



(Les corps de centaines de personnes ont été retrouvés dans la ville de Damasak (nord-est du Nigeria), apparemment victimes des exactions du groupe islamiste Boko Haram, qui a perpétré de nouvelles attaques pendant le week-end, nouveau signe de son pouvoir de nuisance.)

BURUNDI :

[La radio coupée, les chefs de la société civile traqués](http://lavenir.net/28/04/2015)
lavenir.net/28/04/2015

Les autorités burundaises ont fermé lundi la principale radio indépendante du pays et arrêté l'une des figures de la société civile opposée à un troisième mandat du président Pierre Nkurunziza, tout en empêchant de nouvelles manifestations contre le chef de l'État à Bujumbura.

La RPA (Radio publique africaine), station la plus écoutée du pays, a elle-même annoncé dans l'après-midi s'être fait retirer son autorisation d'émettre, avant que son signal ne soit coupé. Accusée par les autorités d'incitation «au soulèvement», elle ne pouvait déjà plus émettre au-delà de Bujumbura depuis les premières manifestations de dimanche.

Un peu plus tôt lundi, Pierre-Claver Mbonimpa, patron de la principale organisation burundaise de défense des droits de l'Homme, a été arrêté. Selon son avocat, son arrestation est «liée» à l'appel du militant à manifester.

Un mandat d'arrêt a par ailleurs été émis contre le principal organisateur, au sein de la société civile, de la campagne anti-Nkurunziza, Vital Nshimirimana, passé dans la clandestinité, mais qui a promis, dans un entretien téléphonique à l'AFP, de poursuivre le mouvement.

«Ça ne fait que commencer, le mouvement ne s'arrêtera que quand Nkurunziza annoncera qu'il

renonce à sa candidature», a-t-il dit. «Le peuple burundais et la communauté internationale sont témoins que nos manifestations sont pacifiques».

Burundi: ce qu'il faut retenir de la 2e journée de heurts à Bujumbura

Par RFI /28-04-2015

Des heurts ont opposé manifestants et forces de l'ordre, à Bujumbura, pour la deuxième journée consécutive depuis l'annonce, samedi, de la candidature de Pierre Nkurunziza à un troisième mandat présidentiel. Au moins deux manifestants avaient été tués dimanche. Pierre Claver Mbonimpa, figure des droits de l'homme dans le pays, a été arrêté.

Avec notre envoyée spéciale et notre correspondant à Bujumbura,

- Heurts à Bujumbura. Au lendemain d'une journée d'affrontements violents à Bujumbura, qui ont fait au moins deux morts, dimanche, les opposants à la candidature de Pierre Nkurunziza à un troisième mandat sont de nouveau descendus dans la rue lundi, malgré l'interdiction de manifester décrétée par le pouvoir.
- L'armée déployée dans la capitale. L'armée est déployée dans les quartiers de Bujumbura depuis la nuit de dimanche à lundi, mais ne participe pas aux actions anti-émeutes.
- Arrestations. Pierre Claver Mbonimpa, militant de la société civile opposé, qui avait appelé à manifester, a été arrêté lundi matin. Selon un haut gradé de la police entre dimanche et lundi « environ 320 personnes » ont été arrêtées. Un mandat d'arrêt a été émis contre le principal organisateur de la campagne anti-Nkurunziza, Vital Nshimirimana.
- Réfugiés au Rwanda. Le climat de tensions de ces dernières semaines a provoqué un afflux de réfugiés burundais dans le Rwanda voisin. Ils sont 17 000 à y avoir trouvé refuge.
- LA RPA n'émet plus. Le signal de la Radio publique africaine, principale radio privée au Burundi, a été coupé à Bujumbura à la mi-journée lundi sur ordre des autorités.

■ Les manifestations continuent, l'armée déployée

Les affrontements entre policiers et manifestants, à coups de pierres contre des gaz lacrymogène, ont repris à Musaga, un quartier du sud de la capitale. La police assure tirer à balles à blanc et l'armée n'intervient pas. « On va redresser la situation », explique même un policier.

Manifestants et policiers anti-émeutes s'affrontent depuis lundi matin dans plusieurs quartiers de la capitale burundaise. La police est postée à l'extérieur des quartiers, d'où elle empêche les manifestants d'accéder à la place de l'Indépendance, où les opposants à un troisième mandat de Pierre Nkurunziza avaient appelé à se rassembler.

Si les manifestants, des jeunes pour la plupart, affrontent la police pour l'empêcher d'entrer dans les ruelles des quartiers, les militaires déployés dans la capitale burundaise y circulent librement. L'armée, qui s'interpose lorsque des camions anti-émeutes tentent d'entrer dans les quartiers, a même été acclamée par la population. Les manifestants disent que « la police est du côté du pouvoir, l'armée est du côté du peuple ». L'armée, elle, dit que sa mission est différente de celle de la police.

« L'armée a été déployée dans plusieurs points de Bujumbura depuis la nuit dernière [dimanche à lundi, ndlr] pour maintenir l'ordre public », a ainsi expliqué le général Gaspard Baratuza à l'Agence France-press, précisant que l'armée ne serait pas engagée dans des actions anti-émeutes mais qu'elle était sur le terrain pour « protéger la population ».

Sur le terrain, les soldats n'empêchent pas les manifestants de monter des barricades, pas plus qu'ils ne réagissent aux slogans anti-Nkurunziza tels que « Pierre Nkurunziza ira à la CPI ». Les militaires paraissent clairement là pour faire baisser la tension.

Pierre Claver Mbonimpa arrêté

Pierre Claver Mbonimpa a été arrêté lundi matin à la Maison de la presse. Cette figure des droits de l'homme, président de l'Association burundaise de protection des droits humains et des personnes détenues (Aprodh), était venu se renseigner sur l'incursion de la police dans les locaux de cette institution commune à tous les médias privées. « La Maison de la presse a été fermée. Et Pierre Claver a été brutalement arrêté par des policiers », ont confié à RFI plusieurs témoins, qui ont requis l'anonymat.

Pierre Claver Mbonimpa était à la Maison de la presse pour participer à une émission en direct avec plusieurs médias privés. La Maison de la presse dispose d'un studio pour faire des émissions communes. L'un de ses avocats dit se renseigner pour savoir où il est détenu, et sur quel motif. A la mi-journée lundi, les avocats de Pierre Claver Mbonimpa se sont rendus à la Documentation des services de renseignements burundais pour tenter d'obtenir l'information. Selon des témoins, le vieux militant des droits de l'homme aurait été vu descendant d'une voiture et entrant dans les locaux de la Documentation. Un garde à l'entrée du bâtiment a affirmé le contraire.

Pierre Claver Mbonimpa, membre de la coalition « Halte à un troisième mandat », avait appelé à manifester lundi. Il est déjà sous le coup d'une procédure judiciaire pour « atteinte à la sûreté de l'Etat », dans le cadre de laquelle il a été placé en détention provisoire le 16 mai 2014 avant d'être relâché en septembre dernier, pour avoir affirmé l'an dernier que des Imbonerakure, la ligue des jeunes du CNDD-FDD, le parti au pouvoir, avaient reçu une formation militaire en RDC.

L'antenne de la RPA coupée à Bujumbura

Le signal de la principale radio privée du pays, la Radio publique africaine (RPA), n'émet plus sur Bujumbura. « La radio est fermée sur décision des autorités », ce sont les derniers mots de l'animateur qui était à l'antenne lorsque le signal a été coupé, à la mi-journée.

A la mi-journée lundi, les autorités n'avaient pas donné les raisons officielles de cette fermeture de la RPA, la radio la plus populaire au Burundi. Dimanche, la police avait fait irruption dans les locaux, accompagnés de trois ministres, dont celui de l'Intérieur. Des négociations avaient suivi, et la radio autorisée à continuer d'émettre à condition de ne pas couvrir en direct les manifestations en cours dans la capitale burundaise. Ce média est accusé par le gouvernement d'inciter au soulèvement.

RWANDA :

Former Barclays chief Bob Diamond in Rwanda bank move
standard.co.uk/27 April 2015

Bob Diamond, the former chief executive of Barclays who quit over the Libor scandal, today took another significant step in building his African banking venture Atlas Mara.

