



(The Egyptian military said Monday it has bombed ISIS targets in Libya after the militant group released a video that appeared to show the mass beheadings of Coptic Christians."The airstrikes hit their targets accurately and our eagles returned to their bases safely," a statement reported on Egyptian state television said.)

BURUNDI :

RWANDA :

#### **IFC Issues \$5m Offshore Bond in Rwandan Franc**

Friday, February 13th, 2015/SOURCE: KTPress

The International Finance Corporation has issued a 3.5 billion Rwandan Franc (US\$5m) bond on the Luxembourg Stock Exchange, KTPress has learnt.

The bond, not yet, unnamed, mark the first Rwandan bonds placed offshore.

The 3-year bond with a 9% coupon, is jointly arranged by Citibank N.A. and Standard Bank of South Africa.

They were placed with five international investors, who had not yet been announced by press time.

The offshore bond follows the decision by Euroclear, within 24 hours ago, to add Rwandan francs as a new denomination currency to facilitate the development of Rwanda Capital Market and attract

more international investors.

Euroclear, a Belgium firm, settles domestic and international securities transactions, covering bonds, equities, derivatives and investment funds in more than 90 countries.

Now, over 2000 institutions worldwide can trade the Rwandan Franc denominated securities.

“It adds that value of recognition internationally and therefore it makes it easy for us to trade bonds in Rwandan Franc in the future,” central bank Governor John Rwangombwa, said.

Jingdong Hua, International Finance Corporation Vice President and Treasurer, announced the bond at the just concluded East African Capital Markets Conference held in Rwanda’s capital, Kigali organised by the government together with IFC.

He said this offshore bond will attract more foreign investment into Rwanda, and help mobilize more capital from international investors.

Jingdong Hua said this is a pilot project, and will hold the funds as part of the IFC’s global currency holdings.

Last year, IFC issued a US\$22m bond on the RSE, which was over subscribed by 400%.

Finance Minister, Claver Gatete, said IFC is playing a leading role in continuously providing groundbreaking transactions for developing countries and by bringing new products and new investors to our playing fields.

“This bond issue demonstrates the powerful role that capital markets can play in linking international savings to investment needed for development,” Gatete said.

International investors are eager to participate in the African growth story, and Rwanda is emerging as a leader in tapping the interest of these investors, he added.

Rwanda is regarded a risk-free economy with minimal inflationary risks and an economic growth rate averaging 8% over the past decade.

SOURCE: KTPress

RDC CONGO :

**Offensive contre les rebelles rwandais: la RDC dit « renoncer » à l’aide de l’ONU**  
15 février 2015/maliactu.net

Kinshasa a annoncé dimanche qu’elle renonçait à l’aide des Nations unies dans son offensive annoncée contre les rebelles hutu rwandais dans l’Est de la République démocratique du Congo après que l’ONU eut indiqué avoir cessé son soutien à cette opération ».

« La République démocratique du Congo vient de renoncer à l’aide de la Monusco » (Mission des Nations unies pour la stabilisation en RDC), a déclaré le porte-parole du gouvernement congolais, Lambert Mende, sur la télévision publique nationale.

L'annonce a été faite dimanche par le chef de l'État, Joseph Kabila, lors d'une réunion avec les ambassadeurs de plusieurs pays en RDC et le chef de la Monusco, Martin Kobler.

« Le président a tenu à rappeler que la République démocratique du Congo était un État souverain », a ajouté M. Mende.

Samedi, un haut responsable onusien à New York avait déclaré que la Monusco avait « effectivement mis fin à son soutien aux FARDC » (Forces armées de la RDC).

Kinshasa avait dépassé la date limite du 13 février qui lui avait été imposée pour remplacer deux généraux fraîchement nommés et avec lesquels la Monusco dit ne pas pouvoir travailler.

Les deux hommes au cœur de la discorde sont les généraux de brigade Bernard Mandevu, chef de l'opération Sokola 2, chargée de lutter contre les groupes armés dans le sud de la province du Nord-Kivu, et donc en premier lieu contre les Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR), et le général Sikabwe Fall, chef de la région militaire du Nord-Kivu.

L'ONU les accuse de s'être rendus coupables par le passé de graves violations des droits de l'Homme mais n'a jamais voulu dire publiquement ce qu'elle leur reproche exactement.

La traque des FDLR, dont plusieurs chefs sont accusés d'avoir participé au génocide de 1994 contre les Tutsi au Rwanda, est attendue de longue date en RDC. En novembre 2013, après la défaite de la rébellion congolaise du M23, essentiellement tutsi et soutenue par Kigali, M. Mende avait annoncé que les FDLR seraient la prochaine cible de l'armée.

Mais les FARDC ont entre-temps lancé une offensive contre un autre groupe rebelle étranger, les Forces démocratiques alliées (ADF), milice musulmane ougandaise présente dans le nord du Nord-Kivu depuis 1995, accusée d'être à l'origine de récents massacres de civils ayant fait au moins 260 morts d'octobre à décembre. Les Casques bleus sont engagés au côté de l'armée congolaise dans cette offensive.

Alors que l'on attendait le lancement d'une offensive conjointe FARDC-Monusco contre les FDLR, M. Kabila a refusé de donner son aval à une telle opération et l'armée a annoncé le 29 janvier qu'elle allait passer seule à l'offensive, comptant sur un soutien logistique, stratégique et opérationnel de la part de la Monusco.

Plusieurs diplomates et analystes doutent que Kinshasa ait réellement l'intention de désarmer par la force les FDLR, qui ne compteraient plus aujourd'hui qu'en environ 1.500 à 2.000 combattants disséminés essentiellement au Nord et au Sud-Kivu.

M. Mende a cependant assuré que l'opération allait se « poursuivre ».

Les FDLR sont opposées au président rwandais Paul Kagame dont l'arrivée au pouvoir à Kigali en 1994 avait mis fin au génocide.

La milice qui n'a plus lancé d'offensive sérieuse contre le Rwanda depuis le début de la décennie 2000 est régulièrement accusée de crimes graves contre les populations civiles congolaises et de tirer ses ressources de trafics de minerais ou de bois dont les Kivus regorgent, avec la complicité locale de certains officiers congolais.

Ses membres les plus anciens sont présents en RDC depuis 1994.

UGANDA :

SOUTH AFRICA :

### Rolling power cuts spark fears for South Africa's economic future

Mon, Feb 16, 2015/irishtimes.com

South Africans endure up to three power outages a day as its electricity company, Eskom, struggles to cope

South Africa's stuttering economy will struggle over the next few years to achieve the growth rate required to tackle its high levels of unemployment due to the state-run electricity provider's inability to meet the country's power needs.

Rolling periodic power cuts known as load-shedding have been implemented across the country since mid-January by Eskom – the public electricity utility – to reduce the pressure on the national power grid so that essential maintenance can be carried out on its aging power generators.

Eskom chief executive Tshediso Matona said last month that the need to carry out maintenance at the power utility was so great, power station units had to be shut down to accommodate repairs and prevent a plant's complete collapse.

“It is not whether or not load-shedding will be part of our lives, but how we are going to cope with it,” Mr Matona said during a January 15th press conference before adding that daily load-shedding would begin within one week.

Stage one load-shedding allows for up to 1,000 megawatts of the national load to be shed, stage two for up to 2,000 megawatts, and stage three for up to 4,000 megawatts.

Each power outage lasts a minimum four-hour period and affected areas can be subjected to two or three outages a day depending on the stage being implemented.

Since South Africa last experienced load-shedding of this magnitude, in 2008, Eskom has been putting off essential maintenance and keeping the lights on by running open cycle gas turbines on diesel. But Mr Matona admitted: “Our equipment is so unreliable and the risk of breakdown has become so high . . . that it has created havoc for us”.

