



(The United Nations is investigating fresh allegations of sexual abuse in Central African Republic, where peacekeepers have been hit with numerous charges of sexual abuse over the past year, a U.N. spokesman said on Monday.)

## BURUNDI :

### **Burundi: l'aide financière de l'Union européenne toujours en suspens**

Par RFI/le 15-02-2016

Un enfant a été tué et au moins 30 personnes blessées, ce lundi 15 février à Bujumbura, dans une série d'attaques à la grenade. Des attaques qui témoignent du récent regain de violences au Burundi, plongé dans une crise depuis presque dix mois. Une situation qui pourrait entraîner une suspension de l'aide de l'Union européenne (UE) au Burundi. L'UE s'est réunie ce lundi pour étudier la question. La décision est importante, car le soutien européen représente plus de 20 % du budget de l'Etat burundais.

On attendait une décision ce lundi, puisque cela fait deux mois que l'Union européenne évoque la possibilité de suspendre son aide au Burundi, mais le Conseil de l'UE se donne encore quelques semaines.

A l'issue de la réunion, la chef de la diplomatie européenne a simplement confirmé que l'option était bien sur la table. « La suspension de l'aide a été proposée, indique la Haute représentante de la politique extérieure de l'UE, Federica Mogherini. La position est sur la table du Conseil. Ce n'était pas la décision d'aujourd'hui, c'est pour ça que vous ne la trouvez pas dans le texte des conclusions

d'aujourd'hui. Parce que ça va être reconsidéré ces prochaines semaines. »

Elle n'a donné aucune autre indication sur la forme que pourrait prendre cette suspension. Pour l'instant, l'Union européenne répète qu'elle prendra les mesures appropriées face au manque de signaux positifs de la part du gouvernement burundais.

Avec une aide globale de quelque 430 millions d'euros pour la période 2015-2020, l'UE est le premier donateur du Burundi.

#### Aide directe à la population

Pour autant, les Vingt-Huit ne vont sans doute pas couper complètement leur soutien financier. Bruxelles précise que la fragilité économique du Burundi risque d'aggraver la crise actuelle. Pas question d'abandonner les habitants et de suspendre l'aide humanitaire. L'idée des diplomates européens serait donc plutôt de modifier les destinataires de leur aide : concrètement, cela signifierait privilégier l'aide directe à la population sans passer par le gouvernement.

L'Union européenne, qui dénonce à la fois les attaques de groupes rebelles et la répression gouvernementale pourrait aussi élargir les sanctions personnelles de gel des avoirs et d'interdiction de visas qui touchent actuellement quatre proches du président Nkurunziza.

En attendant, l'Union européenne réclame de nouveau la tenue d'un dialogue politique interburundais, sans condition préalable et sous médiation internationale. Et elle lance un nouvel avertissement aux autorités burundaises. Sur Twitter, la députée Cécile Kyenge écrit : « Le gouvernement du Burundi doit prendre pleinement conscience que la patience de l'Union européenne a des limites. »

#### **Le Burundi prêt à présider aux destinées de la Communauté Est Africaine après la Tanzanie** Xinhua/16.02.2016

La ministre burundaise à la Présidence chargée des affaires de la Communauté Est-Africaine (CEA), Léontine Nzeyimana, a exprimé lundi son optimisme que son pays présiderait aux destinées de la Communauté.

"Normalement la présidence de ce sommet devrait revenir au Burundi", mais c'est au prochain sommet des chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement de la CEA prévu le 29 février de décider le pays qui va présider aux destinées de cette Communauté après la Tanzanie dont le mandat a expiré au mois de novembre 2015, selon les préoccupations au niveau national, a expliqué la ministre à Xinhua,

Elle reste tout de même optimiste qu'il reviendra au Burundi de présider aux destinées de la CEA malgré des desideratas de certains Burundais qui ont fait un mauvais lobbying auprès des organes dirigeant cette Communauté sans y parvenir.

"Il n'y a pas de crainte parce que le Burundi est représenté dans tous les organes de la CEA. Il n'y a rien qui se perd et l'essentiel, c'est l'entente entre les chefs d'Etat. Il y a eu des accusations par certaines organisations de la société civile et des partis politiques qui voulaient que le Burundi soit exclu de la CEA, qu'il n'occupe pas la présidence du sommet et qu'il n'obtienne pas le poste de secrétaire général de la Communauté. Tout cela n'a pas été accepté parce que même l'Assemblée de la Communauté n'a pas le mandat de prendre de telles décisions", a rassuré la ministre Léontine Nzeyimana.

Le sommet qui devait avoir lieu en novembre 2015 en Tanzanie, a été reporté, car la Tanzanie alors sortait des élections et n'a pas encore mis en place un gouvernement.

La Communauté Est-Africaine est composée du Burundi, du Kenya, de l'Ouganda, du Rwanda et de la Tanzanie. Le Soudan du Sud a fait également la demande d'adhésion.

