(The devastating impact of sanctions by the Tanzania Civil Aviation Authority against Kenyan Airways clearly prompted heavy political pressure on Kenya's top duo, and it appears that the lobbying and what essentially amounted to "get this sorted or else" messages bore fruit when Kenya President Kenyatta spoke to Tanzania President Kikwete to lift sanctions imposed by both countries earlier on at lower level.)

BURUNDI :

RWANDA :

Rwanda appoints first ever ambassador to Egypt
English.news.cn/Xinhua/2015-03-23

KIGALI, March 22 (Xinhua) -- The former Grand Mufti of Rwanda, Sheikh Saleh Habimana has been appointed during a Cabinet meeting chaired by President Paul Kagame as the country's first ever ambassador to Egypt, according to a Sunday statement released by the Cabinet.

It said that an embassy was urgently needed "to reshape diplomatic and technical cooperation links" between the two countries and "to give them fresh impetus".

"The relationship and harmony between the Rwandan and Egyptian communities are simply natural," the official statement said and noted that the leaders of the two countries shared a "common perspective" on a range of continental and global issues.

Egypt is one of Rwanda's leading development partners, especially in the health sector.

The two countries' leaders have expressed their desire to expand this cooperation to other areas, with Egyptian investments in tourism and the industrial sector being planned, it said.

Rwanda and Egypt and both members of the Nile Basin Initiative which groups 10 countries: Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

The basin of Africa's longest river serves a population estimated at some 300 million people.

An accord on the waters of the Nile signed in 1929 gave Egypt exclusive use and surveillance of the river whose source is said to be in the high mountains of Southern Rwanda.

United Nations envoy urges joint effort against armed group FDLR

Xinhua/23/03/2015

UNITED NATIONS New York (Xinhua) -- The UN envoy to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has called for joint efforts to fight the armed group Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) as the country is still facing security threat from the group.

Martin Kobler, the UN Secretary-General's special representative and head of the UN peacekeeping mission in DRC (MONUSCO), made the appeal while briefing the Security Council at a meeting on DRC.
.
"The overall security situation however is still not stable, let alone irreversible," he said. "Many still live in fear of rape, fear of attack, fear of being robbed of already meagre possessions. This fear affects every aspect of daily life."

More work is needed to reduce the threat from armed groups and violence against civilians to a level that can be effectively managed by Congolese institutions and to achieve stability through the establishment of functional, professional, accountable state institutions and strengthened democratic practices, Kobler said.

The greatest threat to peace and security in the Great Lakes Region remains the FDLR, said Kobler, who stressed the need for joint efforts to fight the armed group.

Tackling the FDLR requires a well-functioning demobilization and repatriation process and effective extension of state authority, he said, underscoring the need for non-military initiatives against the FDLR.

"There is no purely military solution to the problem of the FDLR," he said.

Also on the FDLR, Said Djinnit, the special envoy of the UN chief for the Great Lakes Region who attended the meeting, encouraged the DRC government and the UN Mission to engage in a structured strategic dialogue to resume full cooperation.

"The DRC and the Great Lakes Region have made considerable progress in overcoming the tragedies of the past but they are yet to achieve irreversible progress for lasting peace," Djinnit added.

As the primary remnant Rwandan Hutu rebel group fighting in the eastern part of the DRC, the FDLR is recognized by the Council as a group whose leaders and members were among the perpetrators of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

The eastern DRC has witnessed the threat posed by armed groups to state authority and civilian security since early 2012.

RDC CONGO :

UGANDA :

SOUTH AFRICA :

Colonial statue triggers race debate in South Africa
dw.de/23/03/2015

University of Cape Town students have called for the removal of a statue of British colonialist Cecil John Rhodes from university grounds. The event reveals deeper discontent with South Africa's state of affairs.

Controversy has erupted at the University of Cape Town (UCT) following vandalism of a statue of Cecil John Rhodes - a British-born mining magnate and South African politician active in the late 19th century. A group of students threw a bucket of excrement over the statue and later wrapped it in garbage bags. They also staged a protest on campus.

The demonstrators are calling for the statue's removal and have mounted a "Rhodes must fall" campaign on social media.

An active promoter of British colonialism and racial segregation in his time, Rhodes is seen by some as a symbol of white oppression. Adding to this symbolism, the mining magnate's name also marked the colonial map of southern Africa for decades, with "Rhodesia" a colonial term for territory that now combines modern-day Zimbabwe and Zambia.