Diamond has teamed up with Ashish Thakkar, an African entrepreneur who entered the Sunday Times Rich List this weekend, in 270th place, with a fortune reckoned to be £500 million.

They floated Atlas Mara on the London stock market in 2013 and raised \$325 million (£215 million) to make acquisitions across Africa in the financial services sector.

When at Barclays, Diamond had been a big fan of the growth of banking services, particularly mobile banking, among Africa's growing middle class.

The firm will invest \$22.5 million in Banque Populaire Rwanda, which would see it end up with a 45% stake. It would then merge Banque Populaire Rwanda with last year's acquisition of BRD Commercial Bank of Rwanda. It will eventually end up with a 70% controlling interest in the merged banks, which together become Rwanda's largest branch network, and second largest bank by assets, with combined value of some \$305 million.

Dutch bank Rabobank is a significant minority shareholder in Banque Populaire Rwanda and will remain an investor. This could lead to further opportunities to work together.

Atlas Mara said: "Given Rabobank's agricultural lending expertise and broad network of investments and operations in Africa and Atlas Mara's operational expertise and sub-Saharan African ambitions, Atlas Mara and Rabobank are enthusiastic about the potential to work together in other markets."

Banque Populaire Rwanda focuses on lending to small businesses and farmers, while BRD Commercial is in retail and mortgage banking.

John Vitalo, chief executive of Atlas Mara, said: "I am excited by the prospect of our second acquisition in Rwanda, which is one of sub-Saharan Africa's most dynamic economies."

Remembering the Rwanda Genocide

28 Apr 2015/thisdaylive.com

In Abuja, as elsewhere, several people gathered to remember the Rwanda genocide, 21 years after. Chineme Okafor and Peace Dasouza, who witnessed the memorial organised by the Rwandan High Commission in Nigeria, report

Beginning on April 6, 1994, about 1,074,017 Rwandans; Hutus and Tutsis were killed within 100 days in what is now referred to as the vilest genocide the world has ever seen within such short period. Ironically, the brutal killings continued while the world stood idly by and just watched until Rwandans came to grip with the absurdity and indeed vanity of their actions.

Indeed, the terrible acts which now form the unsavoury substance of the Rwandan genocide continue to raise extremely painful issues that are today dominating conversations in Rwanda and Africa.

Now, 21 years after that act was committed, Rwandans by themselves are dutifully throwing in everything they can and with discipline to circumvent a repeat of such history.

The 1994 Rwandan genocide which lasted for 100 days and recorded a total of 1,074,017 was indeed a watershed.

Before the "Interahamwe-(those who strike as one)," a local extremist group began the killings in Kigali, Rwandan capital city and continued over the next days and weeks, events leading to the

genocide suggests that it was not a spontaneous act but a planned, primed, taught and executed one which perhaps emanated from an ideology.

But like any other genocides that is recorded in human history, the Rwandan genocide was said to had started with an ideology promoted by the then sitting government which also organised the killers, listed the victims and of course, passed on the action of exterminating guiltless targets of the genocide.

In the course of the event, Rwanda ensured that its simple citizens who used to live peacefully together were instigated to eliminate their neighbours because of their tribal affiliations and as the world dispassionately watched on for that length of time, an average population of 10,740 people were reportedly killed every day or seven persons every minute that it lasted.

Men, women, and children were murdered during the violence and in some situations, the victims were reportedly given the option of paying for the bullet to make their deaths quicker and less painful with machetes or clubs, since bullets were quite 'expensive' to purchase.

To better appreciate the extent of the terrible things that happened in Rwanda within that period, young women and girls were raped before they were killed, and while others were kept as sex slaves for weeks, others were tortured and either had their breasts cut off or sharp objects shoved up their vagina.

Places which traditionally provided some form of shelter to people were turned into places of mass murder during the Rwandan genocide as thousands of people who tried to escape the killings by hiding in churches, hospitals and schools were found out and killed.

More accounts of the genocide explained that one of the worst massacres happened in the Nyarubuye Roman Catholic Church which is located just about 60 miles east of Kigali on April 15 and 16, 1994. The church massacre was encouraged by the mayor of the town who betrayed his assurance of safety to the refugees when he gave them up to the insurrectionists.

Notwithstanding the motives for the genocide, Rwanda at the end of that 100 days was completely destroyed without any hope for reconstruction or reconciliation of her people who were let down by the government that is constitutionally positioned to protect them but then capitulated in its responsibility and approved their killing.

Twenty one years after that, Rwandans have given up themselves, taken up the responsibility to forge a new life and emerge from the ashes of divisive politics, genocide ideology, and repeated massacres to a new nation of disciplined appreciation of ideals of each other.

In addition to initial in-house 'Gacaca' solutions in concluding trials of genocide suspects to as a matter of urgency refurbish the unity of the landlocked 'land of a thousand hills' during the last 21 years of its emergence from the genocide, Rwanda has continued to sow and nurture seeds of disciplined co-existence amongst its people, especially its young people which is about half of its 11.8 million population.

The Charge d'Affaires of the Rwandan High Commission, Mr. Protogene Nsengumuremyi disclosed to THISDAY at the 21st memorial of the genocide in Abuja, that over the years, the country has had to tell its story over again to avoid a repeat of the genocide in it or any other parts of the world.

Nsengumuremyi noted that in dealing with the realities of the genocide, Rwandans have come to appreciate that no human was born a killer but that extremist manipulations, brainwashing and bad

leadership could force people to commit atrocities such as the genocide.

He said that Rwanda was not prepared to go down that ugly path again and is tasking its people to stay above board on such national resolve, adding that just like in the pre-1994 genocide when politicians were fanning up embers of violence, political actors in some parts of world are nowadays found backing terrorist groups who kill people based on their religion, social classes, ethnicity and races.

“In 1994, Rwanda collapsed, destroyed by the hands of its citizens by the genocide ideology of its leaders and by the indifference of complicity of the international community.

But today, 21 years later, Rwanda is reborn from ashes, built by the resolve and efforts of its people by the vision of its leaders headed by Paul Kagame and by the support of the international community,” Nsengumuremyi said.

He added that: “In 1994, Rwanda was covered with dead bodies on our streets, in our churches, schools and Rivers and our hearts were filled with hatred for the other.

21 years after, Rwanda is aspiring for a better future and vision with purity in the minds and hearts of its children. Green vegetation and abundant crops welcome whoever passes and no more hate and revenge of the brothers and sisters.

As a matter of fact, we identify ourselves as Rwandan and no longer Hutu, Tutsi or Twa. Ndi Umunyarwanda/I'm Rwandan is a concept that has become part of our daily life.”

Nsengumuremyi further explained that recent attempts by groups of people to deny that the genocide did happen in Rwanda has been condemned by Rwandans who consider such campaign as cruel to the history of the country and memory of victims of the genocide.

He noted that such attempt to tweak the genocide narrative moved the government through its young population to couch the theme of the 21st memorial of the genocide on “fighting genocide denial and revisionism” which young Rwandans are seen to have taken up with vigour.

“The most important resource of Rwanda is her citizens. 21 years after the genocide, there are still those who deliberately deny the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi.

As states and nations members of the UN, it is our responsibility to sanction all those who for this or that interest still propagate the heinous ideology of genocide,” Nsengumuremyi stated.

Commenting on the roles that the young people of Rwanda has played so far in reconciling the nation, Nsengumuremyi said: “Youths are very powerful, they can construct and destroy because they are the most dangerous sets of people in any case that there is destruction to do but very powerful also in construction.

"African youths must learn not to listen to politicians who have the capacity to train them on activities that are not fitting for nation building and self-development. Our youths must begin to think big and have big ambitions and not waiting for politicians to merely use them to cause problems.”

He said that the term Kwibuka which frowns at genocidal tendencies was developed not to hunt anybody but to remind Rwandans of the ugly consequences of genocide which they have painfully fought to overcome.

“It is because we want to have it in our memory and that of our young people that we tagged this Kwibuka which means ‘genocide, never again’ and we have to say this because we know it and we don't want it again.

