



(A suicide bombing in a church in the Nigerian village of Potiskum on Sunday that killed the priest and four congregants marked the end of a particularly violent week during which 200 people were killed in the African nation.)

BURUNDI :

Burundi: le parti au pouvoir récuse Bathily, le médiateur de l'ONU

Par RFI /06-07-2015

Au Burundi, le parti au pouvoir CNDD-FDD, toujours bien décidé à organiser les élections malgré la désapprobation internationale, a lancé dimanche une charge virulente contre la communauté internationale, mais aussi contre le médiateur de l'ONU, Abdoulaye Bathily. Le Sénégalais avait été nommé pour résoudre la crise burundaise. Le CNDD-FDD demande sa démission.

« Le parti CNDD-FDD informe qu'il retire toute sa confiance à ce représentant du secrétariat général de l'ONU et lui demande de déposer sa démission puisqu'il s'est récusé lui-même avant qu'il ne commence son boulot », a déclaré le porte-parole du parti Gélase-Daniel Ndadirabe. Le parti au pouvoir accuse notamment Bathily de ne pas avoir réservé ses premières rencontres aux autorités ou d'avoir proposé un report des élections. Bref d'« avoir manqué au respect de la souveraineté nationale. »

Mais ce n'est pas vraiment une surprise. Le CNDD-FDD n'avait pas participé au dialogue initié par l'équipe de facilitation internationale dont fait partie l'onusien Abdoulaye Bathily. Le gouvernement burundais, lui, n'y avait participé qu'une fois avec un message très clair : il était hors de question d'accepter un nouveau report. Et pourtant c'est ce que proposait la facilitation internationale : le 30 juillet pour tous les scrutins pour permettre des élections crédibles. C'était le motif évoqué par les

médiateurs pour faire cette proposition. Et c'est ce qu'avait expliqué le représentant onusien quand les négociations avaient échoué il y a un peu plus d'une semaine.

Abdoulaye Bathily avait été désigné comme porte-parole de l'équipe de facilitation. Il avait affirmé que dans les conditions actuelles, les élections ne seraient ni libres, ni démocratiques. Le ministre de l'Intérieur Edouard Nduwimana lui avait répondu vertement sur les antennes de RFI. Il l'avait accusé en substance d'être biaisé, de s'être récusé lui-même.

Le rapport de la facilitation internationale sera en tout cas sur la table des chefs d'Etat de la communauté est-africaine réunis en sommet demain à Dar es-Salaam. Et il n'est pas signé que par Abdoulaye Bathily. Les représentants de l'Union africaine, la communauté est-africaine et la conférence internationale pour les Grands Lacs en sont aussi membres et signataires.

Pour rappel, Abdoulaye Bathily n'est pas le premier à avoir été ainsi récusé au Burundi. L'onusien Saïd Djinnit l'avait été avant lui. Et cette fois-là, c'était par l'opposition.

Burundi: un nouveau sommet à Dar es Salaam pour dénouer la crise

Par RFI / 06-07-2015

Un troisième sommet sur la crise burundaise se tient ce lundi à Dar es Salaam en Tanzanie à l'initiative des Etats d'Afrique de l'Est (EAC). Le principal intéressé, le président Pierre Nkurunziza, ne devrait pas y participer si l'on en croit son programme de meetings électoraux. Ses homologues de la région vont encore tenter de trouver une solution.

Le précédent sommet de l'Afrique de l'Est, il y a un peu plus d'un mois, avait fait trois recommandations au gouvernement burundais : repousser les élections, désarmer les milices et entamer un dialogue avec l'opposition. On connaît la suite : les élections locales précipitées, la présidentielle déjà bien lancée, l'absence de dialogue et surtout toujours la violence. La récusation du médiateur de l'ONU Abdoulaye Bathily dimanche renforce encore cette impression de fuite en avant.

Il y a une certaine exaspération dans les pays voisins et il y a surtout la crainte de voir cette crise s'étendre et menacer la paix au-delà des frontières du Burundi. Déjà l'afflux de réfugiés pose des défis sécuritaires et sanitaires en Tanzanie avec l'apparition du choléra.

