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BURUNDI :

RWANDA :

RDC CONGO :

RDC: Denis Sassou-Nguesso s'implique dans le dialogue congolais

Par RFI/le 29-07-2016

Le président du Congo-Brazzaville, Denis Sassou-Nguesso, s'est invité à son tour dans le processus de dialogue politique en RDC. En dix jours, ce dernier a reçu en consultation à Brazzaville une vingtaine de personnalités politiques de RDC, coté majorité et opposition.

Tout a débuté à Luanda en juin lors du dernier sommet des chefs d'État de la CIRGL. C'est là que Denis Sassou-Nguesso a proposé ses services à Joseph Kabila, en concertation avec l'Angolais José Edouardo Dos Santos. Objectif pour les deux voisins : éviter qu'une crise majeure en RDC ne déstabilise leurs propres pays, déjà fragilisés par la baisse des cours du pétrole.

Les consultations, à proprement parler, ont débuté le 20 juillet. Depuis, les principaux représentants de la majorité présidentielle ont défilé à Brazzaville, ainsi que des figures de l'opposition, comme par exemple Pierre Lumbi pour le G7 qui soutient Moïse Katumbi, ou encore Vital Kamerhe pour la dynamique de l'opposition. Il existe une exception notable à ce stade : l'UDPS d'Etienne Tshisekedi.

Denis Sassou-Nguesso a l'avantage de bien connaître la scène politique kinoise et de nourrir une amitié ancienne avec Edem Kodjo, qu'il a également reçu plusieurs fois ces dernières semaines. Reste que les conditions de sa propre réélection au prix d'une nouvelle Constitution suscitent la méfiance de certains. « Comparaison n'est pas raison », veut croire un diplomate pour qui Denis Sassou-Nguesso a « tout intérêt à aller dans le sens souhaité par la communauté internationale » pour « redorer son blason après sa réélection contestée »

RDC: une juge dénonce des pressions lors d'un jugement contre Katumbi

Par RFI/le 29-07-2016

L'affaire fait grand bruit en RDC. La juge Chantal Ramazani Wazuri dénonce des pressions qu'elle a subies pendant le procès pour spoliation immobilière qui visait Moïse Katumbi. La présidente du tribunal de paix de Kamalondo, à Lubumbashi, demande de ne pas considérer sa signature et met en cause l'Agence nationale des renseignements (ANR). Les réactions sont diverses. Madame Chantal est recherchée et les réseaux sociaux la situent déjà aux Etats-Unis.

Dans sa lettre au ministre de la Justice, et dont RFI s'est procuré une copie, Chantal Ramazani Wazuri, présidente du tribunal de paix de Kamalondo, à Lubumbashi, dénonce ce qu'elle appelle « des contraintes physiques et morales » exercées sur sa personne dans le procès de spoliation immobilière intenté contre Moïse Katumbi Chapwe.

Cette juge affirme qu'elle a été obligée de condamner l'opposant à trois ans de prison, entraînant ainsi l'inéligibilité de l'ex-gouverneur du Katanga au cas où il serait candidat à la présidence de la République. « J'ai été menacée de révocation et d'emprisonnement », écrit la juge Ramazani.

Des pressions exercées, selon la lettre, par l'ANR, le procureur général près la cour d'appel de Lubumbashi, et la présidence de la République. Elle fait ensuite état de toute une série d'irrégularités dans la procédure. Un dossier jamais examiné juridiquement, un prononcé rendu en moins de 24 heures, ou encore des faits prescrits depuis plus de 10 ans. En conclusion, la juge sollicite l'annulation dudit jugement.

L'ANR dénonce une machination politicienne

Réplique vigoureuse du collectif des avocats d'Emmanuel Stoupis, le Grec qui avait porté plainte contre Moïse Katumbi. C'est un montage pour discréditer la justice congolaise, déclare Me Clément Tshitembo. Pour sa part, la cour d'appel de Lubumbashi parle dans un communiqué de manipulation après de nombreuses tentatives de corruption des magistrats.

De son côté, l'ANR assure dans un communiqué que l'administrateur général, Kalev Mutond, directement mis en cause, n'a jamais eu de contacts avec la juge. L'Agence met en doute l'authenticité du document. Elle dénonce une véritable hérésie juridique, une machination politicienne pour dédouaner le candidat Moïse Katumbi et demande à la justice qu'une enquête soit ouverte.

