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BURUNDI :

RWANDA :

Rwanda president urges more efforts to resolve street children problem

Mar 14,2016/Xinhua

KIGALI, March 13 (Xinhua) -- Rwandan President Paul Kagame has asked government leadership to put an end to street children problem which had risen in past few months.

The Rwandan leader made the call on Saturday while opening the 13th National Leadership Retreat, at the Rwanda Defence Forces Combat Training Centre in Gabiro, Eastern Rwanda.

In Rwanda, the growing population of children living on the streets is a reflection of an increased orphan population and unwanted pregnancies in the country.

"What happened to our child protection policies? How come there are children roaming streets and begging for survival?" Kagame wondered, tasking government officials to do more to protect children.

He noted that it is unacceptable for Rwandan children to become beggars on streets, to be sold into slavery through human trafficking, or suffer from domestic violence.

"These children lead an unhealthy and often dangerous life that leaves them deprived of their basic needs for protection, guidance, and supervision which exposes them to different forms of exploitation and abuse. We must put an end to this!" Rwanda president emphasized.

World Health Organization studies show that street children suffer from health problems, and that they are exposed to a variety of toxic substances, both in their food and in the environment around them.

Last month Rwanda launched multi-ministry campaign aimed to improve the welfare of children and generally safeguard their rights.

The campaign is implemented jointly by the ministries of justice, local government and that of gender and family promotion.

It was introduced after weeks of public concern over a growing number of street children in Kigali and other urban centres across the country.

Speaking to reporters on Sunday Oda Gasinzigwa, Rwanda Minister of Gender and Family Promotion said that indeed there has been a growing number of street children and the government is committed to put an end to it.

"We stand in support of this call and will continue to push for more campaigns to ensure that no children roaming on streets begging for survival. These young people face immense challenges and deprivations and struggle to access even the most basic social services, forcing them into undesirable situations such as living on the streets," she said.

Available statistics from the National Commission for Children indicate that about 2,177 children were integrated into families in 2012.

Meanwhile 2,797 former street children were integrated into families between 2013 and 2015.

More than 250 senior leaders from the Central Government, Local Government, parastatals and the private sector are taking part in the annual leadership retreat. It focuses on "Reaffirming Brand Rwanda" to boost local production.

The meeting will deliberate ways to improve delivery towards achieving the country's Vision 2020 targets and as well how to revamp the country's manufacturing sector.

RDC CONGO :

UGANDA :

Ugandan police beat up chief and Kenyan AP officers on Migingo
Monday, March 14th 2016/standardmedia.co.ke

An assistant chief and an administration policeman stationed on the disputed Migingo Island were at the weekend beaten up by Ugandan police and fishermen.

Assistant Chief Esther Masasi was allegedly accosted by 10 fishermen from Uganda who ordered her to accompany them to a police station manned by Ugandan officers. The Kenyan AP, who was at the beach, tried to intervene but the Ugandan officers turned on him and started battering him together with the administrator. The administrator said the Ugandan policemen questioned her legality as an administrator of the contested island, which they claimed should now be manned by the Ugandan government. "They came and found me near the beach where fishermen were offloading their catch and they informed me that I was required at the police station, which is manned by Ugandan officers, saying their police chief, Sergeant Denis Nenis, had summoned me in his office. I told them that that was not the best way to summon me and they pulled me off my seat and started raining blows and kicks on me," she narrated. Corporal Samwel Ocharo of Kenya, who was nearby, tried to rescue her but the attackers descended on him too, leaving him with serious injuries.

The chief later escaped to Ugingo Island.

A beach official blamed the Kenyan government for taking the security of its people on the island for granted. "We currently have only four police officers in this place when the Ugandans have about 30," said the official. As the scuffle ensued, more policemen from the Ugandan side started beating Kenyan fishermen, spreading tension on the island. The incident on Saturday afternoon happened three days after the same policemen arrested Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) officials who had gone to register voters on the island. The officials were later released after alleged manhandling by Ugandan security forces.