In an open letter on the university's website posted on March 19, several students said that removing the statue would "end the unreflective public glorification of Rhodes at the expense of the legitimate feelings of those the statue offends on a daily basis."

The monument, unveiled in 1934, depicts Rhodes in a seated position. The university campus was built on land donated by Rhodes.

UCT Vice-Chancellor Max Price agreed that the statue be taken down - but also noted that the decision had to be made by the university council. He has proposed talks for staff and students ahead of a council meeting on April 15.

Tip of an iceberg?

According to Belinda Bozzoli, Shadow Minister of Higher Education for South Africa's Democratic Alliance party, the protests could have been partly triggered by "a recent rise in race consciousness in South Africa, which has highlighted some of resentment felt by black people."

"Another influence could have been UCT staff, who have previously pointed out that the university has very few black academics," Bozzoli told DW.

However, she also pointed out that the removal of a statue was a largely symbolic act that would not address any underlying issues that may exist.

This idea is reflected in the official statement by the UCT Student Parliament on the university's website from March 20. While confirming its majority vote in favor of removing the statue, it also uses the opportunity to address more complex problems.

"It is important to note that the statue is simply a symbolic physical representation of institutional racism," the statement reads. "Issues like the transformation of the curriculum, which is Eurocentric and undermines black voices, as well as staff demographic transformation are at stake."

South African universities in trouble

To Bozzoli - herself an academic and former deputy vice chancellor of the University of the Witwatersrand - the small percentage of black academics is the main race-related problem faced by South African universities.

"Unfortunately, the key to solving this problem is money," said Bozzoli. "There is no money for new academic posts in South Africa. Student numbers are expanding but staff numbers are stagnant. I don't expect this to change in the near future."

She also admitted that South Africa still had a long way to go in eradicating racism completely.

"Proper reconciliation hasn't been truly achieved yet," said Bozzoli. "Reconciliatory ideas vanished from politics with Nelson Mandela's death. Nobody is talking about reconciliation much today."

But she doesn't believe that the squabble over the statue of Cecil John Rhodes at UCT was the start of a new phase of debates on colonial symbolism in the country.

"There are many people here who don't even know who Cecil Rhodes exactly was," said Bozzoli. "This whole debate could turn out to be a storm in a teacup."

Analysis: The crisis at Eskom, a dry run for South Africa itself

Dirk de Vos/dailymaverick.co.za/23 Mar 2015

South Africa

The many and apparently never-ending problems at South Africa's State Owned Enterprises (SoEs) provide fuel to the well-worn arguments that they should simply be privatised and sold off. They appear, as a group, to be in a permanent state of dysfunction and share many similar problems. Perhaps, then, what ails them all could be solved in the same way. The counter-arguments, informed by the belief that the state must play a leading role in the economy, hold that these entities are critical to something called the developmental state and perhaps something else, more ambitious, known as the National Democratic Revolution, should come into play.

While there are interesting parallels between Eskom and other SoEs, we need to understand that Eskom stands alone from the rest in two very important respects. Firstly, Eskom dwarfs the other SoEs in size. Consider this: the proposed full re-capitalisation of SAA will require R6.5 billion.

That is less than the outstanding R8 billion electricity bill that Soweto residents owe Eskom. Eskom's sheer size sets it apart. Secondly, Eskom, a total monopoly, represents almost entirely our national electricity system. By definition, we could not function as a recognisable society without electricity, and therefore without Eskom.

Its size, its monopoly and its central importance to our economy and broader society suggest instead that a more useful comparison would be with our government itself. How Eskom's crisis plays out provides a forecasting tool for South Africa's own fate.

Finance Minister Nhlanhla Nene's first full budget presentation in February this year will be remembered for its increases in various taxes. Further increases in different types of taxes are likely after The Davis Tax Committee presents its findings and recommendations. These increases have been widely expected. The reasons are clear – our government's growth in expenditure is more than the growth of the underlying economy. Minister Nene also made a call to halt spiralling government expenditure. Typically, there were those that criticised this budget as an inappropriate austerity budget, others who decried the tax increases as a further break on economic growth. We are even seeing the comeback of an economic concept last spoken about in the 1980s, namely the Laffer Curve, which shows that there is only so much tax that can be extracted from an economy. Increases in tax rates beyond a point serve to decrease the total amount of tax collected. Discussions about an incipient tax revolt by taxpayers are now front page news.

