanda et au Burundi

lundi 5 janvier 2015/rtbf.be

Les ministres des Affaires étrangères et de la Coopération au développement, Didier Reynders (MR) et Alexander De Croo (Open VLD), s'envolent ce lundi pour une visite conjointe de quatre jours au Burundi et au Rwanda, deux pays d'Afrique centrale qui sont les 2ème et 3ème partenaires de la coopération belge, derrière leur grand voisin, la République démocratique du Congo (RDC). Ce sera la première visite à l'étranger pour Alexander De Croo et le moins que l'on puisse dire c'est qu'elle s'annonce délicate.

Nos ministres des Affaires étrangères et de la Coopération s'envolent ce lundi pour la région des Grands Lacs.

Didier Reynders et Alexander de Croo rendront visite aux autorités rwandaises, avant de passer deux jours au Burundi, deux pays qui ont été sous mandat belge et avec lesquels les relations ne sont pas toujours simples.

Le Burundi et le Rwanda ont tous deux la particularité d'être d'anciens protectorats allemands administrés par la Belgique entre 1922 et juillet 1962, date de leur accession à l'indépendance.

Il y a d'abord le Rwanda, où le nouveau ministre de la Coopération Alexander De Croo risque d'être accueilli fraîchement. Il y a deux semaines, le ministre a en effet décidé de ne pas accorder la dernière tranche prévue de 40 millions d'euros d'aide au développement.

Motif : cette aide était versée à plusieurs conditions, dont la bonne gouvernance, le dialogue politique avec l'opposition et le respect de la liberté de la presse.

Alexander De Croo a estimé que ces conditions n'étaient pas respectées. Le gouvernement belge a tranché.

La coupole des ONG belges, le CNCD 11 11 11 a salué un signal fort de la Belgique.

Au Rwanda, la flamboyante ministre des Affaires étrangères Louise Mushikiwabo a réagi avec une élégance teintée de mépris. Elle a twitté "La Belgique a le droit de disposer de ses fonds comme elle l'entend". Mais ce tweet a rapidement disparu des réseaux sociaux.

Des rencontres sont prévues avec les présidents burundais Pierre Nkurunziza et rwandais Paul Kagame, avec des membres des deux gouvernements, des responsables de la société civile, tout comme des visites à des projets et à des entreprises. Le fait que les ministres des Affaires étrangères et de la Coopération effectuent cette visite ensemble montre que ces deux aspects sont intimement liés, a souligné le porte-parole des Affaires étrangères, Hendrik Vandeveld.

Avec Belga et Françoise Wallemacq

RWANDA :

Zuma endorses call on Rwandan rebels to disarm
by Wyndham Hartley/bdlive.co.za/05 janvier 2015

PRESIDENT Jacob Zuma, as head of the Southern African Development Community's (Sadc) organ on politics, defence and security, has appealed to the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) to comply with a call to surrender their arms.

The FDLR operates in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The deadline set by the heads of state of Sadc and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region for the FDLR to disarm voluntarily or face military action, expired on Friday.

A statement from the Presidency on Sunday said that Mr Zuma had taken note of the second wave of disarmament that took place on December 28 in the provinces of North Kivu and South Kivu, during which a further 151 FDLR combatants disarmed voluntarily and 67 weapons were handed over.

This brings the total number of combatants who have disarmed since May to 337 and the number of weapons handed over to 234. This represents about 24% of the FDLR's estimated number of combatants.

Russell Feingold, US special envoy to the Congo, said any delays in military action would play into the FDLR's hands and the current abuses of human rights would continue.

The United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operation is known as Monusco and includes a 3,000-member intervention brigade that is empowered to conduct offensive operations against the FDLR and other rebel groups.

The intervention brigade, which has a strong South African contingent, roundly defeated the M23 rebels in eastern DRC in 2013 but has been criticised for failing to act against other rebel groups.

The DRC has struggled to put an end to conflicts in the east which began in the mid-1990s in the aftermath of neighbouring Rwanda's genocide, in which some Hutu FDLR commanders were accused of being involved.

About 800,000 people were killed between April and June 1994 when Hutu extremists massacred ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

The FDLR formed bases in DRC in 2000 when Hutu combatants fled from reprisals by the Tutsi-led Rwanda Patriotic Front that took over in Rwanda under President Paul Kagame.