However, a Border Patrol Marine team from the Kenyan police led by Sergeant Mohamed Ngome, revealed that animosity between Kenya and Uganda government agencies that saw the police officer and area assistant chief assaulted by Ugandan police was as a result of a misunderstanding.

A passenger said trouble started after some Ugandan traders alleged that Kenyan authorities were illegally holding their luggage.

SOUTH AFRICA :

TANZANIA :

East Africa: Tanzania Doing Well in Regional Trade

13 March 2016/The Citizen (Dar es Salaam)

Arusha — In a bid to improve trade with other members in the East African Community (EAC), Tanzania has issued 3,222 simplified certificates of origin (CoO) as of June last year compared to 2,355 certificates issued in 2014.

This was revealed in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday by Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa in his address to the East African Legislative Assembly (Eala) currently holding a plenary session here.

A CoO is a document used in international trade in printed form or as an electronic document. It is completed by an exporter and certified by a recognised issuing body, attesting that a ship consignment has been produced, manufactured or processed in a particular country.

The origin of a product does not refer to the country, where the goods were shipped from, but to the country, where they were made.

If it happens that the products were manufactured in two or more countries, origin is obtained in the country, where the last substantial economically justified working or processing is carried out.

A common practice is that if more than 50 per cent of the cost of producing the goods originates from one country, the local content is more than 50 per cent, then that country is regarded as the country of origin. In case of trading blocs, such as the EAC, CoO may be allowed to state the trading bloc rather than a specific country.

Determining the origin of a product is extremely important because origin is key information for applying tariffs, embargo and other trade policies. However, not all exporters need a CoO for depends on the destination of goods, their nature and it can also depend on the financial institution involved in export process.

CoO became a contentious issue in early years of enforcement of the EAC Customs Union Protocol, specifically through the application of Common External Tariffs (CET), which were removed on goods produced outside the bloc. The problem came, when such goods were on transit from one member state to another in the bloc.

Mr Majaliwa told the Eala that issuance of CoO was one of the measures taken by partner states to consolidate economic integration and that it reflected the pace with which trade barriers were being eliminated in the region.

He cited Kenya, where a significant number of non-tariff barriers (NTBs) had been eliminated through an innovative SMS-based NTBs reporting system

Rwanda has done away with all trade restrictions and has gone further to harmonise demographic and social statistics for undertaking agricultural surveys and census.

"All initiatives are geared towards enhancing the Common Market Protocol," he said in an address he delivered on behalf of President John Magufuli, adding, however, that issuance of electronic CoO had been delayed and, therefore, had yet to be adopted.

He said in Uganda, the value of goods from the EAC partner states that had been accorded zero-tariffs grew by nine per cent, while 360 EAC standards on traded goods had been adopted and applied.

No trade figures were given for the strife-torn Burundi, but the tiny country is reported to have started recognising academic qualifications, experiences obtained, licences and certifications obtained for workers from other EAC member countries.

"We all admit that we have done well in eliminating tariff-related barriers. We must resolve to do away with the remaining ones," he said, remarking that the bloc had also seen the removal of many road blocks in recent years.

The PM disclosed in a speech, whose copy was availed to The Citizen on Sunday in Arusha, that out of the 15 one-stop border posts (OSBPs) being constructed in key borders areas across the region, seven had been completed, of which four were fully operational.

Those already working include the Holili/Taveta OSBP on the Tanzania/Kenya, which was opened a

few weeks ago. TradeMark East Africa granted some \$ 12 million for its construction.

Other posts completed within the borders of Tanzania are Rusumo (Tanzania/Rwanda), Sirari/Isebania (Tanzania/Kenya), Horohoro/Lunga Lungu (Tanzania/Kenya), Kagitumba/Mirama Hills (Rwanda/Uganda), Gasenyi/Nemba (Burundi/Rwanda) and Ruhwa Border Post on the border of Burundi and Tanzania.

OSBPs have been adopted for use in the region as a trade facilitation to minimise delays at borders and in major trade corridors in the region.