Pour le porte-parole du gouvernement, Lambert Mende, l'auteur de la missive ignore tout du droit congolais. « Je ne sais pas si un membre du gouvernement l'a reçu, mais le fait qu'elle est adressée

au ministre de la Justice nous fait douter de son authenticité ou des qualités de juriste de son auteur, parce que le droit congolais n'établit aucune relation de dépendance structurelle entre le gouvernement et les juges du siège, explique-t-il à RFI. Le supérieur hiérarchique des magistrats du siège comme Mme Ramazani, c'est le conseil supérieur de la magistrature, c'est-à-dire le président de la Cour suprême de justice. Rien que pour ça, on comprend qu'on a à faire à une manipulation, mais qui a raté son effet puisqu'on a adressé cette lettre à la mauvaise cible. »

La défense de Katumbi demande une enquête

Mardi 26 juillet, les avocats de Moïse Katumbi, eux, ont dénoncé devant la presse à Kinshasa les irrégularités dans ce procès et l'acharnement contre leur client. Maître Jacques Shesha, qui a assisté Moïse Katumbi dans cette affaire, demande au gouvernement d'ouvrir une enquête pour établir, ou non, la culpabilité des personnes citées dans la lettre :

« Il ne suffit pas seulement de pouvoir contester l'authenticité du courrier, réagit-il au micro de RFI. Ce que le gouvernement devra faire, c'est au contraire ouvrir une enquête pour constater la véracité de ceux qui ont été dénoncés par Mme le juge président. [...] Je pense que le gouvernement devra tirer toutes les conséquences de cette dénonciation. En tant qu'avocats de M. Katumbi, au départ, nous avons dénoncé toutes les pressions qui tournaient autour de cette affaire dans les salles d'audience et personne ne voulait nous croire, mais aujourd'hui, madame le juge président l'a elle même dénoncé. »

Pour l'instant, personne ne sait où se trouve la juge Ramazani, qui ne s'est pas exprimée depuis que la polémique a éclaté.

UGANDA :

Aid agencies call for emergency response for South Sudanese refugees in Uganda

Fri Jul 29, 2016/presstv.ir

Press TV, Elegu

The latest surge of violence in South Sudan has forced more than 50,000 people to cross into Uganda. The new arrivals have reportedly entered Uganda via the border crossing of Elegu, while others have gone directly to refugee settlements in the mid-western part of the country.

Our correspondent Daniel Arapmoi has been at the Uganda-South Sudan border and filed this report.

SOUTH AFRICA :

Bleak outlook as South Africa sheds half a million jobs

July 29, 2016/businessstech.co.za

South Africa has shed almost half a million jobs in the first half of the year – with things not looking like they will improve any time soon as the country heads for 0% growth.

Employment data released by Stats SA on Thursday showed that South Africa's unemployment figures dropped slightly from 26.7% to 26.6% – however 129,000 jobs were still lost in the quarter.

In the first quarter of the year, 355,000 jobs were lost, taking the total to just under half a million (484,000) with prospects for the second half of 2016 looking bleak.

Jobs were lost in the services, agriculture, transport and mining sectors, Stats SA said.

According to economists, South Africa's 0% growth outlook announced by the South African Reserve Bank in July, shows how much strain the country's economy is under, with many sectors facing financial strain.

Some argue that the country is showing signs of already being in a recession – though it has managed to avoid the technical definition of two successive quarters of decline.

Finance minister, Pravin Gordhan has said that the country will likely avoid a technical recession, with Q2 expected to show GDP growth – but with the country entering into a highly political period with the upcoming elections and subsequent market reactions, the six months ahead will be tough.

According to financial group Nomura, investors' outlook on the country is bearish for the second half, with no progress being made on rates, CPI or the current account deficit.

The group also said that the political fallout from the elections is being underestimated, and that a major Cabinet reshuffle by president Jacob Zuma could crush the economy.

“We still believe that asset prices (including the currency and local rates) currently markedly underestimate the political risk premia required into year-end after the local elections, as the ‘war’ between the ANC's factions resumes and with Jacob Zuma exercising (and remaining in) power – not to mention ratings downgrades still looking likely.”

Taking market conditions into account, and looking ahead to what is expected to be a turbulent political season to the end of the year, Nomura forecast that the rand – which is currently enjoying a stronger position – will end the year at R17 to the dollar.

TANZANIA :

Vodacom requests for time extension to list on DSE

July 29, 2016/exchange.co.tz

Following the government's amendment of the Electronic and Postal Communication Act, 2010 that now requires phone companies to sell as much as 25 per cent of shares on the DSE to boost local ownership, Vodacom has approached the government requesting an extension of its deadline on listing at the stock market.

According to a report released by South African media, Vodacom is in talks with the Tanzanian government to extend the time it had to list its shares on the Dar es Salaam Stock Exchange (DSE).

The amendment requires the existing company to list on DSE in six months after the date of change,

which comes to December.