To make matters worse, the availability of energy plants has also fallen over the past six years from 85 per cent to 75 per cent because the quality of maintenance has deteriorated on the power generators, 64 per cent of which are past their mid-life.

Price hikes

Eskom is also in serious financial crisis and further significant electricity price hikes are a near certainty, even as customers increasingly find themselves sitting in the dark.

Eskom is one of the leading utilities in the world and has 27 operational power stations including one nuclear plant. It claims to generate over 95 per cent of the electricity used in South Africa and around 45 per cent of all electricity consumed across the African continent.

Due to the company's importance to the continent's economic growth, the questions on everyone's lips are how have the government and Eskom ended up in this position, and how bad could this energy crisis really get?

According to its 2007 annual report, Eskom needs to nearly double its generation volume from its current maximum self-generated capacity of 41,194 megawatts to 80,000 megawatts by 2025.

To meet the country's immediate demand shortfall, it is constructing two coal-fired nuclear power stations, Kusile and Medupi, which will contribute 9,000 megawatts of power to the national power per year.

While Eskom has said load-shedding will be with the country for a few years, many energy experts – as well as the main political opposition parties – warn this is an extremely optimistic forecast. They are warning that the current situation of rolling blackouts could be a reality for much longer than that, a factor that could scare off international investors, hamper business development and stifle job creation efforts.

According to the International Monetary Fund, South Africa needs an economic growth rate of at least 3 per cent annually to create jobs, but even this will only facilitate a reduction in the official unemployment rate of around 23 per cent if the labour force remains stagnant.

South Africa has estimated that GDP for the first nine months of 2014 increased by just 1.5 per cent compared with the corresponding period in 2013, and this was before load-shedding had even been introduced.

The adverse effect that load-shedding is having on the economy in monetary terms was brought sharply into focus by South African energy specialist Chris Yelland.

Last week he was widely quoted in local media as saying that stage one load-shedding was costing the economy 20 billion rand (€1.5 billion) per month, with stage two forecast to carry a 40 billion rand monthly bill and stage three a massive 80 billion rand per month.

As a result of the crisis's economic ramifications, it has become a political minefield for the ruling African National Congress party.

While the former liberation movement is still the dominant political force in South Africa, it has been losing support steadily for the past five or six years. It is clearly concerned at how rolling blackouts will affect its local election chances next year and beyond.

#### Passing phase

To try and deflect the culpability for the crisis away from itself, government has gone to great lengths to blame bad planning by successive apartheid-era governments for causing the situation. At the recent World Economic Forum President Jacob Zuma said: "Our electricity infrastructure was never designed to serve an expanded citizenry. Last year, we celebrated the expansion of electricity to 11-million households. In the last six months of the year, we reached more than 100,000 homes.

"This extension of electricity to more households that had been excluded in the past, coupled with a growing economy, has sharply put pressure on the infrastructure, which needs improved

maintenance and expansion,” Mr Zuma said.

He went on to say the energy crisis was just a passing phase as the government had its new coal power stations and other sources of energy such as large-scale nuclear, shale gas, solar and wind plants in the pipeline to resolve this situation.

Mr Zuma’s government has insisted that the launch of the Medupi nuclear power station at the end of this year will help plug the current gap, as it has six power generating units that can produce 800 megawatts of electricity each.

However, only one of the units will come online at that time, and all six are not expected to contribute to the national grid before 2018.

Furthermore, Kusile nuclear power station is not expected to start coming online until 2016 at the earliest.

The opposition Democratic Alliance (DA) party maintains that Eskom itself is the main cause of the country’s unstable power supply, as it enjoy an unhealthy market monopoly because it controlled access to the national grid.

Earlier this month, DA leader Helen Zille questioned why the government appeared unwilling to break Eskom’s stranglehold over the market, saying it is not healthy for the same company that produces the bulk of the power, to also make decisions on transmission and grid expansion.

“Opening the grid, in a meaningful way, to independent power producers is key to solving our electricity generation shortfall,” she said. “There is certainly no shortage of project proposals for co-generation, and with every round of bidding, the cost has come down.”

### South Africa Protests Apartheid Column in Japanese Press

Associated Press/Feb 15, 2015

TOKYO

South Africa's ambassador to Japan has sent a letter of protest to a conservative Japanese newspaper about a recent column that in essence advocated separate residences for foreign workers modeled on apartheid.

The Feb. 11 column in the Sankei newspaper by well-known conservative writer Ayako Sono said Japan needs foreign workers to offset its shrinking population, but that based on the South Africa experience, different races should live separately.

In her letter, Ambassador Mohau Pheko called apartheid a crime against humanity that should not be justified in the 21st century, the Sankei said in an article published over the weekend.

Sono has served on an advisory panel for Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on education.

In the article, Sono says her column did not propose an apartheid policy for Japan. "I only wrote, from my personal observation, that it is difficult for people with different customs to live together."

A statement by senior Sankei editor Takeshi Kobayashi says Sono's regular column reflects her opinion, and that the newspaper believes that apartheid and racial discrimination should not be

permitted.

TANZANIA :

### Team sets Sh7bn for referendum, voters` registration processes

By Aisia Rweyemamu/SOURCE: GUARDIAN ON SUNDAY/15th February 2015

Tanzania Election Monitoring Committee (TEMCO) has set aside \$4m (Sh7billion) to be spent on supervising the country's voters' registration and constitution referendum processes.

The exercise will involve a team of 180 long term members and another 6,400 short term election observers to be posted in various polling stations in the country during referendum day.

Speaking to reporters in Dar es Salaam yesterday at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) the Co-Chairman of TEMCO Dr Benson Banna said his committee accredited to the National Electoral Commission (NEC) will observe post referendum developments in all the regions in the country.

Dr Banna said TEMCO will also observe the general election slated for October this year with 118 long term observers and 7,000 short term observers to monitor the entire electoral cycle.

According to him, the observation will also include intra-political parties' nominations of candidates for presidential, parliamentary and local council's posts in sampled constituencies on Mainland and Zanzibar.

"We have decided to take such a role because this is a component that is mostly overlooked by most election observers. This programme will assess the degree of credibility, transparency, freeness and fairness as well as the quality and integrity for this years' general election" he said.

TEMCO observers will specifically pay attention to the legal and institutional framework, intraparty nomination process, efficacy of election management bodies, enforcement of election expenses act and nomination of candidate, he said.

The areas on focus include campaigns, gender aspect; media conduct, referendum and election day activities that include voting and votes counting.

Others will include results aggregates, declaration of results and the ensuing of post-election episodes as well as complaints and appeal handling mechanism.

The don however noted that observers will also be exposed to their code of ethics issued by NEC and Zanzibar Election Commission (ZEC).

"Their report will be published in newsletters and distributed to election management bodies, political parties, government institutions and other stakeholders.

The Interim assessment reports for the voters' registration process, constitutional referendum and general election will be made public in both Swahili and English languages" he said.

TEMCO has been supported by the United State Agency for International Development (USAID) to handle the exercise.

It was formed in 1994 and has so far monitored five general elections since 1995. Currently, it has 162 members consisting of civil society, organisations that include Tanzania National Muslim Council (BAKWATA), Tanzania Episcopal Conference (TEC) and the Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT).

### Tanzania, Kenya in tourism battle

12 February 2015/World Bulletin

300,000 of the 1.5 million tourists who visit Tanzania each year arrive via Kenya

East African neighbors Tanzania and Kenya are embroiled in a battle over tourism that is likely to have a far-reaching impact on the former.