Conventional Keynesian theory holds that government should step in and spend during an economic slow-down and that is exactly what the South African government, along with most other governments in the world, has done, aided by an extended historically low interest rate environment. But it can't go on forever. While South Africa's government has aspirations for being a developmental state, it is very far from being one. We are an importing economy, not an exporting one. Our focus has long been on consumption and not production. This much is clear from an outstanding analysis done by one of the Mbeki government's economic advisors, Ricardo Hausman.

The result of all this is that South African government is now increasingly indebted. How much debt a country can handle is another debate. Famously, an economics paper produced by academics Carmen Reinhardt and Kenneth Rogoff in 2010 used a statistical analysis to show government debt in the US should be kept below 90% of GDP if economic growth was not to be permanently harmed. Their analysis was later shown to be unreliable, but all that is hardly relevant to South Africa. While rich and developed countries appear to be able to borrow and manage seemingly endless amounts of debt, our creditors are significantly charier about lending our government the money needed to bridge deficits.

Becoming more indebted is not so much the problem as much as the cost or interest demanded on that debt. The cost of debt is a function of our creditworthiness as reflected in the scores provided by debt rating agencies. As South Africa's government took on more debt from 27.8% of GDP in 2008/09 to a projected 48% by next year, our creditworthiness has declined. While we are still in investment grade territory, our declining credit status is a limit on further borrowing, especially when borrowing supports expenditure that is directed at consumption spending and not investment. We spend 10%, or nearly R115 billion, of our government's budget to pay off our existing debt, about two-thirds the amount paid to all South Africa's 17 million odd social grant beneficiaries. If we don't turn the situation around, South Africa will fall over its fiscal cliff.

Eskom finances are now in a far worse state than South Africa's. There was a time recently when Eskom had a better credit rating than government's sovereign debt. No more. Eskom's long-term debt has ballooned in recent times, and is fast approaching R300 billion, an amount equal to 18% of total government indebtedness. It is not clear whether this provides for the R160 billion still needed to get our grid up to standard. Once again, debt in of itself is not the real problem. It could be argued that a utility like Eskom should be using debt to finance its activities. It is, however, a problem when creditors call into question the ability to repay them. Debt-servicing costs, according to Eskom's annual reports, have doubled from R4.2 billion in 2008-2009 to over R9 billion in 2013-14. Last week, rating agency Standard & Poor's downgraded Eskom debt to junk status. This will immediately increase the interest payable on existing debt and, coincidentally, on the same day as the S&P downgrade, Eskom announced that it was seeking a 25% tariff hike. Eskom is confronted with its own fiscal cliff. Using the analogy, Eskom needs to extract more money from its customers. Not the relatively gentle increments required of us by Minister Nene, but a very steep increment.

What remains to be seen is South Africa's electricity 'Laffer Curve' equivalent. It is the great imponderable. The more one charges for a unit of electricity, the less electricity is used. Already Eskom is reporting lower sales, and in an economy with one of the highest energy intensities, it is tough to work out immediate, medium and long term price elasticity for electricity. Most analysis, including the government's planning document, the Integrated Resource Plan 2010-2030, and analyses such as the recent effort by the IRR - which predicts a massive 18,000 MW shortfall - take the view that increased demand for electricity is an almost straight line function of economic growth. They are almost certainly wrong. Demand for electricity is mostly a function of its price.

The suspensions of Eskom's management certainly played a role in S&P's ratings downgrade, but Eskom's performance as a utility has been terrible on all fronts. The Medupi, Kusile and Igula builds have been disastrous. It is estimated that Medupi and Kusile will deliver electricity to the grid at a price 20% higher than the highest price being offered to privately funded coal-fired power producers. So, too, the maintenance of existing plants, and with it decimation of the generating reserve margins. The coal purchasing or primary energy procurement function is obviously not working. In the meantime, Eskom's staff complement and their remuneration has grown out of all proportion. Even since 2008, when the first bout of load shedding hit South Africa, Eskom has grown its employee numbers an average of 23% to almost 47,000 people with an average wage of R623,000 per annum.

Government has been doing the same. From 2005 to 2012, the government's salary bill grew by 146%, and since 2008, government salary payments have increased by more than 80%. Research shows that the public sector also pays over 25% more than the private sector. It is not apparent that the rest of us are getting value for money. Large swathes of our public service produce very poor outcomes and are a substantial drag on South Africa's competitiveness.

On the face of it, South Africa looks to be running three separate social welfare systems. The first one we all know about, but there are also the welfare systems hidden in the salary payments to a large part of the public service and Eskom's employees.

