

Summary of Africa

BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

Weekly Report 128

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POLITICS OF SECURITY AND CONFLICT ISSUES

Nigeria: Sambo Links National Development to Security

Vice-President, Namadi Sambo, has said security of lives and property of every Nigerian was a critical ingredient of national development. Sambo said this at the State House in Abuja during the inaugural meeting of the Interim Implementation Committee on Police Reform. He further said the administration had taken the issue of security as one of its cardinal objectives with a view to safeguarding the lives and property of Nigerians.

Franco-phone Africans: Several heads of state and government of French-speaking African countries will participate in France's anniversary celebrations Wednesday. President Sarkozy's government invited 14 armies from France's former African colonies to celebrate their 50th independence anniversary during a military parade. The 14 countries expected to take part in the military parade include Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, Congo-Brazzaville, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

Uganda: Uganda President Yoweri Museveni has vowed to retaliate against the Somali Islamic extremist group that took responsibility for the bomb attacks in Kampala that claimed more than 70 lives. Mr. Museveni will push the African Union to upgrade the size and the mandate of its peacekeeping mission in Somalia. Mr. Museveni charged that al-Shabab has been taken over by powerful Middle East extremist groups trying to establish Somalia as a safe haven for terrorists.

Somalia: The former coordinator of the U.N. Monitoring Group for Somalia says the al-Shabab militant group had planned attacks in other African countries, not just Uganda. Bruno Schiemsy, now a security analyst, says, "The attack was organized by al-Shabab in Somalia out of one of their bases in Mogadishu and another base located near the Kenyan border. The al-Shabab wants to show that they can reach out across borders and hit targets when they want to."

Washington Concern over Al-Shabab: U.S. President Barack Obama has said Washington will "redouble" its efforts against the Somali Islamist group al-Shabaab (The Youth), whose deadly bombings in Kampala Sunday are likely to result in stepped-up U.S. military and other assistance to the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in

Mogadishu. In an interview with the South African Broadcasting Corporation Tuesday, Obama suggested that the group represents a growing threat to the region.

Sudan: Sudan's army says it has killed at least 300 rebels in clashes this week, while losing more than 70 of its own troops. Sudanese state media on Saturday quoted General Al-Tayeb al-Musbah Osman as describing the fighting with the Darfur region's Justice and Equality Movement. The Sudanese general said government forces destroyed rebels' vehicles during the series of clashes. Violence in Darfur has increased since insurgent forces withdrew from peace talks in May.

Congo-Kinshasa: Media Buzz On Order to Release Lubanga

The order issued by judges for Congolese war crimes accused Thomas Lubanga to be released has received wide coverage online. Media from all continents have reported the story, as have bloggers, with many dwelling on the causes of the stay of proceedings and resultant order for Mr. Lubanga's release. Others sounded out parties to the trial, and yet some looked at the way forward was likely to be. Judges ruled that Mr. Lubanga - the first person tried at the International Criminal Court (ICC) should be released unconditionally if the prosecution did not appeal the release order within five days.

South African Police Take Measures to Protect Foreigners

The South African government says it is taking measures to address threats of violence against foreigners. South African police have stepped up patrols in several impoverished communities after some foreign-owned shops were looted and hundreds of foreigners reported being threatened with violence if they do not leave the country.

Guinea security forces foil de-stability plot – PM

Guinean security forces have uncovered a suspected armed plot to destabilize the West African country as it approaches the decisive round of a presidential election, its prime minister said on Saturday. The world's biggest bauxite exporter is in the process of replacing a military-led government with what would be its first freely elected administration. The first round of voting last month produced no clear winner, and a second round is expected within weeks.

LIBERIA: Tension Clouds National Muslim Council

The Union of Islamic Citizens of Liberia in Collaboration with the Concern Muslim of Liberia has demonstrated against the leadership of Sheik Kafumba Konneh for what the group termed as election fraud, Corruption and misapplication of funds that were intended for Liberian Muslims. The protest which was held on Saturday, July 10, 2010 at the UMIL Headquarters in Sinkor brought together a group of aggrieved Muslims who demanded that the Supreme Court place an injunction on the induction of the officers elect of the National Muslim Council of Liberia (NMCL).

HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL ISSUES IN DOMESTIC POLITICS

Nigeria: Jos Crisis: Military Task Force Convicts Five

Five members of the military Special Task Force (STF) who are on peace keeping mission in Plateau State have been given various jail sentences for offenses committed while on duty. These offences include manslaughter, theft, assaults, house breaking and failure to perform military duties.

Nigeria: FG to Sponsor 13,000 Ex-Militants to Tertiary Institutions

No fewer than 13,000 ex-militants would be sponsored by the Federal Government through the Ministry of the Niger Delta Affairs to various tertiary institutions both in Nigeria and abroad in pursuance of the post –amnesty programme of the Federal Government.