"For Kenya to enforce a ban that was earlier lifted because Tanzania asked for more time for negotiations is an act that lacks wisdom and a sense of diplomacy," Tanzanian Tourism Minister Lazaro Nyalandu told The Anadolu Agency.

Last week, Kenya banned Tanzania-registered tour vehicles from accessing Jomo Kenyatta International Airport and other tourist attractions, including game parks.

Kenyan Tourism Minister Phyllis Kandie said the decision was taken after Tanzania had failed to hold a previously agreed-upon meeting aimed at amicably resolving a dispute between the two countries.

"Three weeks have expired without our Tanzanian counterparts convening a meeting for negotiations," Kandie told AA by phone from Nairobi.

Last December, Kenya decided to ban tourist vans with Tanzanian registration plates from entering Jomo airport and other tourist attractions.

On Jan. 16, the Kenyan government temporarily suspended the ban following a meeting between Kandie and Nyalandu in Nairobi.

The two ministers had agreed that a second meeting should be held in three weeks' time to renegotiate a 1985 bilateral trade agreement.

The Tanzanian side, however, appears to have failed to abide by the deadline.

"After our meeting in Nairobi, the Tanzanian government asked for... another three weeks to give new ministers appointed in the cabinet reshuffle time to read the necessary documents before engaging in solving the matter," Nyalandu told AA.

"Unfortunately, the Kenyan government didn't accept the request and instead banned Tanzanian vans from Jomo airport," she noted.

Kenya wants to renegotiate the 1985 treaty, which, it believes, favors Tanzania.

Nairobi insists that giving Tanzanian-registered tour vehicles access to Jomo airport is not part of the deal and had merely been a "goodwill gesture" by Kenya.



The two countries are both members of the five-member East African Community (EAC), along with Uganda, Burundi and Rwanda.

The regional bloc is devoted to promoting regional economic integration, including a common market, currency, and visa.

## Hurting

The Tanzania Tour Operators Association (TATO), for its part, said the Kenyan ban would have a far-reaching impact on Tanzania's tourism industry.

"This is an alarm to the government to lift high-landing fees and put more effort into improving our airports to attract international flights," TATO CEO Cyril Akko told AA.

"This will enable tourists to come directly to Tanzania instead of using neighboring countries as entry points," he stressed.

Currently, more than 300,000 of the more than 1.5 million tourists who visit Tanzania each year arrive via Jomo international airport.

Harrison Mwakyembe, Tanzanian minister for EAC affairs, said the government was looking at alternatives with a view to fixing the problem.

"We are preparing ourselves for other options, including advising tourists... to use our Kilimanjaro, Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar international airports instead of Jomo," he told AA.

Tanzania generates more than \$1.9 billion each year – nearly 17 percent of its GDP – from tourism.

## Highlights of some of the radical changes in the New Education and Training Policy in Tanzania By Kitila Mkumbo/SOURCE: GUARDIAN ON SUNDAY /15th February 2015

On 13 February 2015, President Jakaya Kikwete officially launched a new policy on education and training. This launch comes after almost ten years of procrastination and shilly-shallying.

It is therefore appropriate to congratulate the Government of President Kikwete for the courage it has taken in steering the process to this logical conclusion and to finally put the otherwise old policy in the public domain.

In this briefing, I highlight the salient features of the new policy in comparison to the 'old' policy.

I have organised my highlights into three major parts. In the first part I highlight the scope of the new policy and in the second part I highlight some of the specific radical departures in the new policy.

In the last part, I conclude with my own assessment regarding the significance and enforceability of the new policy in addressing some of the most critical problems confronting our education system today.

## Scope

The previous education and training policy, which survived for 20 years since 1995, focused on basic, secondary, vocational education, tertiary education and non-formal education and training. It

did not cover higher education. The new policy is comprehensive in that it covers all education levels across the spectrum.

Thus, unlike previously, this policy also provides guidance on the management of higher education sector. Additionally, the previous policy put the responsibility of managing the education sector in the Ministry of Education and Training.

In the new policy, this ministry is only going to play an oversight role with a focus on formulation of policy guidelines with regard to basic education. The management of the basic education sector (pre, primary and secondary education) has been transferred to the Ministry responsible for local government. The Ministry of Education and Training, however, continues to manage the higher education sector.

The policy is less in detail and it only provides broad policy statements. This is also confirmed by the size of the printed policy document, which has only 68 pages compared to the old policy's 117 pages.

Radical departures in the new policy

Many of the policy issues relatively remain the same in the current policy, as was the case in the previous policy. Nevertheless, there are three radical shifts evident in the new policy as highlighted below.

Threshold of basic education has been extended and become fee free

The education system is changing radically from 2-7-4-2-3+ to 1+-10-2-3+.

This means that, while previously children were expected to attend pre-primary school for two years beginning at age 5, they will now study for one year (or more years depending on age) and proceed to primary education. The school-age threshold is also changing.

Children will now begin pre-primary school between age 3 and 5 and begin primary education at age 6 instead of 7. Basic education will now be for ten years and will cover secondary education. Another radical shift in this regard is that secondary education (being part of basic education) will now be fee free.

The policy is likely to trigger major curriculum reforms

There are several policy statements that are likely to lead to rigorous curriculum reform and change in the next few years.

For instance:

- Policy statement 3.2.5 has put an emphasis on communication, reading, writing and arithmetic skills as some of the critical competencies expected at basic education level.

This is likely to trigger changes in the pre-primary and primary education curriculum because currently the curriculum at these level is overcrowded with many subjects

- The new policy requires that there should be one core textbook for each subject for each student, whose preparation and production will be controlled by the Government. In the current practice schools are free to use any book provided that such a book has been approved by Government
- The policy calls for the teaching of peace and conflict resolution in the curriculum, which is currently not part of the official curriculum.

- The policy calls for the recognition, promotion and facilitation of the use of sign language in

teaching and learning

- The policy calls for the inclusion of the teaching of HIV and AIDS in the curriculum

The policy is evasive in the language of instruction

On the one hand, the policy seems to heed to the consistent call that has been made for years by some educationists and Kiswahili zealots to use Kiswahili as a medium of teaching and learning throughout the education system.

Accordingly, policy statement 3.2.19 proclaims: “Lugha ya Taifa ya Kiswahili itatumika kufundishia na kujifunzia katika ngazi zote za elimu na mafunzo....”.

(The national Kiswahili language shall be used in teaching and learning at all levels of education and training...”, uk.38). Nevertheless, the policy also stress that “kuna umuhimu wa kuimarisha matumizi ya lugha za Kiswahili na Kiingereza kwa kuzifanya kuwa lugha za kufundishia katika ngazi mbalimbali (there is a need to strengthen the use of Kiswahili and English languages as languages of instruction at various education levels).

Accordingly policy statement 3.2.20 states: “Serikali itaendelea na utaratibu wa kuimarisha matumizi ya lugha ya Kiingereza katika kufundishia na kujifunzia, katika ngazi zote za elimu na mafunzo” (The Government shall continue strengthening the use of the English Language in teaching and learning at all levels of education and training).

Effectively, therefore, the policy recognises both languages (Kiswahili and English) as media of instruction in our education system. As such, the policy is not helpful to the campaigners of using Kiswahili as a medium of instruction in Tanzania.

Concluding Remarks

There is no doubt that the new policy on education and training is radically different from the previous policy in a number of aspects as highlighted above. Nevertheless, it will be naïve to reckon that the envisaged policy changes will be realised easily in the near future.

These are policy intentions rather than actual happenings. The implementation of the envisaged changes will need heavy investment in human and financial resources. Indeed, the President was categorically clear yesterday when he said that most of the changes in the policy will not be realised in the next few years.