The problem Eskom confronts is this: There is so much wrong with it that needs to be fixed but, in the terminology of venture capital, it is running out of runway. One of its essential requirements, access to cheap debt funding, is in the process of being kicked away by the credit downgrades. As such, the scope for solutions that are politically palatable to its owners has narrowed down considerably. Our government could step in and extend its guarantees, but that would have the effect of adding Eskom's debt into its own balance sheet. The impact of adding another R300 billion to our existing debt could well prompt an alarming response by the same credit agencies. As anybody deep in debt knows, your creditors get to call the shots. Even though all Eskom's equity is owned by the government, with a debt/equity ratio of over 2, it could be said that Eskom is already two-thirds privatised already. It is worthwhile noting that S&P's downgrading decision was accompanied by the reason that the "shock suspension of the utility's CEO and three other senior executives has led us to have less confidence in the company's corporate governance arrangements”. That looks very much like a reason falling within the domain of a shareholder.

Critics of the Mbeki government’s GEAR policies, derided by the SACP as the “1996 class project”, held that it followed conservative or neo-liberal economic policies favouring balanced budgets, and did so at the expense of the poor. The dynamic has changed since then, but as countries like Brazil are fast finding out, you can’t succeed public spending your way into a new economic paradigm using borrowed money. Rather do what needs to be done to preserve this precious sovereignty.

A lot of things are going to have to change at Eskom, and it will be rough ride. The first order of business for Deputy President Ramaphosa’s electricity sector advisors ought to be clear financial reporting down to individual plant level. We need to know what is going on, and so do the credit rating agencies. We know, too, that part of the solution is that Eskom’s salary overhead will need to be slimmed right down without losing critical skills.

It a pity that the necessary changes spelled out in the 1998 White Paper on energy were never carried out, and now change is forced on Eskom from the outside. There is a salutary lesson here for South Africa. As Eskom goes, so goes the nation? DM

TANZANIA :

KQ to resume full flights to Tanzania after Uhuru, Kikwete solve stalemate
By Ally Jamah/standardmedia.co.ke/Monday, March 23rd 2015

Kenya: Kenya Airways is set to resume its full schedule of lucrative flights to Tanzania after President Uhuru Kenyatta and his Tanzanian counterpart Jakaya Kikwete broke the deadlock. In addition, Kenya's ban on Tanzanian registered vehicles at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) has also been lifted, effectively unlocking the dispute that was threatening to choke the diplomatic and economic ties between the two countries. The two presidents met on Saturday and struck the deal in the Namibian capital Windhoek, where both were attending the 25th Anniversary celebrations and inauguration of Namibia's new president Dr Hage Geingob. The meeting took place three days after Kenya Airways flights to Tanzanian routes were cut from 42 to 14, precipitating regional tension.
Foreign Affairs Cabinet Secretary Amb Amina Mohammed said yesterday that the two presidents agreed that within four weeks, the ministers of Foreign Affairs from both countries would convene to chair a meeting of the parties to discuss and reach a mutually beneficial agreement. The first meeting will be held in Dar-es-Salaam on a date to be agreed by the conveners and will include ministers of Transport, Tourism and Chiefs of Staff of the two presidencies. See also: Tanzania mobile firm to spend Sh11b in expansion "The meeting was held under a very cordial atmosphere, with the two Heads of State emphasising the need to continue to discuss openly issues affecting the brotherly and long-standing bilateral relationship that exists between Tanzania and Kenya," said Amina.
She was speaking yesterday at the Foreign Affairs headquarters in Nairobi in the company of the Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and the East Africa Community Affairs Philys Kandie and her Transport counterpart Michael Kamau. "Despite our disagreements with Tanzania from time to time over some issues, our relations are cordial. Even brothers and sisters of one family can have healthy disputes occasionally, which are quickly resolved," she said. TRAVEL LIMITS The CS added: "We maintain good communication with Tanzania, which is one of our partners in the East African Community. I communicate with my Tanzanian counterpart almost every week." The Ministry of

Tourism of Kenya had barred Tanzanian registered vehicles from accessing JKIA while the Tanzania Civil Aviation Authority had reduced the frequency of Kenya Airways flights operating between Kenya and Tanzanian airports.
Last Thursday, Kenya Airways flights to lucrative routes in Tanzania had been cut from 42 to a meagre 14 by Tanzania authorities, threatening huge losses to the national carrier, which dominated those routes. In attendance at the ad hoc meeting in Namibia that broke the deadlock were Tanzanian Foreign Minister Bernard Membe, Amina and Kenya's Transport and Infrastructure Cabinet Secretary Michael Kamau. Countries in the East African Community are working to remove air travel restrictions in order to boost trade but this dispute between Kenya and Tanzania has been threatening to delay progress.

