

***PROJECT ON BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD***

**AFRICA REPORT**

**First Quarterly Report on Africa**

*January to March 2009*

**Volume: 2**

***Reports for the month of March 2009***

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**INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY  
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**Department of Politics and International Relations  
International Islamic University Islamabad**

# **BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD**

## **AFRICA REPORT**

First Quarterly Report on Africa 2009

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Abbas S Lamptey

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- e. NIGERIA: Good Governance Panacea for Continent's Stability – Salim: Sylvester Enoghase: 26 February 2009:interview: [Daily Independent](#) (Lagos).

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- c. South Africa: Civil Society Claims UN 'Mishandled' Refugee Crisis: Wilson Johwa: 23 February 2009: BUSINESS DAY.

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- b. Nigeria: Gunmen Hit Aero Helicopter in Bayelsa: Segun James I N Yenagoa With Agency Report:26 February 2009:THIS DAY.

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- g. ALGERIA: Algerian minister says 120 militants killed: Another 322 militants linked to al-Qaida have been arrested: March 1, 2009.AFP.
- h. Algeria /Nigeria: Govt, Algeria Meet On N1.8 Trillion Saharan Gas Pipeline:Ese Awhotu:20 February 2009:[Leadership](#) (Abuja)
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## THE NEWS IN DETAIL

### 13. CHINA-AFRICA RELATIONS

#### West Africa

#### **Liberia: Green Advocates - Global Witness Analyze GoL - China Union Concession Agreement;25 February 2009:Liberia Government (Monrovia)**

Monrovia — President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has welcomed comments and recommendations by two rights groups, contained in an in-depth analysis of a recently concluded Mineral Concession Agreement between the Government of Liberia and the China Union Mining Company. The President described as refreshing the observations and recommendations by the two groups, noting that terms of the agreement are a manifestation of Government's determination to ensure that Liberia reaps the maximum benefits from its natural resources. President Johnson Sirleaf described as constructive the acknowledgment by Global Witness and Green Advocates standards being set by the Government of Liberia to highlight in concession agreements, measures which will safeguard the interest of the country and benefit the people of Liberia. In a recent analysis of the Liberian Government-China Union concession contract, International rights group, Global Witness, and local environmental advocacy institution, Green Advocacy, observed that the contract includes positive commitments to transparency through the contractual obligation to join the Liberia Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative. The groups also welcomed terms of the agreement which call for the disclosure of information on payments to the Government and publishing of the contract. The agreement, the groups noted, also contains robust transfer pricing provisions and the Concessionaire and the Operating Company are made jointly and severally liable. These provisions, Global Witness and Green Advocates observed were notably lacking in previous concession agreements.

A campaigner for Global Witness, Natalie Ashworth said, the Liberian government should be congratulated on negotiating an Agreement which has the potential to play a very positive role in Liberia's development and which is a significant improvement on other recent natural resource concession contracts between the state and international companies. "We encourage Liberia's lawmakers now to use their voice to ensure that the final, ratified, Bong Mines contract represents the best possible deal for Liberia and its people," the Global Witness official emphasized. The Groups also lauded measures taken by Government toward transparency in the Agreement, a principle they described as important safeguard against corruption and should be applauded. The Government, Green

Advocates Executive Director Alfred Brownell noted, must now apply this kind of transparency to the way it spends and accounts for the US\$40 million signature bonus."The Executive Mansion quotes President Johnson Sirleaf as saying the signature bonus will be used for the rehabilitation and construction of roads and bridges throughout the country, in line with budgetary appropriations.

Under the agreement, China Union will pay the Government of Liberia a US\$40 million up-front signature bonus. The fact the Liberian Government has publicly announced this payment, the groups noted, is positive. The Groups pointed out that this development is contrary to what is practiced in other resource-rich countries, where signature bonuses are often kept secret, thereby raising the risks of corruption. Despite the positive aspects of the contract, Green Advocates and Global Witness observed, the Agreement is vague in parts, potentially leaving it open to abuse. Greater clarity and rigor, the groups said, is required to prevent serious problems from arising in the future. "Weaker elements of the contract which the Legislature should consider amending are the provisions relating to the resettlement of communities, the fiscal stabilization clause and the clauses governing the feasibility study," the Advocacy Groups recommended. "Ultimately, the contract is only as effective as its implementation. As such, it is critical that significant international support is given to develop state capacity, local civil society and legal avenues to provide the checks and balances needed to ensure oversight of the contract's execution," Green Advocates and Global Witness recommended.

Southern Africa

### **Mozambique: Chinese Industries Invited to Invest:20 February 2009: MOZAMBIQUE INFORMATION AGENCY**

Maputo — The Mozambican authorities are interested in Chinese companies setting up industries in Mozambique. According to the chairperson of the National Exports Promotion Institute (IPEX), Joao Macaringue, the relations between the two countries cannot be regarded only in terms of Chinese products entering the Mozambican market, but also in terms of Chinese industries being installed in the country.

He believed that this would help Mozambique overcome some of its difficulties, through the transfer of technology and know-how. "Trade relations with China are tending to grow", he said. "We think that these relations should be aimed at installing Chinese industries, and not merely at importing Chinese products into Mozambique". Macaringue was addressing reporters on Thursday, during an exhibition of Chinese products as part of the agenda of a business delegation from the central Chinese province of Hubei. He explained that this delegation has come to Mozambique to learn first hand of the real potential of the country. It is holding discussions with Mozambican business people to discuss possible partnerships in order to enhance Mozambican production for export to China.

At the opening of the exhibition, the Chinese Ambassador to Mozambique, Tian Guangfeng, said that trade relations between the two countries has been growing over the

last two years. Trade between them reached 346 million US dollars in 2008."Trade relations between Mozambique and China went from 22 million US dollars in 2002 to 2007 million in 2007, and reached 346 million US dollars in the first 10 months of 2008", said Tian.Mozambican trade and industry authorities acknowledge that exports from Mozambique to China are still very insignificant. Mozambique has been exporting to China products such as soya, sesame, and timbers.This exhibition preceded a seminar on trade and investments, involving business people and government officials of the two countries, to take place in Maputo on Friday.

**Zambia: Chinese in Court:21 February 2009:TIMES OF ZAMBIA**

A 50-YEAR-OLD Chinese national appeared in the Ndola magistrate's court for getting stolen copper from three mining companies worth over K600 million.Xudian Ping of Lusaku Street in the Ndola heavy Industrial area appeared before principal resident magistrate, Chilombo Phiri, for retaining stolen property.Particulars of offence are that between January 2007 and November 2007 in Ndola, Xudian retained 3, 940 kilogrammes of copper valued at K121, 385, 367, property of Konkola Copper Mines (KCM) knowing or having reason to believe that the same to have been feloniously stolen or obtained.

In the second count, Xudian between January 2007 and November 2007 in Ndola retained 17, 480 kilogrammes of copper valued at K500, 172, 720, property of Mopani Copper Mines (MCM) while knowing that the same was stolen or feloniously obtained.In the third count, Xudian between January 2007 and November 2007in Ndola, retained 820 kilogrammes of copper valued at K21, 488, 500, the property of Kansanshi Copper Mines (KCM) while knowing or having reason to believe that the same to have been feloniously stolen or obtained.The case, however, did not proceed with defence in court because there was no one to interpret for Xudian.Mrs Phiri adjourned the matter to April 20 for defence.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Uganda: China Grants Reach Sh197 Billion: David Muwanga and Mikaili Sseppuya:24 February 2009:THE NEW VISION**

Kampala — China has extended a total of \$100m (about sh197b) loans and grants to Uganda in the last five years.The Chinese government has provided Uganda interest free loans and grants to set up different projects in the country totalling \$100m since November 2003 to date," the former industry state minister, Prof. Ephraim Kamuntu, said.

"The projects that benefited include Kibimba and Doho rice schemes, which have promoted agriculture diversification and made Uganda one of the major rice producers in Africa," he said.This was during the launch of the China Enterprises Chamber of Commerce in Uganda at the Sheraton Kampala Hotel, recently.Kamuntu said the other projects financed by China include Mandela Stadium, the Uganda Industrial Research

Institute, the foreign affairs ministry headquarters, trucks for various government departments, health and education exchange programmes. In addition, he said, the China had promised to double assistance to Africa this year during the Beijing summit and provide \$3b (about sh5.9 trillion) preferential loans and \$2b (about sh3.9 trillion) preferential buyers' credit. Kamuntu added that it would also set up a \$5b (about sh9.8 trillion) China-Africa development fund to encourage Chinese companies to invest in Africa. Gavin Zhao, the chamber chairman, said the objective of the chamber was to establish commercial links between Uganda and China to boost trade and cooperation. "the chamber will attract more Chinese investors to come and take advantage of the good investment climate in Uganda and contribute to its development," he said. "We shall also provide business consultation services and other forms of assistance to the Chinese government, enterprises and institutes."

#### 14. PAN AFRICA

West Africa

#### **NIGERIA: AU Okays Policy for Women:21 February 2009:THIS DAY.**

Abuja — African Union (AU) Ministers of Foreign Affairs have approved a new gender policy that would further promote participation of women in the development of the continent. The policy, which was part of the outcome of the 14th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia would also enable the AU to monitor progress in gender balancing. AU Chairperson, Jean Ping said "This will ensure gender issues remain a permanent policy on Africa's development."

He said the policy provided for the setting a target of reserving at least 30 per cent of all government positions in every country for women. Ping lauded the efforts of some women networks across the continent for their collaboration with governments to promote and achieve complete ratification of the Protocol on the African Charter on Human and People's Rights and the Rights of Women in Africa by 53 countries within the union. Ping said: "I am committed to fully play my role to facilitate the processes that member states have undertaken to meet their obligations as stated under the Protocol and Constitutive Act of the African Union to enable it achieve gender equality in the Union." Meanwhile, Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf has said the promotion of gender issues by African leaders have impacted significantly in the representation of more women in elected offices including law enforcement and peacekeeping.

Johnson-Sirleaf, who spoke at a book launch entitled: "Best Practices Booklet on Gender in the African Union," said Liberia would be hosting an international conference in Monrovia in March aimed at promoting gender issues in Africa. She disclosed that out of the 22 ministries in the country, women occupied five of the most influential portfolios adding that this was a pointer to the 'strategic positioning' of women in Liberia's political Affairs. Also speaking, President of the Pan Africa Parliament (PAP) Getrude Mongela explained that the AU has made several steps in promoting women issues since its



adoption of the Solemn Declaration on Gender but added a lot still needed to be done."We want to prepare the next generation of women leaders by training them to take over from us," Mongela said.

### **Nigeria, South Africa Set Up Investment Committee: Golu Timothy:25 February 2009:Leadership (Abuja)**

Abuja — Nigeria and South Africa yesterday inaugurated a 10-man Joint Presidential Advisory Council on Investment (JPACI) in its second review council meeting of the Nigeria -South Africa Bi-National Commission (BNC).JPACI was established in June 2008 to strengthen the bilateral economic relations of JPACI under the BNC.

The body, which has five representatives from each country is to advise the two presidents on business cooperation and investment promotion.The Nigerian representatives are Mr. Jim Ovia, MD, Zenith Bank, Mazi Sam Oluabunwa, Nigeria Economic Summit Group (NESG), Mr. Femi Otedola, Zenon Oil, Alhaji M.A Gambo, former MD, Federal Airport Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) and Alhaji Sani Nuhu, former Comptroller-General of Customs.From the South African, Mr. Cheryl Carolous, Petonia Group, Ms. Wendy Nqenga, Aphrodeitis Mining, Mr. Phutuma Nleko, MTN, Mr. Simphiwe Tshabalala, Standard Bank and Mr. Jerry Vilakazi, Business Unity, South Africa (BUSA).The members will meet to pick their leader (s).

The body was inaugurated by the Vice President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan and the Deputy President of South Africa, Ms. Baleka Mbete.In his remark, Dr. Jonathan said the notable individuals from both countries have been chosen for the very important task.While noting that they will bring their experience to bear, Dr. Jonathan said "In this time of global economic recession" the group will work hard to bring the two countries into the path of economic recovery and development.He also tasked the body to inject a new life in the flow of goods and services between the two countries.The vice president also said that the 10th anniversary of the BNC in October this year will afford the two countries the opportunity to comprehensively review the achievements, as well as challenges, with a view to identify measures to be taken in further strengthening and deepening the work of the BNC.

Dr. Jonathan said that a joint committee has been drawn-up for the marking of the 10th anniversary of BNC.In her remark, Mbete said though the meeting is coming up at a time when economies of the developed countries are experiencing a meltdown, with the accompanied adverse effects on the economies of the developing world, Nigeria-South Africa are challenged to deploy necessary measures to ensure that the crisis does not affect the foundations of democracy nor deter the effort to defeat poverty and reversing underdevelopment.She noted that BNC would have failed in its duties if it does not reflect on matters that would enable its activities deliver the people from the shackles of poverty.The South African Deputy President also said that Nigeria- South Africa should continue to encourage intra-African trade as mandated by the imperatives of the New Partnership for Africa 's Development (NEPAD) so as to develop and boost the economies of the continent.As a building block, the enhancement of bilateral trade

between the two countries would consolidate this goal. She added that BNC is ten-years old this year as a testimony to the commitment of the leadership of both countries to strengthen the bilateral relations on all fronts- from business and trade to science and technology, education and culture.