For example, he said that the process of transforming the basic education system to cover ten years, including secondary education, could be realised in the next ten years from now. The only aspect that the President said will be implemented immediately beginning next year is the abolition of fees in ordinary secondary education.

The policy is evasive in the language of instruction. The decision to recognise and promote both Kiswahili and English languages in teaching and learning seems to have been reached as a compromise to please the two sides of the debate.

As a consequence, I can bet that English will continue to be used as a medium of instruction because it still is largely associated with ‘being learned’ and the fact that it is much more available in the literary world than Kiswahili.

Furthermore, the case to use Kiswahili as a medium of instruction has always been made on the basis of cultural activism and romanticism rather than on solid evidence based scholarly discourse.

Clearly, this new policy has come at an opportune moment at this election material time and CCM will use it as an important weapon as it seeks to build a case for re-election. And the policy adds an important element in President Kikwete's achievement checklist.

Prof Kitila Mkumbo is a lecturer specializing in Psychology and Education, School of Education, University of Dar es Salaam

### Private sector welcomes power tariff reduction

Monday, 16 February 2015/by ORTON KIISHWEKO/dailynews.co.tz

THE private sector has welcomed the recent announcement by Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (EWURA) on the reduction of electricity consumption costs, saying it will bring down the cost of doing business.

But they were quick to make calls that the Tanzania Electric Supply Company (Tanesco) should move to address the issue of reliability and quality by March 1, this year, to significantly cut down operational costs for bigger power consumers.

Tanzania Private Sector Foundation Executive Director Godfrey Simbeye said in Dar es Salaam that they welcomed the development as it will reduce the cost of doing business.

He noted that his foundation has for long raised concern that higher power tariffs pushed the cost of doing business upwards.

The reaction from the private sector follows EWURA's announcement last Friday that electricity tariffs have been reduced by 2.21 per cent for Tanesco customers who consume more than 75 units a month.

The reduction becomes effective on March 1. Mr Simbeye noted that the power tariffs in Tanzania have been relatively lower among East African Community (EAC) region, calling on local firms to take advantage of the situation by devising strategies to step up production.

He called on Tanesco to move beyond price reduction and work towards improving quality and production reliability as the two "have remained consistent hurdles in obstructing improvement in the business environment."

He noted that TPSF and CTI would meet Tanesco this week to engage with the view to see how private sector can access reliable and quality power for their businesses.

In the announcement that has set off a sense of relief in private sector circles, EWURA Director General Felix Ngamlagosi said in their study carried out last year, it was found necessary to reduce the tariffs by 2.21 per cent because Tanesco had enjoyed unplanned income of 33bn/-, following changes in the cost structure accrued from inflation, oil prices and shilling value.

According to him, the changes in TANESCO's running costs include fuel costs at the value of 57.2bn/-, decline in shilling value that results in unplanned revenue of 6.7 bn/- and inflation that has resulted in 17.4bn/- spending.

He noted that according to their calculations, all the three factors have made TANESCO reduce spending on running costs at the value of 33bn/-.

“In line with our formula for fixing power tariffs, we have decided to reduce electricity prices by 2.21 per cent,” he had stated.

Mr Ngamlagosi has said that under the study carried out between September 2014 and January 2015, they instituted four tariff categories for Tanesco customers, including the ordinary ones who consume more than 75 units a month.

The second category is for customers consuming 400 volts, who will enjoy a tariff reduction of five shillings per unit — from 205/- to 200/- per unit.

The third category includes those who will enjoy a reduction of four shillings per unit, which is a fall from 163/- to 159/- per unit. The fourth category includes those who will enjoy a reduction from 159/- to 156/- per unit.

EWURA said the last category will include big industrial consumers of electricity and Zanzibar customers and that customers consuming 75 units or less than that would not enjoy a tariff reduction because already they had been subsidised by higher consumers.

It was also learnt that according to operating regulations on tariff changes, EWURA would be reviewing the power tariff structure quarterly with effect from April, this year.

KENYA :

#### **SOLDIERS TESTED BY KENYA EXERCISE**

Paul ward/heraldscotland.com/Monday 16 February 2015

More than 900 Scottish soldiers have faced gunfire, town riots, wildlife and on exercises in Kenya.

Troops from 2nd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland (2SCOTS) battle group took part in Exercise Askari Storm in the shadow of Mount Kenya.

The soldiers, from Glencorse Barracks in Penicuik, Midlothian, were attempting peace-keeping between the fictional countries and Jella and Sortu, amid intense 45C heat.

All weapons were muzzled and loaded with blank rounds, with a set of lasers and receivers attached to each soldier recording any simulated injuries, making the battle a "sophisticated game of laser tag".

Opponents in the battle - the British Army's Mercian regiment - were not the only thing 2SCOTS had to worry about as scenarios also included village riots staged by local Kenyans, employed to take part and add an extra dimension to the exercise.

The soldiers were not told how events would unfold and had to react to developments around them as if they were real.

At one point, A company of 2SCOTS had to intervene in 'Bala' when the locals clashed over the fictional war with staged blasts hitting the village. Some locals used blood-covered prosthetic limbs to add realism to the scene.

The training site in Kenya used to be seen as the primary base to prepare for deployments to Afghanistan but the the latest exercise was designed to "reset the regiment's DNA" as an infantry unit.

Commanding Officer Graeme Wearmouth said: "Here, we've gone back to basics - a light infantry force working out of a backpack, living on our feet and demonstrating our capabilities against what we would call a near peer enemy; an enemy that is not an insurgent, but a more conventional force who have their own artillery, air support and those sorts of things.

"It's getting back to basics and resetting our DNA as infantrymen."

Under an agreement with the Kenyan government, six Army battalions carry out exercises in Kenya every year, and despite a diplomatic row last year over travel advice issued by the UK to Britons travelling to the east African country, it remains an important base.

Commander Wearmouth added: "It's such an important relationship we have (with Kenya). We're only here as guests of the Kenyan people and they are truly hospitable.

"We have many locals taking part as players in the exercise in some of the fictional villages and they do the job so well."

The animals roaming the training area gave the exercise a sense of safari but the wildlife was not kind to everyone.

Private Jade Baptie, 23, from Edinburgh, was given a shock when a scorpion bit her hand.

"When we're being transported between spots you see hundreds of animals - sometimes elephants, baboons and lots of zebras - but when you're on the job you hardly notice them because you're concentrating so much," she said.

"That's what happened when I got stung by a scorpion while I was pulling my bergen (backpack) off one of the trucks."

Pipe Major Stuart Gillies, from Arran, Ayrshire, said: "The first lot of phases were in Archers Post where it was absolutely roasting, around 45C.

"I think I managed three hours sleep in the first couple of days of the final exercise because we were moving and preparing at night.

"It's obviously very different from deployments where the danger is real and everywhere but it's hard work and everyone takes it seriously."

### **Falling oil price gives more confidence to workers in Kenya: IMF**

by: `Customs Today Report/ February 16, 2015

NAIROBI: Kenyan farmer Anne Lidonde will plant more spinach than usual this year thanks to the collapse in global oil prices.

The middle-aged mother of two is one of the more obscure beneficiaries of a falling oil price which the International Monetary Fund (IMF) predicts will depress growth rates for sub-Saharan Africa to 4.9 per cent.

This is almost 1 per cent lower than previous forecasts, with key economies such as Nigeria relying on oil sales for revenues.

Kenya, like all but one of its neighbours in east Africa, is dependent on oil imports rather than exports. The big fall in crude oil prices has resulted in savings not only in petroleum products, where prices have fallen less precipitously than crude, but also for products that rely on fuel inputs.