Les chefs d'Etat de l'Afrique de l'Est vont-ils cette fois émettre un message ferme ? Et surtout, sauront-ils parler d'une même voix ? On dit le président tanzanien Jakaya Kikwete plus conciliant vis-à-vis de Pierre Nkurunziza que d'autres comme le président rwandais Paul Kagamé.

L'opposition en nombre au sommet

Le président Pierre Nkurunziza ne sera a priori pas présent à Dar es Salaam. En revanche l'opposition s'est déplacée en nombre. L'opposant Jean Minani, candidat à la présidentielle, est en Tanzanie. Pour lui, il est temps de passer aux sanctions. « Ce sommet devra constater que le gouvernement Nkurunziza n'a rien fait, ne veut rien entendre et qu'il faut donc commencer à prendre des sanctions, estime-t-il. Il faut envoyer rapidement des experts militaires pour aider à désarmer la milice Imbonerakure. Mais il faut aussi envoyer en grand nombre des experts d'observation des droits de l'homme et prendre des sanctions personnelles contre Nkurunziza, contre le gouvernement. Et dire clairement que s'il se fait réélire, son gouvernement ne sera pas reconnu et qu'il y aura gel de toutes les aides qui étaient versées au gouvernement burundais. »

De son côté, l'ancien président burundais Domitien Ndayizeye mise beaucoup sur le poids des institutions africaines.

Est-ce que la communauté est-africaine a un mot à dire sur ses membres? Est-ce que l'Union africaine a un mot à dire sur ses membres? Il faut que ces organisations fassent valoir leur valeur.

RWANDA :

RDC CONGO :

UGANDA :

Tourism to shine

Sunday, 05 July 2015/ By Ian Katusiime/independent.co.ug

Industry stakeholders optimistic after massive budget boost

In the 2015/2016 budget, one of the sectors that got an unprecedented allocation of funding was tourism. With a cool Shs30 billion — an increase of 67% from last year's Shs18 billion - there is now optimism. Maria Mutagamba, the minister for Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, says the new funding gives them impetus to develop the sector countrywide. There is now a plan for cluster development where regions in the country, tribes and cultures are going to be uniquely celebrated.

We have a plan to celebrate our cultural diversity like never before,” she said, adding that the government intends to bring the private sector on board to promote cluster tourism across the country.

Indeed one of the targeted areas for boosting tourism has been the promotion of faith-based events. For instance, Martyrs Day, celebrated every June 3, has been an event of intensive marketing by the Uganda Tourism Board in the last two years.

Mutagamba says her ministry for instance has elaborate plans for the Pope's visit this November. Amos Wekesa, the proprietor of Great Lakes Safari Ltd, has no doubt about the importance of tourism, which says creates innumerable opportunities for everyone. But he argues that if Uganda is going to compete with its neighbours Kenya, Tanzania and even Rwanda, it will have to come down to aggressive marketing, which drives up the numbers.

Mutagamba said Uganda will in the near future be targeting markets in Germany, UK, and Netherlands on top of the Russian and Chinese market - currently the biggest source of tourists around the world.

“Little is still known about our tourism,” Mutagamba admits. Also, the tourism ministry is partnering with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to establish a task force at specific Ugandan

embassies to promote experiential tourism abroad.

Also, some experts in the sector say Uganda has undersold her heritage by having little investment in its museums.

For example, Uganda Museum has is not up to international level. However, a new museum in Biharwe, a private museum just 12 km from Mbarara town in western Uganda, has set the bar so high for visitors interested in Ugandan heritage. Igongo Cultural Centre has collections of various artefacts and traditions of the people of Ankore. But museums of such a kind remain a rarity in Uganda. Mutagamba urges the private sector to take a leaf from the proprietor James Tumusiime and not to always rely on the government. Museums are essential in the tourism marketing and education for every country. Tumusiime also talks about the regional clusters as the drivers of this growth. “These [clusters] bring out the uniqueness of our cultures and ecological zones. We are working with UTB and the Ministry.”

Tumusiime and other players work with the Greater Ankore Tourism Network as one group with people who own lodges, hotels for the benefit of Lake Mburo National Park. A similar network operates in the Kigezi area where the culture and traditions are being harnessed to promote the region. There is also Busoga Tourism Network, which does the same kind of work and amid other efforts spread across the nation.