RWANDA :

RDC CONGO :

**RDC: le président du plus grand parti d'opposition apporte son soutien à la journée "ville-morte" à Kinshasa**

Xinhua/16.02.2016

Le président de l'UDPS (le plus grand parti d'opposition en République démocratique du Congo) Étienne Tshisekedi a déclaré son soutien à une journée "ville morte" mardi à Kinshasa, pour commémorer la mémoire des martyrs de "marche pacifique des chrétiens de 1992".

Étienne Tshisekedi, président de l'Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social (UDPS) s'est exprimé dans un récent communiqué publié depuis Bruxelles où il séjourne depuis des mois pour des raisons des santés.

"J'apporte mon soutien à toutes les manifestations pacifiques programmées pour faire pression sur le gouvernement actuel, et particulièrement à la ville-morte prévue pour ce mardi, 16 février", affirme le communiqué.

Ce communiqué d'Etienne Tshisekedi vient contredire celui du secrétaire général de son parti, Bruno Mavungu, qui avait affirmé que l'UDPS n'était pas du tout concerné par la journée "ville-morte".

Plusieurs parties de l'opposition ont réitéré leur appel à une journée de "ville morte" mardi à Kinshasa, notamment le plateforme du front citoyens et le G7, pour dire non au troisième mandat du président Joseph Kabila et appeler à l'organisation des élections dans le délais constitutionnel.

Ces membres de l'oppositions accusent Joseph Kabila de vouloir faire de manœuvre pour rester au pouvoir au-delà de son deuxième mandat.

Le président Kabila a convoqué un dialogue politique pour débattre sur l'organisation des élections apaisées et transparentes. L'Union africaine et la Mission de l'ONU pour la stabilisation du Congo ont exprimé leur soutien au dialogue.

**RDC : "L'opération ville morte est déjà une réussite"**

Hubert Leclercq/lalibre.be/le mardi 16 février 2016

Vital Kamerhe est sur tous les fronts. Le patron de l'Union pour la Nation Congolaise (UNC) , un

des principaux partis de l'opposition et un des leaders de la Dynamique de l'Opposition qui fédère différentes formations politiques de l'opposition, ne compte pas ses heures. Il faut dire que l'opposition au régime du président congolais Joseph Kabila joue gros ce mardi 16 février avec son appel à la ville morte.

“La tension est à son comble dans la ville de Kinshasa”, nous explique-t-il au téléphone à la nuit tombée. “La majorité présidentielle comprend qu'elle a vraiment face à elle un ensemble de partis politiques déterminés et unis mais aussi et surtout une population lassée par sa non gestion du pays et par sa volonté de ne pas respecter la constitution”.

Cet appel à la journée ville morte, mouvement de désobéissance populaire et pacifique, n'a été lancé qu'en fin de semaine dernière. Initialement, ce 16 février - journée de commémoration de la marche pacifique des chrétiens du 16 février 1992, qui avait vu l'armée zaïroise ouvrir le feu sur des manifestants qui demandaient l'ouverture de la Conférence nationale souveraine - devait être marqué par une nouvelle marche dans toutes les villes du pays. “Mais on a vu que le pouvoir avait dépensé sans compter pour s'armer. Nous ne voulons pas de confrontation violente. Les Congolais ont déjà assez souffert. Nous voulons faire comprendre pacifiquement à Monsieur Kabila qu'il doit respecter la Constitution et organiser les élections présidentielles en novembre prochain avant de céder le pouvoir à son successeur en décembre de cette année. Aujourd'hui, tous les partis de l'opposition et les grands mouvements de la société civile forment un énorme bloc monolithique et non violent avec lequel il devra inévitablement compter. Nous voulons envoyer un message au président Kabila mais aussi à la communauté internationale.”

Une marche seule ne pourra suffir pour faire plier le pouvoir en place ?

“Nous en sommes bien conscients. C'est une première étape. Et nous sommes déjà certains que ce sera un succès. Kinshasa, Lubumbashi, Goma, Bukavu, Kananga et tant autres se sont mobilisées pour faire de ce mardi 16 février le début d'un mouvement très large. Ensuite, nous continuerons, nous avons une multitudes d'actions à mener, toujours pacifiquement, pour faire comprendre qu'il doit organiser ces élections et qu'il ne pourra pas s'accrocher au pouvoir. Nous voulons le strict respect de la constitution.”

Les élections doivent se tenir dans un peu plus de 9 mois. Est-il encore possible de les organiser dans ce timing ?

“Absolument. On veut nous faire croire qu'il faudra des mois, des années, pour préparer ce scrutin. Regardez ce qui s'est passé en 2011. La préparation de ce scrutin n'a vraiment débuté qu'en avril 2011 après que le président a fait modifier la Constitution pour passer d'un scrutin présidentiel de deux à un tour. Aujourd'hui, on sait qu'il faut nettoyer le fichier électoral qui n'a pas été mis à jour volontairement depuis le dernier scrutin. C'est à dire qu'il ne tient pas compte des personnes qui sont décédées ni des jeunes qui ont atteint l'âge de voter depuis fin 2011. La plupart des experts indépendants sont d'accord pour dire qu'il faut quatre mois pour faire ce travail. Nous sommes donc parfaitement dans temps. En tout cas, il n'est pas trop tard.”