KENYA :

Tanzania and Kenya Presidents step into airline sanctions mess
eturbonews.com/23/03/2015

The devastating impact of sanctions by the Tanzania Civil Aviation Authority against Kenyan Airways clearly prompted heavy political pressure on Kenya’s top duo, and it appears that the lobbying and what essentially amounted to “get this sorted or else” messages bore fruit when Kenya President Kenyatta spoke to Tanzania President Kikwete to lift sanctions imposed by both countries earlier on at lower level.

It is understood that Kenya Airways and other Kenyan airlines will resume their full schedule with immediate effect and that Mwanza will also remain open for Kenya airlines to operate into.

The result of presidential intervention also exposes the incredible stubbornness and “cutting off your nose to spite your face” attitude among tourism and aviation bureaucrats and the responsible ministers on both sides of the border. Hotheads from Kenya and Tanzania for a few days were in a shouting match frenzy on social media and comment sections in the print media and several notorious individuals even spoke of cutting diplomatic ties. This exposed their dire lack of common sense and their ability to seek compromise over confrontation, something they seem to thrive on.

In turn, Tanzanian tourist vehicles will again be able to access Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, with effect as of today. First in December and then again in February, this whole scenario was made impossible by a verdict of none other than the Kenyan Cabinet Secretary for East African Affairs, who also still holds the tourism portfolio, clearly failing on both scores and paving the way for the confrontation of the past five days.

It is hoped that the directive by the heads of state to resume deliberations, and it is understood that the entire range of issues from both sides will be put on the agenda, can bring their bureaucrats to heel and have them do what is necessary to ensure continued smooth cross border operations for tourism and aviation.

Sources close to Tanzania’s Fastjet, an airline clearly meeting nationality requirements, as is outlined under the Bilateral Air Services Agreement between the two countries, are contrary to what ill-intended individuals have been peddling in public, having expressed quiet hope that their landing rights will soon be approved now that the spirit of give and take has resumed at the highest level of relations between the two countries.

Said an Arusha-based source: “Keeping these bans up, even in an election year, would have caused immense economic damage on both sides. This was the best outcome, and we hope that the next round of negotiations will reach agreement on a whole range of issues, all aimed to fully implement the East African Community [EAC] protocols in place about economic cooperation and access to each other’s markets. We need to learn to be partners. Our parks and attractions complement each other. Serengeti and Masai Mara are trans-boundary ecosystems which need protecting and using in equal terms. Tsavo and Mkomanzi and Amboseli and Kilimanjaro and Arusha National Park are adjoining, too, and I personally hope that sooner rather than later we can return to the pre 1977 modus operandum when borders were open across the EAC and everyone could travel freely.”

ANGOLA :

AU/AFRICA :

Egypte : un touriste tué par un requin
AFP/le 22 mars 2015

Un touriste allemand de 52 ans a été tué dimanche matin par un requin au large d'une station balnéaire sur la mer Rouge.
C'est la première attaque de requin répertoriée en Mer Rouge depuis 2010 : un squale s'en est pris dimanche matin à un touriste allemand et lui a arraché une jambe au large de la station balnéaire de Marsa Alam, très prisée des plongeurs et apnéistes.

"Lorsque ceux qui lui ont porté secours l'ont sorti de l'eau, il était déjà mort, il avait perdu la jambe droite, sectionnée au-dessus du genou", expliquent les autorités de la province de la Mer Rouge.

Une Française tuée dans la région en 2009

Il s'agit donc de la première attaque de requins connue en Mer Rouge depuis la série inexpliquée de 2010 à Charm el-Cheikh, une autre station balnéaire de la région. En moins d'un mois, quatre attaques de requins -un phénomène très rare à cette échelle dans le monde- avaient tué une touriste allemande et blessé trois Russes. Tous nageaient avec masque et tuba.

L'espèce suspectée d'être à l'origine de ces attaques en série était le requin océanique, très répandu en Mer Rouge. En 2009, une touriste française avait aussi été tuée par un squale au large de Marsa Alam.

