



(Chad's prime minister has appealed for international aid for thousands of Nigerian refugees who fled attacks by Islamist militant group Boko Haram across the border into the Lake Chad region. Around 2,000 Nigerians and 500 Chadians crossed the border into Chad in recent days, joining around 1,000 Nigerians who arrived some months ago, Prime Minister Kalzeubet Pahimi said.)

BURUNDI :

Lutte judiciaire autour de la dépouille du roi du Burundi
tdg.ch/08.01.2015

Justice genevoise Enterré au cimetière de Meyrin, les restes du souverain ont été exhumés voici deux ans. Le Burundi les réclame. Procès.

Au cimetière de Feuillasse, à Meyrin, la tombe du roi du Burundi est vide. Depuis deux ans, l'emplacement No 180 est désert. Le monument érigé pour faire honneur à Mwambutsa IV, qui a régné sur ce pays d'Afrique entre 1915 et 1966 et qui est mort en exil à Genève en 1977, a disparu. La dépouille du souverain défunt se trouve bloquée depuis 2012 aux pompes funèbres de la maison Murith. Sa famille se déchire sur le lieu de sépulture de Son Altesse Royale. Pas moins de deux procédures – civile et pénale – sont ouvertes actuellement dans le canton.

Et hier, une dame de 65 ans se retrouvait sur le banc des accusés du Tribunal de police pour atteinte à la paix des morts. Elle fait partie de la famille du roi et plaide l'acquittement. C'est elle qui payait la concession au cimetière de Meyrin, c'est encore elle qui a fait ériger un monument en son honneur.

Funérailles nationales

Mais quand, en 2012, sa demi-sœur, Rosa Paula (fille du roi défunt) ainsi que l'actuel gouvernement du Burundi lui demandent d'organiser l'exhumation de Mwambutsa IV afin que ses restes soient rapatriés, elle dit oui. «Le gouvernement et le peuple du Burundi veulent le retour de la dépouille du souverain, explique-t-elle au tribunal. Sa famille et son pays souhaitent l'honorer, l'enterrer aux côtés des siens, de ses ancêtres. Depuis deux ans, il est ici tout seul, enterré nulle part,

vous trouvez ça normal?» Problème: le roi, dans son testament, dit expressément qu'il veut reposer au cimetière de Meyrin et nulle part ailleurs. Sa compagne suisse l'a confirmé durant la procédure, précisant que c'était elle qui s'était occupée de Mwambutsa IV durant sa maladie et qui, par la suite, avait régulièrement fleuri sa tombe. Elle a eu un choc lorsque les restes de son compagnon ont été retirés de la tombe. Et alors que le Service des cimetières de la mairie de Meyrin avait déjà procédé à l'exhumation de la dépouille du roi en vue de son rapatriement au Burundi, une de ses nièces s'y est opposée auprès du Tribunal de première instance. D'où l'imbroglio juridico-mortuaire qui bloque les restes de l'illustre défunt.

Car Mwambutsa IV n'était pas n'importe qui, comme le rappelle l'une de ses petites-filles entendue à la barre des témoins: «Il a régné durant cinquante ans au Burundi, c'était une figure historique importante. Il a fait régner la paix.» Dans sa plaidoirie, Me Alain Marti, avocat de la prévenue et des autorités du Burundi indique que ce pays attend les restes de feu le roi «pour lui prodiguer des funérailles nationales». Il poursuit: «Le gouvernement actuel, contrairement aux précédents usurpateurs qui ont massacré la famille du roi, veut faire régner la paix. Rétablir l'harmonie entre les Hutus et les Tutsis. Le retour du roi est un enjeu important, il symbolise la réconciliation nationale.»

Les ambitions d'une nièce

Certes, mais ne faut-il pas respecter les dernières volontés du suzerain? Selon sa petite-fille, «la situation politique à l'époque de son décès ne permettait pas le retour de sa dépouille au Burundi et le roi le savait bien. Son fils avait été assassiné. C'était un homme malade, souffrant d'un cancer en phase terminale, il ne savait pas que la situation de son pays changerait un jour complètement et que sa famille serait réhabilitée.»

Cette femme explique encore qu'après la destitution de son grand-père, en 1966, sa famille a dû s'éparpiller. «Nous étions des réfugiés persécutés et sans le sou, il était impossible de s'occuper de la tombe de mon grand-père en Suisse, mais aujourd'hui son rapatriement est le souhait de tout le monde.»