Ne craignez-vous pas que le mouvement dégénère et qu'il y ait une effusion de sang ?

“Vous vous souvenez qu'en janvier 2015, le peuple de Kinshasa a dit spontanément non à la modification de la Constitution que Kabila et le groupe de mafieux qui sont à la tête de l'Etat voulaient lui imposer. Il y a eu des manifestations qui ont été durement réprimées. On veut éviter toute effusion de sang. C'est pour cette raison, je le répète, que nous avons opté pour cette opération ville morte et que d'autres projets, avec la même approche non violente, sont en gestation. Mais on sait très bien que le pouvoir en place est prêt à toutes les provocations. Ces dernières heures,

certaines gouverneurs, des ministres et le secrétaire général du parti présidentiel ont multiplié les textes menaçants pour exiger que les fonctionnaires se rendent à leur travail. Des manifestations proKabila sont attendues. On veut éviter la confrontation. On a la Constitution avec nous. On est avec le peuple. On veut faire comprendre à ces Messieurs qui veulent s'accrocher au pouvoir qu'il est temps de partir. Que le Congo est devenu ingouvernable pour eux.”

Vous présenter aujourd'hui un front particulièrement uni. Est-ce tenable à moyen terme ?

“Vous avez vu qu'Etienne Tshisekedi a rejoint notre mouvement. Aujourd'hui, nous sommes unis et nous resterons unis parce que, je me répète, nous avons le peuple et la constitution avec nous. Vous verrez dans quelques heures que ce sera une réussite qui fera réfléchir le pouvoir en place et qui enverra un message fort à la communauté internationale. Oui, nous resterons unis parce que ce pays, qui devrait être le paradis sur terre avec ses potentialités gigantesques est devenu un enfer par la volonté d'une poignée d'hommes. Cela suffit, ces hommes ne peuvent tenir en otage un peuple de 65 millions d'âmes.”

UGANDA :

Key facts about Uganda, a major regional player

2016-02-16/news24.com

Kampala - Uganda, which holds presidential elections on February 18, plays a key role in East Africa as a major regional economic and military power.

A diplomatic heavyweight, President Yoweri Museveni has sent troops into multiple nations, as well as led efforts to end regional crises, most recently in troubled Burundi.

Museveni, who seized power in 1986, is one Africa's longest ruling presidents, beaten by Equatorial Guinea's President Theodore Obiang Nguema, Angola's Jose Eduardo Dos Santos, Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe and Cameroon's Paul Biya.

Aged at least 71, Museveni is widely expected to be re-elected, having changed the constitution in 2005 to allow him to run again.

With a constitutional age limit of 75, it would be his last term in power if he wins - unless another change is made.

Here are some key facts about Uganda.

Landlocked but strategic

Sharing borders with troubled countries including Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan - Museveni has sent troops into both - Uganda lies in Africa's volatile Great Lakes region.

It covers 241 038 sq km, about the same size as Britain or Ghana.

Ugandan troops have served with the African Union Mission in Somalia since 2007, forming the backbone of the 22 000-strong force battling al-Qaeda-linked Shebab insurgents.

The Shebab have struck back in Somalia and in Uganda: on July 11, 2010, Shebab suicide bombers in Kampala killed at least 76 people watching the World Cup final.

Growing population

With some 37.8 million people, according to the World Bank, it has one of the fastest population growth rates on the continent.

A mainly Christian population - with believers making up more than three-quarters of the people - Pope Francis was given a rapturous welcome on a visit in November 2015.

Memories of Amin violence

Britain's protectorate in Uganda was forged in 1894 from a group of neighbouring and sometimes rival kingdoms, including the dominant Buganda kingdom in the south and Bunyoro in the northwest.

The country became independent in 1962, with the Buganda monarch, Edward Mutesa, named as first head of state.

But Mutesa was deposed and exiled by then prime minister Milton Obote in 1966, the first in a series of violent regime changes, including Obote's fall in 1971 in a military coup to dictator Idi Amin.

Up to a half million Ugandans died under Amin's regime, which grabbed world headlines in 1976, when Israeli commandos freed more than 100 hostages held by Palestinian militants at Entebbe airport.

Amin's ouster in 1979 was followed by half a decade of instability that ended when Museveni seized power in 1986.

While Museveni enjoyed Western support for much of his early regime, criticism of human rights abuses as well as anti-democratic legal and constitutional reforms, have tarnished his image.

Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels led by Joseph Kony have long since been chased out of Uganda, but the jungle guerrillas continue their three-decade long war across five central African nations, in which more than 100 000 people have been killed and 60 000 children abducted.

Coffee, aid ... and perhaps oil

Agriculture accounts for around 23% of Uganda's national output but employs more than 80 percent of the workforce. The main export is coffee.

Uganda does not generate enough revenue to cover government operating costs, and relies on a consortium of foreign donors to balance its national budget.

The discovery of an estimated 2.5 billion barrels of oil in the northwest Lake Albert region is hoped to boost the economy and stem reliance on foreign aid. But plans for an oil refinery producing 200,000 barrels per day have made little progress so far.