Dozens of Congolese and foreign armed groups are active in the region, which is rich in tin ore, gold and coltan, a compound ore containing the metal tantalum, used in the batteries of smartphones and laptops. Output from the region has surged in recent years.

After the defeat of the M23 rebel group largely commanded by Congolese Tutsis in eastern Congo in 2013, Monusco has failed to prevent a series of attacks since October by ADF-NALU, a Ugandan Islamist group with bases in Congo. The assaults have left more than 250 civilians dead and displaced at least 88,000, according to estimates by the UN's Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Martin Kobler, the UN special representative in Congo, said the mission was stretched thin across a wide area.

The DRC is the size of western Europe.

"All armed groups are our priority," Monusco spokesman Felix Prosper Basse said.

With Bloomberg

RDC CONGO :

African leaders mull action against Hutu rebels in DRC

2015-01-05 /news24.com

Johannesburg - African heads of state will meet later this month to decide how to disarm Rwandan Hutu rebels ravaging the troubled east of the Democratic Republic of Congo who have refused an ultimatum to surrender.

Less than a quarter of fighters from the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) turned themselves in before the January 2 deadline set by regional leaders.

South African President Jacob Zuma and chair of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) defence arm said only 337 rebels had surrendered.

"The FDLR has therefore not complied in full with the conditions imposed," he said.

Heads of state from the region will meet in Angola on 15 and 16 January to decide on how to respond, with Zuma saying SADC was "ready to play its fullest part in this regard".

Brutal attacks

In October 2013, the Congolese army and a force of UN soldiers from South Africa, Tanzania and Malawi - authorised to neutralise armed groups - forced the surrender of M23, another rebel group

in the area.

"In the interim, SADC launches an earnest and urgent appeal on the leadership of the FDLR and all remaining combatants to immediately and unconditionally present themselves for disarmament," Zuma said in a statement.

As the deadline expired on Friday, the head of the UN mission in the DRC Martin Kobler appealed to the rebels to seize the chance for peace.

"To all FDLR, you can help stabilise your area by reaching Monusco or the Congolese authorities and return to peaceful life in Rwanda," he wrote on Twitter, referring to the UN's Monusco peacekeeping mission.

The FDLR is estimated to include between 1 500 and 2 000 ethnic Hutu fighters, some of whom are accused of having participated in the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

Opposed to Rwandan President Paul Kagame's Tutsi government, they have for years been based across the border in eastern DRC, where they have been accused of staging brutal attacks on civilians, including rapes and murders, and smuggling gold and charcoal.
- AFP

UGANDA :

SOUTH AFRICA :

TANZANIA :

Murder suspect manhunt after body found in Cardiff hotel

3 January 2015/bbc.com

Police have launched an international manhunt for a "dangerous" murder suspect after a 28-year-old woman was found dead in a Cardiff hotel room.

The body of Nadine Aburas, from the city, was found by staff at the Future Inn hotel on Hemmingway Road at about midday on New Year's Eve.

South Wales Police say they want to trace suspect Sammy Almahri, 44, a US national living in New York City.

Officers believe he is now in Tanzania, east Africa.

The force said Mr Almahri flew to the UK to meet Ms Aburas at the hotel just after Christmas.

Det Supt Paul Hurley said South Wales Police has a team of officers who are trying to trace him.

"We have been working closely with our counterparts in both NYPD and police officers in Tanzania," he said.

"From our enquiries we have discovered that Almahri is very resourceful and has access to funds, which may further assist his evasion from law enforcement agencies.

"I consider this man to be a dangerous individual and would advise that any knowledge of his location or sightings of him are reported immediately to the authorities and he is not to be approached."

Line break

Family tribute to Nadine Aburas

"Nadine was a lovely, bubbly girl and unique and talented woman.

"She always wanted to help people and everybody loved her.

"She has left such a massive hole in our family and we will miss her so much."

Line break

Det Supt Hurley said the hotel had been busy with people who were in the city to celebrate Christmas and New Year's Eve.

He urged people who may have seen the pair together or on their own to come forward.

In particular, the force said people at the hotel or out in Cardiff Bay may have seen Mr Almahri and Ms Aburas together between 22:00 and 23:00 on 30 December.