Sauf d'une de ses nièces. Pourquoi? demande la juge. «Je ne sais pas, répond sa petite-fille. Elle fait une carrière politique. Elle veut se présenter à l'élection présidentielle de 2015 au Burundi. Elle utilise la situation pour des raisons personnelles, c'est absurde!» Le tribunal estime que l'affaire pose un certain nombre de problèmes juridiques. Il rendra son verdict ultérieurement. (TDG)

RWANDA :

U.N. Security Council backs plan to defeat Rwandan rebels in Congo

Thu Jan 8, 2015/Reuters

UNITED NATIONS (Reuters) - The United Nations Security Council on Thursday backed plans by Democratic Republic of the Congo and U.N. peacekeepers to begin a military campaign to "neutralize" a Rwandan rebel group in the country's rugged eastern provinces.

The U.N. peacekeeping force in Congo (MONUSCO) has already started preparatory operations ahead of an offensive to dislodge the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), which has been at the heart of years of conflict in Central Africa's Great Lakes region.

The FDLR, which includes former soldiers and Hutu militiamen responsible for carrying out Rwanda's 1994 genocide, failed to meet a Jan. 2 deadline to disarm and surrender.

"The FDLR has not only failed to unconditionally and fully surrender and demobilize, but has also continued to recruit new fighters in their ranks," the 15-member Security Council said in a statement.

"The Security Council further recalls that the swift neutralization of the FDLR is a top priority in bringing stability to and protecting the civilians of the DRC and the Great Lakes region."

It called on Democratic Republic of the Congo President Joseph Kabila to swiftly approve and implement a joint Congolese and MONUSCO plan "to neutralize the FDLR by commencing military operations immediately."

The council said it was ready to consider targeted sanctions against individuals or entities supporting the FDLR.

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power said in a statement that the U.N., Congo and regional governments "must now hold firm on their commitment to take immediate action to disarm the FDLR once and for all."

"Twenty years after the genocide in Rwanda, there should be no further preconditions or delays in bringing the FDLR's long history of brutality and impunity to an end," she said.

U.N. officials say active support of Congo's armed forces is vital for success against some 1,500 seasoned FDLR combatants spread across eastern Congo.

They also say Kabila's support for MONUSCO has been lackluster so far, while the Congolese army has been responsible for human rights violations, including a mass rape in Minova in 2012 for which senior officers have not been held accountable.

Kabila told U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon that his army is ready to help peacekeepers fight the FDLR.

A senior U.N. official has said the operation would involve a special unit within MONUSCO known as the intervention brigade, which is mandated to aggressively search out and neutralize armed groups, along with regular MONUSCO peacekeepers.

RDC CONGO :

RDC: l'ONU presse Kabila d'agir contre les rebelles des FDLR
vendredi 9 janvier 2015/rtbf.be

Le Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies a demandé jeudi au président congolais Joseph Kabila d'agir rapidement pour neutraliser les rebelles hutus rwandais actifs dans l'est de la République démocratique du Congo (RDC).

Malgré les menaces brandies par Kinshasa et l'ONU, le déclenchement d'une offensive destinée à mettre hors d'état de nuire les Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR) tarde en effet

à venir.

Dans une déclaration unanime, les 15 membres du Conseil demandent au président Kabila "d'approuver rapidement et d'appliquer pleinement la directive conjointe" qui permettrait à la Monusco (Mission de l'ONU en RDC) et à l'armée congolaise de mener ensemble une offensive contre les FDLR.

La Conseil "réaffirme la nécessité de mettre en oeuvre les plans dressés par la Monusco et les forces armées congolaises (FARDC) (...) pour neutraliser les FDLR en lançant immédiatement des opérations militaires". "Neutraliser rapidement les FDLR est une priorité pour ramener la stabilité et protéger les civils en RDC" et dans la région des Grands Lacs, soulignent les 15 pays.

Comme le secrétaire général Ban Ki-moon l'avait fait la veille dans un conversation téléphonique avec Joseph Kabila, le Conseil rappelle qu'un ultimatum donnait jusqu'au 2 janvier aux rebelles des FDLR pour déposer les armes. Mais le nombre des combattants FDLR qui se sont rendus, environ 300, "est insuffisant pour que le groupe cesse de représenter une menace", estime le Conseil.