Mali: More aid needed for the north

Aid agencies are struggling to meet the food and water needs of people and their livestock in drought-hit Mali, with potentially "catastrophic gaps" in the humanitarian response, according to Oxfam's country head, Gilles Marion. Some 258,000 people are in need of urgent assistance in Mali, according to the government-led early warning mechanism (SAP), with a further 371,000 at risk, following poor rains across the Sahel region.

Senegal: Wade Denies His Son Would 'Inherit' the Presidency

Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade denied on Thursday that he was grooming his son Karim to step into his shoes. Karim, 41, was given a ministerial position in May and is considered a close presidential advisor to his 84-year-old father. "I have no intention of putting my son in my place before I go," Wade told Europe 1 radio. "But he is free to stand elections when he wants to," he added.

Rwanda: Protests Force Spanish PM to Skip Date with Kagame

Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero opted out of an UN-sponsored meeting with Rwandan leader Paul Kagame, after protests that Kagame's regime was linked to Rwanda's genocide. It is the first of the MDG Advocacy Group set up last month by the United Nations to advance the Millennium Development Goals, which include halving extreme poverty by 2015, with Zapatero and Kagame named co-chairs. The Spanish judiciary accuses Kagame of fomenting the ethnic clashes in a bid to seize power. The Rwandan officers are accused of murdering nine Spanish missionaries and expatriates allegedly witnesses to massacres.

Burundi's Military on High Alert Following Uganda Attack

An official with Burundi's army said the military has been put on high alert to protect unarmed civilians, as well as the country's sensitive installations, following Sunday night's deadly twin blasts in Uganda's capital, Kampala. Spokesman for Burundi's army said the military is encouraging Burundians to report anything suspicious ahead of the upcoming parliamentary election scheduled for July 23.

DR Congo: The United Nation's estimates 20,000 civilians in eastern Congo have been forced to flee their homes over the past week as violence increases along the volatile border with Uganda. The latest fighting has scattered people in the Beni region, located in the northernmost part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo's North Kivu province. This past week, the Congolese Armed forces has been trying to root out the remnants of the Allied Democratic Forces, a Ugandan rebel group that has remained dormant for several years in North Kivu.

Central African Republic: Protection of Displaced Vital to Peace, Says UN Expert

The protection of 200,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) is an integral element of the peace-building process in the Central African Republic (CAR), a United Nations human rights expert said today following a week-long visit to the country.

Uganda Urged to Stop Returning Refugees to Rwanda

Advocates for refugee rights are criticizing the Ugandan government for forcibly returning hundreds of refugees to Rwanda, calling it a violation of national and international law. Kampala-based organizations the Refugee Law Project and the International Refugee Rights Initiative have called on the Ugandan government to immediately halt the removal of Rwandan refugees living in southwestern Uganda.

SWAZILAND: Children still share jail cells with adults

Swaziland's judiciary is concerned by an absence of detention facilities for children, which forces them to share jail cells with adult criminals.

HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND DOMESTIC POLITICS

ZIMBABWE: A third of children chronically malnourished

The prevalence of chronic malnutrition (in Zimbabwe) is now 33.8 percent, according to World Health Organization standards, that means one in every three children is chronically malnourished - a significant public health threat, said George Kembo, director of the Zimbabwe Food and Nutrition Council. Only 8.4 percent of children less

than two years - meaning one in 10 children - is receiving a diet that is minimally acceptable.

POLITICAL ECONOMY

Nigeria: Halliburton - 50 Lawyers Sue EFCC Over Obasanjo

Fifty legal practitioners and anti-corruption crusaders yesterday filed a suit in the Federal High Court, Abuja Judicial Division, asking it to compel the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to investigate former president Olusegun Obasanjo and others for their alleged involvement in the Halliburton bribery scandal.

Nigeria state oil firm NNPC insolvent, says minister

Nigeria's state oil firm is insolvent, unable to pay debts of \$5bn (£3.3bn), a government minister has said. Junior Finance Minister Remi Babalola said the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation had asked for help to cover its debts and fund its operations. NNPC group managing director, Mr. Austin Oniwon, said: "NNPC is insolvent as current liabilities exceed current assets. NNPC is incapable of repaying the N450 billion owed to the Federation Account unless it is reimbursed the N1.156 trillion (in subsidies) it has requested from the Federal Ministry of Finance."

Air Nigeria Clears Debts with Banks, Pays N38bn Begins expansion of operations

Air Nigeria (formerly Virgin Nigeria Airways) announced that it has cleared all debts it owed banks and is now poised to expand operations, targeting to carry 10,000 passengers daily in its domestic operations.

Zimbabwe: Some Diamonds from Zimbabwe Field Cleared for Export

Human rights groups say they are partially satisfied with the recent agreement made by an international diamond monitor to allow Zimbabwe to export some of its precious stones mined from controversial fields.

Ghana: Vice President calls on Ghanaian Banks to support oil exploration

Vice President John Dramani Mahama has called on domestic and International Ghanaian Banks to reposition themselves to participate in Ghana's oil exploration expected to begin November this year. "As financial institutions, you would play a critical role in all kinds of investments in the oil industry and I expect you to do it creditably and professionally for the benefit of the entire nation."