In Rwanda, we don't have Hutu and Tutsi anymore, we have one Rwandan and all opportunities that are in the country have to be shared equitably. Healing the hearts and educating both sides has taken so much from the people and government. We have put ourselves to task to be disciplined in how we live and that is why every opportunity that is in Rwanda has to be available for all Rwandans," he explained.

Similarly, former Nigerian envoy who was in the thick of the action during the Rwandan genocide days, Amb. Sule Gambari told THISDAY that it has taken more of discipline and hard work for Rwandans of all strata to overcome the 1994 genocide.

Gambari noted that it would have been difficult for any country that lost such majority of its population to rise up to its feet again without profound discipline, adding that Rwandans may have shown to the rest of Africa the good outcomes that can come from rebuilding a nation with discipline.

"It is a very moving event to remind all of us to renew our commitment and to really mean what we say when we say never again with genocide in Africa and any where in the world.

I was privileged to represent Nigeria in the security council of the UN in 1994 fighting for Rwanda and dignity of the African continent and to get the big powers to rally to stop the genocide," Gambari said.

He further stated that: "The rest is history and we must commend the spirit of the Rwandan people in reconciliation, reconstruction and recovery.

We must never encourage hate speeches, incite violence when we disagree politically and we must never target any group or parts of a nation for particular negative action."

"Politics of hatred and exclusion must never be encouraged in our world and it is only when Africans step up to address their security challenges that the rest of the world can help. Africans must enhance its self-capacity to react quickly to genocide and mass murder before the international community be relied upon.

"I am completely left with a very positive impression that Rwandans rolled up their sleeves and got down to work. You go to Rwanda today and see that the country is getting back up, the process of rebuilding is not complete but they have come a long way from the devastation of the country by genocide to what it is today," he said.

Another Nigerian who was moved by the discipline of Rwanda to live above the challenges that the 1994 genocide brought on it was John Kilaku, who told THISDAY at the memorial that the lessons from Rwanda can be applied to Nigeria's challenges in nation building.

He said that like Rwanda, Nigeria opted to move on with its life after the 1967 civil war but failed to internalise the lessons that were gotten from the unfortunate war.

According to him, unlike Nigeria, Rwanda who felt the pains of the genocide and decided that it will not happen again in their country have gone steps ahead of Nigeria to get its young population to live out the tenets of its disciplined nation building process.

"Basically, life is a going concern and everybody believes that in whatever situation you find yourself, the most important thing is moving forward and so if you see any one here back in the days, there were wailings and mourning but today we are celebrating the real essence of humanity because it entails that you must encounter challenges and your ability to overcome them is what matters."

"Indeed, that is what the Rwandans have faced, unfortunately this is the path they had to go through

but they have moved ahead. There were issues of civil wars in and around Africa and people have left that behind them to move on.

This commemoration is indeed different in that it is a conscious and disciplined decision to chart a new course and we have to support this noble act of celebrating humanity," he added.

On Nigeria's circumstances vis-à-vis Rwanda's choice of action against divisive tendencies, Kilaku said: "Nigeria can take from this very great lessons, we have had our own share of such ugly history which was the civil war, even though I was not born at that time but I imagine it and there is a slight difference from what Rwanda has gone through.

It is the same decision that Rwanda has taken that we also took and daily we preach for peaceful coexistence. I would however want that we stop the preaching now and go the way Rwanda is going by actualising a sense of it in our national life as it is working for Rwanda."

"Today, we have opened another chapter in our political life and it is all part of reconciliation and seeing that we have to leave our past and move forward.

What Rwanda is doing today should not been adopted as a feigned lip service in Nigeria but we should follow their footsteps through and through by getting our young people unbiasedly involved in rebuilding the Nigerian nation.

If we get our young people to become disciplined and passionately involved in rebuilding our country, I tell you that Nigeria will be great again. Imagine that the young population of Rwanda is driving this disciplined national renewal and think of what we can get from our young population if decide to follow the path of Rwanda," Kilaku added.

In the words of Rwandan President, Kagame, Rwandans cannot turn back the clock or undo the harm that has come their way through the 1994 genocide, but they have determined to keep a firm grip on their future and ensure that through discipline, no Rwandan is denied of existence by the hands of a fellow Rwandan.

RDC CONGO :

UGANDA :

Yoweri Museveni: Train Ugandan youths to tackle al-Shabab
27 April 2015/bbc.com

President Yoweri Museveni has ordered security agencies to re-introduce military training for Ugandan civilians to counter the threat from al-Shabab.

Writing in the state-owned New Vision newspaper, Mr Museveni said that although al-Shabab was "defeated", Ugandans need to guard against attacks.

Uganda has more than 6,000 troops in Somalia as part of an African Union force battling the

Islamist militants.

In 2010, al-Shabab bomb attacks in Kampala killed at least 76 people.

Catherine Byaruhanga, BBC News, Kampala

In his open letter, President Museveni focuses on al-Shabab, calling them "idiots".

But the threat of attack from the Islamist militants is not the only source of insecurity for Ugandans. As the Ugandan army spokesman told the BBC, al-Shabab are not the only targets of this policy.

In the past few months, security has become a bigger concern than usual in Uganda.

In December, two Muslim clerics were shot dead in the capital Kampala, and in March, the top state prosecutor, who was investigating the 2010 al-Shabab attack, was shot and killed on her way home from work.

It is still unclear who is responsible for the killings and whether they are linked.

It is also far from certain that military education for civilians would help keep Uganda safe.

In the 1980s and 1990s, Ugandan school leavers used to perform two years of national service before attending university.

President Museveni said he had already given instructions to the relevant security agencies to launch the programme, focusing initially on the most vulnerable areas in the country.

He did not give many details about the scheme, but Ugandan army spokesman Lt Col Paddy Ankunda said that there were no plans to arm the civilian population.

SOUTH AFRICA :

'South Africa is not a xenophobic nation': a letter from Jacob Zuma
theguardian.com/2015/apr/28

In response to criticism from Mozambican writer Mia Couto, the president argues that the actions of a minority should not be used to stereotype 50 million people

My dear brother,

It's a pity that we are reconnecting under sad and painful circumstances, which have prompted you to write an open letter to me.

I remember you from our days in Mozambique, and I cannot forget the friendship that your country accorded my comrades – and to me personally.

You are in pain as your letter indicates, because of the deaths of Mozambicans and the general attacks on foreign nationals in parts of our country. South Africans are also in pain because of the tragic and senseless killings of seven people in the past weeks.

This is a difficult period for our country and its people. Millions of peace loving South Africans are in pain also because they are being accused of xenophobia, which is not true. South Africans are definitely not xenophobic.

The actions of a small minority should not be used to wrongfully label and stereotype more than 50 million people.

Since 1994, we have worked tirelessly to rebuild our country and to reverse the legacy of apartheid colonialism. We have made progress in building a society that is based on the respect for the right to life, human rights, equality and human dignity.

We continue to build a society free of discrimination. We are doing so because we know the pain of being discriminated against because of skin colour, language or nationality.

You reminded me of the hospitality and generosity that was accorded to me by Mozambicans during my stay in your beautiful country in exile. We agree that we benefited immensely from international solidarity and friendship during our struggle against apartheid. Many were killed for supporting our struggle for freedom.

It is for this reason that we embrace our African brothers and sisters who migrate to South Africa legally. In fact our migration policy is advanced because we integrate refugees and asylum seekers within our communities. They live among our citizens, they are part of us.

Mozambicans and South Africans enjoy deep bonds that go far back into our history. These are bonds created by our living together, our working together, and of our fighting together against colonialism and apartheid.

We built our movements together in the early years of the anti-colonial struggle. We shared camps in Tanzania. Umkhonto Wesizwe (MK) cadres fought side-by-side with the Angolan MPLA and the Cubans to defend Angola's independence.

South Africa has not changed – and has not forgotten such comradeship and solidarity. But like most countries that have emerged from conflict, we have deep-seated challenges.

We appreciate the contribution of foreign nationals in South Africa. They add to our economic development by investing in the economy, bringing critical skills and through adding to the diversity that we pride ourselves in.

But there are also some complaints that citizens have raised which need to be addressed. These include the increasing number of illegal and undocumented immigrants in the country, the displacement of many local small traders by foreign nationals, and that some of the migrant traders operate illegally.