Wekesa says eastern Uganda (Mbale) could do with a museum of Igongo Cultural Centre’s stature to showcase the Bamasaba culture while others in Bunyoro and Busoga could preserve the cultural heritage of those areas.

Wekesa notes that Uganda must act fast take artefacts from the stores to the shelves.

Besides improving accommodation facilities around national parks and game parks, the government is also working towards improving the overall human resource needed in the sector. Thanks to a World Bank grant, the hospitality training institute in Jinja is being upgraded to improve skills of Ugandans. In addition, another hotel training school and a research institute is also being considered for Kasese to equip personnel with the prerequisite skills in marketing tourism.

Security priority

One of the priority areas the ministry and entire sector will look at will be the security of people and tourists in and around the game parks.

The Uganda Tourism Police has been an important partner in this area. National parks, Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) liaised with Uganda Police to provide security. The number of the tourism police officers has also increased tremendously officers across the country.

The eastern region of Uganda is also high on the agenda of Uganda Tourism Board (UTB). The Busoga Tourism Initiative which has Speaker of Parliament Rebecca Kadaga as its patron is coordinating various efforts to consolidate the region as Uganda’s tourism hub. The Source of the Nile still maintains its iconic status. Also, Bishop Hannington who was executed on the orders of Kabaka Mwanga, remains an important reference point and tourist site in the region due to the shrine built in his honour in Mayuge District.

Mutagamba also revealed plans of constructing cable cars over Kagulu Hill in Kamuli, which overlooks Lake Kyoga with a breath-taking view. The hill is 6,000 feet and is the only tourist hill in the country.

Hopes are high that Uganda's tourism potential will see a significant boost with the bigger budget. Despite the low funding in the past, Uganda has won several awards in the recent past. For example, Kidepo National Park, which celebrated 50 years in 2013, was named one of the best parks in Africa by CNN last year.

SOUTH AFRICA :

Facebook opening Johannesburg office to boost users in Africa

CHRIS SPILLANE/stuff.co.nz/July 6 2015

North America has a population of about 500 million, and two-fifths of them are on Facebook. In Africa, with more than 1 billion people, just 120 million use the social network. That's an opportunity Facebook can't ignore, though the region poses challenges unlike those the company has faced in more developed markets.

To spur growth on the continent, Facebook next month is opening an office in an affluent suburb of Johannesburg. The sales office will be headed by Nunu Ntshingila, 51, chairman of WPP Plc's Ogilvy & Mather agency in South Africa, who will oversee Facebook's business in the region.

The company will find that winning customers in Nigeria or Kenya is tougher than in Nebraska or Kansas. Africa has few fixed internet connections, so Facebook's original website isn't well known. And while mobile Internet is booming, data is expensive and smartphones are rare, with most people using cheaper, less capable devices called feature phones that can't run Facebook's full mobile application.

"This is one of the places where our next billion users are coming from," said Nicola Mendelsohn, Facebook's vice president for Europe, the Middle East and Africa. "It would be a massive missed opportunity. Africa matters."

To win over consumers concerned about the cost of data or who live in areas with bad signals, Facebook is partnering with mobile-phone companies to offer what it calls Internet.org, which gives people free airtime when they access Facebook and a few dozen other selected websites. And it will soon introduce Facebook Lite, a low-bandwidth app that uses just a fraction of the data of the standard application.

"There's no point sending a video to someone with a 2G connection," Mendelsohn said in an interview. "You really want to make sure that you're delivering the right messages to right devices in the right way."

For the world's largest social network, Africa holds vast potential. Facebook has been blocked by China's censors since 2009, and in Russia it trails local sites such as VKontakte and Odnoklassniki. As sales growth slows, Facebook is working to broaden the reach of its advertisements, which generate more than 90 per cent of its revenue.

A further challenge in Africa is the cost of smartphones, which are rarely subsidised with long contracts as they are in Europe and the US. MTN Group and Vodacom Group, with a total of more than 225 million subscribers on the continent, are trying to change that by selling house-brand smartphones for less than NZ\$75.