GNI (gross national income) per capita: \$670 (World Bank, 2014).

## SOUTH AFRICA :

### What South Africa needs before fracking the Karoo

By News24 Wire/February 16, 2016

Poor infrastructure, the scarcity of water and a lack of skills in the Karoo, as well as public concerns regarding the potential environmental impact are holding back development in South Africa's unconventional gas sector, a new report has revealed.

Poor infrastructure, the scarcity of water and a lack of skills in the Karoo, as well as public concerns regarding the potential environmental impact of shale gas operations are hampering development in the unconventional gas sector in South Africa, a report revealed.

Unconventional gas, a global phenomenon, a report by the World Energy Council in partnership with Accenture, was released at the Africa Gas Forum during the Africa Energy Indaba on Monday in Johannesburg.

Little progress in SA

Even though South Africa has significant potential for shale gas development, little progress has been made in exploiting these resources, the report said.

"Despite the potential and local need for new energy supplies, exploration and development have not yet made significant progress," the report said.

Large reserves of shale gas have been identified in the Karoo basin, which alone could provide up to 4% of additional electricity requirements with no need for pipelines.

Shell as well as Chevron in partnership with Falcon Oil and Gas are currently exploring in Karoo, the report said.

"South Africa (which has the eighth biggest reserve of shale gas in the world) has the potential to become a major unconventional gas producer and should persevere despite the current low prices since gas is a long term game," Christoph Frei, Secretary General, World Energy Council, said in a statement.

What SA needs to do for shale gas

The report advises South Africa to plan infrastructure and ensure water management is taken into account, build local expertise and provide financial incentives such as tax incentives.

"If South Africa invests in its infrastructure and develops local expertise that creates an enabling framework, then investment will follow and it can realise its full unconventional gas potential," said Frei.

While South Africa needs more than 50GW of new electricity generation by 2030, it has committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 34% by 2020.

A majority of its electricity mix is based on ageing coal power stations, a major culprit of these emissions. The Department of Energy is looking toward its Independent Power Producer programme and a controversial nuclear energy build programme to alleviate this need.

Gas gaining popularity

Recently, after the discovery of gas in Mozambique, the country boosted its energy mix to include

more gas, which emits less carbon dioxide than coal power plants.

The Karoo shale basin is considered a good prospect of shale gas due to the presence of mature black shales, the report explains.

“Eskom officials also estimate that shale gas from the Karoo could be produced and directly absorbed by existing electricity networks up to 1 to 2 GW, with no need for pipelines, which enables progress even in the low price environment,” it said.

Better skills needed in shale gas

It explained that the development of shale will require stronger technical expertise in shale gas development.

“To improve market attractiveness, a new Infrastructure Development Bill was implemented to address the risks of expropriation,” it explained.

“However, a clearer stance on tax incentives and subsidies, and ownership of mineral rights should be taken and formalised to further attract potential partners and foreign investment,” it said.

The largest hurdles for Karoo, which means thirsty land, will be infrastructure development and water availability, the report said.

No coverage in Karoo basin

Sasol and Transnet own all significant pipeline infrastructure and there is no coverage in the Karoo basin, it said.

“While it appears some development will occur without major infrastructure investments, eventually infrastructure will be required to realise the potential of the basin in a sustainable manner,” the report showed.

“This will be exceptionally true for water management,” it said. “There is opportunity for shale gas to drive the development of road, pipeline, water management, and municipal infrastructure that could improve the services available to communities and build goodwill with the industry. The basin currently has poor road infrastructure.”

However, it warned that “there are significant local public concerns regarding potential environmental impact from shale operations”.

While environmental protests have focused on the Karoo for years, the focus recently shifted to KwaZulu-Natal, where Rhino Oil and Gas South Africa has seen huge resistance to its bid to explore 1.5 million hectares a gas reserves in the province.

Public meetings being held as part of an environmental impact assessment process have seen a solid wall of protest, as reported on News24 and in a special report on Sunday by Carte Blanche.

Shale gas moving beyond US

The magnitude and speed of change of shale gas production is expanding beyond the US market to China, Argentina and Algeria, which have similar potential, the report explains.

The World Energy Council’s Resources 2013 chapter on natural gas predicted natural gas could reach 25% of the global energy mix by 2030.

“Unconventional gas supplies have the potential to reflect a substantial portion of that share and will continue to change the supply landscape for natural gas,” it said.  
East Africa may win gas race

While there is potential for the development of unconventional gas in Algeria and South Africa, offshore projects in East Africa may win in the race for funding in the region, the report said.

“Natural gas discoveries in recent years in Mozambique and Tanzania appear very promising to the industry,” it said.

“If policymakers in the region are successful at regional cooperation and energy system integration, sub-Saharan Africa could emerge as an important new hub for natural gas that serves as an intermediary, connecting North America and Asian markets, and feeds growing demand for energy within Africa,” explains the report.

“This enables the development of strategic infrastructure, limits the need for fossil fuel imports in the region, and provides some protection for the continent against commodity price volatility.”  
Is this the ‘Golden Age of Gas’?