**NIGERIA: Food Crisis Over, Say Experts: Tunde Sanni:27 February 2009:THIS DAY**

Ibadan — Experts on agriculture drawn from the Asian and African continents yesterday declared that global food crisis that rocked the world last year was effectively over. One of the experts, Marco Woopereis, Deputy Director-General, Research, Africa Rice Center, Cotonou, Benin Republic, who spoke at a workshop on "Stress Tolerant Rice for Poor Farmers in Africa and South Asia" in Ibadan, revealed that a whopping \$800million was expended by the Federal Government last year alone to combat the food crisis but warned that the trend may come back unless there is an aggressive rice plantation and production.

Participants at the workshop were drawn from Nigeria, Ghana, Mali, Benin, Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Senegal, Ethiopia, Uganda, Rwanda, Madagascar, Mozambique and Tanzania, Program Officer, United States Agricultural Development, Dr. David Bergvinson, Dr. Babucarr Manneh from The Gambia and the National Chairman of Rice Farmers Association of Nigeria (RIFAN), Pastor Bode Adenekan, also spoke with newsmen shortly after the opening ceremony of the workshop which was put together by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) at the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Ibadan. They canvassed an extension programme that would facilitate aggressive mobilisation of farmers in their respective countries to ensure that the current rice supply to the global market is sustained. The food expert lamented the continued importation of rice to Nigeria and other African countries inspite of favourable climatic conditions. Woopereis advocated stronger political policies to tap the unexploited rice in Africa, pointing out that 10million tonnes of rice were imported to sub Sahara Africa.

The Africa Rice Center chief revealed that about 4million tonnes of rice were consumed in Nigeria while about 40% of it is imported, adding that the development brought about the need for the Nigerian government to increase rice production. RIFAN boss, Adenekan at the media interactive session warned the government of the danger of the continued importation of rice, noting that it could be used as a political weapon against the country.

**GHANA: Kofi Annan Calls for Return to Value-Based System of Governance:27 February 2009: [Public Agenda](#) (Accra)**

Kofi Annan has called for an urgent return to a value-based system of governance to guide the international community in tackling the economic, climate, food and poverty crises. Speaking at the Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights, the former United Nations Secretary-General warns that the world's most pressing challenges can only be overcome if governments, communities, businesses and individuals work together, adhering to a set of universal values. Mr Annan states, "The fact that we now live in an

extraordinarily interdependent world - that we are a true global village - has not led to the fundamentally different policies and tools needed to tackle this new reality. Nor are our discussions or decisions yet shaped by the values needed to allow us to successfully overcome the challenges we face". Highlighting the importance of the common values of fairness, equality, justice, liberty, and solidarity, Mr Annan warns that "without actions based on these values, the risk is that we will be driven further apart, with increasing disparities in wealth and power both between societies and within them, fuelling anger, despair and intolerance". In a speech entitled 'Governance and Values' delivered to the annual seminar of the Oslo Center, Mr Annan:

§ calls for international leaders to have the courage and vision to fundamentally reform the world's international institutions to incorporate universal values

§ warns that the world's poorest countries and citizens stand to pay the heaviest price for the current economic crisis

§ urges richer countries not to use the excuse of tougher financial times to break development promises to poorer nations

§ draws attention to the worrying signs that the economic crisis will set back progress towards a system of fair and free trade

§ calls for businesses at local and global level must take the lead in driving up standards on labour and human rights, and on the environment

Commenting on the scale and urgency of the challenge presented by climate change, Mr Annan says, "We need a universal agreement to cut emissions, with the most industrialised countries accepting the biggest cuts and the costs of transferring knowledge and technology, investing in sustainable energy and helping developing nations with adaptation costs". Calling for the greater involvement of academics and think tanks in helping to find innovative solutions to the world's problems, Mr Annan praises the work of the Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights. The Center's founder and President, former Norwegian Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik, says, "There is a need for a new international agenda less based on self interest, and more based on common values. This is one of the most important challenges in the struggle for peace and justice today".

**NIGERIA: Good Governance Panacea for Continent's Stability – Salim: Sylvester Enoghase: 26 February 2009: interview: [Daily Independent](#) (Lagos).**

*Former Tanzanian Prime Minister and one time Secretary- General, Organisation of Africa Unity (OAU), now African Union, Dr. SALIM AMHED SALIM'S illustrious diplomatic career thrust him into the centre of Africa's immediate post independence diplomacy at the height of the Cold War, while in his 20s. In this interview with SENIOR CORRESPONDENT, SYLVESTER ENOGHASE, during an encounter in the U.S., Salim spoke on how Africa's contribution to world peace and development lie in nurturing its inherent strength and immense potential. Excerpts:*

**Could you reflect on the dynamics of overcoming conflicts in Africa, and its impact on world peace?** Conflict has been one of the most serious challenges confronting Africa in the past 50 years. The first decade of African independence was marred by a succession of coups and counter-coups. This was a period of a monopoly of politics through single parties; a situation that was rationalised by the need to have institutional mechanisms that foster national unity and integration. At the same time, at a global level, Africa was caught up in the bi-polar context of East-West power contest. Within such a context, Africa found itself to be a theatre in the all-embracing spheres of influence. Largely bilateral relations at that time was limited mainly to conferring or withholding recognition of the different military regimes depending on which global power camp they aligned themselves.

**Are you saying the instability of the first decade contributed to the conflict in the continent?** Yes. I mentioned earlier that when considered in comparative terms, the instability of the first decade involving mainly regime change was essentially a low intensity conflict mode. Apart from the Nigerian civil war, coup d'etats were mostly confined to the barracks and linked up to a few business and political elites. On the other hand, the institutional damage that the instability engendered was quite profound. It eroded the foundations of democracy by undermining the checks and balances among structures of governance, granting a higher prominence to the military - with its monopoly of the instruments of violence. I believe that the inability of African institutions of governance to transform 'naturally' has been a great cost - and a major contributory factor for subsequent instability in the continent. Perhaps, the effects of that early instability was not very visible because the continent was more preoccupied in dealing with the vestiges of moribund colonialism and apartheid in Southern Africa. Sadly, it was the very aftermaths of the decolonisation process that presented the most severe challenge for sustainable peace and security in Africa. As different factions were armed by different powers, Africa became part of the global battleground, where battle of dominance was fought. And in the earlier period, there was also no innocence in the manner independence was granted to some of our countries. Embedded in the handover was almost a deliberate move to weaken the post-independence regimes.

**What role did you play as the then Secretary-General of the Organisation of African Unity?** As the then Secretary General of the Organisation of African Unity, under a directive of African Heads of State and Government, I appointed an international panel of eminent personalities to investigate the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and the surrounding events. The panel was chaired by the former President of Botswana, Sir Ketumile Masire. The title of their final report captured the tragedy that took place and the implications for all of us as Africans, and especially as leaders. They called it - 'The Preventable Genocide' - indicating that there were steps that could have been taken before and immediately when it started that could have arrested that terrible massacre. In the report, the eminent personalities observed: 'If there is anything worse than the genocide itself, it is the knowledge that it did not have to happen. The simple, harsh, truth is that the genocide was not inevitable; and that it would have been relatively easy to stop it from happening prior to April 6, 1994, and then to mitigate the destruction significantly once it

began. **In the words of one expert, 'This was the most easily preventable genocide imaginable.'**

The case of Somalia defies every classical textbook theory of national integration. All the internal sociological conditions for unity were ever present, and yet the nation imploded. There was no issue of ethnicity or religion. Language is common, and inequity was not as bad as in many other parts. Still, Somalia fragmented to the lowest common bond - the clan and even sub-clan. And for two decades now, it has proved difficult to bring it back to sustainable peace and security. There is also the case of the Congo, whose capital is Kinshasa, a country full of riches and natural endowments and yet its people have never had peace and tranquility to fully enjoy those blessings. And by the end of the 1990s, a number of countries were involved in a devastating war in that beleaguered country, costing lives and property, and bringing lots of misery to the Congolese people. The tragedy of Darfur is in all our minds and hearts. There, in Sudan, Africa's largest country, lies all that should be the pride of Africa - massive land, resilient people, richness in diversity, rich history, and wealth of resources. Sadly, for yet another time, Darfur represents a symbol of our collective guilt, not only as Africans, but also in being members of humankind as a whole. The Western Sudan region of Darfur is located in Africa. It embodies the suffering of African people, but it beseeches and speaks to the world community. It critiques globalisation; it mocks at hypocrisy; it challenges global governance. Indeed, it challenges us all.

**Why was it not possible for African leaders to stop these conflicts?** This reminds one of the second development that occurred in the 1990s, relating to Africa committing itself to taking collective responsibility in fostering and sustaining peace and security in the continent. I was privileged to be the Secretary-General of the continental organisation. Together with the Heads of State and Government, we took stock of the implications of the global turn of events of the early 1990s, and acknowledged a new dispensation evolving in the international arena. It was recognised that the coming down of the Berlin Wall and the shifting polarity in power politics as well as the free flow of goods and capital ushered in a new constellation of forces with new patterns of global relations. New opportunities were evolving that required a re-positioning of our continent. The first undertaking was to reinvigorate the establishment of a new architecture for peace, security and development in the continent. The immediate action taken was to create the mechanism for conflict prevention, management and resolution being an operational instrument operating at various levels with a view to assuming leadership in preventing, managing and resolving conflicts in the continent. Indeed, beginning from 1990, Africa undertook a number of bold steps not only to establish a capacity for averting conflicts, but it also began to foster a political culture of democratic governance, greater respect for human rights, as well promoting co-operation and integration among African states. By the end of the 1990s, the scorecard for Africa was impressive, compared to the previous period. Even though conflicts, such as that of Darfur, continue to haunt us, and stability continues to be elusive, it is comforting that the frequency and spread of conflicts diminished.

**What are the implications of the convergence of these related developments?**The convergence of these two developments - the heightening of conflicts in the 1990s and the African resolve to end the scourge - are all indications that we are beginning to see the light, because the bold steps that have been taken are increasingly showing results. The foundation for sustainable peace is being established in the continent. We have now celebrated, in a couple of incidences, our capacity in preventing devastating conflicts, including where necessary and appropriate, the use of combined African unity forces. At the same time the process of democratisation and good governance are gaining strength and momentum in the continent, notwithstanding setbacks here and there. Democratic governance will further consolidate the building of enduring peace. On the other hand, the events in Darfur, Somalia as well as Eastern Congo bring to the fore some critical factors that are incisive for your mission as ADF. From Lumumba's Congo of 1961, through the genocide in Rwanda of 1994, to today's tragedy in Darfur, the dynamics involved underscore the fact that these are not solely the preoccupation of African peoples and their governments. In their causality, in their perpetuation and exacerbation, as well as in their resolution and reconstruction they are part and parcel of the collective responsibility of the international community.

African people, their governments and continental organisation are committed to stay in the frontline for achieving peace. However, they need and are entitled to international support. This support should be timely, genuine and meaningful because the experience of many of those cases has been one of disappointment, lip service and plenty of symbolic gestures. Africans have made a commitment, they have marshaled a determination, availed their human power, but they lack the wherewithal. While having the capacity to contribute, often times the international community has not acted with the commensurate urgency and effectiveness.

**How do you see the role of ADF in getting rid of conflict in Africa?**The ADF could be very helpful in this front by mobilising for the provision of the required resources in a timely and effective manner. We (Tanzania) hosted the Sullivan Summit last year, which is a committed group of the Diaspora that is working with African people and governments in the various areas of development. In this regard, the ADF could play a similar role in helping the harnessing of Africans' resources in a manner, which fosters peace and security. I commend decision of ADF to pursue the area of peace education. It is badly needed, not only back in the continent, among communities and nations, but even more critically among communities of your countries. Furthermore, one particular area in which foundations like yours can effectively assist is promoting an understanding of the realities, problems and challenges facing Africa. For quite often there is a tendency to generalise about the continent and, worse still, to present Africa as a continent of diseases, endless violence, poverty and endemic corruption; in brief a hopeless continent.

A better understanding of the continent is urgently called for. Africa is not a country. It is a continent of more than 50 independent states. It is a continent of diversity - multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-colour, multi-religious and multi-cultural. We have our share of problems, including conflicts, wars, poverty, natural and man-made disasters as well as pandemics, such as HIV/AIDS. We have our Darfur and Somalia. But Africa is not all

about conflicts, corruption and pandemics. Indeed, the vast majority of African countries are peaceful and stable and many of which are undergoing significant political, economic and social transformation.

**Could you briefly make some personal reflections about yourself?**For more than 30 years, I have been in one way or another involved in developments in our continent - from freedom and liberation struggles, nation building, efforts at regional co-operation and integration, political and socio-economic transformation, conflict resolution as well as the search for durable peace. As a young man, I was involved in the independence movement. At the age of 22, I had the rare privilege of serving as my country's Ambassador to Cairo, Egypt. Thereafter, I served in a number of high profile diplomatic posts, including New Delhi and Beijing as well as a 10-year period at the United Nations in New York where among other things I was privileged to serve as Chairman of the UN Committee on Decolonisation, and President of the UN General Assembly. During all this period I was intimately involved together with other African colleagues concerning developments in the continent. Later as earlier stated, I also served for an unprecedented three terms - covering 12 years - as OAU Secretary-General. During this period, I had visited, in some cases, several times, almost all African countries. During these visits and in different forums, I interacted with leaders of our countries as well as with different segments of the population including the Civil Society. I have recently served for three years as the African Union Special Envoy in the search for an end to the conflict in Darfur. I have experienced memories of glory and gratification like the swearing-in in May 1994 of Nelson Mandela, as the first democratically elected President of South Africa. I have also witnessed moments of agony, shame and indescribable cruelty when I visited Rwanda in the immediate aftermath of the genocide. I have been a witness to successes as well as distresses and disappointments.