Oil accounts for most inflationary pressures across the region, according to the African Development Bank, so the oil crash has resulted in lower prices for food and household goods.

“Everything is down: petrol charges are down, unga [maize flour] is down, fertiliser is down. I’m ploughing the savings back into the farm,” said Ms Lidonde as she boarded a minibus taxi that slashed fares by 20 per cent this month.

Inflation across Kenya fell to 5.53 per cent in January, down from 6.02 per cent the month before, according to the latest figures from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics.

This means most food prices are still rising especially in the drought-affected scarce season that lasts until the April rains but the cost of some staples is falling.

Average petrol prices fell 8.9 per cent in a single month, and maize flour by 2.9 per cent the largest monthly drop for any foodstuff, and hugely significant for the millions of Kenyans who rely on ugali, a cooked maize-flour dough, as their staple.

The impact is likely to be most felt in some of the region’s smallest, landlocked economies more than 1,000km from the coast, such as Burundi and Rwanda.

“Forty per cent of the cost of our imports and exports is down to transport, so we stand to benefit more than any other country in our region,” says John Rwangombwa, governor of Rwanda’s central bank. “Pump prices have already reduced by 22 per cent year to year. We expect it to have a positive impact on our growth figures.”

The drop is likely to provide a boost at the macro level for others, too. Kenya and Tanzania, which both spend about \$4bn a year on oil imports equivalent to 8.2 per cent of gross domestic product in Tanzania are likely to save more than \$1bn each on their import bills.

“Lower oil prices will be good for [east Africa’s] current accounts, many of which are dire, at over 10 per cent,” says David Cowan, Africa economist at Citi.

The World Bank says it is still calculating the likely impact of the oil price on the region’s current account deficits and growth prospects, but expects “substantial” savings.

Geoffrey Mwau, economic secretary at Kenya’s finance ministry, raised a note of caution, saying: “Despite the oil price drop, the shilling is still not that strong, so we don’t see a lot of benefits in terms of imports. That’s because the dollar is strong for a variety of reasons.”

The price collapse has also delayed plans by cash-strapped oil explorers for Kenya and Uganda to become crude exporters and grow state revenues, despite finds running to 2.3bn barrels.

Mr Cowan pointed out that the full extent of the price drop was unlikely to be passed on to consumers.

“The last few years have been pretty difficult profit-wise. Quite a lot [of importers, manufacturers and traders] may seek to rebuild profit by keeping up their margins.”

ANGOLA :

### Zambia-Angola link will boost trade

February 16, 2015/daily-mail.co.zm

A WELL-DEVELOPED transport sector is a pre-requisite for trade. The movement of goods from one point to another is facilitated by good roads and other facilities. This leads to increased trade. It is in this respect that we commend the governments of Zambia and Angola for inking bilateral agreements on water and railways transportation.

By signing the agreements, the two neighbouring countries have moved a step further to strengthening their bilateral relationship and cooperation in the transport sector.

Given the position of Zambia, a land-linked country, transportation to the sea is vital and we believe the opening in the western direction offers such an opportunity.

Zambia has pledged to ensure that the construction of the Benguela Railway is completed because of the inherent benefits it stands to offer to the country.

It is also important to note that the pledge comes at a time when the move to construct the North-West Railways has reached an advanced stage and works are expected to commence in June.

The lack of a well-constructed transport network has hampered trade between Zambia and Angola. For example, Zambia is more agriculturally rich and we believe some of the produce could have found its way into the neighbouring country if there existed a proper network of transport.

We know that at the moment, there is a form of trade that takes place across the border, but most of it is by small traders who have to endure some transportation hardships on the way.

On the other hand, Angola offers a source of cheaper oil and other products for Zambia. With the construction of an oil refinery on the Angolan side, there are better prospects for boosting trade.

Trade flourishes well when it is reciprocal and it should be conducted as a matter of a mutual agreement.

It is even better when it is conducted between countries that are near each other because they are able to save on transportation and other related costs.

Currently, Zambia sources oil from the Middle East and this tends to make the commodity more expensive for consumers, and with the opening up of the western border, there is hope that the price will be fair for a lot of Zambians.

Plans to complete the Shangombo-Rivungo canal is another effort that will enhance trade and movement of people between the two countries.

Both Angola and Zambia are members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and any agreement in trade is a move to enhance regional trade.

Regional trade offers benefits to members because countries are able to exchange goods at the shortest possible time and a ready market that is devoid of unnecessary trade barriers.

One of the bottlenecks to trade are barriers that some countries impose on imports, but SADC, which aims to enhance regional integration, has relaxed demands on goods to promote free movement.

We believe that the two countries are on their way to development and we want to urge the governments to continue seeking ways of co-operation to improve the quality of life of their peoples.



## Deepwater Assets to Sustain Angola

By MarEx /2015-02-16

By Celia Hayes, Douglas-Westwood London

As the second largest oil producer in Africa, Angola is heavily dependent on the oil sector, making it vulnerable to oil price fluctuations. In addition, drilling costs offshore Angola are very high, and DW forecasts a resultant drop in deepwater completions in Angola in 2016.

Despite this set-back, Angola's deep and ultra-deep projects are key to driving offshore production during a period of reduced spending and retrenchment. We do not expect to see projects that are past FID being cancelled and many projects have been under construction for a number of years and will start up in the coming three years. The recent start-up of Eni's West Hub and Total's CLOV projects form the basis of our positive short-term forecast: DW expects Angola to meet its 2015 target production of 2 million barrels of oil per day.

As cuts to expenditure are announced, operators like BP and Total are looking to core assets in Angola as a focal point for spending over the next three years. Importantly, Total launched the development of the Kaombo ultra-deep project in April 2014, bringing online a potential 230,000 barrels of oil per day following start-up in two years' time. Chevron, ExxonMobil and Eni also have major deepwater oil projects in Angola, collectively adding a peak capacity of nearly 1 million barrels per day. These are all due to start production before 2018. DW forecasts a dip of 2.3 percent in offshore oil production in 2016, before recovering to 2.2 million barrels of oil per day in 2021.

The downturn offers exploration opportunities for larger oil companies, with potential for expansion in Angola as smaller companies apply for farm-in partners and Sonangol aims to sustain investment. Eni have staked their claim, securing a three year extension for exploration work near their Angolan assets. Repsol has also displaced an exploratory vessel from the Canary Islands for a venture offshore Angola.

A focus on core assets, and even the expansion of assets in Angola has been the message from several major oil companies at the start of 2015, safeguarding Angola through a period of oil price turbulence.

AU/AFRICA :

## Egypte: l'EI affirme avoir décapité 21 chrétiens capturés en Libye

le 16-02-2015 /L'Obs

Le Caire (AFP) - Le groupe Etat islamique (EI) a diffusé dimanche une vidéo montrant la décapitation d'hommes qu'il présente comme 21 Egyptiens de confession chrétienne copte récemment kidnappés en Libye, poussant le président égyptien à faire planer la menace de représailles "adéquates."

Avec ces exécutions revendiquées par sa branche libyenne, l'organisation jihadiste démontre qu'elle a exporté ses méthodes d'extrême brutalité en dehors des régions qu'elle contrôle en Syrie et en Irak et où elle a multiplié les atrocités.

Le Caire a annoncé un deuil national de sept jours et le président Abdel Fattah al-Sissi a convoqué

d'urgence le Conseil national de la Défense, réunissant outre le chef de l'Etat, son Premier ministre, les ministres de la Défense et de l'Intérieur et les plus hauts gradés de l'armée.