Chris Gilmour, an analyst at Absa Asset Management in Johannesburg, said Facebook must be patient to succeed in Africa. While the potential is huge, the region is notoriously difficult for outsiders to crack.

"Facebook has the capacity and skills and they will succeed, it'll just take longer," Gilmour said. "Africa is a fantastic prospect but it is a long-term prospect."

Facebook shares have gained about 11 per cent this year, valuing the company at US\$243 billion (NZ\$361b).

One way to keep data charges low is with what Facebook calls "missed call ads". Advertisers place links in Facebook newsfeeds. When those are clicked, the advertiser rings the user with a promotion - and foots the bill for the call.

"We were conscious of airtime, which is the problem of most of the population in Africa," said Gil Sperling, co-founder of Popimedia, a Facebook partner in Johannesburg that uses the technology. "You need a product that's actually useful to them on a feature phone."

Ntshingila will take over the new Johannesburg's office in September. She joined Ogilvy & Mather in 1999 and was the agency's South Africa CEO for seven years before becoming chairman in 2012. Her mission is to persuade businesses and advertising agencies to promote themselves through Facebook.

"Increasingly marketers are focused on what is the next frontier," said Carolyn Everson, Facebook's vice president of global marketing. "There's going to be an incredible opportunity to develop a consumer base in Africa."

- The Washington Post

TANZANIA :

KENYA :

Motorists forewarned on Obama visit jams

Date: July 06, 2015/mediamaxnetwork.co.ke

Kenyans have been asked to brace themselves for a traffic crisis when US President Barack Obama visits Nairobi on July 24. State House, through Head of Communications Manoah Esipisu said that during the two-day stay, Obama will criss-cross the city as he shuttles to the Global Entrepreneurship Summit (GES) at the United Nations Headquarters, Gigiri, the Kenya International Convention Centre (KICC) where the exhibition will be staged and the Nairobi National Park.

Obama will also hold talks with President Uhuru Kenyatta at State House Nairobi, but there was no mention of a possible visit of his father's home in Kogelo. "I urge Kenyans to bear with the few

inconveniences that they may experience.

However, I would want to make it clear that these will be within bounds of reason and will be communicated in advance,” said Esipisu. He assured that alternatives will be provided in a situation where the routine movements of people are interrupted.

Esipisu said White House was yet to release the official itinerary although it has been confirmed he will be visiting the three places. He did not state whether Obama will be addressing Parliament as it has been stated. Esipisu said 800 journalists had been accredited to cover the event with 400 foreigners and the rest local.

The Summit will congregate 1,500 investors from across the world, of which 250 are Kenyans. State House, he said was well aware that such a high-profile visit is likely to attract cases of insecurity, and urged Kenyans to work closely with the security agencies to curb fight against terror and insecurity. The annual Global Entrepreneurship Summit meeting to be hosted by the government of Kenya starting July 24.

ANGOLA :

AU/AFRICA :

In Nigeria, Suicide Bombing Marks End to Bloody Week That Claimed 200 Lives
time.com/06/07/2015

Some 17,000 people have died in violence related to Boko Haram since 2009

A suicide bombing in a church in the Nigerian village of Potiskum on Sunday that killed the priest and four congregants marked the end of a particularly violent week during which 200 people were killed in the African nation.

No one has claimed responsibility for the church blast, but it is consistent with past attacks attributed to militant Islamist group Boko Haram, CNN reports.

Potiskum has often been the focus of Boko Haram violence during the first half of 2015; in January, three people were killed and 43 hurt during a bombing in a market, and the next week another attack left four dead and 48 hurt at a bus station. Another bus station was attacked in February, killing 17, and in May the town's College of Administrative and Business Studies was targeted.

This past week has seen what new Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari described as a “heinous” burst of violence, the BBC reports, including suicide bombings in two small Borno villages, the killing of 97 people near Lake Chad, and 48 men shot dead in two villages near Monguno.

Amnesty International estimates that more than 17,000 people have been killed since 2009 in violence involving Boko Haram.