Clearly, therefore, one has seen many ups and downs. But one thing has been consistent - the resilience and determination of the African people for a better tomorrow through good governance, transparency, proper and fair utilisation of the continent's immense resources. It is my conviction that notwithstanding the many problems and shortcomings that we face, Africa is on the right path for a better and even more challenging future. With good governance and genuine international co-operation Africa and its people, will rise to the great heights that they are entitled to. **To achieve these objectives however peace, security, stability and the spirit of reconciliation must prevail.**

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Museveni Explains Gadaffi Disagreement: Daniel Edyegu:24 February 2009:THE NEW VISION.**

Kampala — PRESIDENT Yoweri Museveni differed with Libyan leader Col. Muammar Gadaffi on the creation of a single African government because it would escalate crises in the continent. Each African country has unique challenges that would not necessarily be solved by forming a united states of Africa, Museveni reasoned.

"Africa is so big," Museveni said. "We are already heavy laden with our problems in East Africa and I don't need to engage in disagreements with the Arabs.

He (Gadaffi) should first test the idea with the Arab countries like Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt and Sudan."The President made the remarks on Monday while addressing secondary school teachers and political leaders from Teso and Karamoja at Arapai Agricultural College, Soroti after a workshop on patriotism.The disagreement with Gadaffi took place at the AU summit in Addis Ababa on February 3, where Gadaffi called for the fast-tracking of the single African Government.Although he failed to get agreement on the issue, Gadaffi was elected AU chairman, replacing Tanzanian leader Jakaya Kikwete.Gadaffi wants one African president, a vice-president and secretaries for foreign affairs and research among other offices.Museveni, on the other hand, wants stronger regional blocs in order to promote harmony and technological development. "We can trade with Arabs, but being in the same government, no, these Africans are enough," he said.

Due to lack of patriotism, Museveni said, Africa had failed to make progress in science although the majority of countries gained independence about 60 years ago."It is as if we, Africans, are bewitched. The Europeans are sending astronauts to the moon while we are preoccupied with tribal conflicts, rebellions, religious clashes and land disputes. This is dangerous. God created that moon for all of us. East Africa has the potential to develop a space programme if they come together."

On patriotism, Museveni said Ugandans must learn to appreciate each other and love their country."You should love Uganda, not because you like some specific people, but because you love yourself. For instance, to think that I love Banyankole because I come from there, is a misconception.The Banyankole can't exist without other Ugandans. I don't look at people according to their religion or tribe but development," he said.In a memorandum, the teachers asked for an allowance for hard-to-reach areas such as Karamoja. Museveni said he would consult with the education ministry.He said the Government had applied for a loan from the World Bank to improve teacher's welfare and infrastructure in schools."We plan to ensure one primary school in each sub-county. When we started free primary and secondary education, some laughed. We persisted because illiterate people have no place in modern society."Six Forum for Democratic Change members, including the Soroti district speaker, Jorem Opio Osoto, defected to the Movement and were received by the President.

### **Getting the Continent on the Obama Agenda: Reed Kramer:26 February 2009:ALLAFRICA.**

George Clooney's meeting to discuss Darfur with Vice President Joe Biden and with President Barack Obama Monday night at the White House provided one of the first glimmers of Africa involvement from the top echelon of the new administration.

According to Biden spokeswoman Elizabeth Alexander, Clooney was told that Sudan policy is under "ongoing review." The Academy Award-winning actor, who skipped the



Oscar's ceremony Sunday night to fly to Washington, said he welcomed what he heard "because there was some concern this could fall off the radar." That concern has been spreading among Africa watchers as days go by without any significant Africa-related pronouncements - particularly, no announced selection of a person to head the Africa Bureau at the State Department. Similar misgivings are being expressed about the administration's slow movement to fill top foreign assistance-related posts, which also affect U.S. relations with Africa. Not only are the conflicts in Sudan, Somalia and Congo requiring urgent attention and perhaps changed approaches, but also there is equally pressing need to spotlight and support places trying to get development right, especially with the added strain of the global economic crisis. One stark example is Liberia, which has been making "steady progress" toward eradicating poverty, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon reported this month, but where "limited national institutional capacity" and persistent security threats make continuing international support vital for the country's and region's growth and stability, [his report](#) said.

Each of the eight geographic bureaus at the State Department is led by an assistant secretary, and the Assistant Secretary for Africa is generally considered the top Africa policy official in any U.S. administration. The person widely expected to be named to the post is a career diplomat, [Johnnie Carson](#), who has served as U.S. ambassador to Kenya, Zimbabwe and Uganda and is currently senior intelligence officer for Africa on the National Intelligence Council, the agency charged with coordinating strategic thinking for the U.S. government. Although other names have been put forward - and several other prospects were interviewed by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Carson was a near-consensus favorite of Africa-watchers both inside and outside the Obama camp. His experience includes diplomatic postings in Nigeria, Mozambique, Botswana and Portugal and assignments as staff director of the House Subcommittee on Africa and senior vice president of National Defense University. During President Clinton's second term, Carson served as the principal deputy in the Africa Bureau to Assistant Secretary Susan Rice, who is now the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations and member of the Obama Cabinet. His selection would provide a morale boost for career foreign service professionals, many of whom were incensed when he was passed over during the Bush administration for two top ambassadorial posts for which he was considered qualified and deserving - South Africa in 2003 and Ethiopia in 2005.

In a signal that key foreign assistance appointments are awaiting a major policy review, the White House announced that U.S. Agency for International Development Chief Operating Officer Alonzo Fulgham has been named acting administrator. [Gayle Smith](#), who chaired the Obama foreign assistance transition team and is considered a lead candidate to become eventual agency head, is joining the National Security Council staff on Monday as Senior Director for Relief, Stabilization and Development and Senior Advisor to the President. Another oft-mentioned choice, Helene Gayle, a former official at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Centers for Disease Control, continues her high-level engagement as president and CEO of CARE International. As a member of the bipartisan Congressional panel on reforming foreign aid - [the HELP Commission](#), Smith advocated creation of a Cabinet-level position that would encompass not only USAID but also the Millennium Challenge Corporation, created by President George W.

Bush to distribute increased U.S. assistance to developing countries meeting 16 performance indicators. Apparently, the leadership choices will have to wait until a foreign assistance structure is agreed. At the State Department, none of the assistant secretary appointments have been announced, and Clinton is yet to name her own selections for most of the six undersecretaries, who sit one step higher on organizational chart. Currently, the Africa Bureau is headed on an 'acting' basis by Phillip Carter, a former ambassador to Guinea and deputy chief of mission in Madagascar and Gabon.

Europe is the destination for the President's first overseas trip in early April. Asia got the first official visit from Secretary Clinton, who is preparing to head to the Middle East over the weekend. The Middle East, Afghanistan and Pakistan and North Korea have all had senior envoys or representatives assigned to tackle tough policy issues. "Africa has slipped into the background," says Richard Joseph, John Evans professor of International History and Politics at Northwestern University and non-resident senior fellow at The Brookings Institution. Pressure has been mounting to add Sudan to the list of places receiving top level attention. The 'Save Darfur Coalition' has called on the president to name "a point person with the stature, mandate and authority to take charge of U.S. efforts to end the violence in Darfur." The Enough Project, an organization focused on mobilizing a permanent constituency to prevent genocide in Africa, is asking the public to press for special envoys for both Sudan and the Great Lakes Region, to focus on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the deadliest conflict in the world today, where an estimated five million people have died as a result of the fighting in recent years.

Rep. Frank Wolf (Republican-Virginia), who has made five trips to Sudan since 1989, asked President Obama in a letter this week to select former Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist as special envoy for Sudan. Frist, who as a surgeon undertook medical missions to the country and was "a leader in declaring what was happening in Sudan to be genocide," Wolf wrote. Speaking to ABC News as he left the White House, Clooney said he received assurances that Sudan "is high on their agenda" and expects an envoy to be named. Clooney traveled to the Chad/Darfur border visiting refugees with New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof, after being denied a visa to enter Sudan. (Read Kristof's accounts of the trip – and clashes with a nervous United Nations bureaucracy – on [his blog](#).) The top Africa position at the National Security Council, the White House agency responsible for coordinating foreign policy, was quietly filled last week by [Michelle D. Gavin](#). While serving as international affairs fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations last year, Gavin co-chaired the Africa advisory team for the Obama-Biden campaign. Previously, she spent six years as senior foreign policy advisor for Sen. Russell Feingold (Democrat-Wisconsin) and staff director of the Senate Africa subcommittee and two years as legislative director for Colorado Democrat Ken Salazar, Obama's Interior Secretary. Gavin, whose official title is Senior Director for African Affairs and Senior Advisor to the President, is aided by three directors - Karen O'Donnell, Cameron Hudson and Marie Brown. At the Pentagon, responsibility for sub-Saharan Africa falls under a deputy assistant secretary within the office of the Defense Secretary. [Theresa Whalen](#), a national security specialist and career department official who has held the post since 2002, continues to serve under Secretary Robert Gates, whom Obama retained from President Bush's Cabinet.

Within the Obama camp, several names have been mentioned as her possible replacement, most prominently, Vicki Huddleston, who served as acting U.S. ambassador to Ethiopia, U.S. ambassador to Mali and Madagascar, deputy assistant secretary of state and chief of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana. Currently, she is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, where she worked alongside Susan Rice. Huddleston has been an outspoken advocate of a close alliance with the Ethiopian government, a policy pursued by the Bush administration but opposed by human rights organizations and some members of Congress. A November 2007 New York Times op-ed article co-authored by Huddleston and another former chief of mission at the American Embassy in Addis Ababa, Tibor Naby, criticized Congressional moves to limit U.S. military assistance for Ethiopia. "A far better approach would be to buttress Ethiopia against threats to its survival - by helping it resolve its border conflict and ensuring that it reopens negotiations with insurgents and traditional leaders and permits international investigation of reported military abuses," the two diplomats argued. While low visibility for Africa policy may not be entirely unexpected, considering the multiple crises the President faced entering office, it has disappointed many who had hoped the administration might quickly mobilize the high level attention that is needed to spur action on vital issues. "The powerful symbolism of a son of Africa overcoming extraordinary odds to become the 44th president of the United States" may be as much of an 'Obama dividend' as Africa can expect for the moment, Witney Schneidman and Paul Collier wrote in [a guest column for AllAfrica](#). Schneidman, who co-chaired the Obama campaign Africa advisory group with Gavin, and Collier, an Oxford professor and author of "[The Bottom Billion](#)", cite steps that can be taken to help Africa even if Obama is unable to fulfill his pledge to double development assistance. These include "revitalizing the African Growth and Opportunity Act, working through the Millennium Challenge Corporation to improve governance and using the Overseas Private Investment Corporation to extend credit to small and medium enterprises," they wrote. An ambitious agenda, which includes a 'first 100 days action plan', was outlined by the advisory team that Schneidman and Gavin coordinated during the presidential campaign. The group, which included leading experts – American and African, authored 23 thematic and country-specific papers, looking at energy, governance, peacekeeping and women, as well as Nigeria, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Angola, Uganda and the Mano River states (Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, plus Cote d'Ivoire).

The overview called for the new administration to "build on the successes" of the Bush years while addressing issues that were "largely neglected." The advisors recommended a major focus on African agriculture, careful integration of Africa into early administration efforts on climate change, a new HIV/AIDS and malaria initiative to insure treatment over 10 years for anyone becoming HIV-positive, a strengthening of trade ties and reduction in American agricultural subsidies, and annual discussions involving the African Union and China on a range of issues from economic development to codes of conduct for investors. The group suggested a presidential address on Africa in the "first several months" and a U.S.-Africa summit in 2010.

In recognition of a region requiring exceptional attention, the group put together a detailed 360-day action memo focused on conflict-torn Somalia, Sudan and the

Democratic Republic of the Congo. The memo recommended that the effectiveness of the special envoy for Sudan should be strengthened by the addition of two deputies, one for Darfur and the other for southern Sudan to press full implementation of the stalled Comprehensive Peace Accord between the northern government and the south. The advisors also called on the new administration to send an 'early signal' of serious intention by providing helicopters and logistical assistance for the United Nations-African Union peacekeeping mission in Darfur.

Administration statements about Africa have been limited, thus far, to two State Department condemnations of Darfur violence and one this month on Zimbabwe. President Obama reportedly discussed Zimbabwe late last month in a telephone conversation with South Africa President Kgalema Motlanthe, when the two leaders also talked about the G20 summit they both plan to attend on April 2 in London. Proof that Africa's problems will not wait comes next week when Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir is expected to be indicted by the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity in Darfur. "At the Obama School here in eastern Chad, the refugees are waiting to see if the school's namesake will resolutely back up the International Criminal Court," Kristof wrote in his [New York Times column Thursday](#). Based on Obama's strong record in the Senate – along with that of now Vice President Biden and Secretary Clinton, Kristof is hopeful that the administration will support the action. Along with the firm position taken by UN Ambassador Rice, who Kristof says "terrifies Sudanese officials; parachute her into Khartoum, and the entire Sudanese leadership might surrender", he cites the lead role on Sudan of White House assistant Samantha Power, who he says "catalogs all the ways that American politicians have found excuses to avoid confronting past genocides" in her Pulitzer-winning book, [A Problem From Hell](#).

While Africa's violent conflicts and calamities must be addressed, U.S. policy can and must be directed broadly throughout Africa, according to Richard Joseph, a participant and lead author of the advisory group. "There are four critical areas in which the Obama-Biden Administration can have a decisive impact in the 48 states of sub Saharan Africa - most of which are not experiencing complex emergencies," he said in an interview - democracy and the rule of law; enterprise-led growth; energy and basic infrastructures; and capacity-building. Joseph believes the Obama presidency offers "great opportunity" for countries in Africa such as Nigeria to take self measure and make the efforts required for "concrete advances in governance, prosperity and security." He says the President and his administration "should take Africa off the back-burner" and put in on the agenda. "They don't have to commission new policy briefs – they can just read these," he said, speaking of the campaign advisors' reports.