The Eala was also told about a phenomenal increase in intra-EAC trade, which, according to the EAC Secretariat, was now at 23 per cent over and above the intra-African trade figure of 12 per cent. Intra-regional trade within the bloc has been on a 300-per cent increase from \$2 billion in 2005 to \$6 billion in 2014.

However, Eala Speaker Daniel Kidega said the legislators were still concerned about the tenets of the EAC Common Market Protocol, which had not been fully met in the last five years since the arrangement was enforced after two years of negotiations.

"A sticking area concerns that of free movement of persons and the rights of residence," he said, noting that the East African Trade Union Confederation (EATUC) and the East African Employers' Organisation (EAEO) did petition the Eala on the matter, which was debated and passed.

He commended Tanzania, often blamed for being slow in the integration process, for its commitment to harmonising work and resident permits as well as necessary fees in line with providing preferential treatment to citizens of the EAC partner states.

According to him, Rwanda, Kenya and Uganda had already abolished work permit fees and have introduced inter-state passes. The move encourages workers to move freely in search for opportunities.

Mr Kidega added that the launch of the EAC International E-passport would further facilitate movement of the people in the region.

Speaker of Tanzania's National Assembly Job Ndugai said the region looked forward to including new legislators from the Republic of South Sudan and that would widen the bloc. He thus urged the Eala to be bold in playing its role in the integration process.

The Eala was further informed about consolidated gains of the Single Customs Territory, which commenced in 2014 on a pilot basis along the Northern and Central corridors. This is implemented through the finalisation of key operational instruments entailing revision of business manuals, development of an M&E tool framework, staff deployment and revision of an enforcement framework.

Feature: Quelea birds threatens harvest in central Tanzania

Mar 14,2016/Xinhua

ARUSHA, Tanzania, March 13 (Xinhua) -- Farmers in Tanzania's central region of Dodoma are in frustrations over the new invasion of quelea birds in their fields, which is threatening the anticipated bumper harvests this year.

Famously known as the quelea, the world's most abundant wild bird species flock overnight in large group to attack cereal crops like rice, sorghum and maize.

Officials said that Bahi District is one of the highly affected areas in the drought-stricken region of Dodoma.

Currently, the birds have stormed into Bahi Makulu, Mtitaa, Mwitikila and Mpangwe villages, whereby farmers have appealed to the central government to chip-in and destroy the red-billed birds which are threatening to the areas' bumper harvest this season.

Bahi District council's chairman, Danford Chisomi, admitted on the challenge, saying that for the first time quelea birds started hitting Mwitikila village in Bahi Makulu ward.

He said that hundreds of hectares of rice and sorghum have been affected by the destructive birds, suggesting the need for urgent measures to rescue farmers from the 'deadly' birds.

"We have submitted a report to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Cooperatives and our expectation is that all the breeding sites will be destroyed and farmers shouldn't worry," said Francis Mwonga, Bahi District Commissioner.

He urged farmers to remain calm as the government works on best ways to address the challenge.

One of the farmers, Peter Mwaluko from Bahi Makulu village said the birds need to be eliminated in order to rescue farmers crops.

"We have some good rains in this season, but our hopes now might vanish in thin air due to the invasion of quelea birds. That's why we're asking for help from the government," he said.

Mtitaa village-based farmer, Edda Momeli said: "This year we planted more sorghum, but we're now slaves of quelea because our lives are depend on produce from the farms."

Ward councillor for Bahi Makulu, Agustino Ndonuo said farmers have reported the matter to the district council on the need to rescue their farms from the destructive birds.

"The District council has promised to take immediate action on the birds," Ndonuo said.

Early this year, President John Magufuli directed Regional and District Commissioners to ensure that their areas are free from hunger and use the little rains to produce more food.

The Red-billed Quelea (*Quelea quelea*) is the world's most abundant wild bird species, with an estimated adult breeding population of 1.5 billion pairs. Some estimates of the overall population have been as large as 10 billion. The entire population is found in sub-Saharan Africa and is generally absent from deeply forested regions and the southern reaches of South Africa. It is a small passerine bird of the weaver family ploceidae.