M. Sissi a averti que son pays se réservait "le droit de répliquer de la manière et au moment adéquat, pour punir ces assassins."

L'Egypte avait été accusée en 2014 d'avoir mené des frappes aériennes en Libye mais les autorités ont nié. Des responsables américains avaient affirmé que les Emirats Arabes Unis avaient conduit ces frappes, en utilisant des bases militaires égyptiennes.

- Condamnations internationales -

Sur la vidéo diffusée sur internet, des hommes portant des combinaisons oranges, semblables à celles d'autres otages exécutés ces derniers mois en Syrie, sont alignés sur une plage les mains menottées dans le dos, avant que leurs bourreaux ne les décapitent au couteau.

En janvier, la branche libyenne de l'EI avait affirmé avoir kidnappé 21 coptes égyptiens et Le Caire avait confirmé que 20 de ses ressortissants avaient été enlevés en Libye voisine.

L'Eglise copte orthodoxe s'est dite "confiante" que les autorités égyptiennes ne laisseraient pas s'échapper les auteurs de "ce crime abominable." Al-Azhar, l'une des plus prestigieuses institutions théologiques de l'islam sunnite basée au Caire, a qualifié ces exécutions de "barbares."

Et tandis que Washington a condamné "le meurtre abject et lâche de 21 citoyens égyptiens", estimant que "la barbarie de l'EI n'a pas de limites", le président français François Hollande, dont le gouvernement doit signer lundi la vente de Rafale avec l'Egypte, a "exprimé sa préoccupation face à l'extension des opérations" du groupe jihadiste en Libye.

Le Parlement libyen reconnu par la communauté internationale a condamné "un acte terroriste", affirmant que ces "opérations terroristes n'affecteront pas les relations" entre les deux voisins.

De son côté, la Mission d'appui des Nations unies en Libye (Manul) a appelé "tous les Libyens" à dénoncer "ce crime terroriste".

- 'Le corps de Ben Laden' -

Une incrustation au début de la vidéo situe la scène dans la province de Tripoli ("Wilayat Tarabulus" pour l'EI) et un autre message écrit explique que les victimes sont "des gens de la Croix fidèles à l'Eglise égyptienne ennemie".

Un homme habillé en treillis militaire s'exprime en anglais avec un couteau à la main alors que les autres bourreaux, un derrière chaque prisonnier, sont intégralement vêtus de noir et silencieux. Tous sont masqués.

"Aujourd'hui, nous sommes au sud de Rome, sur la terre musulmane de la Libye (...) cette mer dans laquelle vous avez caché le corps du cheikh Oussama ben Laden, nous jurons devant Allah que nous allons la mêler à votre sang", assène-t-il.

Le groupe jihadiste dit agir en représailles à d'anciens incidents sectaires en Egypte, durant lesquels l'Eglise avait été accusée d'avoir empêché la conversion à l'islam des épouses de deux prêtres coptes.

La dernière vidéo d'exécution diffusée par l'EI remontait au 3 février, lorsque le groupe avait montré un pilote jordanien brûlé vif dans une cage. Il avait été capturé en Syrie en décembre après le crash de son avion alors qu'il effectuait une mission dans le cadre de la coalition internationale antijihadistes menée par Washington.

Accusée de nettoyage ethnique et crimes contre l'Humanité, l'EI a reçu l'allégeance de plusieurs groupes jihadistes, notamment en Libye et en Algérie, exportant ses méthodes brutales et ses pratiques médiatiques.

Le premier groupe jihadiste d'Egypte, Ansar Beït al-Maqdess, s'est rallié à l'EI et revendique régulièrement des attentats spectaculaires contre les forces de l'ordre, publiant des vidéos-chocs tournées durant ces attaques ou filmant des décapitations.

Depuis l'été dernier, le groupe a décapité cinq otages occidentaux enlevés en Syrie, trois Américains et deux Britanniques. Il a également exécuté deux otages japonais en janvier.

La Libye est plongée dans le chaos depuis la chute en 2011 de Mouammar Kadhafi, les autorités ne parvenant pas à contrôler les dizaines de milices formées d'ex-insurgés qui font la loi face à une armée et une police régulières affaiblies.

### Egypt says it bombed ISIS targets in Libya after killings of Christians

By Jethro Mullen, CNN/February 16, 2015

(CNN)The Egyptian military said Monday it has bombed ISIS targets in Libya after the militant group released a video that appeared to show the mass beheadings of Coptic Christians.

"The airstrikes hit their targets accurately and our eagles returned to their bases safely," a statement reported on Egyptian state television said.

The footage of the beheadings of at least a dozen men on a beach, which carries many of the hallmarks of previous ISIS hostage execution videos, has deepened international concerns about ISIS' growing reach into countries beyond its strongholds in Syria and Iraq.

The killings of the Egyptian Christians are believed to have been carried out by a Libyan affiliate of ISIS.

Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi on Sunday confirmed in a statement that Egyptian "martyrs" had fallen victim to terrorism and expressed his condolences to the Egyptian people.

Twenty-one Egyptian Christians were kidnapped in the Libyan coastal city of Sirte in two separate incidents in December and January. Officials said all of them were believed to have been killed.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry called Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry on Sunday after the grisly video emerged.

"The secretary offered his condolences on behalf of the American people and strongly condemned the despicable act of terror," the State Department said. "Secretary Kerry and Foreign Minister Shoukry agreed to keep in close touch as Egyptians deliberated on a response."

The White House also condemned the attack, saying ISIS' "barbarity knows no bounds."

"This wanton killing of innocents is just the most recent of the many vicious acts perpetrated by ISIL-affiliated terrorists against the people of the region," White House press secretary Josh Earnest said in a statement, using an alternative acronym for ISIS.

Members of the U.N. Security Council strongly condemned what they called "the heinous and cowardly apparent murder" of the 21 Egyptians.

"This crime once again demonstrates the brutality of ISIL, which is responsible for thousands of crimes and abuses against people from all faiths, ethnicities and nationalities, and without regard to any basic value of humanity," the U.N. statement said.

Coptic Christians are part of the Orthodox Christian tradition, one of three main traditions under the Christian umbrella, alongside Catholicism and Protestantism. Copts split from other Christians in the fifth century over the definition of the divinity of Jesus Christ.

CNN's Yousuf Basil contributed to this report.

### Time for redemption is nigh

by Elliot Ziwira/southerntimesafrica.com/20150216

PRESIDENT Robert Mugabe's ascension to the African Union throne may be the Holy Grail that the continent desperately needs to redeem itself from the whipping boys snare and establish itself as a force to reckon with in global politics.

When the wheel of fortune turns in favour of God's people, the devil always finds ways of throwing spanners in its spokes. It is not difficult to tell that Mother Fortune is nigh, or to discern her charming smile, as it is always reflected on the devil and his incarnates' frowning faces. Fear, real or imagined, is what always betrays the devil in his attempt to scupper the rise of the chosen ones.

That there were so many ruckuses on the home stretch to the revolutionary son of the soil's assumption of the AU reins is indicative of a turn of fortunes in Zimbabwe's favour and Africa's pride as a sovereign continent; and that the brouhaha intensified in smear campaigns to downplay the significance of the Chairmanship from the usual corner of detractors under the tutelage of the United States, her progenies and mouthpieces in Zimbabwe and elsewhere, does not only vindicate Zimbabwe's trajectory enshrined in its socio-economic blueprint, ZIM-ASSET and mirrored in the AU's Agenda 2063, but clearly sounds the panic knell in the erstwhile imperialistic world.