Central Africa

**RWANDA: Rift Widens as Egypt, Sudan Delay Signing Nile Basin Pact: Edwin Musoni: 23 February 2009. THE NEW TIMES.**

Bujumbura — Disagreements on River Nile security have split the Nile basin member countries because the deadline to sign the Cooperative Framework Agreement has

expired. The Nile Cooperative Framework Agreement seeks the establishment of a permanent River Nile Basin Commission through which member countries will act together to manage and develop resources of the Nile. But no agreement on possibilities has been reached yet as Egypt and Sudan are said to be reluctant to sign the agreement. The 39-article agreement was supposed to be adopted by all basin states before June last year and then ratified before going into force as an international treaty.

To date, seven out of nine Nile Basin countries have adopted the new agreement which Egypt and Sudan refused to adopt. The states are Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, DRC, Sudan, Ethiopia, Egypt and Burundi. Several government officials and stakeholders who turned up for the third celebrations of the Nile Day held in Bujumbura, Burundi over the weekend blamed the two countries for refusing to embrace the deal.

Speaking in Bururi Province, Tutovu Commune in Burundi Saturday, the Burundian First Vice President Dr. Yves Sahinguvu decried the delay of signing of the agreement saying that his country "supports firmly the idea that the countries of the Nile Basin should quickly conclude negotiations on the Cooperative Framework which started ten years ago, and to sign it as soon as possible." "We should give a legal base to our cooperation to engage all together and take up challenges which are drawn up in front of us for the development of our people," the Vice President told participants. In a similar development, the Chairperson of the Nile Discourse, Oweyegha Afunaduulu stressed that; "plans are underway to facilitate dialogue on the cooperative arrangements among stakeholders and communities so that pressure is increased to sign the agreement." In another call, the Executive Director of the Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat, Henriette Ndobe, said that after many years of negotiations on the pact, today's ambition is to sign and ratify the agreement.

"The decision that countries are being called upon to take is major. It is a life-giving and a life time decision for all the countries to act independently of the history, geopolitics, the limits of sovereignty, and political boundaries. Through deepening the cooperation, the decision will serve all long-term national interests" Ndobe challenged the participants.

If the pact is signed, it would secure the existence of NBI. The Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) was expected to be signed in September 2007 but it was delayed because of lack of consensus on some articles in the agreement. The new agreement is expected to replace the old one of 1929 but Egypt and Sudan are opposed to it for fear that it would limit their access to the Nile waters.

### **Contentious articles**

The new treaty's strength lies in five main articles, but has since sparked off heated debate among member countries. Among the most contentious provisions include article 4, which is on equitable and reasonable use of the Nile waters, Article 5 (prevention of harm to the waters), Article 6 (protection and conservation of the basin and its ecosystem) and Article 8, which requires prior informed consent before using the waters.

The new wording puts a check on the 1929 treaty, which required the riparian states to seek permission before using the Nile waters. Egypt and Sudan depend almost entirely on the Nile for their agricultural production and are major users of the 6,700 km river's waters. The basin of Nile, the longest river in the world, is about three million sq km. But the water conflict dwells most on article 14 which has remained unresolved. It is this unfinished business of Article 14 that talks about water security that indicates that the negotiations may have not yielded much after all in terms of real benefits for the downstream states.

The article states: "Having due regard for the provisions of Articles 4 and 5, Nile Basin States recognize the vital importance of water security to each of them. The States also recognize that cooperative management and development of the waters of the Nile River system will facilitate achievement of water security and benefits.

Nile Basin States therefore agree, in a spirit of cooperation, to work together to ensure that all states achieve and sustain water security and not to significantly affect the water security of any other Nile Basin State." All the states agreed to this provision except Egypt and Sudan that want the last part of the article re-phrased as 'Not to adversely affect the water security and current uses and rights of any other Nile Basin States'. Rwanda, Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and DR Congo have rejected rephrasing the article which has left the agreement hanging in balance.

### **Egypt denies**

Egypt and Sudan have been pushing for the reinforcement of the old treaty that only favours them but the other countries have also maintained their position. However, Egypt denies frustrating the agreement, saying it was only questioning some clauses. In an interview held last year with the Chancellor of the Egyptian Embassy in Kigali, M.H Kandil Kandil said that it was a matter of some clauses in the agreement and that they were trying to reach a consensus with the sister countries. He refuted allegations by the other riparian states which accuse Egypt of only looking at her own interests. "We did not refuse to sign at any point; we are the initiators of the agreement and are pushing for it to be signed in the shortest time possible," he told The New Times in 2008. Egypt is guaranteed access to 55.5 billion cubic meters of water, out of a total of 84 billion cubic meters.

The Cooperative Framework negotiations began in 1997 with a panel of experts analyzing international precedents like drawing on the UN Convention for the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses (1997) and the experience of other basins.

### **CAMEROON: Scholars Divided Over a United States of Africa: Daniel Gwarbarah & Leocadia Bongben: 23 February 2009: THE POSTNEWSLINE.COM.**

Though most analysts and adherents on the idea of a United States of Africa agree that there is need for unity, there is disagreement on the form it should take. Resource persons

at the monthly Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Press Club, meeting on February 20, highlighted the cracks in the lofty project, with the absence of strong regional integration bodies. They wondered how African States can unite when there is disunity amongst States of the same sub-region. They quoted the Central African Sub Region where Cameroonians have been driven away from Equatorial Guinea on several occasions as an example.

According to Hughes François Onana, CRTV journalist, for African States to unite, there is the necessity to ameliorate credibility and ensure continuity in economic reforms, reinforce the bargaining power in the international scene and harmonise legislation to promote good governance, democracy and human rights. Maurice Tadadjeu, lecturer at the Yaounde I University, for his part, perceives the project of a United States of Africa as a reality and already functional. Having followed the project from inception up to this moment, he argues that the project of uniting Africa is not Kaddafi's idea, but an idea that has existed for at least a century. The principal reason that blurs efforts is the lack of personal engagement, he argued. He regretted that African leaders are divided on the issue as perceived during the 9th African Union summit. Tadadjeu underscored the necessity of sensitising journalists as well as the population on the project. Tracing the history of the Pan African Hubert Kamgang, Chairman of the Union of the Peoples of Africa party, maintained that the idea was basically to abolish the colonial pact and to liberate African States from colonialism.

**RWANDA: New Partnership to Boost Agricultural Growth on Continent: Sam Nkurunziza: 22 February 2009: THE NEW TIMES.**

Kigali — Last week the International Finance Corporation (IFC), joined forces with the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) to unlock credit and financing for small-scale farmers and agribusinesses across sub-Saharan Africa. IFC is a member of the World Bank Group, while AGRA is a dynamic partnership working across the African continent to help millions of small-scale farmers and their families lift themselves out of poverty and hunger. The partnership comes a month after AGRA held an annual retreat in Kigali to streamline the existing innovative financing projects to reach more countries and key stakeholders. The amount of agricultural lending in Africa is very low, one of the reasons hindering farmers' ability to achieve their full potential, and escaping hunger and poverty.

IFC and AGRA will work together in various ways to scale up investors and national commercial banks to make loans available to farmers and agribusinesses. "Our partnership with IFC will harness the strengths of both organizations to scale up innovative programs across the agricultural value chain. We will improve the livelihoods of many more small-scale farmers and be able to do it sooner," said Namanga Ngongi, AGRA's President.

According to her, the growth of the agricultural sector will strengthen the continent's food security, as well as create employment and raise living standards for millions of smallholder African farmers. "The challenges to growing Africa's agribusiness are great.

But so are the opportunities. IFC is committed to helping Africa capitalize on these opportunities by playing a catalytic role of bringing a wide range of partners together to deliver practical market based solutions. Our alliance with AGRA is a very important step in this direction," said Lars Thunell, Executive Vice President and CEO of IFC. AGRA has made a \$12 million investment by providing financing to the African Seed Investment Fund (ASIF) while IFC's new investments totaled \$16.2 billion in fiscal 2008, a 34 percent increase over the previous year.

## 15. AFRICA IN THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS

### Southern Africa

#### **New Africa Commission Report Reiterates Basic Goals: Julio Godoy:24 February 2009:INTER PRESS SERVICE NEWS AGENCY**

Berlin — Africa's arduous path to development could be eased if governments took elementary measures to improve infrastructure, coordinate regional trade policies, capacitate customs personnel to speed up the regional exchange of goods and services and facilitate access of small and medium enterprises to financial resources. These are some of the conclusions of a new study on African economic development perspectives, carried out by the Confederation of Danish Industry (CDI) in cooperation with several African private sector associations. The CDI is a premier employers' organisation and lobbying body for Danish business. The study, titled "A better future for Africa: Recommendations from the private sector", concludes that local governments and international cooperation should particularly focus attention on upgrading five sectors in the African economy.

Other than the above-mentioned improvement of infrastructure, access to finance and trade facilitation, the CDI says that professional education, technology transfer and the empowerment of women can play a key role in the launching of a steady development process in Africa. The report will be officially present on May 7 in the Danish capital of Copenhagen, with the participation of representatives of the CDI, the Danish government and delegations from the African governments and the region's private sector.

The paper is a CDI contribution to Denmark's Commission on Effective Development Cooperation with Africa, known as the Africa Commission (AC), which was launched in 2008 by Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen to make recommendations about the developmental challenges facing Africa. The AC's main objective is the eradication of youth unemployment and poverty in Africa. Several international bodies, such as the World Bank and the United Nations, African governments and other regional groups, including African private business associations, are members of the AC. The paper's main thesis is that only the African private sector can create enough jobs to eradicate youth unemployment. "(Private) business is the single most important factor for creating jobs and economic growth, and thus eradicating poverty," the document says. "However, for business to prosper, the right enabling environment must be in place."



But this "enabling environment" has not been a priority in African policies nor in international economic cooperation, Marie Gad, economic policy advisor at the CDI and author of the paper, told IPS. Gad admitted that the five sectors identified by the report are commonplace in analyses of deficits in developing countries. "And yet, these sectors do not enjoy priority in the international economic cooperation initiatives or in the African governments policies," Gad claimed. To substantiate her claim, Gad said that less than 10 percent of the Danish development aid is aimed at improving the framework within which private business in Africa operates.

In the preparation of this report, the CDI discussed the business situation in Africa with eight business associations in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Mozambique, Zambia, Botswana and South Africa. According to Gad, these associations complained that the national and regional frameworks within which they are forced to work are not conducive to create jobs and wealth.

Gad gave another example. "African banking systems does not support the operations of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs)," she said. Indeed, the report points out that private sector companies need financing to expand. "However, in many developing countries, finance is not readily available, especially for small and medium-sized companies." And, though finance has a high cost and is difficult to access in most low-income countries, "nowhere is credit more expensive or less accessible than in Sub-Saharan Africa," the report indicates. The report refers to the World Bank's enterprise surveys, according to which almost 50 percent of African private companies identify this lack of access to credit as a major constraint for their operations.

This deficient access to bank financing mostly affects SMEs. While large companies can usually obtain credit at banks and micro entrepreneurs have access to the growing volume of microfinance, "SMEs fall into the so-called 'missing middle'," the report argues.

This situation is illustrated by the collateral requirements of African banks. Since few SMEs can show evidence of a credit history, banks require collateral. "Unfortunately, demand for collateral from African SMEs is generally between 100 and 200 percent, making it impossible to meet," according to the paper. Therefore, Gad said, "the CDI believes that facilitating credit access for growth-oriented SMEs should be a top priority in Africa." The report recommends that an African "venture capital fund should be created to finance innovative projects that are commercially, socially and environmentally beneficial. The fund should be focused on a limited number of sectors, as food, water, health, housing, to be able to provide qualified advisory services to investment projects." Furthermore, African countries need an increased use of credit reference bureaus. "In many countries there are no credible credit reference agencies for the banks to rely on in their assessment of loan applicants," Gad added. "Thus, the unfortunate situation is that every company without collateral for a loan is a high risk client to the banks." The report also proposes improving possibilities of using land, buildings and machinery as collateral through better ownership laws and practices, renewed focus on land measurement, establishment of conflict resolution mechanisms, increased awareness of the importance of protection of property rights, including land ownership.

Another example of the basic difficulties economic development faces in Africa are the barriers to regional trade. Studies on development since years emphasise that trade among developing countries - the so-called South-South trade - improve welfare gains, enhance regional linkages in the manufacturing sector and help diversify developing countries' exports. Following such conclusions, Gad suggests in "A better future for Africa" that enhancing trade across Africa can create new businesses and jobs and increase the standards of living. However, the report points out, intraregional trade in Africa faces a number of barriers, including poor infrastructure, high tariff rates and low purchasing power in large parts of Africa. Cumbersome border control and customs clearance constitute additional major problems. All these barriers represent additional costs amounting to 20 to 30 percent of the costs of goods, the study claims. As a result, "international competitiveness remains low due to these problems and the prospects of developing interregional trade suffer," the paper says. "A better future for Africa" does not only suffer of repeating well-known conclusions of other studies on development - it was also formulated before the global financial meltdown crisis worsened into the present global recession. "At the time we were working on the report, we did not imagine the full dimension of the global crisis," Gad told IPS. That the crisis and its consequences - credit crunch, reduction of international demand for African goods, and of official development aid - can darken African development perspectives, is beyond question.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Legal Experts Take Action to Prosecute Pirates: Jacquelyn S. Porth:27 February 2009: [America.gov](http://America.gov) (Washington, DC)**

Washington DC — Pirates that have been attacking ships off Africa no longer will have free rein because the international community is apprehending and prosecuting them. Pirates increasingly are being captured -- sometimes caught in the act, other times spotted with incriminating evidence. Pirates can be prosecuted if they are seen boarding or if they are sailing with weapons such as rocket-propelled grenades. The Associated Press reports that unmanned aerial drones equipped with night-vision gear recently provided the evidence of pirate paraphernalia needed for the U.S. Navy to apprehend nine pirates in the Gulf of Aden on February 12. When caught by patrolling navies, pirates are temporarily incarcerated in the hold of a ship, then transferred to a nation willing to prosecute in a court of law.