However, the report explains that in 2016, the role of natural gas in the global energy mix appears uncertain.

“The so called ‘Golden Age of Gas’ is no longer in sight,” it explains. “Economic, geopolitical, and policy constraints have slowed demand growth in Asia and led to a decline in demand in Europe.

“On the other hand, suppliers in Australia, the Middle East, Africa, and North America who bet on old forecasts for Asian demand growth are bringing plenty of new supplies to the market.

“In shifting the supply structure of the global market, unconventional gas may compliment the actions of key actors by increasing transparency, competition, and reshaping the economics of natural gas,” it said. “

“This will enable the confidence for investors to develop the infrastructure required for the reliable and safe use of natural gas as a fuel source for the long-run.”

### **South Africa's Gordhan Holds Talks With Business Before Budget**

February 16, 2016 /bloomberg.com

South African Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan plans to continue holding meetings with business leaders after he conducted talks with chief executive officers on Monday to discuss strategies to stimulate growth and revive investor sentiment to help avert possible downgrade of the country's credit rating.

“Government has been very clear about engaging with business and the need for engagement with business,” Phumza Macanda, a spokeswoman for the National Treasury, said by phone Tuesday.

Gordhan will deliver the country's budget speech on Feb. 24 amid anticipation of a more investor-friendly policy outlook and tighter consolidation of government spending. President Jacob Zuma announced cost-cutting measures and emphasized the need to market Africa's second-largest economy as a destination for investment in his Feb. 11 address to Parliament. This followed meetings held with CEOs before the speech.

“The finance minister expects post the budget to meet again,” Ralph Mupita, CEO of insurer Old Mutual Plc’s emerging markets business, said by phone on Monday. “And the president said he’d like some work being done with an economics task force to put together some plans on driving growth, so there’s continued engagement.”

Gordhan, 66, who was reappointed to the post that he’d held from 2009 to 2014 after a December market rout, has said the government will do everything possible to ensure that the nation’s debt isn’t downgraded to junk. Local markets and the rand plunged to record lows following Zuma’s decision to fire Nhlanhla Nene as the country’s finance minister, replacing him with a little known lawmaker David van Rooyen.

Moody’s Investors Service cut the outlook on South Africa’s Baa2 credit rating, the second-lowest investment grade, to negative in December. Standard & Poor’s, which puts the nation’s debt one level below Moody’s, also changed its outlook to negative.

TANZANIA :

KENYA :

ANGOLA :

**Virtually Flawless 404-Carat Diamond Unearthed in Angola, Becoming 1 of World’s Largest**  
February 15, 2016/by CNN Wire

A massive diamond among the largest ever discovered was recently unearthed in Angola, mining company Lucapa announced Monday.

At 404.2 carats, it measures about 7 cm across — about the length of a credit card, Lucapa said.

It was mined by the Lulo Diamond Project, a partnership between Endiama, Angola’s national diamond company, Lucapa Diamond Company, and a private investor, Rosas & Pétales.

New York-based diamond retailer Yehuda tested the new diamond’s color and clarity, according to Lucapa, and categorized it as a Type IIa stone — meaning it’s virtually flawless.

It’s also D-colored, or entirely colorless, Lucapa said. That is the rarest — and likely most valuable — color grade for a white diamond, according to the Gemological Institute of America.

The Lulo Diamond Project began exploring a 1,148 square-mile plot of land in central Angola in 2015, and the area has so far produced more than 60 “large special diamonds,” the company said.

Lucapa, a relatively tiny diamond exploration company, is traded on Australia’s ASX stock

exchange under the symbol LOM. It suspended trading a few days in advance of the announcement. When Lucapa resumed trading on Monday, its shares jumped 30%.

Chairman Miles Kennedy told ABC Australia that the historical find could be worth about \$20 million.

Angola is the world's fourth biggest country for diamond production. The 404.2 carat gem is now the largest to ever come out of the country, topping the 217.4 carat gem found in 2007 and dubbed the "Angolan Star."

The world record was a 3,106 carat gem, called the "Cullinan." It weighed in at a massive 1.3 pounds and was discovered in South Africa in 1905. That stone was cut to adorn the royal sceptor, one of Britain's crown jewels, and is on display at the Tower of London.

"Cullinan" was nearly triple the size of the second largest diamond on record, which weighed 1,111 carats and was found in November 2014.

The diamond discovery, announced Monday, would make it the 27th largest diamond ever recorded.

AU/AFRICA :

### Devastating drought threatens to unravel economic growth in Africa

The Globe and Mail/Monday, Feb. 15, 2016

After years of optimistic chatter from economists and politicians about the "Africa Rising" phenomenon, a devastating drought is exposing the fragility of the African boom, pushing millions of people back into hunger, poverty and a dependence on foreign aid.

Until recently, investment bankers and analysts were touting Africa as the next big thing in global growth. Rising foreign investment, soaring GDP rates and an emerging middle class were seen as evidence of a new era dawning. But today, much of the continent is again threatened by its familiar enemies of drought and war.