Il précise que malgré l'expiration de l'ultimatum, les membres des FDLR pourront toujours se rendre et participer au programme de désarmement des groupes rebelles "à tout moment et sans conditions préalables".

A la suite de l'expiration de l'ultimatum, le gouvernement congolais avait estimé une offensive anti-FDLR "inévitabile" mais n'a pas pris selon l'ONU toutes les dispositions nécessaires pour déclencher les opérations.

La décision d'attaquer les FDLR, dont plusieurs dirigeants sont accusés d'avoir participé au génocide de 1994 contre les Tutsis au Rwanda (800.000 morts selon l'ONU), revient à Kinshasa, la Monusco devant intervenir en soutien à l'armée congolaise.

Le Conseil brandit à nouveau la menace de "sanctions ciblées contre tout individu ou entité soutenant les FDLR".

Selon l'ONU, les FDLR comptent quelque 1500 combattants, dont 400 seulement sont aguerris. Ils sont souvent accompagnés de leur famille et sont dispersés sur un très vaste territoire au nord-Kivu, sud-Kivu et dans le nord du Katanga. Malgré leur faible nombre le Rwanda les considère toujours comme une menace contre sa sécurité.

Belga

UGANDA :

SOUTH AFRICA :

TANZANIA :

KENYA :

ANGOLA :

AU/AFRICA :

L'EI dit avoir exécuté deux journalistes tunisiens en Libye
romandie.com/08.01.2015

La branche libyenne de l'Etat islamique a affirmé jeudi avoir exécuté deux journalistes tunisiens. Ils étaient portés disparus en Libye depuis le 8 septembre et leurs ravisseurs étaient inconnus.

Dans un communiqué comportant des images de Sofienne Chourabi et Nadhir Ktari, publié sur des forums jihadistes, le groupe affirme avoir "appliqué la loi d'Allah" à leur rencontre. L'authenticité des images n'a pas pu être vérifiée de source indépendante et les autorités tunisiennes n'étaient pas joignables dans l'immédiat.

Dans ce communiqué signé du "service de communication de la province de Barqa", le groupe accuse les deux Tunisiens de travailler pour "une chaîne satellitaire qui combat la religion". Une image montre les deux jeunes hommes au moment de leur "arrestation" aux côtés d'un homme armé en treillis, le visage encagoulé.

Blogueur et photographe

La quatrième et dernière photo, légendée "Application de la loi de Dieu à l'encontre de Chourabi et Ktari", n'est pas nette. On peut y deviner un tir partant en direction d'une personne qui semble être agenouillée, ainsi que l'emblème "Il n'y a de dieu que Dieu et Mahomet est son prophète".

Sofienne Chourabi, un blogueur très actif durant la révolution tunisienne de 2011, et Nadhir Ktari, un photographe, ont disparu dans la région d'Ajdabiya (est de la Libye) le 8 septembre. Cette disparition est intervenue quelques jours après une première arrestation des deux hommes, qui travaillaient sans autorisation, par un groupe armé.

Décapitation en Syrie

En Syrie, le groupe EI a décapité jeudi un imam syrien après l'avoir accusé d'avoir "insulté Dieu", rapporte pour sa part l'Observatoire syrien des droits de l'Homme (OSDH).

Enfin, la radio de l'EI a réagi jeudi à l'attentat contre "Charlie Hebdo" à Paris. Elle a qualifié de "héros" les auteurs de cette attaque. "Des héros jihadistes ont tué 12 journalistes et blessé plus de dix autres travaillant dans le journal et cela pour venger le prophète Mahomet", a indiqué le bulletin de la radio al-Bayane.

Chad appeals for aid for refugees who fled Boko Haram attacks

Thu Jan 8, 2015 /Reuters

N'DJAMENA (Reuters) - Chad's prime minister has appealed for international aid for thousands of Nigerian refugees who fled attacks by Islamist militant group Boko Haram across the border into the Lake Chad region.

Around 2,000 Nigerians and 500 Chadians crossed the border into Chad in recent days, joining around 1,000 Nigerians who arrived some months ago, Prime Minister Kalzeubet Pahimi said.

U.N. agencies, the Chadian Red Cross and other groups conducted an evaluation mission this week to the area where the refugees are located and distributed supplies including soap, tarpaulins, biscuits and jerry cans, the U.N. refugee agency (UNHCR) said.