There are accusations that foreign nationals commit crimes such as drug peddling and human trafficking, that they take the jobs of locals as they're prepared to take lower wages, and complaints about free government housing that is secured by foreign nationals.

We have emphasised that none of these grievances justify any form of violence and that it will never be tolerated by government. We are also pointing out that not all migrants are in the country illegally and not all are involved in criminal activities.

The grievances of the South African population have to be balanced with the plight of many refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants from the continent and beyond. We therefore have a lot of work to do to find long-term solutions.

I have appointed an Inter-Ministerial Committee of 14 ministers to look into the broader management of migration. Drawing support from all sectors of society, they will help us address the underlying socio-economic causes of the tensions between citizens and brothers and sisters from the continent – and from countries such as Pakistan and Bangladesh – to prevent another flare-up of violence.

In the short-term we will also improve the implementation of the existing migration policy, including tightening controls at the ports of entry and borders and also ensuring adherence to the laws of the country, while protecting migrants and the local population from criminal elements who are taking advantage of the tensions caused by socio-economic challenges. Work has also begun to review the country's migration policy based on the current and recent experiences.

Our government will rely on the cooperation of sister countries in the continent from where most of the migrants come, as we search for solutions.

What gives us strength as a government, is that we are working with the full support of our peace-loving population. The peace and friendship marches that are being held throughout the country embody the South Africa we know and the South Africa we are proud of.

That is the South Africa which condemns hatred, violence, racism, xenophobia and all other related intolerances.

I invite you to join us my dear brother, as we move beyond the anger and pain, and promote sustainable and inclusive development as well as peace and friendship all over Africa.

Sincerely yours,

President Jacob Zuma

'Dear President Zuma': a letter from Mia Couto

In the aftermath of last week's xenophobic attacks the prominent Mozambican writer penned an open letter to president Jacob Zuma which was published by the Daily Maverick last week.

Couto reminded him of the "high price" South Africa's neighbouring countries, including Mozambique, paid in supporting the liberation of apartheid.

The fragile Mozambican economy was wrecked. Our territory was invaded and bombed. Mozambicans died in defence of their brothers on the other side of the border

A history which, as Couto argues, makes it hard to comprehend why South Africans would brutally turn on foreign nationals.

The attacks left seven dead and thousands displaced on the streets of South Africa's cities, shops were looted and torched, and South Africa's "rainbow nation" was thoroughly shaken: "The fabric of the nation is splitting at the seams," the Desmond and Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation said last week.

Zuma and his African National Congress (ANC) party have been accused by Couto, among others,

of failing to do more to protect fellow Africans.

This letter was originally published by the Daily Maverick, part of the Guardian Africa network

We are Africa's safe haven - Zuma

April 28 2015/By Marianne Merten/iol.co.za

Johannesburg - South Africa will brief continental and international organisations on the spate of violence against foreign nationals, President Jacob Zuma said at Monday's official Freedom Day commemoration of 21 years of democracy.

Zuma announced he would submit a formal report to the Southern African Development Community, the AU and the UN on the violence - before going off-script amid queries from the audience on what the report would say.

Zuma tread a careful balance between not being seen to criticise other African governments while urging continental and regional discussions on, among others, why refugees and asylum-seekers did not shelter in countries neighbouring their own as per convention, but continued to travel to South Africa.

"I don't think we need to appear as being critical of other governments. We can't," he said. "They (refugees) know South Africa is a safer country... When they are here, they live like Africans among their brothers and sisters. They don't live in camps. My view is that these matters needs to be discussed by the African Union. As much as we have a problem, alleged to be xenophobic, our brother countries contribute to this."

Recalling discussions last week between the government and organisations representing foreign nationals, Zuma said the representatives cautioned on a new influx of refugees and asylum-seekers as the the state of affairs in their countries deteriorated further.

"Some of them had very serious allegations against their own countries to explain why they are in South Africa," Zuma said, emphasising the need for discussions within SADC and the AU.

"Everybody then criticises South Africa as if we are manufacturing a problem. But what prompted these people to be here? All of us need to treat our citizens with care."

Monday's Freedom Day commemoration took place in the wake of xenophobic violence that spread from Durban to Joburg this month, leaving at least seven dead, including three South Africans, and thousands displaced in temporary camps.

Last week, soldiers were deployed in hotspots, and in seven provinces with points of entry for foreigners, amid a series of steps the government undertook, including various ministerial meetings with communities.

On Monday, Zuma again condemned the xenophobic attacks: "They have no place in a democracy where people are free to express their unhappiness about any issue."

And then he launched into a commentary on South Africa as an angry nation with a propensity to use violence due to its unresolved legacy of dehumanisation and culture of violence embedded by apartheid.

Zuma used Parliament as an example, in a veiled reference to the EFF, which has shaken up parliamentary activities.

“Look at the institution that is said to be the apex of democracy - Parliament. Look at the politicians who you voted for, how angry they are. How defiant they are in Parliament,” Zuma said.

“That is a glaring example of the nature of apartheid culture of violence that is left with us. It’s not just with ordinary people, it’s even in Parliament.

“We need to be cured. We’re sick.”

Across the country, at the EFF Freedom Day event in Inanda near Durban, party leader Julius Malema took a different tack. He said the EFF would continue “speaking truth” even in Parliament, where MPs could no longer just sleep, as the party was not afraid of either Zuma or the police in its drive for economic transformation.

The EFF rally went ahead following the eThekweni council’s reversal of its decision to withdraw permission on Friday, after the required meetings for safety and the like were held, and deposits paid.

While DA national spokeswoman Phumzile van Damme paid tribute to Nelson Mandela at the party’s Freedom Day event in Mangaung, Eastern Cape DA leader Athol Trollip, who is contesting the party chairmanship, led a “freedom tour” through Nelson Mandela Bay, calling on residents to vote for change in next year’s local government elections.

DA leader Helen Zille issued an SA Today online newsletter to call for “real” transformation, highlighting her party’s drive to hold maintenance defaulters accountable.

While apartheid carried “a great deal of the blame for the erosion of the family structure in black communities”, she said, responsible parenthood should be “front and centre of our debate on how to redress the legacy of apartheid and remove the barriers to real transformation”.

Meanwhile, Freedom Front Plus leader Pieter Mulder called for the recognition of everyone’s contribution to a democratic South Africa, while

Cope leader Mosiuoa Lekota urged the government to tackle unemployment.

South Africa and Nigeria spar over xenophobic violence

28 Apr 2015/Azad Essa, Khadija Patel/mg.co.za

SA condemns the withdrawing of envoys by Nigeria and says it did not blame Nigeria for poorly handling the aftermath of the church collapse in 2014.

The recent xenophobic violence in South Africa against migrant workers has sparked a new diplomatic rift with Nigeria, with the South African government condemning Nigeria’s decision to withdraw its envoys from Pretoria.

On Sunday, the South African government released a statement calling Nigeria’s move “an unfortunate and regrettable step” and said the government and a wide range of civic organisations had been “decisive and unequivocal” in condemning the attacks on foreign nationals in the country.

The statement by South Africa's Department of International Cooperation, however, goes on to deride the Nigerian government over its inability to reign in the Boko Haram insurgency in the north of its country. It also points out that South Africa did not blame the Nigerian government for poorly handling the aftermath of the collapse of a church building in 2014, which left 84 South Africans dead.

Nigeria's acting high commissioner in South Africa, Martin Cobham, and the consul-general, Uche Ajulu-Okeke were called home on Saturday to brief the Nigerian Parliament about the welfare of Nigerian citizens in South Africa following the anti-immigrant violence in Durban and Johannesburg.

Tolu Ogunlesi, West Africa editor of the Africa Report magazine, criticised the tenor of the South African government's statement.

Ogunlesi said it was not logical to compare the Nigerian Church disaster in 2014 to the xenophobic attacks and referring to the church disaster was misplaced in a diplomatic context. The Nigerian government has been criticised for mishandling the response to the collapse, with bodies repatriated some nine months afterwards.

"The statement sounded like the thoughts of someone, rather than a diplomatic response," he said.