A post-mortem examination has been completed but officers are waiting for further pathology results before confirming how Ms Aburas died.

Line break

Sammy Almahri timeline:

He entered the UK on Boxing Day and travelled to Cardiff on 28 December

Two days later, on 30 December, he checked into the Future Inn hotel at 20:25 GMT, before Ms Aburas arrived at about 21:00

He left the premises at 03:00 on New Year's Eve, nine hours before Ms Aburas's body was found

Police say he then took a flight from Heathrow to Bahrain later that day and may now be in Tanzania

KENYA :

Kenyan building collapse kills one, others trapped

By AFP/04 Jan 2015

Major rescue operation underway after block collapses in Nairobi

At least one person was killed and several others were injured on Sunday when a six-storey residential building collapsed in the Kenyan capital Nairobi, officials said.

City officials said 22 survivors had been pulled out of the rubble of the building, situated in Nairobi's Haruma neighbourhood, but said it was unclear how many others were still trapped.

The building collapsed at around 7:00 pm (1600 GMT), sparking a major rescue operation involving scores of police, city officials and medical workers, an AFP photographer at the scene said.

Medical workers said more than 20 people had been admitted to local hospitals.

Speaking to Capital FM radio, Nairobi county official Tom Odongo said the six floors of the building were all occupied and a seventh was under construction.

He also said the upper floors were built in quick succession, putting pressure on the lower floors, and added that the construction had not been permitted by local authorities.

"The fault lies with the developer, not the county government, because responsibility starts with the individual," Odongo insisted.

Large numbers of residents also swarmed to the site, volunteering to dig in the rubble with their bare hands, although crowds were pushed away by police as heavy lifting machinery and official rescue teams were brought in.

"I'd gone out to watch the Arsenal (football) game when the building collapsed," said Eric Ochieng, a witness and resident of the building.

"I rushed back for my wife and son, and I also pulled out two people and a child in the process."

Kenya's KTN news channel said 20 ambulances had been put on stand-by in the area.

The collapsed building borders a primary school on one side and a maze of similar, densely populated houses on the other.

Kenya: Fidel Shock Death Robs Raila of Successor

By Dominic Wabala/allafrica.com/ 5 January 2015

FIDEL Odinga, who died in his father's arms on Sunday morning in his Karen home, had told friends on Friday that he was recovering from food poisoning after an outing in Naivasha the previous weekend.

Fidel turned down an offer of drinks from a friend last Friday, shortly after having lunch with eight friends in Nairobi, saying he was recovering from the food poisoning.

Two of his longtime friends, former Kenya Football Federation official Tom Alila and a lawyer who sought anonymity, said Fidel had told them about his mild illness.

Fidel died in his father Raila Odinga's arms in his residence at Bel Air Country Homes, off Miotoni Road, Karen, only hours after coming back from a night out in Westlands.

He had been driven home by a Smart Fellows taxi driver in his Range Rover Autobiography, Registration Number KCA 026V, from Sankara Hotel, Westlands, at about 4am.

The door of his house was opened by a house help and Fidel walked into his bedroom and went to bed.

Shortly thereafter, his wife, Lwam Gatachaw Bekele, who was nursing their baby, was woken up by a commotion and found Fidel in distress. He is reported to have been gasping for breath in bed.

The wife called her parents-in-law, Raila and his wife Ida, who left their Kerarapon home and drove to residence.

A doctor was called to attend to the ailing Fidel, but he died before being transferred to hospital.

Detectives began reconstructing the last moments of the former Prime Minister's son.

Investigators led by the Director of Criminal Investigations Muhoro Ndegwa and County Criminal Investigations Officer Ileri Kamwende started by interrogating the people who were last with Fidel. They included a cousin identified only as Bill, a close confidant identified only as Gichuru and three friends who spent part of the night with Fidel in Westlands before he was driven home.

According to Kwamende, preliminary investigations have established that Fidel was at his father's Kerarapon residence in Karen over lunchtime. He and Raila sat outside under a tree in front of the house and privately held a lengthy conversation.

Taita Taveta Senator Danson Mwazo Mwakulegwa and his wife were at the former PM's residence on Saturday afternoon and said that Fidel looked well and engaged his father in a very long conversation but did not take lunch, despite repeated appeals by his mother Ida.