"Following insurgent attacks on five villages along the frontier between Chad and Nigeria between Dec 28 and Dec. 30, the humanitarian situation has deteriorated," UNHCR said on Thursday. The agency put the total figure of Nigerian refugees in Chad at more than 5,000.

The militants have been waging an insurgency to establish an Islamist state in Nigeria's northeast for five years. The number and scale of attacks rose sharply last year, after the government imposed emergency rule in the three worst-hit states.

Boko Haram has also launched cross-border attacks into Chad and Cameroon. In response, Chad's President Idriss Deby has backed peace talks between Nigeria and the militants and beefed up border security.

UN/AFRICA :

UNHCR: East African region a major source of refugees

By Tesfa-Alem Tekle/sudantribune.com/Friday 9 January 2015

January 8, 2015 (ADDIS ABABA) – A new report issued on Wednesday by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) revealed that conflicts in the Middle East, Africa and elsewhere had forced to displace an estimated 5.5 million people only during the first six months of 2014.

UNHCR's new "Mid-Year Trends 2014" report shows that among the new 5.5 million people 1.4 million of them fled across international borders becoming refugees, while the rest were displaced within their own countries.

East African countries of Somalia, Sudan, and South Sudan are also reported among world's leading refugee contributing countries.

At more than 3 million as of June 2014, Syrian refugees, for the first time, have become the largest refugee population overtaking Afghans (2.7 million), who were the biggest group for three decades.

War- ravaged Somalia is ranked as world's third largest refugee origin at 1.1 million.

Sudan and South Sudan are ranked at fourth and fifth place with 670,000 and 509,000 refugee populations respectively.

Pakistan, which hosts 1.6 million Afghan refugees, remains the biggest host nation in absolute terms followed by Lebanon (1.1 million), Iran (982,000), Turkey (824,000), Jordan (737,000), Ethiopia (588,000) and Kenya (537,000).

The UN refugee agency said relative to the sizes of their populations Lebanon and Jordan host the largest number of refugees, while relative to the sizes of their economies; Ethiopia and Pakistan shoulder the burdens of refugees.

The new data brings the number of refugees under UNHCR's mandate to 13 million as of mid-2014 the highest since 1996 while the total number of internally displaced people protected or assisted by the agency reached a record high of 26 million.

"In 2014, we have seen the number of people under our care grow to unprecedented levels. As long as the international community continues to fail to find political solutions to existing conflicts and to prevent new ones from starting, we will continue to have to deal with the dramatic humanitarian consequences," António Guterres, head of UNHCR, said in a statement.

"The economic, social and human cost of caring for refugees and the internally displaced is being borne mostly by poor communities, those who are least able to afford it."

UNHCR's Mid-Year Trends 2014 report is based on data from governments and the organization's worldwide offices.

Conflicts in Middle East, in east and Central Africa and the Great Lakes region are blamed to have worsened the refugees' crises during the first half of 2014.

(ST)

US/AFRICA :

CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

EU/AFRICA :

CHINA/AFRICA :

INDIA/AFRICA :

Africa on radar with trip

CHARU SUDAN KASTURI/telegraphindia.com/Jan. 8

New Delhi, Jan. 8: Foreign minister Sushma Swaraj will travel to South Africa next month, marking the debut trip by a senior representative of the Narendra Modi government to the African continent where many nations were hoping for quicker attention from the new administration.

Sushma's visit, confirmed by the foreign office today, comes two months after New Delhi postponed a once-in-three-years India-Africa summit citing the Ebola epidemic in West Africa, upsetting many nations that had prepared for months.

"It's good that we are finally on the map," the ambassador of an East African nation told The Telegraph this evening. "I hope this is the start of a series of visits, both ways, and is not just a one-off trip."

The decision that Sushma will visit Pretoria soon was taken after a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and South African foreign minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane today on the margins of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in Gandhinagar. The South African foreign minister is a guest of honour at the summit — which is celebrating 100 years of the return of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi to India from South Africa.

But while Nkoana-Mashabane is the third foreign minister from the African continent to visit India since the Modi government came to power in May, their trips haven't been reciprocated.

Ethiopia, the most influential nation in East Africa, has for instance been reminding the Indian government for some months that annual foreign office consultations are overdue — but has not received even a confirmation of when the meet may happen.