Many South Africans, however, including prominent South African analyst, Eusebius McKaiser, have described South Africa's response as justified.

"This response from South Africa – via Clayson Monyela (deputy director-general of the Department of International Relations and Co-Operation) – is fully justified in my view," McKaiser wrote on Facebook on Sunday night.

"However it certainly helps neither South Africa nor Nigeria – and definitely not the continent, geopolitically – for diplomatic relations between us to deteriorate," he added.

Nigeria 'opportunistic'

While some have described Nigeria's decision to recall its envoy as "opportunistic", others say the action has only come after public pressure.

"The government did not say anything even in the face of protests almost on a daily basis especially in Abuja and Lagos," Deji Badmus, a freelance journalist based in Lagos, said.

Badmus told Al Jazeera that the government decided to act following the decision of the Parliament and a meeting of the Nigerian senate.

"I don't think it would have been proper for the Nigerian government to say nothing, do nothing, when, foreigners, not just Nigerians are being attacked in South Africa," Badmus said.

Jackie Cilliers, executive director of the Institute for Security Studies in Pretoria, however, feels that Nigeria's diplomatic withdrawal is not indicative of a continent-wide indictment of the South African government's failure to stop anti-immigrant violence.

"I don't think Nigeria's action is a statement on behalf of the rest of the continent," he said, adding that the "reality is Africa is multi-polar and there is no singular country that can speak for the entire continent".

Rift between leaders

Few believe Nigeria's decision to recall its envoys speaks for anyone other than themselves.

Nigeria and South Africa haven't enjoyed close relations in the past decade, especially under the leadership of presidents Jacob Zuma and Goodluck Jonathan. Analysts see this rift as part of the larger story of worsening relations between the two countries.

"It has become an all-out contest for influence in Africa between South Africa and Nigeria," Cilliers said.

Leaders from Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe have publicly condemned the attacks, with both Malawi and Zimbabwe sending buses to repatriate citizens following the violence.

Few doubt however, that the violence has been a blow to South Africa's image.

"I think African states have reacted quite strongly to the xenophobic violence in South Africa this time," Cilliers said.

Zuma's administration has come under much criticism for the violence. But not everyone agrees the South African government's response has been poor. Cilliers, for one, describes the government's response as "admirable".

Tolu Ogunlesi said the latest developments between the two countries was only a manifestation of the quality of leadership in both.

"President Goodluck Jonathan has been a dismal leader and Zuma has also not lived up to his responsibility," he said from Lagos.

"They both don't inspire confidence within their countries and outside," he said.

At least seven people in South Africa have been killed in the attacks against migrants since March 20, when South Africa's Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini spoke out against foreign workers.

South Africa comes of age on Freedom Day

28 April 2015/southafrica.info

As South Africa entered its third decade of freedom on 27 April, President Jacob Zuma recommitted his government to the vision of building a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous South Africa.

"We recommit ourselves as government to ensure that all policies and plans that we develop and implement, build a better future for our children and the youth," he said at the official Freedom Day celebrations on the lawns of the Union Buildings in Pretoria.

Freedom Day this year was celebrated under the theme: "Celebrating the third decade of our freedom through accelerating radical economic transformation."

The mood was more sombre than in previous years among the hundreds of people at the official celebrations, with some wearing T-shirts condemning the recent attacks on people from other African countries.

For 47-year-old Martha Mamonyane from Mamelodi, freedom means equality and expression. "For me, to be free is to be able to complain and take to the streets without fear of being arrested," she said. "I still have complaints; there are no jobs, but we have come a long way as a country. For example, my grandchildren go to non-racial schools."

Plenty of possibilities

Tinyiko Maluleka, 23, said he felt that he lived in a country that was alive with possibilities. "I think maybe there's some hope. We might need 30 years after 1994 for everyone to fully see the outcomes of our freedom but I believe we are not far from the right track. For now, I am grateful that I can do my own thing and be openly gay [and] no one can tell me anything."

Mandy Sithole, 31, was moved by how South Africans were coming together, despite some "intolerances" from a few people in the country. "No matter what, South Africans always come together. For example, people from all walks of life stood together in condemning the attacks on our African brothers and sisters in certain parts of the country," she said.

"We united in saying not in our name and time, which is one of our best traits as a country."

Sithole also felt that the country was doing well in promoting individual rights and freedoms. "We now all have rights, but our need to emphasise the fact that our rights do come with responsibilities. Many still need to be educated and more progress can be done in this regard."

But not everyone was optimistic. Emmanuel Chaane (37) said there were a lot of things happening in South Africa which he felt needed to be addressed speedily. "We still have poverty, crime like we still kill two-year-old kids, rape our children and of course unemployment... that's not freedom," said Chaane, who attributed most of these ills to the sense of laziness.

"Having said that we have our little positives. I think South Africa has a lot to offer for those who want to be in it. We have, to a large extent, political freedom and freedom of association."

A better future

The president told the large crowd filling the white marquee that the country was in a much better place than it was 21 years ago, despite its challenges. "Millions of people now have access to education, health care and water which they did not have in 1994. We continue to explore ways to improve quality education. We continue to implement programmes which will lead to economic freedom."

The government would use the National Development Plan to achieve the type of society South Africa wanted in 2030. The government had also put in place other programmes to reach these goals, such as Operation Phakisa, the massive industrialisation and infrastructure programmes. These were set up to include in the economy previously disadvantaged people, women, youth and people with disabilities.

"We are still learning but we are determined," Zuma said. "We are working to build a future where every citizen of our country lives in a community with proper infrastructure, be it a road, school, clinic, recreational facilities, a community hall, electricity, water and sanitation. We are building communities that have effective and responsive police stations and community policing forums, and where the people and the police work together to fight crime."

Democratic elections

South Africa marked 21 years since its first democratic elections, held on 27 April 1994. This year also marks the 60th Anniversary of the Freedom Charter, the historic road-map to the country's struggle for freedom and ultimately the achievement of democracy.

Given the country's harsh realities, the government should make the economy receptive to employing young people. This would enable them to create their own jobs through becoming entrepreneurs. The president called on the business sector and labour to work with the government to implement the youth employment accord and to provide opportunities for young people.

"We want to end the feeling of hopelessness and frustration among the youth, particularly in the townships and rural villages."

For his part, Gauteng Premier David Makhura said democracy was a fundamental basis to any freedom. To achieve a fully democratic country, South Africa needed to mobilise society as a whole.

It is for this reason that the country needed to rely more on the energies and intuition of its people to achieve its goals. "We have a good story to tell. However, we need a radical action to transform and tackle poverty, unemployment and inequality," he said, adding that democracy had its own problems.

"We are coming of age, we are now much noisier... but problems should be solved through democracy and not violence."

Source: Sanews.gov

BDS movement looking to 'hold Israel accountable' over South African visa denial
04/28/2015 /jpost.com

Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman slams "hypocrisy" over xenophobic rioting in Johannesburg.

The South African Communist Party and the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement will soon unveil their plan to hold Israel accountable for its right-wing discriminatory policies, BDS South Africa announced in a statement on Monday.

The plan will come only days after Israel denied a visa to South African Minister of Higher Education Blade Nzimande, who stated his intention to visit the Palestinian Authority. He had been invited to Ramallah by his Palestinian counterpart from April 25-29 to discuss implementing an academic cooperation agreement between Birzeit University and the University of Johannesburg that they signed when Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas visited South Africa in November last year.

"The Israeli government is trying by all means to hide their atrocities against the Palestinian people, and minimize the number of people who can actually see what is happening on the ground," Nzimande told South African media.

Asked about the issue, an official of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies told the post that it was "a government- to-government issue" and that it was "not necessary for us to comment."

On Friday Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman criticized the South African government and gave an angry reaction to the decision, calling it hypocritical and slamming the Communist Party, of which

Nzimande is a member.

“The wild attacks by the South African Community Party against Israel following our refusal to allow the higher education minister to pass through Israel en route to the Palestinian Authority is hypocrisy,” Liberman said.

“It was only a few days ago that a violent, racist attack was perpetrated against foreigners in Johannesburg,” the foreign minister said. “There was also vandalism and destruction of property. The end result was many deaths and wounded.”