[BBC]

UN/AFRICA :

US/AFRICA :

US vows support for Nigeria in battling Boko Haram

(AFP)/Date: 2015-07-06

The United States vowed on Sunday to support Nigeria after a series of deadly terror attacks blamed on Boko Haram, calling for those responsible to face justice.

The Islamists have launched a series of attacks on mosques, villages and markets in Borno state in the past few days, claiming more than 200 lives.

On Sunday a suicide bomber blew himself up inside a church in the restive northeastern city of Potiskum, killing five worshippers.

“The United States strongly condemns the recent attacks in northeastern Nigeria inflicted by Boko Haram,” State Department spokesman John Kirby said in a statement.

“We will continue to support Nigeria’s efforts to bring those responsible for these attacks, as well as previous attacks, to justice,” he added in offering condolences to the families of the victims.

Boko Haram appear keen to prove they are not a spent force despite a four-nation military offensive running them out of several towns and villages they had controlled.

“As we have said before, the people of northern Nigeria deserve to live free from violence and from terror,” Kirby said.

He noted that Washington is providing counterterrorism aid to help Nigerian authorities fight the terror group.

And Kirby commended the “gains” of Nigeria’s military, as well as forces from Cameroon, Chad and Niger, against Boko Haram.

A coalition of the four countries—all of which border Lake Chad, a focal point of Boko Haram unrest—launched military operations against the jihadists early this year to try claw back some of the territory they had seized.

“The United States stands with the Nigerian people in their struggle against violent extremism,” Kirby said.

“We will continue to work closely with the Nigerian government and our international partners to combat Boko Haram and assist its many victims.”

CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

EU/AFRICA :

CHINA/AFRICA :

INDIA/AFRICA :

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

SA needs a concrete Brics strategy

by Peter Draper and Mzukisi Qobo/bdlive.co.za/juillet 06 2015

HEADS of state of the Brics countries will gather in Ufa, Russia, this week for the grouping's seventh summit, which comes at a particularly challenging time for Russian diplomacy. Precipitated by the conflict in Ukraine, Russia is barred from Group of Seven/Group of Eight processes and increasingly estranged from the West.

It intends to use the Brics summit to project itself as a major global power.

By holding the summit at the same time as the annual meeting of the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO), Russia is attempting to impress its Central Asian neighbours and highlight its growing strategic co-operation with China, co-organiser of the SCO. This also sends a message to the West that Russia has other platforms on which to challenge for global power. Russia's agenda preferences can be conceived along two axes: global security and politics; and economics.

Brics national security advisers are meeting regularly, discussing a range of international issues such as the rapidly evolving situation in the Middle East. To the extent that the Brics can agree on co-ordinated positions on such difficult issues, this will presumably build the group's coherence over time.

Offsetting this potential is their disagreement on how to reform the United Nations Security Council — a key gap since it is at the apex of the global security architecture. Accordingly, Russia

emphasises economic co-operation.

Discussions at the Ufa summit are broadly divided into two parts: the financial co-operation package and the evolving Strategy for Brics Economic Partnership.

The strategy is too general and vague and unlikely to grow in substance at Ufa. Perhaps, for this reason, the Russians are pushing for a move beyond a strategy "on paper", to identify concrete trade and investment projects up to 2020.

Nonetheless, three top priorities appear to have been identified in the Brics economic strategy discussions.

FIRST is co-ordination on e-commerce, and Russia proposed the establishment of a working group. This was apparently downgraded to a limited agreement to convene a dialogue leading, possibly, to the establishment of a working group.

More cynical observers of the Brics believe Russia wants to use this discussion to market a cellphone operating system they have developed.

Second are ongoing discussions about trade facilitation. These centre on the creation of a virtual working group on trade and export promotion agencies. There have also been discussions about establishing a single window for electronic processes connected to trade.

Third, China has proposed closer collaboration on intellectual property rights regimes. Observers are understandably sceptical of the prospects and co-ordination possibilities, since the focal points in each country are not obvious. But agreement has ostensibly been reached to exchange information on member states' systems.

At Ufa, there will be much discussion of the two signature Brics achievements to date: the Contingency Reserve Arrangement and the New Development Bank.

Given the closed nature of Brics processes, it is difficult to discern SA's positions on the grouping's economic agenda but some contours are apparent.