By some estimates, more than 40 million Africans in a dozen countries are now in need of humanitarian assistance because of food shortages that have expanded from the Horn of Africa to South Sudan and into the farthest corners of southern Africa.

The disaster was triggered by the pressures of climate change, demonstrating the importance of the pledges made by governments at the Paris climate negotiations in December. But the crisis has been aggravated by a brutal civil war in South Sudan and the continued failings of governments in Somalia and Zimbabwe. Despite the "Africa Rising" rhetoric, many African countries still lack the government resources and social infrastructure to endure a drought without foreign aid.

The crisis began last year with a supercharged El Nino weather pattern. This pattern is a periodic worldwide shift caused by Pacific Ocean warming, but the latest one has been heightened and intensified by climate change, making it the most extreme in decades. It has brought months of drought to countries across East Africa and Southern Africa, with the effects persisting this year.

The effects are being felt in many different ways. In the Horn of Africa, crops are failing and

herdsmen are watching their animals die. In Zambia, the drought is causing a major hydro reservoir to dry up, leading to a huge loss of electricity generation, which in turn is resulting in mine shutdowns and layoffs. And in countries such as Zimbabwe and South Africa, the drought is causing poor harvests, triggering steep rises in food prices and forcing governments to import expensive foreign food or to plead for help.

One of the worst-hit countries today is Ethiopia. Despite its reputation as a country of famine in the early 1980s, Ethiopia rebounded to become one of Africa's fastest-growing economies in recent years. Donors have praised its economic reforms. But now hunger is making a comeback.

The most severe drought in a half-century has swept across huge swaths of Ethiopia, and an estimated 10.2 million Ethiopians now need humanitarian aid. One charity, Save the Children, has classified the Ethiopian situation as a "code-red emergency" – as serious as the war in Syria. But despite urgent appeals, only about half of the needed \$1.4-billion (U.S.) in food aid has arrived so far.

"The present situation here keeps me awake at night," said John Graham, country director in Ethiopia for Save the Children.

"If these emergency funds do not arrive in time, there is no question that there will be a critical fracture in the food-aid supply pipeline during the main 'hungry season,' which peaks in August," he said in a statement.

"The situation here is as grave as I have ever seen it in the 19 years I have spent in Ethiopia and we now only have a tiny fraction of time for the international community to help to stop this."

With a population of 95 million, Ethiopia is the second-most populous country in Africa. But about 80 per cent of its population is rural, leaving it highly vulnerable to drought.

More than 400,000 children will suffer from severe malnutrition in Ethiopia this year, according to projections, while a further 1.7 million children, pregnant women and young mothers are at risk of falling into severe malnutrition if they don't get help soon. More than 2.5 million children are likely to drop out of the education system because of the drought.

In addition, there are 5.8 million Ethiopians who need urgent access to drinking water. The water shortages have left them vulnerable to disease and illness.

"Families should not be put in a position where they need to make heartbreaking decisions about what they use precious water for – to drink and cook with, or to bathe their children and prevent the spread of disease," Mr. Graham said.

In neighbouring Somalia, an estimated 4.7 million people are in need of humanitarian aid. In some regions, the drought has killed up to 80 per cent of the livestock, and pastoralists are desperately searching for pastures and water for their animals.

In South Sudan, where one of Africa's most catastrophic wars has been raging for more than two years, at least 40,000 people in one region are already on the brink of starvation. Only the remoteness of their region has prevented an official famine declaration – it is considered too dangerous for aid workers to visit.

In total, about a quarter of South Sudan's 12 million people are facing a hunger crisis and in need of humanitarian aid – primarily because of war, not drought. In some districts, people are surviving by

scavenging for fish and water lilies in swamps, but the water will soon dry up as the rainy season ends.

Southern Africa, traditionally less prone to malnutrition than the Horn of Africa, has been severely hit by the latest drought. From Botswana and Namibia to Mozambique and Madagascar, much of the region is suffering the lowest level of rainfall in 35 years.

“Over the coming year, humanitarian partners should prepare themselves for food insecurity levels and food insecure population numbers in southern Africa to be at their highest levels since the 2002-2003 food crisis,” a statement last week by United Nations and European Union researchers said.

Even a country such as South Africa, with one of the continent’s most advanced economies, is suffering badly from the drought. Lack of rainfall has led to declarations of agricultural emergencies in five of the country’s nine provinces, and the government will be forced to import maize. Soaring food prices are pushing thousands of South Africans into poverty.

#### Humanitarian crisis

##### Ethiopia

More than 10 million Ethiopians are in need of food aid because of the worst drought since the 1960s, according to relief agencies. One agency, Save the Children, calls it a ‘code-red emergency.’ Crops have failed, livestock are dying and at least 435,000 children are expected to suffer from severe malnutrition soon. The United Nations has appealed for \$1.4-billion (U.S.) in funding for the crisis, but it has raised only about half of this target so far.

##### Somalia

An estimated 4.7 million people – almost 40 per cent of Somalia’s population – need humanitarian assistance, including 3.7 million who are acutely short of food. Much of this is a chronic crisis in a country that has been torn by war and terrorism for more than 20 years. But the drought is worsening the situation, especially in the regions of Puntland and Somaliland, where thousands of pastoral families have been forced to leave their homes in search of water and pastures for their animals.