“I think the time span that has been put in place is exceptionally short, so we are going to have to work on what we can do to extend that and to understand certain requirements,” Ian Ferrao, Vodacom’s Managing Director of its Tanzanian operations was quoted by a section of South African media saying.

However, when ‘Daily News’ Online cross-checked with Vodacom Tanzania public relations and communications said there are not in discussion with the government over DSE listing extension.

Vodacom Tanzania Head of Public Relations and Communications Rosalynn Moria said over a telephone text message that the firm was not in any talks with the government.

“No we are not,” Ms Moria texted back when asked if the firm was engaged on any talks with the government regarding listing issue.

Peter Takaendesa, a portfolio manager at South African based Mergence Investment Managers, said: “There are a number of reasons for the resistance to the listing requirement and they include the potential of the parent companies’ shareholdings getting diluted, as well as shallow equity markets in most African countries.”

Takaendesa said Vodacom raised its stake in Vodacom Tanzania to above 82 percent in 2013 and the listing requirements call for at least a 20 percent float on the exchange.

This implied that Vodacom’s stake would have to be diluted.

The dilution would obviously be more for other operators that owned bigger stakes in their Tanzanian operations, he said.

Sasha Naryshkine, an analyst at Vestact, said Tanzania had a young energetic population with a government that was seemingly spending in order to get the infrastructure moving.

“A local listing would encourage the regulators to be more favourable, knowing that there is a vested interest locally, and that they are not just part of a big global brand.

I guess Tanzania is right for Vodacom,” Naryshkine said.

KENYA :

ANGOLA :

AU/AFRICA :

Barclays Africa Battles Weak Economy to Post Rising Profit

July 29, 2016/bloomberg.com

First-half net income gained 3.7%; interim dividend raised
Results 'better than expected,' Sanlam analyst Rassou says

Barclays Africa Group Ltd., the South African lender that's being sold by its London-based parent, reported first-half profit growth of 3.7 percent even as credit impairments and non-performing loans increased and the economy shrank.

Net income climbed to 7.02 billion rand (\$497 million) in the six months through June from 6.77 billion rand a year earlier, Johannesburg-based Barclays Africa said in a statement on Friday. Earnings per share excluding one-time items increased 7 percent to 8.57 rand, beating the 8.44 rand median estimate of four analysts surveyed by Bloomberg. The bank declared an increased interim dividend of 4.60 rand per share.

The results were better than expected and showed "strong top line growth from the rest of Africa," Patrice Rassou, head of equities at Cape Town-based Sanlam Investment Management, said in e-mailed comments. "Hopefully bad debts will stabilize. They should be able to grow dividends in line with earnings."

Barclays Africa shares gained as much as 2 percent to 157.48 rand, on track for the highest close since December, and traded 1 percent higher as of 9:36 a.m. in Johannesburg. The stock has risen 9.3 percent this year, lagging the 15 percent gain in the seven-member FTSE/JSE Africa Banks index.

Recession Threat

The bank is focusing on managing its expenses to cope with a South African economy tipping toward a recession and the risk of a credit-rating downgrade to junk by the end of the year. Barclays Plc said in March it's selling its controlling stake in the South African lender, which has operations in 12 countries across the continent, because of regulations that make it too expensive to hold all the shares. The London-based company said on Friday that profit fell by more than half in the second quarter.

"We didn't expect South Africa's growth to slow as rapidly as it did," Maria Ramos, chief executive officer of Barclays Africa, said on a conference call from Johannesburg on Friday. "We see another 25 basis points increase in interest rates before year end. We do see the endowment effect in our margins but there are more downside risks than upside."

The credit-loss ratio should improve from the first half, while return on equity is likely to be slightly lower in 2016 after falling to 16.1 percent in the first six months, the lender said. Credit impairments increased 46 percent in the first half to 5.2 billion rand.

Cost Management

"We expect low to mid-single digit loan growth, with corporate and investment banking growing faster than retail and business banking and the rest of Africa growth exceeding South Africa," Barclays Africa said. "Continued focus on revenue growth and cost management should improve the group's cost-to-income ratio."

Parent Barclays continues to explore strategic and capital market options to reduce its shareholding

in Barclays Africa, the South African company said. The banks continue to plan for the operational separation of the two businesses, it said, without giving more detail.

“The bank’s non-performing loans are well covered and Barclays Africa continued to build portfolio provisions on performing loans,” said Adrian Cloete, a banks analyst at PSG Wealth in Cape Town. “It will be more of the same in the second half.”

UN/AFRICA :

Security Council urges cooperation among countries in West Africa and the Sahel to tackle Boko Haram

28 July 2016/un.org

– While welcoming recent political developments recently observed in West Africa, the United Nations Security Council today stressed the need to increase military cooperation between the States in the region and Sahel to fight against the terrorist group Boko Haram.