Guinea and Sierra Leone tried to cover up Ebola crisis, says Medecins Sans Frontieres
telegraph.co.uk/ By Colin Freeman/23 Mar 2015

Report by MSF also accuses US biotech company of failing to spot cases in Sierra Leone

Médecins Sans Frontières has accused the governments of Guinea and Sierra Leone and a leading US biotech firm of obstructing its early efforts to bring the Ebola outbreak under control.

A new report by the aid agency says the governments deliberately underplayed the initial spread of the outbreak last year, and that when MSF warned it could be "unprecedented", it was criticised for "scaremongering".

The accusation of scaremongering - also wrongly voiced by the World Health Organisation - slowed the international response to the crisis, which has now claimed nearly 10,200 lives.

The report, compiled as a "lessons learned" exercise, also questions the conduct of a US medical firm, Metabiota, that was monitoring suspected Ebola cases on behalf of the Sierra Leonean health ministry.

Not only did Metabiota apparently fail to detect any cases of the virus in Sierra Leone during the early months of the outbreak, it later refused to co-operate with MSF in providing details of "contact lists" of potentially infected people, forcing the agency to work "in the dark."

"For the Ebola outbreak to spiral this far out of control required many institutions to fail," said Christopher Stokes, MSF's general director. "And they did, with tragic and avoidable consequences.”

MSF, whose medics handled most of the early frontline response to the outbreak, compiled the report to coincide with the anniversary of its own staff being alerted to the crisis. In mid-March last year, doctors in its Geneva office were informed of a "mysterious disease" in Guinea that had killed several people and had baffled the country's ministry of health.

Dr Michael Van Herp, a senior MSF epidemiologist, was struck by reports that suffers had hiccups - a typical symptom of Ebola - and warned colleagues that they should be "prepared" for an outbreak, even though one had never occurred in west Africa before.

By the end of that month, MSF warned that Guinea was facing an Ebola epidemic “of a magnitude never before seen", only to be directly slapped down the next day by the WHO, which said there had been only “sporadic cases".

In early May, meanwhile, the President of Guinea, Alpha Conde, accused MSF of talking up the threat from Ebola to raise extra funds, the report said. And in Sierra Leone, the government instructed the WHO to report only laboratory-confirmed deaths, hiding the scale of the outbreak by excluding the large number of cases of people who died before ever reaching a clinic.

"Needless obstacles made responding more difficult for MSF teams, who were refused access to contact lists and had to start from scratch in determining which villages were affected and where and how to respond," the report said.

In similar vein, the report criticised Metabiota, which, along with staff from Tulane University in New Orleans, was working as a partner of Kenema Hospital in eastern Sierra Leone in investigating suspected cases for the ministry of health.

The report said that as early as March of last year, health officials in Guinea were seeing Ebola-infected people coming in from over the porous border with Sierra Leone, but that Metabiota and Tulane continued to report no cases at all in Sierra Leone. "Their ongoing surveillance activities seem to have missed the cases of Ebola that had emerged in the country," MSF said.

• Sierra Leone orders three-day Ebola lockdown

It was not until May 26 that a case was first confirmed in Sierra Leone, at which point the government asked for MSF's help. By then, though, "the hidden outbreak in Sierra Leone mushroomed and reignited the outbreak for its neighbours."

To make matters worse, MSF said that when it then started operating in Kailahun - the first major infected area in Sierra Leone - neither Metabiota nor Tulane would share information with them.

“The Ministry of Health and the partners of Kenema hospital refused to share data or lists of contacts with us," said Anja Wolz, an MSF emergency coordinator. "So we were working in the dark while cases just kept coming in.”

The WHO has already acknowledging failings over its response to the Ebola crisis, and that it did not recognise "fairly plain writing on the wall’.

Metabiota, a San Francisco-based firm that describes itself as a "global leader in pandemic threat management", was already in Sierra Leone prior the Ebola outbreak working on other disease control projects. In December, it received a grant from the European Commission to work on testing and treatment programs for Ebola.

Tulane was not available to comment. But Metabiota defended their work.

"We play a supportive role to governments and we do not conduct independent investigations or surveillance in Sierra Leone," said a spokesperson.

"Metabiota adheres to international and national agreements and regulations and, in respect of these, is not authorised to share any results in Sierra Leone to parties other than official health authorities."

UN/AFRICA :

US/AFRICA :

CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

EU/AFRICA :

CHINA/AFRICA :

INDIA/AFRICA :

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

EN BREF, CE 23 Mars 2015… AGNEWS/DAM, NY, 23/03/2015