"I was at the house at about lunchtime and we even joked about him not being in Bondo for Christmas because I spent three days there but didn't see him. We laughed it off. He looked very okay and had a lengthy conversation with his father under the tree. They did not even respond to Ida's repeated calls to have lunch. Then he left," the senator recalled.

Fidel left Karen for Westlands, where he joined his friends and cousin Bill. They went to Capital Club Imperial, then had lunch at Artcaffe at the Mall before going to The Oval.

It is while at The Oval that a Ugandan friend, Barnabas Tarema, called Fidel and his friends at about 6:35pm and invited them to the Sankara Hotel, where they relocated at 10pm until about 3am.

Fidel ordered Vodka.

Fidel also met former South Sudan leader John Garang's son Mabior Garang at the same hotel.

He left and was driven home by the taxi driver.

His cousin Bill, who was with his fiancée Lucy, told the police that they joined the Ugandan along with other friends.

The CID boss keenly took notes from some of the people who were with Fidel as they waited for the Government Pathologist, Dr Johansen Oduor, who was scheduled to conduct a preliminary

investigation on the body, which remained in the bedroom until 5pm.

A family pathologist joined Dr Oduor in conducting the preliminary examination.

President Uhuru Kenyatta called the CID boss, who was at the scene, to find out what was going on and was briefed before he sent a message of condolences to the family.

Friends yesterday disclosed that Fidel had just bought his wife a Range Rover and another house into which they were planning to move.

Nairobi flights halted after plane crash

4 January 2015/bbc.com

Flights into Kenya's main airport have been suspended after a passenger plane crash-landed on the runway in the capital Nairobi.

No deaths or injuries have been reported at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport on Sunday.

The Kenyan Airports Authority said the Fokker 50 turboprop plane carrying six people had touched down on its belly after the landing gear failed.

All flights into Nairobi were being diverted to the port city of Mombasa.

Later on Sunday, airport officials said that the plane had been removed and the runway reopened.

The aircraft had been flying from the north-eastern town of Wajir when it made the emergency landing.

The Jomo Kenyatta airport is one of the busiest airports in east and central Africa, acting as an important transport hub for both passengers and goods across the continent.

It serves a daily average of 19,000 passengers from Africa, Europe and Asia, according to the Kenyan Airports Authority.

A huge fire caused by an electrical fault forced it to close for several days in August 2013.

ANGOLA :

AU/AFRICA :

Archaeologists in Egypt unearth tomb of unknown queen

January 4/theweek.com

The tomb of a previously unknown queen has been discovered in Egypt southwest of Cairo, archaeologists say.

Mamdouh el-Damaty, the country's antiquities minister, said that the queen's name, Khentakawess, was inscribed on a wall inside the funeral complex of Pharaoh Neferefre, who ruled 4,500 years ago. The queen is believed to have either been the Pharaoh's wife or mother, the BBC reports.

The discovery was made by a team from the Czech Institute of Egyptology, and el-Damaty thinks that it will "help us shed light on certain unknown aspects of the Fifth Dynasty, which along with the Fourth Dynasty, witnessed the construction of the first pyramids."

- - Catherine Garcia

Un policier se fait trancher la gorge en Tunisie

The Associated Press/4 janvier 2015

TUNIS, Tunisie – Des combattants islamistes ont tranché la gorge d'un policier tunisien et l'ont poignardé en plein coeur alors qu'il rentrait du travail, a annoncé le ministère de l'Intérieur.

Selon un communiqué du ministère, le policier a été attaqué tôt dimanche dans une région rurale de Zaghouan, à environ 40 kilomètres de la capitale, Tunis.

Un porte-parole du syndicat qui représente les forces de sécurité, Mounir Khemili, a ajouté que les assaillants avaient aussi utilisé un sabre pour couper un doigt de la main droite du policier.

En décembre, un membre de la garde nationale avait été décapité au Kef, près de la frontière algérienne, où les forces de sécurité tunisiennes combattent des extrémistes retranchés dans les montagnes.

Malgré les attaques sporadiques, la Tunisie a élu un nouveau président, Béji Caïd Essebsi, le mois dernier.