The distribution area of the Red-billed Quelea covers the majority of sub-Saharan Africa, excluding deep portions of rain forest in central Africa. It is also generally absent from the southern portion of South Africa.

KENYA :

Jubilee wanted to kill me in Malindi – Joho

Mar. 14, 2016/the-star.co.ke

MOMBASA Governor Hassan Joho has said he escaped death narrowly in a “shooting spree” during last Monday’s Malindi MP by-election.

Addressing a mini-rally in Mombasa town on Friday, he said gunshots were fired at him.

“The bullets were not fired by our people but police and Jubilee leaders,” Joho said.

The governor said the shooters are walking free while those fighting for justice are being hunted down.

Joho’s security was withdrawn last week and his firearm licence revoked.

“It is surprising those who wanted to shoot us are now considered powerful,” the governor said.

Interior CS Joseph Nkaissery on Saturday said Joho, who has already returned one of his three firearms, has up to today to return the other two or face arrest.

At the rally on Friday, Joho had vowed not to surrender his guns.

However, he returned one firearm on Saturday morning.

The governor said his woes are a diversionary tactic by Coast regional coordinator Nelson Marwa and National Assembly majority leader Aden Duale.

Joho said the two are at pains to explain Jubilee’s loss in the by-election.

ODM’s Willy Mtengo trounced JAP’s Philip Charo with 15,582 votes to 9,243 votes.

ANGOLA :

AU/AFRICA :

Al-Qaeda Claims Ivory Coast Attack That Left 22 People Dead

March 14, 2016 /bloomberg.com

Militants linked to al-Qaeda said they led an attack on Sunday that left at least 22 people dead in Ivory Coast, the third assault on a West African hotel since November.

Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb and al-Mourabitoune said three of its fighters died in the attack in Grand Bassam, Mauritanian newspaper al-Akhbar reported, citing a statement. At least 14 civilians and two soldiers were killed, President Alassane Ouattara said in comments broadcast on state

television. Six militants were killed, he said.

“The situation is under control,” Ouattara, 74, said. “We are continuing to reinforce security in Grand Bassam, in Abidjan, and in the whole Ivorian territory.”

Ivory Coast, the world’s biggest producer of cocoa, has been on high alert since November when al-Qaeda-linked insurgents led an attack at a Radisson hotel in Mali in which about 20 people died. The group pledged to continue attacking allies of France and led a similar assault that left about 30 dead in Burkina Faso in February. It’s the first attack by Islamist militants in Ivory Coast, a former French colony with a population almost evenly split between Muslims and Christians.

Islamist Fighters

The Islamist fighters have established bases in northern Mali since a coup in 2012. French President Francois Hollande sent thousands of soldiers to push back the fighters, who benefited from cash and weapons that flowed south after the ouster of Libya’s Moammar Qaddafi in 2011. The militants have vowed to attack French interests until the government pulls soldiers out of the region.

Ivory Coast’s economy has rebounded under Ouattara after almost a decade of conflict in the 2000s and a disputed election in 2010 that left thousands dead and forced the country to default on its foreign debt. Ouattara has pledged to boost economic growth to about 10 percent per year through 2020.

L’Etoile du Sud hotel, the Wharf Hotel and Hotel La Taverne were the targets in the Ivory Coast raid. Grand Bassam is about 30 kilometers (19 miles) east of Abidjan, the country’s commercial capital. Grand Bassam, the former capital during French colonial rule, is popular with residents of Abidjan as a weekend getaway. The beach has more than a dozen restaurants and hotels that are frequented by both Ivorians and foreigners.

Foreign Casualties

One Lebanese citizen was killed and five were were injured, Lebanon’s state-run National News Agency reported. The U.S. State Department said there were no reports of Americans among the casualties. One French citizen was killed, the government said. A press aide for former French President Nicolas Sarkozy said that Carla Bruni, his wife, had been in Ivory Coast and returned before the attacks.

The U.S. condemns the attack in the “strongest terms” and is prepared to assist Ivory Coast’s government as it investigates, National Security Council spokesman Ned Price said in a statement.