If it really is a mere ceremonial title, why would the colonially ensconced world make so much noise about President Mugabe's appointment to the extent of sponsoring malcontents to draw attention from his hugely popular presence in Zambia, to officiate, as the SADC chair, at President Edgar Lungu's inauguration following his victory in the January 20 2015 by-elections?

Is it not a case of a conceited lady of fashion who ogles about a beautiful and expensive dress on display, and when it is bought and donned by a friend, it suddenly becomes ugly and old-fashioned?

The shameless nudity of the Zambia circus to discredit the African revolutionary icon's presence was recalcitrant in the reportage it received from the private media in Zimbabwe, South Africa and other retrogressive outlets, and not in the host country itself. However, the gargantuan applause which reverberated in the inauguration venue when the African Union chair in waiting, and the SADC chair gracefully strode in could really not have come from mercenary political turncoats.

That really was the voice of Africa; the voice of the oppressed, subjugated, raped and displaced, welcoming the champion of their struggle; the ultimate hero in their dreams of economic freedom and empowerment, and it is this that the sponsored gang decided not to hear or see.

It is true that if a well-wisher or pretender disguised as a friend, pays the bride price for your wife, and is more than 70 percent responsible for her upkeep and that of your children, he calls the tune. Would you really fault her if she succumbs to his carnal desires or would it be possible for your children to untangle themselves from his labyrinthine snare?

But if your wife decides to throw caution to the wind and tell him to take his glossed help to hell to protect her pride and your manly ego, would you also fault her, considering that she might also be throwing a lifeline to the dungeons? Would that also not consummate your resolve to fend for her and your children without outside interference?

That is the unenviable predicament which Africa finds herself in, and had to decide at whatever cost at the 24th Ordinary Session of its grouping. The AU budget is disturbingly sponsored to the tune of 72 percent by co-operating partners, of which the United States and her allies contribute 60 percent, leaving members to meet the remaining 28 percent.

Such a situation is unsustainable for any independent family, as it robs it of its sovereignty and gags its voice.

The bulk of Malawi's budget, as is the case with many other African countries, is donor funded and as a result of that her policies are devoid of the wishes of the Malawian people.

Poverty indeed is the culprit that the West exploits effectively against the continent.

Riding on the wave of such a crest, Zimbabwe's and indeed Africa's detractors sought to derail the continent's train to prosperity through realization of the true value of her resources, as embodied in President Mugabe's policies and ideological philosophy.

It is rather hypocritical for the West to revoke the issue of the illegal embargo imposed on the motherland, which is unleashing untold suffering on the poverty stricken majority, and at the same time disowning the same; for the mere reason of subverting a popular vote.

Notwithstanding the predicament of scoffing at glossed aid, the continent's Heads of State decided to elect their trusted, tested and experienced revolutionary, Robert Mugabe, to steer the African ship to glory.

The West may vilify him, demonise him or even crucify him and rubbish whatever he stands for, but the statesman is an icon and a hero to Africa. His actions, desires and words are reflective of what the continent yearns for, but have of long pretended not to; for fear of irking Big Brother who holds the carrot stick.

There is no better person at the moment who can tell the African story with fearless conviction than Robert Mugabe, and the alien gangsters from where the sun sets are frettingly aware of it.

That Africa is endowed with vast mineral resources is as true as the fact that the colonial world was developed through their pillage; but sadly the continent remains poor and lies prostrate on the ground as the imperialists rape her willy-nilly.

Western hegemony which seeks to continue the subjugation of the once physically and emotionally

colonized should be seen as it is—a sugar coated devil.

Land has always been a people's pride, and it remains so, because without ownership of it development continues to recede to the horizon; it is the womb to aquatic, mineral, agricultural and other natural resources which makes it trite to wish away any struggles for the repossession or simply possession of the land.

History has it on record that colonization reduced the legitimate owners of the land to subsistent croppers, who barely exist beyond the tag of peasantry, on barren land; with the minority whose belief in the superiority of their race is legendary, occupying vast tracts of arable land.

In Zimbabwe for instance, colonial laws saw to it that 70 percent of the land belonged to about 4000 white progenies and only 30 percent was to be shared among the 13million blacks, who ironically are the legitimate owners.

In South Africa, statistics show that more than 80 percent of the land is still in the hands of the beneficiaries of apartheid, 20 years after independence, with only 14 percent controlled by the government on behalf of the black majority whose population is more than 50million.

It is against this backdrop that President Robert Mugabe decided to shame the West in its backyard, especially the British government, for reneging on their promise pertaining to the land issue as enshrined in the Lancaster House Agreement; calling the agreement a mere piece of paper; yet there are a lot of such pieces of paper the deceitful hypocrites want Africa to respect. The Pact Colonial between France and the 14 Francophone African countries immediately come to the fore.

The heinous pact requires the African countries which were formerly colonized by France, to deposit 65 percent of their foreign currency reserves in the French Treasury. The hard to accept fact that these countries have no individual monetary policies as everything is pinned on the CFA franc points to the baneful nature of neo-colonialism, which the continent collectively lambasts as reflected through Robert Mugabe's appointment to be the face of the struggle for

total emancipation and empowerment of the African people. As the incoming chair outlined in his acceptance speech; "African resources should belong to Africans and no one else. Except those we invite as friends, friends we shall have, yes, but imperialists and colonialists, no. Africa is for Africans, let us sing."

It is this hard talk that the revolutionary, whose values are respected the continent over, which he is vilified for; it is this same talk that he is revered and adored for, and it is indeed this candid talk that he will use to address Africa's unfair treatment at world platforms like the United Nations. Africa has come of age, and gone are the days she was given multiple voices to represent her.

The exportation of raw minerals or any other resources should be done away with - value addition and beneficiation should be the new norm.

Whoever wants to trade with Africa should be prepared to meet the continent's terms, because there is no freedom without ownership of the means of production; therefore, impoverished democracy is not what is yearned for; but a better standard of living for the majority, in a world where diseases are not manufactured to decimate presumed inferior races, where the mouth always precedes action, where every human being is given a chance regardless of race, creed or nationality, where the so called global village is not hijacked by thieving gangs, where wars are not manufactured to create anarchy and chaos as a way of plundering others' ancestral resources, where the power of mighty is checked to ungag the voices of the feeble and vulnerable; mutilated, displaced and

molested in full view of all and sundry over generations of stoic submission, where the multiplicity of religious and cultural beliefs is respected, where the word “terrorism” is not used selectively and where every soul’s dreams are given a chance to sprout.

Such a world is what Africa needs as is manifested in her appointment of the revolutionary grandmaster and seasoned statesman, whom the West choose to hate, Robert Mugabe, to carry the gargantuan basket of her children’s dreams and aspirations, and such a decision should not only be respected by a progressive world, but will function as a milestone that goes a long way in redefining the continent’s aspirations.

This indeed is Africa’s chance to glow in the limelight of global economic and political phenomena, as she redeems herself from the world’s punch bag and free for all tag.

#### **Nigeria: sept morts lors d'une attaque contre une gare routière**

2015-02-16/ xinhua

La police de la ville de Damaturu, dans le nord-est du Nigeria, où le mouvement Boko Haram a mené des attaques fréquemment, a confirmé dimanche la mort de sept personnes et plusieurs autres blessés lors d'une attaque suicide à la bombe dans la gare routière centrale de Damaturu.

Le porte-parole de la police de l'Etat, Toyin Gbadisoje, a déclaré à Xinhua que sept personnes, y compris la femme kamikaze, ont été tuées lors de l'explosion.

Selon lui, la femme kamikaze prétendant être une voyageuse a pris un autobus dans la gare et a fait exploser la bombe.