Africa in 2015: A New Year's Guide

Simon Allison/dailymaverick.co.za/05 Jan 2015

News and politics rest for no man, not even weary journalists or the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, and while millions of Africans were celebrating the festive season, the continent continued on its merry way. If you were lucky enough to switch off the outside world for a week or two, here's a round-up of what's been making headlines to ensure you don't start the new year on the back foot – and a peek at what's waiting for Africa in 2015. By SIMON ALLISON.

Thank god that's over. Despite the Daily Maverick's valiant attempts to look on the bright side, 2014 was not a great year for Africa. For this, special thanks must go to Ebola, Boko Haram, and South Sudan's egomaniacal leaders, which together (among plenty of other culprits) conspired to undo decades of good progress in regions that desperately need it.

But that's all behind us now. It's a new year, and a new dawn beckons. Surely, surely, we can do better.

Already, there's been some good news. On 1 January, Egyptian authorities granted a retrial to jailed Al Jazeera journalists Peter Greste and Mohamed Fadel Fahmy and Baher Mohamed, all of whom were jailed a year ago on spurious charges. The new trial should be fairer than the last, if only because the bar is not high: the prosecution's "evidence" consisted largely of Greste's family

photographs and seemingly unrelated YouTube clips. There's also an off chance that Greste and Fahmy, as foreign nationals, could be deported before the new trial begins.

There's also new optimism on the Ebola front. The current epidemic, which has already taken more than 8,000 lives and counting, will be over by the end of 2015. This isn't our prediction, but comes from someone who should know. "We are engaged in an epic battle," said Anthony Banbury, head of the UN team fighting the epidemic. "Going forward it's going to be extremely hard for us to bring it down to zero [cases], but that is what we will do. I believe we will end Ebola in 2015."

Elsewhere on the continent, the picture is a little less encouraging. The biggest story of the new year so far is the attempted coup in Gambia, which failed to unseat President Yahya Jammeh (who is entering his third decade in charge of the tiny West African country). Despite himself seizing power in a coup, Jammeh was decidedly unsympathetic towards the plotters. At least three of the alleged ring leaders are dead, and Gambian soldiers are going door-to-door in the capital Banjul looking for others. Rights groups worry that this is a precursor to a wave of arbitrary arrests and intimidation as Jammeh looks to reassert power. With reason: that's exactly how the president reacted to another failed coup in 2006.

Then there's Nigeria, where Boko Haram have continued exactly where they left off last year. The Islamist militants have been blamed for the abduction of 40 boys and young men from a rural village in north-east Nigeria. The victims will presumably be press-ganged into fighting for the group. Ominously, Boko Haram is continuing to spread its wings further afield, launching an attack on a bus in northern Cameroon that killed at least 15 people.

Less expected is new violence in Mali, where the interim government – and the international force which props it up – is struggling to keep a lid on tensions. "A string of incidents in recent days have shown the fragility of any gains," reported Reuters, the most recent being the assassination by unknown gunmen of the mayor of a northern town and his son. For now, the ceasefire holds between the government and rebel groups in the north, but only just.

As the new year unfolds, we're also keeping a close eye on campaigning in Zambia and Nigeria, scheduled for 20 January and 14 February respectively. Supporters of the late Zambian President Michael Sata will be relieved that his party has finally sorted out internal differences to agree on a single presidential candidate, defence minister Edgar Lungu, although Lungu faces a stiff challenge at the polls from former President Rupiah Banda.

There's more potential for trouble in Nigeria, where President Goodluck Jonathan for the first time faces a real challenge to his rule. He's a victim of his own rapidly declining popularity and the emergence of a new and potent opposition coalition, led by perennial runner-up Muhammadu Buhari who might just be thinking that his moment has finally come. No matter what the outcome, it's bound to be contentious, especially with Africa's largest economy at stake.

Another potential flashpoint is in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, where – surprise, surprise – FDLR rebels missed a 2 January deadline to disarm. The United Nations' Force Intervention Brigade, which so spectacularly routed M23 rebels in the same area in 2013, is now supposed to go on the offensive. Will South Africa and Tanzania, which provide the bulk of troops and leadership to the force, agree to go to war again? We should find out at a meeting of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region in Angola in late January.

And nearby, in Burundi, we're keeping an eye on a military offensive against mysterious, unidentified rebels who allegedly entered the country from the DRC. The army claims to have killed more than a hundred of them and "wiped them out", but it is not the most reliable source.