More Western Help Urged to Fight Al-Qaida Threat in Africa

March 14, 2016/voanews.com

An Africa expert said Sunday’s attack on Ivory Coast should be viewed as an attempt by al-Qaida to undermine that country’s emerging political stability and economic growth.

J. Peter Pham, director of the Africa Center at the US-based Atlantic Council, an international affairs think tank, said it would be a tragedy if all the progress that Cote d’Ivoire has made over the last four years is derailed by al-Qaida. He said the United States and Ivory Coast’s former colonial power France should do everything they can to come to the assistance of those African countries that are trying to help themselves.

“The attack certainly is horrific and should be condemned. It shows both the brutality of al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb and its allies and how ruthless they are mowing down innocent people who are trying to escape the heat of Abidjan for a weekend on the beach,” he said.

On the other hand, Pham said the attack did not surprise him because ever since the French intervention in Mali in 2013, there has been concern in the international community that al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb and its allies were seeking to attack stable countries beyond the Sahel to show their reach.

He said the attack on Ivory Coast is not because of political instability and ethnic tensions stemming from that country’s disputed 2010 presidential election. On the contrary, Pham said, Ivory Coast has been performing well in the last four years.

“If one looks at the fact that the country went from the last months of Laurent Gbagbo’s regime when it defaulted on its international bond to its position just four short years later where the country is experiencing one of the highest economic growth rates in the world, and president [Alassane] Ouattara trounced the opposition this past year in October, winning a second term in office with 83 percent of the vote. So, I think it’s actually the stability, the democracy, and the economic growth that al-Qaida is seeking to undermine rather than necessarily exploiting tensions,” Pham said.

Pham said a U.S. strategy for Africa promulgated by President Barack Obama in 2012 recognized that an al-Qaida threat is a threat to not just the security and prosperity of Africa but the international community as a whole.

“And so this is a challenge really for the international system as a whole, and all the more so because the victims in this particular attack were primarily non-Africans. They were expatriates helping build the economy of Cote d’Ivoire and they were targeted by the terrorists,” Pham said.

The United States condemned the "heinous attack," and praised "Ivorian and French" forces for preventing more people from dying.

National Security Council spokesman Ned Price said the U.S. is prepared to assist Ivory Coast in its investigation. He also reiterated U.S. commitment to working with others in West Africa to fight terrorists who want to undermine efforts to "build tolerant and inclusive societies."

EDITORIAL: Africa needs to embrace technology for deeper integration

By: The New Times/March 14, 2016

Ghana had one of the continent’s most restrictive visa policies before last week. But all that changed on Independence Day.

The President then announced that nationals of all African countries would now get their visas on arrival, taking the cue from Rwanda that announced a similar decision in 2013.

It had always been Ghana’s first President Kwame Nkrumah’s dream to have a united and integrated Africa, but, unfortunately, those dreams died with him.

The amount of column space Ghana’s move generated was quite amazing if not annoying for those who have tirelessly advocated for free movement of people on our continent; what is so difficult about it? Why do we willingly open our borders to rich western countries – nearly all of them former colonial masters – but opt to keep out our African brothers and sisters?

Among the 20 African countries with liberal visa policy, only one is from North Africa (Mauritania) but there is none from Central Africa.

According to the Visa Openness Index published by the African Development Bank (AfDB), there is more to gain by opening up than living as a recluse as it “promotes talent mobility and business opportunities”. Among the solutions it offers is having an African passport for business people and promoting the use of regional passports and issuing eVisas.

But that will remain an uphill task as most countries still lag behind technologically to the extent that only nine countries in Africa have eVisa facilities.

So, at the end of the day, only embracing technology will be the continent’s door to meaningful integration.

Nigeria: AU Approves Nigeria's Centre for Disease Control As Regional Hub

13 March 2016/Premium Times (Abuja)

The African Union said on Saturday that Nigeria will host one of Africa's Centre for Disease Control, CDC.