Le porte-parole a ajouté que les blessés ont été transférés dans l'hôpital spécialisé de Damaturu.

Il a exhorté les résidents à signaler des personnes, ou des objets suspects aux agents de police.

Les membres du groupe Boko Haram ont mené récemment des attaques transfrontières du Nigeria jusqu'au Cameroun en passant par le Tchad, en tentant d'établir un Etat ismalique dans le nord-est du Nigeira.

Le groupe islamiste a intensifié ses attaques au cours des ces dernières semaines lorsque les élections du pays s'approchent.

#### **Ebola-hit nations pledge to eradicate virus in 60 days**

AFP/February 16th 2015

Commitment comes as infections drop rapidly across the region; WHO still concerned due to recent spike

The leaders of the countries devastated by the west African Ebola outbreak vowed at a summit in Guinea on Sunday to eradicate the virus by mid-April.

The outbreak, which began 14 months ago, has killed more than 9,200 people in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia and savaged their economies and government finances.

Guinea's President Alpha Conde and his Liberian and Sierra Leone counterparts Ellen Johnson

Sirleaf and Ernest Bai Koroma made the pledge after day-long closed talks in the Guinean capital Conakry.

Hadja Saran Daraba Kaba, the secretary-general of the Mano River Union bloc grouping the countries, said their presidents "commit to achieving zero Ebola infections within 60 days, effective today".

The summit came with infections having dropped rapidly across the countries, although the World Health Organization says Guinea and Sierra Leone remain a huge concern as both have seen a recent spike in new confirmed cases.

Reading a joint declaration from the leaders, Kaba said they "recognised the efforts that have been made by the member states and the international community which have resulted in the decline of Ebola infections and death rates".

The World Bank said in January the economic damage of the epidemic could run to US\$6.2 billion, trimming an earlier estimate of US\$25 billion.

However, the epidemic "will continue to cripple the economies of Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone even as transmission rates in the three countries show significant signs of slowing," it said.

Worst case scenario "far away"

The International Monetary Fund announced 10 days ago US\$100 million in debt relief for the three countries and said it was preparing another US\$160 million in concessional loans.

The leaders agreed to formulate a joint economic recovery plan to present at a conference on Ebola to be held by the European Union in Brussels on March 3, the Guinean presidency said in a statement.

"This comprehensive plan covers topics that affect virtually all key areas of development: education, agriculture, industry, trade, health and social action that will focus on the issue of the management of Ebola orphans and impoverished families," it added.

Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, the head of the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency response, said the dramatic drop in infections from the October peak showed that "the worst disaster scenario now seems far away".

"The number of new cases per week declined from an alarming level of nearly 1,000 in the bad times of the crisis to 145 confirmed cases in the course of the last week in the three countries," he said.

"However, despite the significant decrease of cases we must always remember that it all started with one case. We know how on the basis of experiences in the fight against polio, for example, that it is easier to go from 100 to 10 than from 10 to 0."

In a sign of the fragility of the recovery, Sierra Leone was forced to place 700 homes in the capital under quarantine on Friday, less than a month after it had lifted all restrictions on movement.

The government said the properties had been locked down in Aberdeen, a fishing and tourist district of Freetown, after the death of a fisherman who tested positive for Ebola.



UN/AFRICA :

US/AFRICA :

CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

EU/AFRICA :

**Libye: l'ambassade d'Italie a suspendu ses activités, son personnel rapatrié**  
AFP / 15 février 2015

Rome - L'ambassade d'Italie à Tripoli a suspendu dimanche ses activités en raison de l'aggravation des conditions de sécurité, et son personnel a été rapatrié à titre provisoire, a annoncé un communiqué du ministère des Affaires étrangères.

Il s'agit de la dernière ambassade occidentale en Libye à évacuer son personnel.

Une aide logistique a aussi été offerte aux ressortissants italiens pour qu'ils quittent temporairement le pays, a ajouté le communiqué.

Les services essentiels de l'ambassade resteront assurés, a-t-il cependant assuré.

La Marine militaire escortait un bateau pour permettre le transfert dans de bonnes conditions des Italiens à travers la Méditerranée.

Il s'agit d'un allègement de la présence italienne, non d'une évacuation, soulignait-on à la Farnesina, le ministère des Affaires étrangères.

Le ministère invitait ses ressortissants à quitter le pays depuis le 1er février en raison de l'insécurité croissante qui y règne.

La suspension des activités de l'ambassade a été décidée après divers épisodes hostiles dans les centres urbains, y compris Tripoli, à l'encontre de l'Italie et des ressortissants italiens.

Une centaine d'Italiens se trouvaient encore ces derniers jours en Libye. Ils étaient venus au cours

des dernières années pour leur travail, notamment pour le compte de la société ENI (gaz et pétrole).

Un récent attentat contre un hôtel à Tripoli et la progression de milices jihadistes proches du groupe Etat islamique (EI) en divers endroits inquiètent l'Italie, qui souhaite participer à une opération militaire de maintien de la paix dans le cadre de l'ONU.

Dans une interview au quotidien La Stampa, le représentant du Vatican à Tripoli (vicaire apostolique), Mgr Giovanni Martinelli, de nationalité italienne, a déclaré vouloir rester pour le moment en solidarité avec environ 300 Philippins catholiques restés à Tripoli.

Les autres chancelleries ont suspendu leurs activités en Libye cet été après qu'une coalition de milices (Fajr Libye) s'est emparée de la capitale au terme de combats meurtriers et après la multiplication des attaques contre ambassades et diplomates.

D'autres pays, notamment africains, maintiennent leur dispositif dans la capitale libyenne. Mais la plupart des pays arabes, comme l'Egypte, les Emirats arabes unis, la Tunisie, l'Algérie ou l'Arabie saoudite ont aussi fermé leurs ambassades et ont évacué leurs personnels diplomatiques.

Toutes les compagnies aériennes étrangères ont aussi suspendu leurs vols vers et depuis la Libye.

### Italians rescue more than 2,000 Mediterranean migrants

15 February 2015/BBC News

The Italian coastguard has rescued more than 2,000 migrants in a major operation off the Libyan coast, officials say.

During the rescue, search teams were threatened by Kalashnikov-wielding men who approached in a speedboat from Libya, Italian officials said.

Last week, at least 300 migrants perished in the Mediterranean Sea.

They were travelling in dinghies that ran into trouble during stormy weather after leaving the coast of Libya.

On Friday another 600 migrants were rescued about 50 miles (80km) off the coast of the North African country.

The latest rescue effort on Sunday involved a plane, four coastguard ships, two tugboats and a navy vessel, according to the AFP news agency.

Local media reported that the migrants had been aboard 12 boats and had been taken to Italy.

According to Italy's transport ministry, four men with Kalashnikov rifles sped out from the Libyan shore during the rescue and ordered the coastguard to return a boat that had been emptied of migrants.

Some of the gunmen then jumped onto the boat and took off with it, added Transport Minister Maurizio Lupi.

The UNHCR says almost 3,500 people died attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea to reach Europe in 2014, making it the world's most dangerous sea crossing for migrants trying to enter the

European Union.

More than 200,000 people were rescued during the same period.

Many were plucked from the sea as a result of an Italian operation known as Mare Nostrum, which was launched in October 2013 in response to a tragedy near Lampedusa in which 366 migrants died.

That operation has now ended, leading the UNHCR to warn EU leaders to expect more deaths.

Some European countries, including the UK, have said a rescue service for migrants could encourage refugees to continue making the crossing.

The EU now runs a border control operation with fewer ships, called Triton, which only covers waters close to Europe's coast.

CHINA/AFRICA :

INDIA/AFRICA :

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

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