Ghana inflation falls to 9.52% in June

Ghana's inflation for the month of June has hit 9.52%, the Ghana Statistical Service has announced. This is the 12th consecutive time that the country's inflation has dropped.

Inflation for the month of May stood at 10.68% fueling expectations that the Bank of Ghana will cut its policy rate further down from the current 15%. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the central bank has been meeting since Monday this week to review the economy and to determine a new policy rate to be announced.

SIERRA LEONE: African Minerals in \$1.5 Billion Strategic Investment

African Minerals (AML), with significant iron ore and base metal interests in Sierra Leone, has reached an agreement with its Chinese partner Shandong Iron & Steel Group (SISG) Co Limited to hit a strategic investment of \$1.5 billion. The business is in respect of AML's flagship iron ore project at Tonkolili district in the north and related infrastructure projects which valued at approximately US\$6 billion.

China Africa Relations:

Sino-African Relations: The Journey so far

China and Africa enjoy a long history of friendship built on a solid foundation. Sharing similar historical experiences, China and Africa have all along sympathized with and supported each other in the struggle for national liberation and forged a profound friendship. The bilateral trade and economic cooperation have grown rapidly; cooperation in other fields yielded good results; and consultation and coordination in international affairs been intensified. China has provided assistance to the best of its ability to African countries, while the latter have also rendered strong support to China on many occasions.

Chinese Investment in Africa: Good Deals or Bad?

Two US-based economists who use Chinese FDI data to analyze determinants of Chinese investment in Africa. Derek Scissors at American Heritage Foundation Commented recently on a different set of challenges raised for those who try and track investments by using media reports: "An accurate assessment, however, is confounded by widespread credulity regarding Chinese investment. But the paper by the two economists reminded me of another issue. They state as a "fact" that Chinese companies will pay significantly inflated prices in order to get access to resources, citing a 2006 article in African Affairs - - Jędrzej G. Frynas and Manuel Paulo, 2006,

Pan-African issues:

Africa's untold story is of a booming continent and a growing middle class

Images of war, poverty and famine are being replaced by expanding economies and a new global potential. Ten years ago the Economist pulled no punches in a cover story about Africa with its headline: "The hopeless continent." Now Africa is leading the way with a "spectacular" recovery from the global recession thanks to decades of market

reform and strong trade ties with China, the African Development Bank's (ADB) chief economist said last week. Mthuli Ncube, predicted a growth rate of 4.5% for the continent's economies this year. The bank expects more than 5% growth next year, then a return to the average of about 6% Africa enjoyed between 2003 and 2008 before the recession bit.

Iran and Israel take their tussle to Africa

Arch foes Iran and Israel have taken their diplomatic rivalry to Africa, courting the continent with everything from trade to security ties in their search for support in the United Nations. Both nations are sending politicians and business leaders across the continent to forge or revive contacts, clinching a string of deals ranging from arms and agriculture to promises of dams, oil and protection.

AU Summit: A cabinet minister in President Yoweri Museveni's government said Uganda is adequately prepared to host the African Union summit scheduled to begin Monday in the capital, Kampala. Hope Mwesigye, Minister for Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries said Uganda will host a successful summit saying the government is unwavering, despite the recent al-Shabab-inspired twin suicide bombings that killed more than 70 people.

Elections:

Nigeria: Northern Summit Wants Four More Years for Jonathan

A new dimension has been added to the debate on President Goodluck Jonathan's alleged 2011 presidential aspiration and the contentious zoning of the presidency to the North. A group of Northern leaders and politicians led by former Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Chairman Chief Solomon Lar yesterday rose from its Northern Political Summit with a resolution that the President's alleged plan to contest the 2011 presidential poll should be seen as a continuation of his joint presidential ticket with late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua till 2015.

2011: Nigerians Must Decide Credible Elections, Says US

First Secretary for Political Affairs, Embassy of the United States of America (USA), Mr. Jeffery Salaiz, yesterday reminded the Nigerian electorate that the responsibility for free, fair and credible elections in 2011 rests with them and not his country. "Many ask what the U.S will do to make sure that Nigeria experiences free and credible elections," he said. "But the reality is that it is not up to us, US; it is up to the Nigerian people to have free, fair and credible elections." Salaiz stated this in a meeting convened by the Youth Synergy Meeting to discuss the Road to 2011 organized by Youth Action Initiative Africa.

Rwanda: EU Chief Clarifies on Election Observer Mission

The head of delegation of the European Union clarified that the union will not send observers to Rwanda for the presidential elections slated for next month because of limited financial resources.

Ghana: About 38,129 voters registered in Upper West Region

The Electoral Commission (EC) has registered 38,129 people who turned 18 years this year during the Voters Registration Exercise in the Upper West Region, Mr. Mahama Yahaya, Regional Director of EC has said. Mr. Yahaya, in an interview with the Ghana News Agency in Wa on Monday, described the registration exercise as successful attributing it to the non- interference by politicians.