The threat of a lengthy court proceeding and a long prison sentence resulting from a successful prosecution will hopefully deter a slew of pirates who have been operating largely without consequence in the past year. In 2008, there were 115 pirate attacks off the coast of Africa. There have been a dozen more attacks in 2009. And, an estimated 100 merchant ship crew members from countries including India, Greece, the Philippines and Ukraine still are being held hostage as a result of incidents in the past year. But, in a sign of the times, France picked up some pirates on land in Somalia during a raid to free hostages in April 2008, and France is prosecuting the pirates.

Also, more recently, the Danish navy nabbed some pirates at sea and sent them to the Netherlands, where they are being tried and face a 12-year sentence if convicted. Kenya is another country with experience prosecuting pirates and, under a recent agreement, will play an increased role in legal action against piracy.

International law defines piracy as any act of violence, detention or depredation conducted on the high seas from one vessel to another. There are several relevant legal instruments: the 1958 Convention on the High Seas, the 1988 Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (signed by more than three-quarters of the world's nations) and the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention. The French navy apprehended 19 pirates off the coast of Somalia in January.

But recent agreements are already making it even tougher for pirates. A group of African nations signed a regional code of conduct in Djibouti in January on the subject of piracy. Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, the Maldives, the Seychelles, Somalia, Tanzania, Yemen and Djibouti were early signatories. The document, aimed at repressing armed robbery against ships off Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, remains open for signature by all countries in the region.

Each signatory has agreed to review its legislation to be sure there are existing laws to criminalize piracy and related crimes as well as sufficient guidelines to investigate and prosecute. Captain Charles Michel, chief of the Coast Guard's Office of Maritime and International Law, said countries interested in combating piracy must have the laws in place to prosecute and must be willing to see the prosecution through. The United Nations recently passed two resolutions (numbers 1851 and 1846), which authorize actions against Somali pirates on land, as well as at sea. The resolutions are expected to spur further captures of pirates. In the United States, the National Security Council, a high-level White House forum, issued a piracy action plan for the Horn of Africa just before the transition from the Bush to the Obama administration. The action plan focuses on preventing and responding to attacks and negotiating agreements leading to the prosecution of perpetrators.

Furthermore, the United States and Kenya signed a memorandum of understanding (as has Kenya and the United Kingdom) in January. Under its terms, the U.S. Navy can transfer captured pirates to Kenya for prosecution. Kenya may choose to prosecute or extradite the pirates (to the hostages' home country or to the country under which the captured ship sailed).

## BUILDING A LEGAL CASE

Michel said the legal process can be daunting because so many parties may be involved in any one case: for example, Somali pirates, U.S. military personnel, Filipino crew and Kenyan judges. Legal experts also say that, for these new agreements on piracy to be effective, it will be critical for prosecutors to collect physical and video evidence that will be admissible in Kenyan courts. According to Michel, the legal process can be excruciating. Even after detaining captured pirates, naval personnel must arrange to

transfer the pirates to Kenya. Then the Kenyans have to figure out where to house them while building their case. Witnesses have to be assembled, depositions collected and all kinds of preparatory work completed before they can be tried. The United States has agreed to help support future trials by transporting victims from attacked ships to Kenya or to supply as prosecution witnesses Navy and Coast Guard personnel who served on ship-boarding teams. The U.S. Coast Guard assigned law enforcement detachments to a Navy special task force to help collect and train ship-boarding team members in the best methods of collecting prosecutable evidence.

The U.S. Naval Criminal Investigative Service has a role too, with special agents assigned to Combined Task Force-151. They interview suspects and witnesses and coordinate with lawyers and foreign law enforcement agencies. There is a strong international commitment to jail as many pirates as possible as a deterrent to others who would contemplate a life of crime on the high seas. Besides the nine pirates the Navy captured February 12, Michel said there is sufficient evidence to send another set of pirates apprehended a day earlier to Kenya for prosecution under the new bilateral agreement.

Central Africa

**Forests Prove Valuable Carbon Sink: Source: Nature: 25 February 2009: [SciDev.Net](#) (London).**

African forests are adding to their mass each year by an amount equivalent to a small car per hectare, researchers have found. The finding has surprised researchers and confirms the forests' status as one of the world's substantial carbon sinks. Researchers used data collected between 1968 and 2007 to calculate that 0.6 tonnes of carbon per hectare are added to African forests each year. While this has been shown in the Amazon, this is the first demonstration that African forests are taking in carbon.

There are two possible explanations. One is that the forests might not be in equilibrium, as was previously thought. All forests take in carbon as they grow. In the absence of disturbances they then reach equilibrium, when tree death and growth occur at the same rate. It could be that the seemingly undisturbed African forests are actually still recovering from past disturbances such as fires or mass logging - and therefore still growing. Alternatively, changes in the global climate and atmosphere could have disturbed the forests' previous equilibrium. Increased carbon dioxide could be increasing tropical tree growth for example. It is likely that both theories have a role to play, but scientists need a better understanding of carbon dynamics in tropical forests to know the answer, writes Helene C. Muller-Landau of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama.

The research also highlights the need to protect African forests, write the authors. "With adequate protection these forests are likely to remain large carbon stores in the longer term. Securing this service will probably require formalising and enforcing land rights for

forest dwellers, alongside payments for ecosystem services to those living near forested areas."

## 16. HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER AND SOCIAL ISSUES

West Africa

### **Sierra Leone: 'Forced Marriage' Conviction a First: 26 February 2009:IRIN.**

Freetown — The Special Court for Sierra Leone on 25 February convicted three former leaders of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), marking the first time a court has convicted on the charge of "forced marriage". After a four-year trial, [the tribunal found](#) former RUF interim leader Issa Hassan Sesay and RUF commander Morris Kallon guilty on 16 of 18 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, and former RUF chief of security Augustine Gbao on 14 counts. All three men were convicted of forcing marriage on women. The court also set a precedent by charging all three for war crimes for targeting humanitarian and peacekeepers in direct attacks. The prosecution argued that forced marriage should be considered a crime against humanity distinct from other forms of sexual violence such as sexual slavery because of the length of the association and its domestic nature.

"Our position is that sexual slavery is a horrendous crime," lead prosecutor Stephen Rapp told journalists after the verdicts. "Victims would be held for days or weeks and forced into sex acts. Forced marriage is all of that plus essentially being consorts to the rebels."

The result, he said, is stigma, with the women seen as responsible for the crimes of their "husbands". Rapp said the decisions marked a legal turning point. "We have essentially filled a gap in international humanitarian law. The decision will become a precedent for other cases in the International Criminal Court, and possibly act as a deterrent in future conflicts."

### **Child soldiers**

Kallon and Sesay were found guilty of the deliberate and widespread conscription of child soldiers as young as eight years old; rebels used children in a number of ways, including: to support soldiers in a campaign of systematic amputation and mutilation, to spy, perform domestic labour, take part in armed patrols, or serve as bodyguards for RUF commanders. Gbao was acquitted on this charge. "I think it's likely that we will be appealing the majority if not all of the guilty verdicts," John Cammegh, lead counsel for Gbao, told journalists. Sentences are expected in March 2009, followed by an appeals process, which will mark the end of the Court's work in Freetown. The Special Court's trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor - accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Sierra Leone's war - is ongoing at The Hague. The Special Court was established jointly by the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone to try those

deemed most responsible for atrocities committed during the 11-year civil war that killed up to 50,000 people.

### **Muted reaction**

Local reaction to the verdict was muted. In the capital Freetown people went about their daily business, selling goods along bustling downtown streets, largely oblivious. Unisa Sesay, in his 20s, who during the war was caught in an ambush at Tombo just outside of Freetown, doubted the court's impact on Sierra Leoneans' daily lives. "Jailing them will not bring back lives and property. Look at all of us. We are in the street. We have no jobs. And they are spending money on the Special Court?" Patrick Fatoma, outreach coordinator for the Special Court, is familiar with such reactions. "That's not going to end," he told IRIN. "This is a very poor country, and if people hear about money being spent by the court, even if you're spending [it] for a good cause, they will think you should spend it on people for food." Fatoma tries to explain to people like Sesay that the money used to run the Special Court has been donated specifically for that purpose. "If it is not used for the court, they [the donor countries] take their money back." The Special Court received support from over 40 states, with Canada, the Netherlands, Nigeria, the United Kingdom and the United States providing the majority of the funds. Fatoma said perceptions have shifted slightly. "The question [people] ask us now in our outreach events is not, 'Why are you spending so much money on the Special Court and not giving it to the amputees and war victims?' The question is now, 'Why are you not trying more people?'" Some Sierra Leoneans told IRIN that with the RUF verdict they felt they could finally move on. "I like the Special Court," said Alpha Tommy Conteh, whose wife was killed by a stray bullet in a January 1999 rebel attack on Freetown. "It is necessary. If you don't [have a] Special Court to bring punishment, other men will just bring war again."

### **Sierra Leone: UN-Backed Court Convicts Three Rebel Leaders for War Crimes: 26 February 2009: UN NEWS SERVICE.**

Three men who led a rebel movement during the most brutal phase of Sierra Leone's decade-long civil war have been found guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity by a United Nations-backed court in the capital, Freetown. The Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) found the former leaders of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) guilty of charges relating to forced marriage, attacks against peacekeepers and use of child soldiers, according to a news release issued by the Court. Former RUF Interim Leader Issa Hassan Sesay and RUF commander Morris Kallon were each found guilty on 16 of the 18 counts in the indictment, which included the child recruitment charges. Former RUF Chief of Security Augustine Gbao was found guilty on 14 counts. All three were found guilty of specific war crimes relating to attacks on peacekeepers, the first time ever such charges have been successfully pressed, and on the forced marriage charges. They will face sentencing in the coming weeks. The Special Court, established in January 2002 by an agreement between the Sierra Leonean Government and the UN, is mandated to try "those who bear greatest responsibility" for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in the country after 30 November 1996, when fighting was marked by murder, mutilation, rape and sexual slavery.

The Court's trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor for crimes committed in Sierra Leone is currently under way in The Hague.

**Sierra Leone: Country Holds National Forum On UN Resolution 1325:Regina Pratt:24 February 2009:Concord Times (Freetown)**

Freetown — A two-day national consultation forum to develop a 'national action plan' on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 for Sierra Leone wraps up today in all the regions of the country, including the western area. The purpose of the forum is to develop an action plan for the implementation of the resolution and also to discuss the important role women play in the prevention and resolution of conflict and peace-building generally.

In her keynote address during the opening ceremony of the western area forum at the conference hall of CHASL, Kingharman Road yesterday, deputy minister of social welfare, gender and children's affairs, Jenneh Kandeh thanked WANEP-SL and MARWOPNET-SL for working collaboratively with her ministry in the formation of a task force on the UNSC Resolution 1325. She pledged her ministry's readiness to support any initiative and also provide leadership for the development of the national action plan. The deputy minister noted that in order for peace consolidation to effectively integrate, and gender equality and women's right to be upheld, there should be a direct participation of women in the peace process resolution. She said the UN-established peace building commissions in Sierra Leone and Burundi are currently benefiting as pilot countries.

"The Security Council has ensured that women participate in all levels of peace consolidation and gender equality," Mrs. Kandeh stated. WANEP national coordinator, Edward Jombla said women should be properly educated on the resolution. "They should see that the action plan works and people should understand the idea of the whole project, down to community level," he said. Mrs. Elizabeth Sam of GRADOC women's forum gave an overview why Resolution 1325 was adopted in October 31st 2000. According to her, the resolution was addressed on the suffering of women, peace building and policies that do not cover the welfare of women. She also gave a rundown on the prevention, protection and participation on the resolution, adding that much was not done when there was no resolution and even when it was adopted. Meanwhile, at a meeting held last Tuesday by the task force of WANMAR (a collaboration of WANEP and MARWOPNET organizations) at the conference room of the gender and children's affairs division, Youyi building, Dr. Nana Pratt said Resolution 1325 of the Security Council should be made known to all women in the country

She said what is in the resolution should be reviewed in readiness for reparation, adding that issues coming up would form part of the papers that would be presented at the regional consultation. Dr. Pratt further committed to supporting the government in activating its role on gender mainstreaming by involving the gender ministry and other line ministries. "We need active people who can send the message across the community," she maintained. At the meeting, members adopted a plan of action, which includes

lobbying for at least 30% representation for women in parliament and all political executive positions in political parties, and also appointment of women into key ministries and commissions. Members also resolved that there should be an alliance with men to ensure that women enjoy peace and security from a gender perspective, an independent court for rape victims, monitor the practice of rape by the community during the implementation of the resolution.

Resolution 1325 was unanimously adopted by the UN Security Council on 31st October 2000 under the presidency of Namibia, and it establishes the legitimacy of women's and gender issues in the domain of peace and security.