##### South Sudan

In South Sudan, the main cause of the rising malnutrition is not drought but the brutal civil war that has dragged on for two years. Because of the conflict, farmers cannot plant their crops, roads are dangerous and many families are too isolated to receive aid. About three million people are hungry and in need of assistance. Of those, about 400,000 are in a severe emergency and about 40,000 are on the verge of famine and starvation.

##### Zimbabwe

The drought is particularly bad in southern Africa, including Zimbabwe, where an estimated three million people (about 30 per cent of the population) are in desperate need of food aid. Animals are dying and harvests are failing in the worst drought in a quarter-century. President Robert Mugabe’s government has appealed for \$1.5-billion (U.S.) in emergency humanitarian aid, mostly to pay for food imports and to repair irrigation equipment. The government says it will need to import 1.5 million tonnes of maize, the main food staple.

## Zambia

The drought has wreaked havoc on Zambia's economy, not only by hurting its farmers but also by damaging the supply of electricity to its copper mines. Almost all of Zambia's electricity is generated by hydro power, mainly from the huge Kariba Dam. But the dam's reservoir has fallen to just 12 per cent of its capacity, forcing Zambia to cut the power supply to its mining companies by 30 per cent. This, in turn, has led to higher costs and layoffs at the mines.

## South Africa

Food prices are soaring in South Africa because of the drought, with the cost of maize rising by about 75 per cent over the past year. The World Bank estimates the drought pushed 50,000 South Africans into poverty last year. The country will need to import 3.8 million tonnes of maize this year, forcing prices even higher. Five of the country's nine provinces have declared agricultural emergencies and food prices are expected to rise by a further 20 per cent this year.

## Commodities rout fails to slow urban explosion in Africa

16/02/2016 /independent.ie

Africa's biggest economies have been hammered by the collapse in commodity prices over the past 18 months but there are still investment bright spots to be found.

In cities such as Lagos, Nairobi, Accra, Kinshasa and Johannesburg, growth remains robust and investors are prospering in the retail, financial services, technology and construction sectors.

This means investors can now readjust their strategy for Africa. Instead of taking a view on the continent as a whole, or choosing one country over another, they can seize opportunities city by city.

Sub-Saharan Africa is urbanising faster than anywhere else in the world and city dwellers have more money to spend.

"In the current economic environment, investors want areas where success is proven, growth is strong and will remain strong. Big African cities give you that," said Jacob Kholi, a partner at Abraaj, a private equity firm with \$9bn under management.

"It has become even more important to focus on these key cities than before," Kholi added.

Nairobi is the most attractive destination for foreign investment, according to a 2015 report by PricewaterhouseCoopers, followed by Accra, with Lagos and Johannesburg equal third.

Consumption per capita in Accra is 1.6 times greater than the average in Ghana, 2.3 times bigger in Lagos than the average in Nigeria, and 2.7 times larger in Nairobi than nationally in Kenya, Abraaj estimates.

Lagos, one of the world's fastest growing cities and with a population of 20 million, expects economic growth of 7pc this year, twice the pace of the country as a whole.

Even South Africa, which is grappling with youth unemployment of over 40pc and could slip into recession this year, has areas where industry is booming.

"Looking around here, you wouldn't know things were so bad," construction worker Sifiso Zwane told Reuters in Johannesburg's wealthy Sandton business district. "Rich people will always find a way to make more money," said Zwane, with cranes filling the skyline behind him and billboards advertising new retailers like Krispy Kreme doughnuts and H&M.

This year, Kenya is set to unveil the Two River malls in Nairobi, the continent's largest shopping centre outside South Africa, with brands like Porsche, Hugo Boss and France's Carrefour already booking space.

"The economy still has opportunities," said Gabriel Modest, a jeweller who says demand for the gold necklaces and bracelets he sells remains strong. "Sometimes you have to treat yourself," he added, ordering a bowl of muesli and yoghurt at an upmarket Nairobi coffee shop.

In Lagos, plans are in place to develop the multi-billion euro Eko Atlantic city, a Dubai-style gated community that will boast chrome skyscrapers, business parks, palm trees and a marina. By 2025, Mckinsey estimates that more than 80 cities in sub-Saharan Africa will have populations of over one million, accounting for 58pc of the region's growth.

This rapid urbanisation means Africa's big cities will need more roads, hospitals and power stations, while growing numbers of new inhabitants will be buying consumer goods like instant noodles, washing powder and mobile phone cards. (Reuters)

UN/AFRICA :

#### UN investigating fresh Central Africa rape allegations

Tue Feb 16, 2016 /Reuters

UNITED NATIONS (Reuters) - The United Nations is investigating fresh allegations of sexual abuse in Central African Republic, where peacekeepers have been hit with numerous charges of sexual abuse over the past year, a U.N. spokesman said on Monday.

"A team from the Republic of Congo arrived in the country to investigate recent allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse against their troops," Farhan Haq told reporters.