South Africa has had to deploy its army to stop the mob attacks on foreigners following comments last month by Goodwill Zwelithini.

“Let us pop our head lice. We must remove ticks and place them outside in the sun. We ask foreign nationals to pack their belongings and be sent back,” he reportedly said.

At least seven people have been killed in the latest wave of anti-immigrant violence to hit South Africa, which began almost three weeks ago in Durban, a coastal city in the Zulu heartland.

TV stations across the country have broadcast scenes of angry mobs armed with machetes looting immigrant- owned shops, in the worst xenophobic violence since at least 67 people were killed in 2008.

According to the BDS movement, “South African political and civil society views the denial of entry to Palestine by Israel as an affront on not only the minister, the Department of Higher Education and Training but also on the South African government and her people” and, as such, a coalition of groups will present a “plan of action to hold Israel accountable for its right-wing discriminatory policies.”

Last year South African Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein demanded that the African National Congress, the country’s ruling party, retract a statement comparing Israel with Nazi Germany and accused a senior ANC official of having “betrayed the South African dream of peaceful and dignified dialogue.”

The ANC had denounced last summer’s military operation against Hamas in the Gaza Strip, comparing it to the Nazi war against the Jews and eliciting an immediate denunciation from South African Jewry.

Party deputy secretary-general Jessie Duarte condemned Israel’s strikes on Hamas targets as “barbaric attacks on the defenseless Palestinian people of Gaza,” adding that Israel has turned the “occupied territories of Palestine into permanent death camps” and calling for all South Africans to boycott Israel.

TANZANIA :

Tanzanian women endangered by illegal abortions

By Kizito Makoye /reuters.com/Mon Apr 27, 2015

Dar es Salaam (Thomson Reuters Foundation) - Lydia Daudi saw no other choice than to end her

six-week pregnancy to spare her deeply religious family from the shame of a pregnancy before marriage.

With the help of a friend, the 26-year-old student at the College of Business Education secretly visited a clinic that provides illegal abortions.

“I was very scared and shocked because it was my first time to do such a thing,” she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. The interview was arranged by a Dar es Salaam-based group that protects women’s rights and declined to be identified.

Abortion is illegal in Tanzania except to save a woman’s life and is punishable by up to 14 years in prison.

In Tanzania and other parts of East Africa, the estimated number of unsafe abortions was 2.4 million in 2008, or 36 unsafe abortions per 1,000 women of reproductive age—the highest regional unsafe abortion rate in Africa, according to the Guttmacher Institute, which researches reproductive health issues.

Illegal abortions in Tanzania have been documented in a number of studies which suggest that almost 60 percent of women admitted to public hospitals with a suspected miscarriage had, in fact, undergone an abortion.

Daudi said when she and her friend arrived at the clinic, she was hurriedly taken to a room where she met a man who appeared to be a doctor, dressed in a white coat with a stethoscope slung across his shoulders.

“I told him that I wanted to have an abortion and that I counted on him to help me,” she said.

Daudi said the doctor told her that the procedure she was requesting was illegal but he could be of assistance if she agreed to pay 50,000 Tanzanian shillings (\$26).

The abortionist, who was assisted by a female nurse, asked Daudi to undress and lie on a bed in the middle of the room.

“He gave me a pill to swallow. Then he put a thick jelly in my vagina and inserted a metal object fitted with a gauze,” which he seemed to use to scrape inside her uterus, she said.

According to Daudi, it was a quick but painful procedure. She was given antibiotics and told to wear a sanitary pad to absorb bleeding.

A few days later Daudi was bleeding heavily and her mother, unaware of the abortion, rushed her to the Marie Stopes Hospital, which specializes in reproductive health. Doctors examined her and confirmed she had undergone an incomplete abortion.

“I was feeling severe pain in the lower parts of my belly while constantly discharging thick blood,” she said. After doctors removed infected tissue from her uterus, her condition improved.

Approximately 22 million unsafe abortions take place worldwide, according to a 2015 study by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Abortions and childbirth are among the greatest dangers faced by women in Tanzania. The country has one of world’s highest maternal mortality rates at 454 per 100,000 live births.

Some of the deaths are due to abortion-related complications, according to the country's ministry of health and social welfare.

(\$1 = 1,935 Tanzanian shillings)

(\$1 = 1,935.0000 Tanzanian shillings)

(1 Tanzanian shilling = \$0.0005)

(This version of the story fixes the dateline)

(Reporting by Kizito Makoye, Editing by Lisa Anderson)

Tanzania's METL Group to Invest In Zambia

Apr 28, 2015/lusakatimes.com

One of Tanzania's biggest manufacturing and trading firm, Mohammed Enterprises Tanzania Ltd plans to invest \$250 million to expand its business in Zambia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Burundi, Madagascar and Ethiopia.

"We want to expand our presence in Africa to capitalize on a growing middle class demand. The focus for investment would be in manufacturing, particularly cotton," company's Chief Executive Officer, Mohammed Dewji said.

"Our vision is that by 2020/21, we want to be a \$5 billion revenue company," he said. Revenue was expected to reach \$1.9 billion in 2014/15.

Regarding plans to invest \$250 million over two years, Dewji said: "Half of this ... will be our equity and the other half will be raised through banks."

The company operates in 11 African nations, mostly in East Africa, including Kenya and Uganda, as well central and southern states such as the Democratic Republic of Congo and Mozambique.

Established in the 1970s, the firm has more than 30 factories making consumer products ranging from bicycles and detergents to edible oil and beverages.

Other investments cover the agriculture, infrastructure, energy and mobile phone sectors. METL employs 24,000 mostly in Tanzania.

Dewji said he expected this to rise to more than 100,000 in five years

MCW Facilitates Historic Partnership To Provide Interdisciplinary Healthcare Training In Tanzania

by: PR Newswire/en.starafrika.com/date : April 27, 2015

- An innovative collaboration between the Tanzanian Government through its Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Muhimbili University, New York University College of Nursing and MCW set to begin next month.

NEW YORK, April 27, 2015 /PRNewswire/ – As part of its Oral Health Care Initiative, which has

the vision to improve oral health care for all Tanzanians, MCW announced today the formation of an historic four-party Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

The MOU was signed between the Government of Tanzania through its Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW), Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS), New York University (NYU) College of Nursing and MCW, to provide an innovative solution to address the inadequate access to oral health care in Tanzania through NYU's Global Nurse Scholars Program. The program aims to create a curriculum to train nurses in the field in basic oral healthcare.

With a population of 47.8 million, Tanzania has less than 0.3 dentists per 100,000 citizens. With over 35,000 nurses and midwives in Tanzania, there is an opportunity for nurses to play a pivotal role in expanding access to oral health care in the country. This inter-disciplinary healthcare training program aims to create a curriculum for nurses to meet the basic oral healthcare needs of underserved communities.

“Our partners at the MUHAS dental school have long since advocated for us to help in bringing formal training to nurses in oral health,” said MCW Director of Health Care Projects, Dr. Marion Bergman. “We are thrilled that the Government of Tanzania through its Ministry of Health, recognized NYU's Global Nurse Scholar program as the perfect vehicle to bring a scalable educational training module for field nurses to Tanzania.”

A Tanzanian nurse has been selected as a Global Nurse Scholar and will define and create a user-friendly, evidence-based curriculum. With guidance from the Tanzania MoHSW and mentorship from MUHAS Schools of Dentistry and Nursing, and NYU's College of Nursing, the scholar will develop a program to be accredited and recognized in Tanzania which will educate nurses through continuing education.

“MCW has recognized an opportunity to address neglected oral health needs in Tanzania through the NYU College of Nursing's Global Scholars Program. In this unique and important partnership between MCW, NYUCN and the Tanzanian Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Global Scholars Program will work to build oral health capacity among nurses in Tanzania. As an engaged governmental agency, the MoHSW understands the needs of its citizens and its workforce and offers invaluable guidance to the context, structure and audience for our programs in Tanzania,” said Dr. Ann Kurth, Executive Director, NYU College of Nursing and Global Associate Dean for Research, NYU Global Institute of Public Health.

The Scholar will arrive at NYU for the research and training stage of the program in May 2015.