Southern Africa

**Zimbabwe: MDC Executive to Meet Friday Over Mugabe Violations: Lance Guma: 26 February 2009: SW Radio Africa (London)**

The National Executive of the MDC will meet Friday afternoon to discuss ongoing violations of the unity deal, that brought their party and ZANU PF into the shaky coalition government. On Tuesday Mugabe unilaterally announced the appointment of ministerial permanent secretaries without consulting the MDC. Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai and his Deputy Arthur Mutambara then convened a press conference Wednesday to declare the appointments null and void. On Thursday party spokesman Nelson Chamisa issued a statement saying the supreme decision making body of the MDC would meet to 'review the status and performance of the inclusive government, in relation to the party's expectations. The issues include the unilateral appointment of permanent secretaries, the irregular appointments of the Attorney-General and the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe Governor, the issue of provincial governors and the continued detention of MDC and civic activists on trumped-up charges.'

Mugabe continues to dare the MDC to walk out of the coalition government and on Thursday said Reserve Bank Governor Gideon Gono and Attorney General Johannes Tomana would not be removed from their jobs. 'I do not see any reason why those people should go and they will not go,' he stubbornly insisted. This is despite Gono presiding over one of the most corrupt and politically driven reigns at the central bank, while Tomana has been accused of willfully blocking the release of political prisoners by abusing the appeal process. The big surprise however was Mugabe revealing that the country will have a new constitution within the next 18 to 24 months, followed by elections. 'We are an interim arrangement; we are not a permanent inclusive government. Ahead of us is a whole constitutional process which requires that we address the issue of the constitution. We will then have an election thereafter, perhaps in about two years time,' Mugabe said. The ZANU PF leader sounded rather too self-assured for someone who lost the presidential elections to Tsvangirai in March last year.

MDC spokesman Nelson Chamisa however told Newsreel Mugabe's comments were nothing new. He said the life span of the coalition government was clearly set out as 2 years in the deal and they expected free and fair elections in that time. With Mugabe in



defiant mood, political prisoners still in detention, WOZA activists beaten and arrested, continuing farm invasions across the country and other violations, Tsvangirai's party has done nothing to suggest they wield any state power or have the stomach to walk out. The guarantors of the unity deal, SADC and the African Union, have kept a deathly silence over the violations. Limp statements from South African President Kgalema Motlanthe criticizing the arrest of Roy Bennet for example were blasted as half-hearted and not followed up with any pressure on Mugabe. Human rights academic Pedzisai Ruhanya told Newsreel that Tsvangirai has no power to do anything and was now simply an appendage of the ZANU PF government. He said the Prime Minister's lame duck status was evidenced by his complaints through the media, instead of being able to change things through his office. He compared the MDC to a wife in an abusive marriage who keeps saying, 'things will get better.' He said the earlier the MDC realize they are being used the better, and they should walk out.

Ruhanya said the history of the interaction between the two parties shows that Mugabe always gets his way. He said the ministries that were unilaterally grabbed and gazetted by Mugabe last year, are the ones which were eventually adopted anyway. He argued the same will happen with the appointment of permanent secretaries, the Attorney General, the Reserve Bank and other appointments. Defending the MDC Chamisa said the decisions they had to make were difficult ones and they understood the frustrations faced by their party supporters. He however said they had several options to respond to Mugabe's maneuvers.

**Zimbabwe: Woza Activists Remain in Custody: Alex Bell: 26 February 2009: SW Radio Africa (London)**

Five activists from the pressure group, Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) are still being kept behind bars after they were arrested during a peaceful and legal demonstration in Harare on Wednesday.

The four women and one man were part a 400 strong group that marched to the government buildings in the capital for an official meeting with the new Education Minister, David Coltart. However, the group was violently set upon by riot police, who, true to form, used brutal force to disperse the peaceful group. The five activists that were arrested were all assaulted, while another nine were treated for injuries inflicted at the hands of the riot police. According to a WOZA statement released on Thursday, charges against the arrested group have not yet been detailed, although an investigations docket has been filed with the Law and Order department. The state now has until Friday morning to produce a charge sheet, as the 48 hours allowed by law to keep the group in custody will expire at 10:30am Friday. Meanwhile, WOZA leaders, Jenni Williams and Magodonga Mahlangu both appeared in the Bulawayo Magistrate's Court on Thursday on charges of 'disturbing the peace'. The pair was arrested last October during another peaceful demonstration urging that the crippling food shortages in the country be declared a national emergency. Their case has once again been postponed to next week and it's expected the High Court will fast track the case, resulting in the trial being forced

through the system. WOZA already has a case from 2004 still waiting for a ruling in the High Court.

### **Zimbabwe: Hardliners Frustrating Release of Detainees:25 February 2009:IRIN.**

Harare — The Zimbabwe Attorney-General's office is frustrating an agreement reached between President Robert Mugabe and Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai for the release of political activists.

"President Mugabe and myself last week agreed that all political detainees who have been formally charged with a crime should be released on bail, and that those who have not been charged should be released unconditionally," Tsvangirai said at a press briefing in the capital, Harare, on 25 February. "The Attorney General's office is wilfully obstructing the release of all detainees by abusing the appeal process, and that must stop forthwith." About 30 activists have been detained for allegedly receiving military training in neighbouring Botswana, which has long been critical of Mugabe and his ZANU-PF government. The charge has been strongly denied by the government of President Ian Khama.

The ZANU-PF hardliners are said to be security chiefs and central bank officials, who fear that the emergence of a transparent government could reveal crimes they have committed.

Roy Bennett, Zimbabwe's deputy agriculture minister designate and treasurer-general of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), remains incarcerated on charges of arms possession and banditry, despite being granted US\$2,000 bail by the High Court in Harare on 24 February. The judge also ordered the former white commercial farmer to surrender travel documents and imposed stringent reporting conditions, after receiving assurances from Tsvangirai that he would ensure Bennett did not abscond from Zimbabwe. The progress of the unity government - which came into force with the inauguration of Tsvangirai as prime minister on 11 February, after a power-sharing agreement was signed on 15 September 2008 - has been far from smooth. At the press briefing Tsvangirai also called for the continued farm invasions by ZANU-PF supporters to cease, and said Mugabe's unilateral appointments of Gideon Gono as central bank governor, and Gen Johannes Tomana as attorney-general, needed to be revisited, as these were contrary to the power-sharing agreement.

The re-appointment by ZANU-PF of the majority of ministerial permanent secretaries without consultation was also contrary to the terms of the deal. "The announcement of permanent secretaries has no force of law, and is therefore null and void," Tsvangirai said.

**Southern Africa Must Develop Laws On Human Trafficking – UN: Professor Ndawonde:25 February 2009:BuaNews (Tshwane)**

Pretoria — The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has called on southern African states to develop comprehensive legislation on human trafficking. Lucas Duncan of the UNODC Southern Africa Regional Office said human trafficking had become a major global concern affecting all regions in the world, including southern Africa.

Mozambique is the only country in the region which has wide-ranging legislation dealing specifically with trafficking in persons, said Mr Duncan, adding that until countries harmonized their legislation, there was nothing they could do to criminalize this offence. Mr Duncan was speaking at the launch of the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons in Pretoria on Wednesday.

According to the report, although some countries in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) have laws related to human trafficking, the legislation does not criminalize all or most of the forms of this activity. These laws also do not define trafficking in persons.

The report also revealed that not a single conviction was recorded for trafficking in persons in the entire region. This could be blamed on the low response to the crisis. In response to these shortcomings, the UNODC Southern Africa Regional Office has established a partnership with SADC in providing technical assistance to regional states. Mr Duncan said these partnerships will strengthen the technical and legal capacity of the national competent authorities in ratifying and implementing the United Nations Trafficking in Persons Protocol. South Africa has signed and ratified the UN Convention Against Trans-National Organised Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Person, especially Women and Children, also known as the Palermo Protocol, which came into operation on 29 September 2003 and 25 December 2003, respectively.

The Palermo Protocol obliges member states to criminalise trafficking in persons, investigate and prosecute traffickers, as well as undertake border control measures. In addition, each country which accedes to the protocol has to provide measures to protect and assist victims, train law enforcement and border officials, inform and educate victims, potential victims and the general public. The National Prosecuting Authority's (NPA) Sexual Offences and Community Affairs (SOCA) Unit has been mandated with the responsibility to implement South Africa's National Strategy on the emerging crime of Human Trafficking.

In August last year, the NPA said the unit, together with partners in government and civil society, had spearheaded the establishment of an inter-sectoral task team to commence a process of co-ordination and refinement of activities towards the development of a multi-sectoral and comprehensive strategy to counter human trafficking.

This strategy is expected to lead to the adoption of a National Action Plan as required by the Palermo Protocol. The Task Team developed a strategy which aims to deepen knowledge and understanding of trafficking in South Africa, establish a co-operation and coordination structure and develop a prevention strategy and public education and awareness programmes. South Africa has also been working closely with the South African Law Reform Commission (SALRC) to beef up measures against human trafficking. The 2008 Report on Trafficking in Persons by SALRC revealed that South Africa was regarded as a destination, transit and country of origin of victims of human trafficking operations between developing and developed countries. The SALRC embarked on various initiatives such as the establishment of a Human Trafficking Desk which is responsible for coordinating all human trafficking issues received from the provinces and also advice head of the Organised Crime Unit on matters relating to the crime.

There are various factors which lead to human trafficking, these include poverty, war, lack of economic opportunities, natural disasters and political instability. Human trafficking involves the trading of persons as a commodity by various means and is often connected to organized crime, sexual exploitation and forced labour. According to UNODC's report worldwide almost 20 percent of all trafficking victims are children. Children are targeted because of their innocence and used for begging, prostitution, paedophilia, or child pornography. Others are sold as child brides or camel jockeys.

**Zimbabwe: Bennett Case Continued in High Court On Friday: Violet Gonda: 27 January 2009: SW Radio Africa (London).**

Beatrice Mtetwa, the lawyer representing jailed MDC politician Roy Bennett, was in the High Court on Friday challenging the State's decision to appeal against the granting of his bail. On Tuesday High Court Judge Tedious Karwi granted the Deputy Agriculture Minister designate bail, but he remains in a Mutare prison after the State opposed this. Mtetwa was back in the courts Friday challenging the decision by the Attorney General's office, saying they did not follow proper procedure. The defence team argues that the AG's office had appealed, without seeking permission from the High Court judge. Apparently the State should have first sought permission from the judge to appeal against the granting of bail. One of Bennett's lawyers Trust Maanda said the State has seven days to apply for this permission.

Bennett was arrested two weeks ago at Charles Prince airport, on his way to South Africa where he had been living in exile since 2006. He is being charged with the illegal possession of firearms for purposes of committing banditry, terrorism, insurgency and sabotage. He denies these charges and says he is being politically persecuted. Meanwhile, Pishai Muchauraya the MDC spokesperson for Manicaland Province and MP for Makoni South, who has been visiting Bennett regularly in prison, said the official is still in good spirits despite the appalling and overcrowded conditions at the prison in Mutare. He said Bennett is being held in the D-Class section of the jail that houses dangerous criminals.

Muchauraya said senior prison officers from as far as Masvingo have been deployed to Mutare because Bennett is being viewed as a 'hardcore criminal.' The MP said the prison conditions for all inmates are disturbing. The remand prison has a capacity of about 160 inmates but is said to be currently holding at least 300. Muchauraya said food is very scarce and six inmates have this week died in just two days because of starvation.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Kenya: Statement from Kofi Annan on Parliament's Rejection of Special Tribunal Bill: 6 February 2009: PAMBAZUKA.**

*The Chair of the Panel of Eminent African Personalities, His Excellency **Kofi Annan**, today [24 February] warned that further delays in establishing a tribunal to try those accused of post-election violence committed in Kenya in 2008 could have grave consequences for the country's reform agenda, upon which Kenya's stability and prosperity depend.*

In letters to President Mwai Kibaki and Prime Minister Raila Odinga delivered on Tuesday 24 February, Mr Annan said that failure by the Kenyan government and parliament to create a Special Tribunal would 'constitute a major setback in the fight against impunity and may threaten the whole reform agenda in Kenya'.

'The Panel of Eminent African Personalities remains of the firm conviction that a Kenyan-owned and Kenyan-led process would be the most beneficial to the Kenyan people', said Mr Annan, adding that 'We believe that this is a sentiment shared by a great many of your compatriots.' Mr Annan said the panel welcomed promised efforts by the leaders to re-engage parliament to ensure the enactment of the necessary legislation for the establishment of the Special Tribunal. 'It is the panel's view that such an effort should be encouraged and carried out within the shortest possible timeframe.'

Mr Annan made it clear, however, that recourse to the International Criminal Court will be taken if the Special Tribunal is not established within a reasonable period of time. Mr Annan also stressed the need to ensure that legislation for the Special Tribunal meets international legal standards and that it be broadly debated with all sectors of society in order to bring credibility to the process. Mr Annan reaffirmed the panel's commitment to remain engaged and assist Kenya as it works towards the important objectives of addressing impunity, and fostering reconciliation and long-term reform.

**Kenya: Police Reform Key to Ending Impunity - UN Expert: 25 February 2009: IRIN.**

Nairobi — Radical surgery of Kenya's police force is necessary to end "systematic, widespread and carefully planned" extrajudicial killings in the country, a UN expert said on 25 February. The reforms should include sacking the police commissioner and the resignation of the attorney-general.

"The Kenyan police are a law unto themselves and they kill often with impunity," Philip Alston, the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, arbitrary or summary executions, said in a preliminary report at the end of a fact-finding mission. The government had invited Alston to investigate allegations of unlawful killings by the police, violence in the western Mt Elgon district and murders during the post-election violence in early 2008.