Nigeria was favoured to host one of the region's CDC after AU experts appraised the effectiveness of the Nigerian government in managing the Ebola scourge in 2014, as well as the recent outbreak of Lassa Fever.

The head of the AU delegation, Olawale Maiyegun, informed PREMIUM TIMES that his team came to Nigeria with a checklist of requirements that Nigeria needed to fulfil before the AU committee on CDC could ratify its nomination as one of the 5 approved collaborative regional centres for Africa-CDC.

"We are satisfied with our findings that Nigeria can be able to take on the triple responsibility of running the Nigeria-CDC, the Regional-CDC and African-CDC", said Maiyegun, a Director in charge of Social Affairs AU Commission.

"The Ebola outbreak in West Africa, provided the impetus and the Heads of States and governments of the AU together with the executive council decided to fast track the establishment of the African-CDC.

In 2014, the Heads of states and government of the African Union at a Special summit on HIV, TBN and malaria, decided upon the need for an African Centre for Disease Control that will conduct life saving research, that will also have the capability for disease detection, surveillance and response.

In January 2015, the Assembly also reaffirmed and asked the African Union to get to work; even though they gave clear instructions on the nature of the Africa-CDC that is to be setup.

"They want an African-CDC that will not reinvent the wheel, but build on an existing structure that will leverage on existing assets on ground", Mr. Maiyegun said.

The concept approved by the African leaders in January 2015, was to have a coordinating office inside the AU headquarters in Addis-Ababa with five regional collaborating centres, each bringing certain capabilities, asset and values to the work of the African-CDC.

And the ministers of health of each member countries had recommended criteria for the selection of the regional collaborating centres and which country was to host the regional centres.

"We have to start with five - but they could be more than that as the CDC expands.", said the Nigerian AU officer Maiyegun. "Each regions of Africa was to nominate the centres for the African-CDC; and we received nominations from all the five regions of the continents.

"Central African has nominated Gabon; East Africa nominated Kenya; North Africa nominated Egypt; the Southern African region nominated Zambia and West Africa Nominated Nigeria.

"The AU team has to visit the countries proposed to host the regional centres for African-CDC for on the spot assessment to ensure they meet the criteria contained in the article 26 of the CDC statue.

"The purpose of our mission is to see whether the Nigeria CDC which also doubles as a regional CDC for West Africa has indeed met those criteria contained in the statue. We are not comparing the countries hosting the African-CDC with each other, but we are evaluating and assessing them viz a viz the criteria contained in the statue.

The team's point of reference was to assess "Government commitment, Human Resources, The infrastructure and Funding."

"In all these, we are happy to note that there is strong commitment in the part of the government of the federal Republic of Nigeria and that was clearly demonstrated by the two ministers. We have seen the legal frame work and the one that is being put in place , which we feel is very strong and we hope that the efforts that will be made in the legal frame work to reflect the regional dimension of the Nigeria-CDC to be seen not only the Nigerian CDC but a regional one for West Africa, and a regional collaborating centre for the African CDC.

"We are happy to note that from what we have seen on ground that indeed the Nigeria-CDC can take those responsibilities that is about to be entrusted to it.

"We also looked at some of the strength that they are bringing to the table, we have found that they are bringing in strong human resources, a strong and powerful field epidemiological and laboratory training - which is a huge asset that will help in the fulfilment of the core capacity of the international health regulation.

One of the challenges that may affect the smooth running and sustenance of the Nigerian-CDC office is that the country has been notorious in not fulfilling its agreement on counterpart funding.

Mr. Maiyegun said his team strongly hopes the Nigerian government's c commitment "will be translated into proper funding." "We will need more indication of continued funding, which is the strong political commitment being translated into budgetary support and financial allocation."

The committee said Nigeria has an edge over other African countries to earn its coordinating status because it has some key healthcare infrastructures that other don't have.

"Nigeria has a very strong Emergency Operating Centre (EOC) dedicated to polio; and government will need to decide on putting it at the disposal of West Africa and the continent as a whole and begin to use it for the larger public health under the CDC. We see this as a very powerful asset that Nigeria can put at the disposal.