SA seems to regard the economic partnership strategy as being weak and less of a roadmap of how to get things done than a "ticking the check box" exercise for Russia to notch up some "success".

For SA it is not clear how the strategy will promote more value-added exports and attract investment in minerals beneficiation or processing at source. The draft trade ministers joint communiqué is seemingly noncommittal and soft.

SA has some challenges with agreeing to create a single window for trade facilitation. It has to navigate through legal arrangements within the Southern African Customs Union, especially on external agreements SA has with third parties that may see the free movement of goods in the common customs area.

Although the government supports India's proposed business travel card, modelled on the Schengen visa arrangement, SA views it as unfair that its liberalised visa arrangement for the Brics countries has not yet been reciprocated.

SEVERAL working groups have been set up under the auspices of the Brics Business Council: for manufacturing, ICT, small business and finance. The president of the South African delegation to

the council, Brian Molefe, proposed new working groups for deregulation and agribusiness.

South African business is interested in common issues affecting Brics trade and investment and specific issues pertaining to particular companies and industries — such as pharmaceuticals — for which they want to identify important platforms for joint technology development.

They support the trade facilitation agenda in principle, but want progress in promoting transparency in the financial incentives each country makes available to its companies, and progress in approvals for businesses from other Brics countries.

They want to promote "fair" trade. The concern is that SA has the lowest average import tariffs of all Brics countries, but implements the fewest nontariff barriers.

South African business representatives to the Brics Business Council are concerned about how the government is managing the Brics process.

It is regarded as too bureaucratic and there is a strong feeling that the government is not prepared to tackle the real issues, such as "fair" trade.

There are problems within the council. Brazil has not been driving the process, and Russia and China are represented primarily by state-owned enterprises — unlike India, Brazil and SA — with the interests of the private and state sectors not being sufficiently aligned.

The Brics process seems to be of limited use to South African business.

Promoters of the Contingency Reserve Arrangement argue that it will provide "insurance" to SA in the event of investment status downgrades by the ratings agencies, and an ensuing capital flight — an increasingly likely proposition. SA could tap these resources during balance of payments crises, enabling the government to cover calls on forex reserves.

However, the Contingency Reserve Arrangement is not capable of providing more than an initial first line of support. The amount SA could call from it is capped at \$6.5bn — 130% of its contribution of \$5bn — a small fraction of the daily turnover in South African currency markets.

Clearly, a lot more money would be required to prevent a run on the rand, assuming the South African Reserve Bank wishes to intervene to prevent a slide in the currency, which it does not. In the extremely unlikely event that such funding was to be sought, it would come from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The Contingency Reserve Arrangement rules explicitly provide for this. The idea put forward by some Brics promoters, that the Contingency Reserve Arrangement will enable the Brics countries to avoid IMF conditionalities, therefore holds no water.

SOUTH African officials have indicated they will seek to revive African infrastructure development as an important issue for the Ufa communiqué. They are of the view that this lost momentum during the 2014 Brics summit. There is much speculation about the New Development Bank's Africa Regional Centre, whose agreed establishment is regarded as a diplomatic victory for SA.

The government is still working on the Africa Regional Centre's articles of association. There seems to be agreement it will be located in Johannesburg. It could, in effect, be a "mini New Development Bank", targeted at African markets, but it is not clear how it will relate to the New Development Bank's head office in Shanghai, and what autonomy it will enjoy.

The Brics Business Council has expressed an interest in playing an advisory role in the New

Development Bank, as it wants more say in project selection and the disbursement of funds. But there is no clarity on the interest rates that will be charged; how small and medium enterprises will be treated; the methodology to be applied in selecting projects; and how considerations such as sustainability will be integrated into project design and selection.

Further complicating matters, the government recently decided to join the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank, which will be heavily focused on infrastructure projects in Asia. It is not clear what the strategic value of this move is — apart from earning kudos from China. But it could erode the effectiveness of the New Development Bank and the Africa Regional Centre.

The Brics agenda for Ufa is ambitious. It is important SA identifies its clear interests and thinks carefully about its allocation of resources vis-à-vis potential returns.

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