"It is clear from the many interviews I conducted that the police are free to kill at will," he said. "Sometimes they do so for reasons of a private or personal nature. Sometimes they kill in the context of extortion, or of a ransom demand. Often they kill in the name of crime control, but in circumstances where they could readily make an arrest." There was also compelling evidence that police death squads operated, primarily in Nairobi and Central Province, with the explicit mandate to exterminate suspected Mungiki (an outlawed sect) members. Outlining 11 preliminary recommendations, which he said would be given in a final report to President Mwai Kibaki as well as the UN, Alston said the president should publicly acknowledge the widespread problem of extrajudicial executions and commit to systematic reform. "Effective leadership on this issue can only come from the very top, and sweeping reforms to the policing sector should begin with the immediate dismissal of the Police Commissioner," Alston said. "Given his role in encouraging the impunity that exists in Kenya, the Attorney-General should resign so that the integrity of the office can be restored."

### **Mt Elgon commission**

On Mt Elgon, Alston said the government should immediately set up an independent commission because there was compelling evidence the police and the military committed torture and extrajudicial executions against civilians during their 2008 operation to flush out the Sabaot Land Defence Force (SLDF) militia. "For two years, the SLDF militia terrorised the population and the government did far too little," he said. "And when the government did finally act, they responded with their own form of terror and brutality, killing over 200 people." Calling for a special tribunal to ensure that Kenya did not descend into chaos during the 2012 elections, Alston urged the media, civil society and international community to take a firm line on its establishment. "At the same time, this is an ideal case for the ICC [International Criminal Court at The Hague] to urgently take up," Alston said. Police spokesman Eric Kiraithe told IRIN the force gave Alston "all the documents within our resources but he expected too much".

A comprehensive response to Alston's findings would be made by the government, "but from the point of view of the police, we welcome his suggestions that a police officer from another country be invited to vet the internal operations of the force". Contrary to claims that no action had been taken, some 206 police officers had been prosecuted between 2005 and 2008 for various offences, Kiraithe said. Some 667 officers had been dismissed during the same period for reasons "including criminal offences". He said the force had offered Alston a chance to peruse some of its files, "but he declined". Kiraithe dismissed the existence of police death squads as "totally false". A day earlier, the Kenya National Commission of Human Rights released details of a report it issued in 2008. The Cry of Blood gives accounts of alleged executions and disappearances of suspected

Mungiki members. The commission also released a video recording in which a police officer, who was killed by unknown persons in October 2008, claims he witnessed police killings of at least 58 people suspected to be Mungiki members.

**Uganda: Kampala Faces Odhiambo Dilemma: Bill Oketch, Patrick Okino and Samuel Okiror Egadu in Gulu: 29 January 2009: Institute for War & Peace Reporting (London).**

Lira — *If the rebel leader surrenders will he be tried in Uganda or sent to the ICC?*

The reported pending defection and surrender of deputy commander of the rebel Lord's Resistance Army, LRA, Okot Odhiambo, could put Uganda at odds with the International Criminal Court, ICC, which wants to try him for war crimes, say observers. The commander is reportedly negotiating the terms of his defection and surrender along with some 45 of his men and a handful of captives. Odhiambo, along with LRA leader Joseph Kony and another deputy commander, Dominic Ongwen, are wanted by the ICC in The Hague for war crimes and crimes against humanity. Kony alone faces 33 counts. Uganda asked the ICC for help in dealing with Kony and the LRA in late 2003, and after extensive investigation, issued indictments against Kony and four other commanders in 2005. Two of the five are now presumed dead. However, in a draft peace deal with the LRA which Kony has repeatedly failed to sign Uganda has agreed to put the rebel commanders on trial before a special Ugandan court, which has not yet been established. Odhiambo, who was reportedly the mastermind behind some of the LRA's most bloody massacres, is demanding an assurance that he won't be sent to the ICC. Instead, he wants an amnesty, which has already been granted to thousands of former LRA fighters.

His offer to surrender comes after he was wounded in clashes with Ugandan forces - now in northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo, DRC - which were seeking to destroy the LRA. "The issue of Odhiambo surrendering is very positive and welcome," Henry Okello Oryem, Uganda's state minister for international relations, told IWPR. Okello, however, refused to discuss the matter of Odhiambo's ICC indictment until the suspect was in custody. "Once he hands himself, then we shall deal with all issues regarding the International Criminal Court indictments and the amnesty that he is demanding," said Okello.

"We can't begin talking about ICC or amnesty when the bird [Odhiambo] is still in the bush. We shall discuss about ICC [and] amnesty when we have the bird in our hands." The ICC, which has not commented on Odhiambo's defection, has asked Uganda to outline its position on its negotiated peace agreement with the LRA. Meanwhile, other top officials have indicated that Uganda plans to try Odhiambo. Stephen Kagoda of the internal affairs ministry, who helped negotiate the peace deal, insisted that Odhiambo would face trial in the country - as was outlined in the agreement. "The agreement we signed in Juba is clear," Kagoda told the New Vision newspaper in Kampala. "It stated that those accused would face the [national] courts and we stand by that." Military

spokesman Major Felise Kulaigye said it was too early to comment on whether the indicted LRA commanders would be tried in Uganda or The Hague.

The Ugandan military, which first struck at Kony's camps in the DRC's Garamba National Park on December 14, was encouraged by the pending surrender, said Kulaigye. "It's a positive step [towards rescuing] innocent people who are still in the hands of the LRA," said Kulaigye. "As far as the UPDF (Uganda People's Defence Force) is concerned, we cannot continue to coexist with tigers in Garamba." Since the attack, the LRA has gone on a bloody rampage in the DRC, killing an estimated 700 to 800 people. One hundred villagers were killed in the most recent incident some 10 days ago, according to the United Nations.

The latest killing spree is similar to attacks by the LRA on northern Uganda during the civil war of the last 20 years, and has prompted many Ugandans to call for Odhiambo to be turned over to the ICC. "This is a time for accountability," said Sam Odongo, a victim of LRA war in Oyam, northwest of Lira. "The government should surrender any top commanders of the LRA to the ICC. We don't want to hear [the] story that the rebels [have been] arrested and killed before [they] admit their guilt and then pay compensation for our lost dear ones."

Patience Aber of Gulu agreed. "I don't support this issue of forgiving the LRA. The indicted LRA commanders have to face the [ICC] for the atrocities and crimes they committed in northern Uganda for the past two decades," said Aber. "He [Odhiambo] has to go to The Hague and face the court. He must answer for all the people he murdered." Those in the north belonging to Kony's ethnic Acholi group were opposed to Odhiambo being sent to The Hague. "If [Odhiambo] surrenders, he should not be handed to ICC," said Emmanuel Mwaka Lukutumoi, spokesman for the Acholi Cultural Institution.

"If he is handed to The Hague for trials, this will scare other top LRA commanders who want to come out of the bush and surrender." Some in the region thought Odhiambo's surrender could help restore peace. "We are very sure of our security now because Odhiambo was the brains behind the massive killings in Abia, Barlonyo and Amononeno where nearly 500 people lost their lives," said Moses Opio, who lost two children to the LRA. "We hope the arrest of Odhiambo will bring peace and justice to northern Ugandans," said David Livingstone Okwir, an elder who also lost two of his children in rebel attacks. Anthony Okello, a resident of the Apac district, said Odhiambo's possible surrender meant that the LRA's days were numbered. "We are tired of [Kony]. We want him killed if he [surrenders] like his deputy," Okello told IWPR.

*Bill Oketch, Patrick Okino, and Samuel Okiror Egadu are IWPR-trained reporters.*

**Uganda: Lira Muslims Commend Council Over New Road: B. Odongo and R. Aduk  
:24 February 2009: THE NEW VISION.**



Kampala — MUSLIMS in Lira have commended municipal authorities for razing a building to open an access road to Lango Quaran Primary School and mosque."We have had Dhua prayers over this matter and today Allah has done it," said Rashid Yusuf Acup Ouni, the secretary to the district khadi, Sheik Yusuf Angiro Mpira."Muslims now expect prolific performance from the school children," Acup said.Vincent Otaka, the municipal secretary for works, said the owner of the destroyed building had been allowed to put up a temporary structure, that would be removed any time the municipal council intended to implement development plans.The structure was demolished after the owner ignored a notice to move.Amunoni Wesamoyo, a resident whose house was demolished, said the implementers neglected what was on the map and vandalised other property including mango trees.

Central Africa

**Rwanda: Catholic Priest Sentenced to 25 Years for Genocide: ashegu Muramira:28 February 2009:THE NEW TIMES.**

Arusha — The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) yesterday sentenced Emmanuel Rukundo, a Catholic priest accused of Genocide, to twenty five years in prison.Trial Chamber II of the ICTR composed of Judges Joseph Asoka Nihal de Silva, Taghrid Hikmet and Seon Ki Park, found Rukundo guilty of Genocide, murder as a crime against humanity and extermination.He is the second Catholic Priest found guilty by the court. Athanase Rukundo was sentenced to life in prison last year, while Hormisdas Nsengimana is still on trial.Dressed in his full priesthood attire, the nonchalant Rukundo was called to the dock by the presiding judge, from where he was sentenced."Considering all the relevant circumstances and having ensured that the accused is not being punished twice for the same offence, the chamber finds Emmanuel Rukundo guilty of Genocide, murder and extermination as a crime against humanity, to a single sentence of 25 years of imprisonment," Judge Silva read from the verdict.

The Chamber found the priest guilty of having participated in the killings of Tutsis, together with former Rwandan soldiers, at St. Leon Minor Seminary in the Southern Province.He was also convicted for participating in the killing of a lady identified as Rudahunga and well as severely beating and injuring her two children.The chamber also averred that prosecution had proven beyond reasonable doubt that Rukundo was present during the commission of the crime and the soldiers acted under his authority.A former military chaplain, Rukundo was also found guilty of having sexually assaulted a Tutsi girl at the St. Leon Seminary, an issue the chamber considered as a highly aggravating factor saying the priest abused his moral authority."As an educated person, the priest should have appreciated the dignity and value of human life and the need for a peaceful co-existence between communities," Judge Joseph Asoka Nihal de Silva said.Speaking to The New Times shortly after the sentence, ICTR Prosecutor Justice Bubacar Jallow said the prosecution was particularly happy with the findings, but could not readily confirm if they would appeal against the sentence."We have found the findings on sexual violation being a very important decision in that respect particularly. We shall not certainly appeal against the findings, we need to look at the judgment and review and analyze it," he said.

However, senior legal experts at the tribunal criticized the court's judgment saying that since the priest was found guilty of Genocide, he should have been sentenced to life in prison. In his final submissions last year, prosecutor William Egbe had requested for the priest to be given a life sentence arguing that he deserved no lesser punishment. The chamber finally ruled that Rukundo, who was arrested in July 2001, shall receive credit for the time he has served at the UN Detention facility as from. The priest will remain in the custody of the tribunal pending a possible appeal or transfer to the State where he will complete his sentence.

**Congo-Kinshasa: Rwandan Rebel Attacks Lead to More Displacement in East, UN Says: 24 February 2009: UN NEWS SERVICE.**

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said today it continues to be extremely worried about rising violence against civilians in the eastern Congolese province of North Kivu, where attacks by Rwandan Hutu rebels have sparked new displacement. UNHCR spokesperson Ron Redmond told a news conference in Geneva that thousands have been uprooted since 13 February, when the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) began carrying out attacks in Masisi, Lubero and Walikale areas in North Kivu, in the strife-torn eastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

"Using firearms and bush knives, the FDLR has attacked Kipopo, Remeka and Kamuobe near Masisi and Kanyatsi and Busigho near Lubero, killing civilians and raping women," Mr. Redmond reported. "Local authorities have informed us that some 3,000 people have been internally displaced in Remeka village, some 20 kilometres south of Masisi, following a recent FDLR attack. Some of these internally displaced people are staying in churches and schools and others have taken shelter at several UNHCR-assisted sites around the town of Masisi." He added that a joint UN team is heading out today to Kitanga, on the outskirts of Masisi, to monitor and assess the needs of the newly displaced.

In addition, there are also growing fears of reprisal attacks by the FDLR - composed mainly of Rwandan Hutus who arrived in the DRC in the wake of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda - against civilians suspected of collaborating with the joint DRC-Rwanda military operation against the rebel group that began in late January. The UN peacekeeping mission in DRC (MONUC) last week condemned the "cowardly terror tactics" employed by the FDLR. The mission has boosted its efforts to protect and reassure threatened populations, mostly in North Kivu province where some 250,000 civilians have been uprooted by fighting between Hutu groups, a mainly Tutsi militia known as the CNDP, the Government army and others since August.

**Rwanda: Gacaca - 54 Genocide-Accused On the Run to Face One Single Trial in Absentia: 18 February 2009: [Hirondelle News Agency](#) (Lausanne)**

The semi-traditional Gacaca Court of Cyivugiza Sector, Kigali, is scheduled to start on 1 March one single trial in absentia of 54 alleged authors of the genocide perpetrated

against Tutsis from April to July 1994, reports Hirondele Agency."All these people have an unknown residence; none presented themselves despite notifications posted for a prolonged period in public buildings", according to Agrees Nsengiyumva, a panel member of the court of Cyivugiza.

According to the judge, the trial, which should have started last Sunday, was deferred because of logistical reasons reasons, which he did not wanted to divulge details. On the list for the trial include three women and a former legislator, Jean Rwabukwisi. It is expected that more than 200 prosecution witnesses be called to the stand. The Gacaca trials are scheduled to close in June, but the government has assured that, to avoid any impunity, the traditional courts would continue try cases which may surface afterwards. The Gacaca courts are presided not by professional judges, but by people who are considered of high esteem in the society.