He offered no details on the allegations. Another U.N. official told Reuters that some of the new allegations involved minors.

Earlier this month the U.N. peacekeeping mission for Central African Republic (CAR) said it had identified seven new cases of sexual abuse by its troops, including women and girls Human Rights Watch (HRW) says were raped or gang raped.

The mission's previous head, Babacar Gaye, resigned amid sexual abuse allegations by peacekeepers last August.

In December, an independent review panel accused the United Nations and its agencies of grossly mishandling allegations of child sexual abuse in 2013 and 2014 by international peacekeepers in CAR, calling its approach to the charges "seriously flawed" and a "gross institutional failure."

The world body has pledged to crack down on allegations of misconduct and abuse to avoid a

repeat of past mistakes.

France intervened in CAR, a former colony, over two years ago to stem violence between Christian militias and largely Muslim Seleka rebels who had seized power. It started withdrawing some of its 2,000 troops last year, handing over to U.N. peacekeepers.

France is also among the countries whose troops have been accused of sexual abuse in CAR. It has been investigating the charges since last year.

US/AFRICA :

CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

EU/AFRICA :

CHINA/AFRICA :

INDIA/AFRICA :

### **Racism can shatter India-Africa ties**

Tuesday 16 February 2016/arabnews.com

Racism hangs heavy in the air Indians breathe — a fact demonstrated yet again by the vicious attack on a female Tanzanian college student in Bengaluru.

The 21-year-old was stripped and assaulted by an Indian mob after a Sudanese student's car crushed to death a local woman sleeping on the roadside. The Tanzanian and her three African friends, who had nothing to do with the fatal accident, were targeted when they were passing by the accident site. Five policemen have since been suspended for not saving the Tanzanian from what was clearly a racist attack. Tanzanian and Indian diplomats decried the savagery in Bengaluru even as the media highlighted the deep-rooted hostility against dark-skinned Africans who are ridiculed as kallus (blacks) even by educated Indians, making a mockery of the nation's claim that it values diversity and is tolerant to a fault.

The Indian Express noted that as Africans are visibly different — just like many Muslims, Dalits (low-caste Hindus who are deemed untouchable by upper castes), Indians from the northeast who have Mongoloid features and other ethnic minorities — they are viewed as the “other” by mainstream society. It wrote: “Our racism is vintage; only the targeting of black people is new. They weren’t so readily available earlier.” An aghast columnist writing in The Hindu demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi invite the battered Tanzanian to New Delhi and get photographed with her to send the right message across to his flock.

That, of course, would be too much to expect from Modi. Last year, Giriraj Singh, a BJP Member of Parliament and a minister in the Modi government to boot, was caught on camera saying that had the late Rajiv Gandhi married a “Nigerian” woman instead of the “fair-skinned” Sonia Gandhi, the Congress Party would not have accepted her as its leader. The Nigerian High Commission lodged a complaint with the Ministry of External Affairs while the Congress condemned the racist remarks. But what did Modi do? He promptly gave Singh a promotion!

Other parties too have shown their true colors when it comes to Africans. Somnath Bharti, the Law Minister of Delhi belonging to Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which claims to be morally superior to the BJP or the Congress, recently branded Nigerian and Ugandan women as “prostitutes” and “drug peddlers” during a midnight raid he illegally conducted accompanied by TV cameras. His remarks, sadly, mirrored the average Indian’s mindset.

But the majority’s violent dislike for people who don’t look like them, eat, dress and behave differently, and come from faraway places, is bound to cost India dearly. If the country, particularly Bengaluru, which claims to be heart of digital India, is seriously interested in becoming a global investment destination, it just can’t afford to be labeled an unsafe place where the law of the jungle prevails. Capital and anarchy never go hand in hand.

Prisoners of their own prejudice, Indians love to stereotype Africans as violent and dirty. But this embedded racism flies in the face of New Delhi’s all-out bid to woo Africa for meeting India’s energy and mineral requirements. In October, the Modi government hosted the India-Africa Forum Summit, or IAFS, on a grand scale. Attended by 54 African nations, it was the largest diplomatic assembly in India since the 1983 Non-Aligned Summit.

India is still far behind China in Africa but it’s trying its best to catch up. Ahead of IAFS, Sanjay Baru, a close aide of former Premier Manmohan Singh, wrote: “Authorities in China have invested in a systematic, institutionalized campaign to purge at least the educated urban Chinese of their racial prejudice against ‘black’ Africans. Enough has not been done in India, as is evident from the sporadic incidents of racist abuse against African students and tourists. Without a change of attitude at the people-to-people level, mere summitry at the top and government-sponsored events are unlikely to bring India and Africa closer to each other.”

Moreover, India should purge itself of notions of superiority. Africa is not as poor or backward as Indians like to think. As many as 21 African nations have a higher per capita income than India. Citizens of eight African countries have incomes, which are four times higher than the income of Indians. Between 2008 and 2013, nine African countries grew faster than India.

The barbarism in Bengaluru is a wakeup call for India. It must accord African visitors the love and respect they deserve so that India and the so-called Dark Continent can march together toward peace and prosperity.

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