2015 has barely begun and already it is shaping up to be a momentous year for Africa. While we can't predict what will happen, we do know it won't be boring. DM

Ebola survivors in West Africa to share stories via mobile app, to help fight stigma

Monday, 5 January 2015/Agency: Reuters

Ebola survivors in the three West African countries worst hit by the epidemic will share their stories through a mobile application to be launched on Monday, in a UNICEF-backed campaign to inform and fight stigma around the disease.

The Ebola outbreak, the worst on record of the highly infectious haemorrhagic fever, has killed over 7,900 people with more than 20,000 cases recorded mostly in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Although many people have survived the disease, they still face rejection and stigma from their communities, while the virus continues to spread due to lack of information and denial, according to the WHO and other health organisations.

The campaign called #ISurvivedEbola, is funded by US philanthropist and co-founder of Microsoft Paul G. Allen's foundation which has committed \$100 million to fight the disease. UNICEF, the UN children's agency is collaborating in the project.

Survivors in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia will be given smartphones and will document their stories and exchange tips on how to cope with it for a mobile app, which will be available to the public, the backers said in a statement.

"While treatment of Ebola patients is critical, the best way to end the Ebola outbreak in West Africa is to cut the chain of transmission and prevent further infections," Rafael Obregon of UNICEF said in the statement.

"#ISurvivedEbola is reinforcing our efforts by providing this information in multiple, highly entertaining forms, including through the testimonies of actual survivors," Obregon said.

Survivors who have agreed to contribute include Camara "Fanta" Fantaoulen in Guinea who lost six members of her family to Ebola, and Decontee Davis, a 23-year-old from Liberia who overcame Ebola but lost her fiancé.

Boko Haram seizes Nigerian army base

04 Jan 2015/aljazeera.com

Scores of troops killed in raid by fighters using military vehicles in Baga after about 40 young males were kidnapped.

Boko Haram fighters have overrun an army base in the remote northeast Nigerian town of Baga, killing scores of soldiers in the attack, security sources have said.

Baga is known for hosting the headquarters of a multinational force comprising troops from Niger, Nigeria, Chad and Cameroon, although only Nigerian troops are actually stationed there.

Troops eventually fled the remote station on the semi-desert shores of Lake Chad after it was attacked on Saturday by Boko Haram fighters using military vehicles, two sources said.

Earlier on Friday, suspected members of the armed group raided the northeast village of Malari, kidnapping about 40 boys and young men.

The fighters came to the remote village of Malari and urged people to come out and listen to a sermon, farmer Bulama Malam told reporters on Saturday.

"After telling us that they wanted to preach to us, they began to select young men aged between 12 and 25," Malam said. "I was lucky to escape because they only selected very young and able-bodied men."

He spoke in Maiduguri, the capital of northeast Borno state, to which he escaped on foot.

Nigeria's longstanding conflict with Boko Haram has killed over 10,000 people this year, according to a count by the Council on Foreign Relations in November.

Neighbouring countries threatened

It is the gravest threat to Nigeria, Africa's biggest economy, and a headache for President Goodluck Jonathan ahead of an election on February 14 where he is being challenged by opposition leader Muhammadu Buhari, a former military ruler seen as tough on security.

After beginning their fight for an Islamic state five years ago in the northeastern city of Maiduguri, the group has radiated outwards into porous border areas, threatening Nigeria's neighbours around the Lake Chad Basin.

In northern Cameroon, at least 15 people died in an attack by suspected Boko Haram fighters on a bus, officials said on Saturday.

Cameroon's army has been trying to dislodge the fighters from its Far North region with the help of air strikes.

Nigerian Interior Minister Hassoumi Massaoudou said late last month that his country was ready to negotiate with Boko Haram, but did not even know who in the group to talk to.

Baga came into the international spotlight early in 2013, when dozens of people, mostly civilians, were killed in fighting between the multinational force and Boko Haram. Many were burned alive in their thatched houses.

African Markets - Factors to watch on Jan 5

Sun Jan 4, 2015/Reuters

NAIROBI, Jan 5 (Reuters) - The following company announcements, scheduled economic indicators, debt and currency market moves and political events may affect African markets on Monday.