About MCW MCW is a non-profit organization founded in 1999 with the vision “Local Change through Global Exchange®.” Our mission is to empower youth to become positive agents of change in their communities. Based in New York, with partner organizations in Africa (i.e. Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Zambia), MCW offers the following programs: Global Youth Development, Community Development and Oral Health Care, as well as Partner Initiatives (e.g. Paediatric AIDS Treatment for Africa). The MCW Oral Health Care program aims to achieve lasting oral health improvement in Tanzania through three core activities: Infrastructure Upgrade, Capacity Building, and Dental Outreaches. MCW's core values include integrity, compassion, accountability, responsibility and excellence.

KENYA :

Kenyan Court Allows Gay Rights Group

VOA News/April 27, 2015

Kenya's High Court has ordered the government to register a gay rights group that the government had earlier refused to recognize on moral and religious grounds.

The court said Monday that the Kenyan constitution recognizes and protects the rights of minorities and does not allow limitations on moral grounds.

"In Kenya, the constitution is supreme," the three judge panel said. "The state has to act within the confines of what the law allows and cannot rely on religious texts or its views of what the moral and religious convictions of Kenyans are to justify the limitation of a right."

The judgment followed a petition by a Kenyan activist, Eric Gitari, to register a non-governmental organization whose objective was to protect the human rights of gays and lesbians. Gitari took his case to court in September 2013 after a government board rejected his application.

Some Kenyan lawmakers say they want to pass a motion to compel authorities to more strongly enforce the country's anti-homosexual laws.

In neighboring Uganda, the government recently passed a law in defiance of Western pressure to criminalize homosexual acts with a life sentence. The Ugandan Supreme Court overruled the measure based on a technicality, saying the bill passed in parliament without enough members present for a quorum. Government officials say they will make another attempt to crack down on homosexuality.

ANGOLA :

AU/AFRICA :

Soudan: Omar el-Béchir réélu sans surprise avec 94,5% des voix

Par RFI /28-04-2015

Le président sortant Omar el-Béchir a été réélu à la tête du Soudan avec 94,5% des suffrages, selon la Commission nationale électorale indépendante soudanaise. Une victoire largement attendue après les élections présidentielle, parlementaires et régionales qui se sont déroulées du 13 au 16 avril. Omar el-Béchir inaugurera officiellement son quatrième mandat le 17 mai après avoir prêté serment devant la nouvelle Assemblée nationale.

Trois heures après la proclamation des résultats, lundi, Omar el-Béchir, le président réélu, a prononcé un discours devant les militants de son parti, le Congrès national. Après les remerciements d'usage, le président soudanais a rendu hommage aux femmes. Il est à noter en effet que son parti détiendra 323 sièges, dont 128 occupés par des femmes sur les 425 de la prochaine Assemblée nationale.

Omar el-Béchir a dénoncé avec virulence les ingérences des pays européens, qualifiés de puissances coloniales, dans les affaires intérieures. L'Union européenne avait dénoncé le processus électoral, le jugeant non démocratique. L'opposition avait boycotté ces élections.

Le président soudanais a conclu son discours en récitant des versets du Coran glorifiant Dieu et s'est engagé à promouvoir une société au service de l'islam.

Nigeria: nouvelles attaques de Boko Haram, "des centaines" de corps trouvés à Damasak
28/04/2015/lepoint.fr

Les corps de centaines de personnes ont été retrouvés dans la ville de Damasak (nord-est du Nigeria), apparemment victimes des exactions du groupe islamiste Boko Haram, qui a perpétré de nouvelles attaques pendant le week-end, nouveau signe de son pouvoir de nuisance.

Le président élu du Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari, qui doit être investi le 29 mai, a promis, lundi, de traiter Boko Haram comme "des terroristes" parce qu'ils ne sont "qu'un faux groupe religieux".

A Damasak, "des corps ont été trouvés dans les maisons, les rues, et encore davantage dans la rivière Damasak dont le lit est à sec", a indiqué Kaumi Kusur, un habitant. Les victimes, découvertes jeudi, ont été enterrées dans une vingtaine de fosses communes pendant le week-end, a-t-il précisé.

Selon Mohammed Sadiq, un autre habitant qui a aidé à enterrer ces corps samedi, le bilan pourrait s'élever à plus de 400 morts tandis que le gouvernement de l'Etat de Borno a parlé de "centaines" de cadavres.

Des soldats venus du Tchad et du Niger avaient reconquis le 9 mars dernier la ville de Damasak des mains de Boko Haram, dans le cadre d'une offensive régionale contre les militants islamistes qui avaient pris la localité en novembre dernier.

Quelque 200 rebelles avaient été tués de même que 10 soldats lors de cette reprise de la ville, selon une source sécuritaire tchadienne.

L'armée tchadienne avait parlé en mars de la découverte d'une centaine de corps dans une fosse commune sous un pont à l'extérieur de Damasak, dont certains avaient été décapités, précisant que ce massacre pourrait avoir eu lieu en janvier dernier.

Mais selon M. Kusur, le nombre de corps découverts jeudi "dépassait nettement" celui de mars.

- Une cinquantaine de soldats tués -

Malgré plusieurs victoires militaires contre Boko Haram, le groupe islamiste a montré qu'il gardait un fort pouvoir de nuisance, tuant samedi plus d'une cinquantaine de soldats au Niger, après avoir vraisemblablement abattu la veille 21 villageois au Nigeria.

Samedi à l'aube, Boko Haram a mené sur un camp militaire nigérien du lac Tchad une attaque parmi les plus meurtrières infligées à la coalition active depuis quatre mois et composée du Tchad, du Niger, du Nigeria, du Cameroun et du Bénin.

Deux jours après le raid, les bilans différaient selon les sources mais toutes évoquaient avec certitude plusieurs dizaines de morts.

L'armée nigérienne "a perdu 48 soldats et 36 sont portés disparus", a ainsi déclaré une source sécuritaire tchadienne. Un élu du sud-est du Niger, région frontalière du Nigeria où l'assaut s'est produit, a quant à lui fait état de "80 soldats tués" et d'une trentaine de disparus, tandis qu'une source proche de l'armée nigérienne mentionnait 100 morts et 17 disparus.

"Il y a eu énormément de pertes" au sein de cette position militaire située à Karamga, une île "particulièrement isolée" du lac Tchad, où 120 à 150 hommes étaient postés, a confirmé une source humanitaire à l'AFP, selon laquelle 45 soldats basés sur l'île auraient pu être joints.

Karamga, attaquée samedi à l'aube par des islamistes de Boko Haram, a depuis lors été reprise par l'armée nigérienne, de même source.

- 'Brûlés vivants' -

Umar Yerima, un pêcheur nigérian qui vivait sur cette île, a fait également état d'un bilan humain "énorme" parmi les civils à Karamga.

"Après en avoir terminé avec les soldats, ils ont retourné leurs armes contre les habitants", "visant les têtes" de ceux qui s'étaient jetés à l'eau pour leur échapper et "brûlant vivant beaucoup de résidents dans leurs maisons", a-t-il raconté.

Les assaillants sont demeurés sur l'île jusqu'à samedi à la mi-journée, quand un avion de combat a commencé à bombarder la zone, a affirmé M. Yerima, qui s'est décrit comme "l'un des rares chanceux" ayant survécu.

"L'aviation tchadienne (...) est intervenue pour détruire les éléments de Boko Haram", tuant certains d'entre eux et détruisant leur équipement, a complété la source tchadienne.

Aucune attaque importante n'avait été recensée depuis plus d'un mois au Niger.

Vendredi, en parallèle, des combattants présumés de Boko Haram, déguisés en soldats, ont abattu 21 déplacés qui tentaient de regagner leur village dans le nord-est du Nigeria pour y chercher à se nourrir.

"Les hommes, ils étaient 21, ont été arrêtés dans (le village de) Bultaram par des hommes armés dont on pense qu'ils font partie de Boko Haram, qui les ont abattus par balle", a déclaré Baba Nuhu, un responsable de la localité de Gujba, dans l'Etat de Yobe, un récit qui concorde avec celui D'Haruna Maram, le frère d'une des victimes.