Some African nations have pitched to the Indian foreign office that they would even settle for a visit by junior foreign minister V.K. Singh. "But we've not received a confirmation of a visit even by him," a senior diplomat from one such nation said.

Although Africa has for long been a low priority in India's foreign relations, the UPA government — and the current Modi government — have officially insisted they intend to re-energise ties with the continent.

The Manmohan Singh government sent then President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam to South Africa and Tanzania in September 2004, four months after it came to power. Natwar Singh, the then foreign minister, went there in early 2005.

The year 2014, African diplomats point out, was meant to be different. The India-Africa summit, launched by the UPA government, had had two fairly successful conclaves in 2008 (New Delhi) and 2011 (Addis Ababa).

The third summit was scheduled for December 2014 in New Delhi but was cancelled in November because Indian authorities were not confident they had the infrastructure to smoothly screen all visiting delegates from Ebola-hit nations.

East Africa — especially Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania — are home to large Gujarati populations, and these nations were hoping these links would help them connect better with Modi. “So far, we haven’t seen that. We’re still waiting,” a diplomat from one of the nations said.

100 years ago today, Gandhi returned from South Africa to a week of parties in Bombay

Scroll Staff/Friday, January 9th 2015

'I have not known a moment's peace,' he complained, shortly after arriving.

A hundred years ago on Friday, a small launch bearing some of Bombay’s more prominent industrialists, a senior doctor, a diamond merchant and a journalist set off from the newly built Gateway of India to greet the SS Arabia, a mail boat travelling from London.

This unusual delegation were greeting an unusual figure: Mohandas Gandhi, who was back in India with his wife Kasturba after 21 years in South Africa. Gandhi had been in London the previous year to treat a severe bout of pleurisy, a lung inflammation. His doctors advised him to return to India to escape the English winter. This time, India became his permanent home.

Gandhi remained in Bombay for one week before leaving for Ahmedabad. In that week, everyone from Jehangir Petit of Bombay to the Gurjar Society of India held parties for him. He met Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mohammad Ali Jinnah and a platoon of relatives. Kasturba and he gave speeches, were given speeches at, and most strangely, were presented with a set of golden shackles, perhaps to commemorate his time in prison in South Africa.

“Mr. Gandhi, in acknowledging the gifts, described the silver casket and the fetters as somewhat unsuitable to a person who had neither a roof over his head nor locked doors to his house,” wrote the Bombay Chronicle, which seemed to have avidly followed him between January 9 and January 16. “Fetters, whether of gold or of iron, were the same to him.”

The first reception was on January 12 at at Petit’s Peddar Road mansion. Six hundred people attended the gathering presided over by Ferozeshah Mehta. Gandhi was left feeling like “a rustic” in his Kathiawari turban and clothes in the midst of Bombay’s high society. The lawyer KM Munshi later claimed that a lady at the party had said Gandhi looked like her tailor.

A later party organised by the Gurjar Society of India seems to have been a more sombre affair, with a long speech in English by Jinnah in praise of Gandhi and Kasturba and Gandhi’s equally long reply in Gujarati.

Already a hero

Gandhi was already well known in India for his 20 years of activism for better treatment of Indians in South Africa. Through this period, he corresponded regularly with his political mentor Gopal Krishna Gokhale and the Indian National Congress.

But the South African human rights activist had not yet become the leader of the Indian freedom struggle. While he was interested in replicating his South African experiments with Satyagraha in

India, Gokhale made him promise not to become politically active for at least one year after his return.

“For the present, as Mr. Gokhale has very properly pointed out, I, having been out of India for so long, have no business to form any definite conclusions about matters essentially Indian, and that I should pass some time here as an observer and a student,” he said just after he arrived in an interview to the Bombay Chronicle with the journalist BG Horniman, who was present on the welcome launch.

Though the British watched Gandhi, they did not think of him as particularly dangerous. This might be why Bombay felt free enough to give him a hero’s welcome.

Even so, Gandhi was never quite the social butterfly. In a letter to his cousin Maganlal Gandhi two days after he arrived, he wrote waspishly of his time in the city.

“I feel suffocated by all this public honouring,” he wrote. “I have not known a moment’s peace. There is an endless stream of visitors. Neither they nor I gain anything.”

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

EN BREF, CE 09 Janvier 2015... AGNEWS/DAM, NY, 09/01/2015