In a Presidential Statement approved by the body, the Council’s 15 members welcomed political developments including, the holding of elections "free and peaceful" in Niger, Benin and Cabo Verde. At the same time, they stressed the importance of ensuring the forthcoming elections in Ghana and Gambia are also "free, fair, peaceful, inclusive and credible."

The Council, however, expressed specific concern over recent political events in Guinea-Bissau and called on national actors "to respect the Constitution and the rule of law, while trying to find a political solution to the crisis."

Regarding the promotion of stability in West Africa and the Sahel in general, the Council welcomed the merger of the Office of the Special Envoy for the Sahel and the UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA). It also welcomed the increased cooperation between the new UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and sub-regional and regional organizations, including the African Union (AU), the Community economic of West African States (ECOWAS), the group of five Sahel countries (G-5 Sahel), the Lake Chad basin Commission and the Mano River Union.

The Council 15 members “strongly condemned” all attacks perpetrated by the terrorist group Boko Haram, particularly in the Lake Chad Basin, and in Mali, Côte d’Ivoire, Burkina Faso and in the Sahel region.

However, they noted the progress made in the implementation of the Joint Multinational Force (FMM) and urged Member States participating in that Force to “improve cooperation and military coordination in the region,” to “refuse harbouring Boko Haram,” to “facilitate the restoration of the rule of law” in areas liberated from Boko Haram and to " allow humanitarian access."

Specifically, the Council reiterated its grave concern at the “dire humanitarian situation” caused by the activities of Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin area.

In this regard, the Council urged the international community to “immediately support the provision of urgent humanitarian assistance” to those most affected by the crisis in Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria and Chad, including by fulfilling the appeal for the Lake Chad Basin region launched by the UN.

UN food agency responds to "race against time: in southern Africa

Jul 29,2016/Xinhua

UNITED NATIONS, July 28 (Xinhua) -- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on Thursday presented a response plan to what it describes as "a race against time in drought-ravaged Southern Africa" to ensure 23 million people receive farming support, a UN spokesman told reporters here.

"With only a few weeks before land preparation begins for the next main cropping season, the plan aims to ensure that seeds, fertilizers, tools, and other inputs and services are provided to small-holder farmers to cope with the El Nino-induced drought in the region," Farhan Haq, the deputy UN spokesman, said at a daily news briefing here.

The FAO warns that at least 109 million U.S. dollars in funding is required to avoid these 23 million people being dependent on humanitarian assistance until mid-2018, he said.

On July 15, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said that Southern Africa is experiencing the worst El Nino-induced drought in 35 years, following the failure of two consecutive rainy seasons.

Nearly 40 million people in the region are food insecure, OCHA said.

This year's El Nino is taking place in a world already dramatically affected by climate change.

US/AFRICA :

CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

EU/AFRICA :

CHINA/AFRICA :

China signs US\$17b deals with Africa on energy, agriculture and pharma

Jul 29, 2016/Xinhua

Companies from China and Africa signed 39 deals worth US\$17 billion yesterday in Beijing. The deals, involving financial institutions and enterprises, were signed on the eve of a meeting on delivering the outcomes of the Johannesburg Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation. More than 400 participants from government agencies, financial institutions, business associations and enterprises attended the Seminar on China-Africa Business Cooperation and Signing Ceremony in Beijing.

The seminar was hosted by the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade. It was a supporting event to the Johannesburg Summit of the FOCAC. Participants exchanged views on industrial capacity cooperation, trade and investment facilitation and financial cooperation.

Chinese and African companies spanning the sectors of infrastructure, processing and manufacturing, finance, investment, energy, chemicals, agriculture, pharmaceutical and ICT, reached consensus for future cooperation.

Jiang Weixin, chairman of the CCPIT, said it will work with its African counterparts to enhance communication, strengthen policy coordination, and organize more trade and investment events to boost China-Africa trade ties.

Vice President Li Yuanchao had a group meeting with the African delegates. Li called on China and the African countries to enhance mutual trust, promote pragmatic cooperation, expand people-to-people exchanges and improve coordination on global affairs.

State Councilor Yang Jiechi held separate meetings with the foreign minister of Chad, Moussa Faki Mahamat; Sudanese Presidential Assistant Al-Jaz; and Gambian Foreign Minister Neneh MacDouall-Gaye, exchanging views on China's ties with their respective countries as well as Africa as a whole.

At the summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation last December in Johannesburg, South Africa, President Xi Jinping announced 10 major China-Africa cooperation plans for the next three years, backed by US\$60 billion, including interest free loans and preferential policies.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi met with his counterparts from Mali, Madagascar, Comoros and Democratic Republic of Congo.-Xinhua

INDIA/AFRICA :

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

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