L'Etat de Yobe a été le théâtre de très nombreuses attaques de Boko Haram ces six dernières années. Au total, l'insurrection islamiste et sa répression par l'armée nigérienne ont fait plus de 15.000 morts depuis 2009, selon l'ONU. Plus d'1,5 million de personnes ont aussi été obligées de fuir leur domicile.

UN/AFRICA :

Central Africa is becoming largest forgotten humanitarian crisis: UN
India Blooms News Service/Apr 28

New York, Apr 28 (IBNS): The Central African Republic (CAR) is quickly becoming the largest forgotten humanitarian crisis of our time with some 60 percent of its population in need of aid, including nearly 900,000 people forcibly displaced by conflict, but assistance programmes remain “dramatically underfunded,” the United Nations refugee agency said on Monday.

“We must prevent the Central African Republic from becoming a forgotten crisis,” said UN Humanitarian Coordinator Claire Bourgeois was quoted as saying in a press release.

“The current funding for the strategic humanitarian response does not allow us to ensure the protection of all these displaced persons or to provide the minimum of what is needed to meet the huge humanitarian needs,” according to Bourgeois.

According to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) there are more than 460,000 refugees from the CAR in neighbouring countries and some 436,000 people are internally displaced. In the country, a total of 2.7 million people out of a population of 4.6 million are in need of humanitarian aid.

“Yet humanitarian assistance programmes both for the Central African Republic and the Regional Refugee Response Plan remain dramatically underfunded, with funding levels of only 14 per cent for programmes inside CAR and 9 per cent of the refugee programmes in the neighbouring countries,” the UNHCR press release said.

The World Health Organization, meanwhile, said only 55 per cent of the health facilities are functioning in a country that has among the world’s highest child and maternal mortality rates, and noted that other pressing crises like Syria and Yemen are siphoning off critically needed funding from the CAR.

UNHCR and partners are struggling to provide an adequate level of assistance to the refugees in the four neighbouring countries: Cameroon, Chad, the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

“It is critical that the international community does not forget about the Central African Republic”, the agency quoted Liz Ahua, its Regional Refugee Coordinator. “Important progress has been made and we cannot allow these gains to be undone because of lack of funding and support.”

Meanwhile, Under-Secretary-General for UN Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, arrived in the CAR capital Bangui over the weekend.

During his four-day visit, Ladsous will mark the achievement of full operational capability of the UN Mission there known by the French acronym MINUSCA established a year ago to protect civilians and support the transition processes in the CAR.

Ladsous will meet with the transitional authorities, shortly before the opening of the National Bangui Forum on 4 May.

UNHCR said there are two crucial milestones coming up in the peace process: the first will be the Bangui Forum on National Reconciliation, bringing all parties together in May to address the political and security issues that lay at the centre of the crisis; and the second will be the national elections scheduled for August.

“The participation of internally displaced people and refugees in both processes will be crucial to

their success,” it said.

US/AFRICA :

U.S. Trade With Africa At A Glance

By Dana Sanchez/afkinsider.com /April 27, 2015,

By 2013, the U.S. had a trade deficit with Africa, importing more from Africa (\$51 billion worth) than it was exporting to Africa (\$35 billion worth), according to a report in East Africa BusinessWeek by John Sambo.

Trade between the U.S. and Africa has grown 7 percent per year over the last decade, with U.S. companies investing \$10 billion in African countries, second only to \$11 billion from the U.K.

More than 400 companies generate more than \$1 billion in revenue in Africa, and many are American companies such as IBM, Hewlett-Packard, General Electric, General Motors, Proctor and Gamble and Ford, BusinessWeek reports. Walmart plans to open 63 new stores in five African countries by December 2016.

Ten economies account for 80 percent of economic growth. These include six in Sub-Saharan Africa: Angola, Kenya, Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa; and four in North Africa: Egypt, Algeria, Morocco and Libya.

But the U.S. share in Africa’s trade has declined from 13 percent in 2001 to 7 percent in 2013, bypassed by China, which grew its share from 3 percent in 2001 to more than 14 percent over the same period.

U.S. President Barack Obama’s President’s Advisory Council on Doing Business in Africa came out with its first report on how the U.S. can strengthen commercial ties with Africa following the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit of August, 2014.

The council made eight recommendations that it says could hold the key to improving U.S. trade with Africa. These include:

Improving perception of doing business

Highlight trade opportunities by publicizing best practices and success stories, developing unique marketing platforms and partnerships, and creating an online Doing Business in Africa toolkit.

Manufacturing and services

Address U.S. manufacturing and services companies in Africa and industrialization in African countries by initiating government-to-government dialogues including with regional economic communities such as the East African Community.

Capital markets

Support capacity building for African banks, financial regulators, exchanges, and financial market participants through knowledge sharing, partnerships and training programs. This could be enhanced through funding of existing U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission technical assistant program.

Institutional investment

Mobilize more capital from institutional investors by launching an investor roadshow and creating an investor toolkit.

Facilitate trade

Emphasize harmonization, automation and global best practices through inter-agency coordination and partnership with the private sector. Provide assistance to African countries during implementation of the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement.

Cold chain development

Optimize the perishable supply chain through analysis and training programs that enable technological improvements to cold chain, storage, and packaging facilities, thereby reducing post-harvest food loss.

U.S.-Africa infrastructure center

Enhance the ability of U.S. companies to compete for major infrastructure projects with a dedicated U.S.-Africa Infrastructure Center.

Use the center to compile a database of forthcoming infrastructure projects in Africa and provide a focal point for U.S. inter-agency coordination to enhance U.S. competitiveness in African infrastructure projects.

Healthcare infrastructure

Help small- and medium-sized U.S. businesses pursue opportunities in the health sector. Expand the use of healthcare public-private partnerships. Allow more flexibility in existing U.S. government healthcare assistance for Africa for broader healthcare infrastructure needs in Africa.

CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

EU/AFRICA :

CHINA/AFRICA :

China rail group signs \$5.5bn in Africa deals

Gabriel Wildau in Shanghai/ft.com/April 28, 2015

A Chinese state-owned rail company has signed \$5.5bn worth of contracts in Africa, in the latest sign that the country's "New Silk Road" strategy to build infrastructure around the developing

world is showing tangible results.

African units of China Railway Construction Corp will build a \$3.5bn intercity rail line in Nigeria and a \$1.9bn residential real estate project in Zimbabwe, the company said in exchange filings overnight on Monday.

The latest deal follows a \$12bn contract that CRCC reportedly signed for a separate rail line in Nigeria last November, days after Mexico cancelled a \$3.6bn high-speed rail contract with a consortium led by CRCC.

China's "One Road, One Belt" strategy includes plans to build roads, railways, ports, natural gas pipelines and other infrastructure stretching into south and Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and through central Asia to Europe to create demand for China's industrial exports in the face of overcapacity at home.

The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road and a land-based counterpart, the Silk Road Economic Belt, are expected to drive sales to Chinese trainmakers, port operators and electricity producers. China's two other largest rail groups are also engaged in a merger aimed at creating a globally competitive giant.

CRCC said financing for its rail project had not been finalised but last week state media reported that China's central bank would use the country's foreign exchange reserves to inject \$62bn in fresh capital into the country's non-commercial "policy banks", which are expected to play a key role in supporting the New Silk Road initiative.

China Development Bank, the largest of China's three policy banks, has granted more loans to Africa than the World Bank, the African Development Bank and the Asian Development Bank combined over the past six years, the official China Daily newspaper reported in December.

In addition to CDB, China has pledged to create a new \$40bn Silk Road Fund to finance overseas investments. The China-led Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank, in which at least 47 countries will participate, could be another source of funding.

Large Chinese investments in Africa have been controversial, however, in part because of concerns over transparency and corruption at Beijing's largest state companies. The use of imported Chinese labour has also been a source of tension.

CRCC is listed in Shanghai and Hong Kong but is majority-owned by China's central government. Its Shanghai-listed shares were up more than 6 per cent on Tuesday morning.

So-called concept stocks related to "One Road, One Belt" have performed especially well amid a broader China stock market boom that pushed the Shanghai Composite Index to a seven-year high on Monday.

INDIA/AFRICA :

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

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