EVENTS:

*Mauritius and Seychelles due to release consumer inflation data for December anytime starting on Monday.

GLOBAL MARKETS

The euro hit a nearly nine-year low versus the dollar on Monday as investors bet on quantitative easing by the European Central Bank while Asian shares were subdued as soft manufacturing surveys soured the mood.

WORLD OIL PRICES

U.S. crude and Brent futures dropped to fresh 5-1/2-year lows on Monday as worries about a surplus of global supplies amid weak demand continued to drag on oil markets.

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SOUTH AFRICA MARKETS

South Africa's rand slipped to a two-week low against the U.S dollar on Friday, tracking a weaker euro which stumbled after the European Central Bank said it will soon embark on outright money-printing.

South African stocks fell in thin trade on Friday as a weaker gold price dragged down bullion producers AngloGold Ashanti and Sibanye Gold.

NIGERIA CRUDE OIL PRICES

Nigerian crude differentials were steady on Friday close to multi-year lows, pressured by a large quantity of unsold cargoes for loading in early 2015 and ample global supply.

NIGERIA SECURITY

Gunmen abducted 40 boys and young men from a remote village in northeast Nigeria in a raid that residents and a security source blamed on Boko Haram, the Islamist group that has gained worldwide notoriety for mass kidnappings.

Also, Boko Haram overran an army base in the remote northeast Nigerian town of Baga, two security sources said on Sunday.

KENYA MARKETS

Kenya's shilling was seen weakening, with traders saying on Friday that a new capital gains tax introduced this year could trim hard currency inflows and weaken the local currency. Stocks were stable.

KENYA SECURITY LAW

Kenya's High Court on Friday suspended some anti-terrorism measures signed into law two weeks ago by President Uhuru Kenyatta, in a partial victory for opposition groups who had

argued they threatened basic liberties and free speech.

CAMEROON SECURITY

At least 15 people have been killed in an attack by suspected Boko Haram militants on a bus in northern Cameroon, a senior local security official and a businessman said on Saturday.

SOUTH SUDAN CRUDE OIL REVENUE

South Sudan's oil revenue last year was hit by reduced output because of conflict in the African republic and the rapid decline in oil prices, petroleum minister Stephen Dhieu Dau said in a statement seen by Reuters on Saturday.

UN/AFRICA :

US/AFRICA :

100 soldiers return to Fort Carson from battling Ebola in West Africa

By Associated Press/January 4, 2015,

FORT CARSON, Colo. (AP) – About 100 soldiers deployed to West Africa to help build treatment facilities to house Ebola patients and caretakers are back in the United States.

The returning soldiers are being kept in a controlled monitoring area at Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington for 21 days.

During the monitoring period, the soldiers will not have physical contact with family members or other non-medical personnel, but they will have phone and email access to their friends and families.

The soldiers were part of a military program that includes units from the Active Army, Army Reserve and Army National Guard. Those who returned this week were part of a group of 150 soldiers from the 615th Engineer Company, 52nd Engineer Battalion who departed in November from Fort Carson, Colorado.

About 50 soldiers have remained in West Africa to provide assistance.

U.S. health worker arrives in Nebraska for Ebola evaluation

By Kevin Murphy/Reuters/Sun Jan 4, 2015

(Reuters) - An American health care worker possibly exposed to the Ebola virus in Sierra Leone arrived at a hospital in Omaha on Sunday for evaluation and any necessary treatment, an official said.

The patient was taken by ambulance from the Omaha airport to the University of Nebraska Medical Center, where three other patients were treated last year, said Taylor Wilson, hospital spokesman.

Wilson would not disclose the age or gender of the patient, whom he said was flown directly from Sierra Leone to Omaha in an air ambulance.

The patient has not tested positive for Ebola but will be treated at the hospital's Biocontainment Unit using the same precautions taken with those who had the disease, Wilson said. Two of those patients were treated successfully and a third, gravely ill upon arrival, died.

"There will be 21 days of monitoring and if the disease does develop, obviously treatment would begin pretty quickly," Wilson said.

Ebola is a hemorrhagic fever. The latest outbreak, first identified in Guinea's remote southeast in early 2014, has struck six West African nations, with Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia bearing the brunt of the 20,000 infections and nearly 8,000 dead.

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