Unlike other four African Countries hosting the sub-regional CDC centres, Mr. Maiyegun said the CDC facility in Nigeria could function as a centre with triple obligations: for Nigeria, as a regional hub and as Africa's CDC coordination centre.

UN/AFRICA :

US/AFRICA :

CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

EU/AFRICA :

From 'Welcome' to 'Enough,' Europe's Migrant View Shifts
associated press/Mar 13, 2016

PARIS —

Last fall, soccer fans celebrated refugee children at a legendary Munich stadium; today, European voters are boosting anti-immigrant political parties and governments are closing their gates to new arrivals. The refrain of Europe's migrant crisis has changed from "welcome" to "enough already."

Has Europe suddenly turned heartless? Or is it just waking up to the reality that it has failed to collectively manage this drama?

"It is not sustainable anymore that no one's playing a common game," said Yves Pascouau, a migration expert at the European Policy Center. "We need to fix this and really need to move ahead."

But not all Europeans see this as a problem they must share. Worried about their own weak economies, concerned that their national values are eroding, many say war in the Middle East and poverty in Africa are someone else's responsibility.

Compassion had the upper hand just six months ago, as the number of Syrian refugees soared and the photo of a dead 3-year-old on a Turkish beach galvanized volunteers. Border guards greeted weary travelers with a hearty "Welcome to Germany," and Chancellor Angela Merkel inspired other

nations to do the same. Players on the Munich field promoted integration, holding hands with a refugee child on one side and a German child on the other.

Then, the refugees kept coming, along with economic migrants from Senegal, people fleeing repression in Sudan, and many, many others. Amid the swelling tide was a handful of violent extremists, who found common cause with angry young men whose families arrived a generation earlier.

Paris was attacked. Women were assaulted in Cologne. Attitudes shifted, creating a turning point in the crisis that has dominated Europe for the past year and will define its immediate future.

Now, resentment of the open-arms approach is driving support for a German nationalist party that made gains Sunday in three state elections. On the margins, extreme anti-immigrant youth in the French port of Calais torched tires and blocked migrants from the center of town this weekend, decrying a "veritable invasion." Sweden, which has taken in more migrants per capita than any other country, has suffered a spate of arson attacks on asylum centers and other sites.

"Europe is at a critical crossroads," said Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras of Greece, the first stop for migrants braving the sea crossing from Turkey. Extreme right forces, he said, "are the real threat for Europe now."

Governments are cracking down, too. The route hundreds of thousands of migrants have taken through the Balkans effectively closed over the past few days, one nation after another shut its borders. Some 42,000 people are now stranded in overwhelmed, debt-weakened Greece, including 14,000 desperate souls languishing in a fetid field in the border town of Idomeni.

Some European leaders consider the unilateral border closures to be a threat to a continent meant to be borderless and based on consensus. But proponents say it's the only way to show migrants with little chance of winning asylum that smugglers are peddling a false dream of easy prosperity in Europe.

Even Merkel now makes clear that she doesn't plan a repeat of last September's move to let in the migrants who had piled up in Hungary.

She still insists on a Europe-wide solution that addresses the causes of this massive migration. But her government has been tightening controls — declaring that several Balkan nations and North African nations are safe countries of origin, making their citizens ineligible for asylum — as it tries to reduce the influx of migrants who have little chance of winning permission to stay.

Deterring those migrants is central to the complex EU migration plan being worked out this coming week. The idea is for Europe to send back to Turkey anyone from any country who doesn't qualify for asylum or has tried to evade the rigorous asylum application process. For every person sent back, EU countries would take in one confirmed Syrian war refugee.

"The policy of waving (people) through is over," German Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere told ZDF television Thursday. "We want to reach solutions. And a solution is that we end these illegal ways to Europe, and so break the business model of the criminal smugglers."

The coming warm season may provide answers. With the Balkans route closed, others may emerge — and an even more dangerous journey from lawless Libya across the Mediterranean to Italy may offer renewed promise.

CHINA/AFRICA :

INDIA/AFRICA :

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

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