**Congo-Kinshasa: Demobbed Child Soldiers Struggle to Adjust to Civilian Life: Jacques Kahorha: 17 February 2009: Institute for War & Peace Reporting (London)**

Goma — *Some are reluctant to return home because they fear falling victim to revenge attacks.*

Many children are among the militiamen being demobilised in Congo's North Kivu province, putting a strain on agencies trying to reintegrate them into their former communities.

The demobilisation in the east of the country is gathering pace as a tentative peace deal agreed last month shows signs of holding. Rebel chief and International Criminal Court, ICC, fugitive Bosco Ntaganda agreed in January to end the fighting that has created a humanitarian emergency in the east and said he would integrate his CNDP troops into the national army. Other rebel groups followed suit and have been emerging from the forest to join Congo's army. More than 430 fighters, including 20 children, were recently demobbed at a stadium in Nyanzale, 100 kilometres west of Goma in Rutshuru territory. Most were dressed in civilian clothes and a few were carrying weapons. "We were in the jungle and heard that we should now be under the command of the president of [Congo]," said Boniface Bafakururimi, a colonel in the Mongol Mai Mai group. "We also heard the CNDP, the PARECO and other Mai Mai armed groups had left the jungle. That is the reason why we also decided to leave the forest." The adults will be incorporated into Congo's army, but Rutshuru district commander Colonel Smith Gihanga told the children at Nyanzale that they would have to be demobilised. "We cannot integrate children, because our country signed a convention on the rights of children," Gihanga said. A spokesperson for the United Nations Mission in the DRC, known by its French acronym MONUC, said that the child soldiers would be taken by its child protection section and given to the UN children's agency UNICEF and other agencies to begin their reintegration into civilian life. "Anywhere armed groups are gathering ... our teams are present to separate children from other combatants," said Sylvie van den Wildenberg, the MONUC spokeswoman in North Kivu, adding 315 have been demobilised in recent

days. The aid agency Caritas told IWPR that this has been the largest demobilisation in recent years. "The warlords have no more interest in keeping them. That is the reason why they are getting them out of the jungle and presenting them publicly," said Juvenal Munubo Mubi who works on a Caritas child soldier demobilisation and reintegration project. "One challenge today is that there are so many children who are separated from armed groups but there are fewer infrastructures to welcome them." The children spend several weeks in a transit and orientation centre where they are taught to readjust to civilian life. "When they come from the armed groups, they consider any civilian as inferior. At this stage, it is difficult to send them home directly. We have to teach them how to live in the community," said a staff member at a Goma-based transit centre. Helping to prepare families and communities is also part of the process of reintegration. Counselors from the centres visit the children's families and their villages before they are taken home. "We have to make sure that the community is ready to welcome them," Munubo Mubi said. He also encourages the children to return to school or take vocational training.

In reality, reintegration is often hugely difficult, particularly for the children who have committed crimes in the villages of North Kivu. "I'm afraid to go back home. I could be killed by the members of the local community," said a 20-year-old former child soldier who doesn't want to leave the Goma transit centre. He said he shot and killed a child during an incident at a school and was involved in the killings of 10 people in the village of Karuba, about 50 km from Goma. "[They] were hiding themselves in the bush. My friends and I shot them. They died," he said. Often unwelcome back home, the children who've fought in North Kivu's bitter conflicts are then easy targets for any armed groups trying to re-recruit those for whom civilian life doesn't work out. Several youngsters interviewed by IWPR say they prefer a military life. "I would like to continue working in the army, but as the authorities have decided to demobilise us, I have to leave the army," said Habamugisha, a 15-year-old holding a gun. Some children like Sore pretend to be 18 so they will be accepted by the armed forces. "I'm going to continue serving my country in the army. I like the army, because I have to fight to protect our country," he said. Crimes against Congolese children feature in the ICC's first-ever case. Militia leader Thomas Lubanga is currently on trial in The Hague on charges of conscripting children to fight in the Bunia conflict. *Jacques Kahorha is an IWPR reporter in Goma.*

## 17. REFUGEES, IDPs AND MIGRATION

West Africa

**Nigeria: Country Has 10,000 Refugees: Osunde Adesuwa:23 February 2009:Leadership (Abuja).**

The chairman of the House Committee on Human Rights, Hon Beni Lar has disclosed that the number of refugees and internally displaced persons in Nigeria has risen from 4,500 to almost 10, 000 people. While briefing newsmen over the weekend, the chairman said there has also been a record increase in the incidence of rape in the country.

She explained that the committee is currently working with the ministry of Interior to stem the growth in the number of refugees which she attributed to the influx of people from neighbouring countries such as Bakassi region and other countries who are faced with crises. "We have an increase of refugees in Nigeria coming from Cameroun, from Amana which is towards Taraba State area; we have internally displaced persons as a result of an increase in crisis both internal and external; Bakassi and all those places. The lawmaker stressed that the increase is a big challenge for the National Refugee Commission of Nigeria which suffers already from low funding but added that her committee and relevant stake holders are working to not only check the situation but also reduce the number of refugees.

"Nigeria has close to 10000 refugees and internally displaced persons as I speak. That is a very huge problem and also the same problem of inadequate funding. "What we are trying to do is to reduce the issue of camps because it is very expensive for government to maintain refugee camps. What we are trying to do is send back those who are not Nigerians and those who are Nigerians we try to reintegrate them into society," she said.

Responding to questions on the rise in rape cases across the country, the lawmaker commended the 16 states that have passed the Child Rights Act and revealed that her Committee is working to ensure effective enforcement and coordination of the Act as part of its mandate to "curb violence against women and so many other issues of the violation of their rights". She added that "state governments have to do more if there must be tangible results on the issue of rape which has unfortunately not been addressed sufficiently" and that empowering people at the state level is more important than at the federal level. "The state level is where the people are. The Police at the state level and the Human Rights Commission at the state level and Legal Aid Council at the state level, they are the proper people that ought to be working on this."

She also assured that her committee was working in conjunction with the ministry of Interior to reduce the number of inmates in Nigerian prisons as well as provide reform for them so that they can live meaningful lives when they leave prison. "On that, we are working closely with the committee on Interior to ensure that our prisons are not only decongested but to ensure that when the prisoners are there, they are actually reformed because we have about 300% over crowding of prisons. "So, we need to not only build more prisons but we need to also reform because a prisoner is supposed to be reformed when he is in prison and right now we don't have sufficient programmes for this," she lamented. In the same vein, the chairman also informed the press that the report on the People living with disability Act is ready for consideration by the House. If approved, the bill which states a transition period of five also seeks that the federal government should provide devices such as brail or any form of device that would be of help to the kind of disability the person, provide free education for people with disability from primary to secondary school levels and amend the building code to make public buildings accessible to people with disabilities. Speaking on the need for more funding for the Human Rights agencies in Nigeria, the lawmaker stressed that "Human Rights education should be made compulsory in schools so that people will be aware that there is a commission to protect

their rights and rather than take laws into their hands, they should take the issues where they can be addressed.

'Like the crisis that just occurred in my state (Jos). The people didn't know where to lodge their grievances on the breach of their political right so they took up arms in protest.'

Southern Africa

**South Africa: Man Faces Seven Counts of Murder:25 February 2009:CAPE ARGUS.**

A fire that killed seven Zimbabweans near Worcester at the weekend was intentionally lit and a 26-year-old man is expected to appear in the De Doorns Magistrate's Court today on murder charges. An eyewitness, who managed to escape the blaze in the Stofland informal settlement, told police on Tuesday that he had seen a man unknown to him set the shack alight, said police spokesperson Captain Marie Louw. Police initially opened an inquest docket, but on Tuesday afternoon the charges were changed to seven counts of murder. It was later established that the suspect is also a Stofland resident and was hitchhiking from De Doorn to Robertson.

He was spotted and arrested on the Worcester road to Robertson. The names of the dead, aged between 23 and 40, have not yet been released. Meanwhile, residents of the Hex River Valley claim they are being terrorised by youngsters, who they say are responsible for the fire. They allege that on Saturday night the youngsters surrounded the shack, armed with knobkieries and sticks. They then attacked the occupants, locked them in the shack and left them to die in the fire. Nine people managed to escape, three of whom are in police protective custody. Police have ruled out xenophobia as the motive behind the attack.

**South Africa: Civil Society Claims UN 'Mishandled' Refugee Crisis: Wilson Johwa: 23 February 2009: BUSINESS DAY.**

Johannesburg — AN INQUIRY has blamed misunderstandings over the role of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for charges that its South African office mishandled the humanitarian crisis that resulted from last year's wave of xenophobic violence. The investigation by the UN says many of the concerns listed in a 25-page formal complaint by South African civil society organisations resulted from misconceptions of both the scope of the UNHCR's mandate as well as its failure to address the misunderstandings.

A number of civic society groups laid a strongly-worded complaint with the UNHCR's head office in Geneva in October, saying the Pretoria office had "remained uncooperative and isolated" from requests for assistance and information in the aftermath of the attacks on foreigners. Among the complainants was the South African Council of Churches whose general secretary, Eddie Makue, last week said they were looking to the UNHCR

to clarify what exactly its role is. "We have very clear expectations on what we think the UNHCR could be doing to bring relief to victims of displacement," he said.

Other petitioners were the Black Sash, the Aids Law Project, the Treatment Action Campaign, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, the Jewish Community Volunteer Action Group and Sonke Gender Justice Network. Their letter alleged the UNHCR had failed to advocate for the rights of refugees and migrants "in the face of a South African government that has become increasingly ignorant, abusive and careless under both South African and international law".

The letter, copied to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, led to an "ad hoc inquiry" whose report was circulated to stakeholders in SA this month. The report acknowledged that the UNHCR's Pretoria office could have handled the crisis better, particularly through improved communication on the limitations of its mandate and its resource shortcomings. The four-member investigation panel also questioned why the Pretoria office had not formally activated a "cluster approach". This would have led to a broadening of the UN's capacity in responding to the crisis. However, it suggested that the quality of the UNHCR's response was "conditioned" by the response of the UN country team whose focus was development activities rather than humanitarian work. "Governmental capacity and sovereignty is high, and the UN's role is largely advisory," it said. The Pretoria office's support of the government-led response was perceived as support for government policies which many civic groups deemed inappropriate. The panel believed the office "should have conducted a more public advocacy role with the government with regard to the lengthy waits for asylum seekers for a decision on their determination claims".

Other charges were that the UNHCR hotline went unanswered while the office and its staff were not reachable after hours. "It supported the consolidation of intolerable camps and provided little or no meaningful oversight over the rapid status determination process," the complainants argued. Several temporary shelters were opened in Gauteng and Western Cape soon after last May's violence. These were closed weeks later. In Gauteng, only one of them still exists. The camp in Pretoria is the subject of ongoing discussion to determine whether the refugees there should be resettled, re-integrated or repatriated.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Somalia: Over 40,000 Displaced Return to Capital Despite Clashes, Says UN Agency: 27 February 2009; UN NEWS SERVICE.**

Geneva — Although the Somali capital is witnessing some of the worst clashes in months, more than 40,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) have returned to Mogadishu in the last six weeks, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR) reported today. The violence has led to civilian casualties and the agency is currently assessing the scale of displacement caused by this latest round of fighting, spokesperson William Spindler told reporters in Geneva. "UNHCR is not encouraging

returns to Mogadishu at this juncture, as the security situation is volatile and the conditions are certainly not conducive," he said, noting that there is limited access to basic services and very few international aid agencies on the ground due to the violence.

"Nevertheless, we are preparing to help returnees or those who wish to return in the near future, in the hope that the security situation will improve," Mr. Spindler said. There are some 1.3 million Somalis uprooted within their own country, while last year alone, 100,000 people fled to neighbouring Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Yemen, and the total number of Somali refugees in asylum countries numbers nearly 450,000. The majority of the IDPs who have recently returned to Mogadishu have come from the southern and central regions, which have faced a combination of renewed conflict and severe drought.

Many are returning as complete families, while some are heads of households who have left their relatives behind in camps who have gone to the capital to check on their properties. The returnees are going back to neighbourhoods in northern Mogadishu that are virtually empty after two years of conflict. Somalia, which has been beset by factional fighting and has not had a functioning central government since 1991, witnessed several encouraging developments over the past month, including the election of the country's new President and the creation of an enlarged Parliament.

**Sudan: Car Accident Kills 23 Somalis: 26 February 2009: Shabelle Media Network (Mogadishu).**

**Somalia** — At least 25 people 23 of them Somalis died and 80 others injured in a car accident in the Sahara desert between Sudan and Libya, witnesses said on Thursday. The people were all Somali and Ethiopian immigrants traveling illegally to Libya to migrate boats to Europe. Many Somalis travel in the Sahara desert via Sudan and Libya to Europe. Their illegal boats capsize in the sea which brings disaster.

Hudeyfi Abdulle, one of the immigrants told Shabelle radio the car overturned three times and the driver was drunk. The United Nations said Tuesday smugglers carrying a boatload of migrants forced their passengers to jump overboard in deep water off the coast of Yemen, causing up to 17 to drown. The 52 Somali and Ethiopian passengers in one of seven boats crossing the Gulf of Aden were made to jump after the smugglers spotted police and refused to sail closer to shore, the U.N's refugee agency UNHCR said in a statement.

It said 35 people made it to land, six drowned and 11 others were missing presumed dead. Almost 10,000 people have made the perilous journey across the Gulf of Aden to Yemen this year. Forty-seven people have died, with 23 bodies buried and 24 missing at sea, the UNHCR said. Last year, more than 50,000 people crossed the gulf into Yemen. Many are fleeing the war in Somalia, but recent months have seen an increase in the number of refugees from Ethiopia.

**Sudan: North Darfur Camp Hosting Over 15,000 People Uprooted By Recent Clashes – UN: 25 February 2009: UN NEWS SERVICE.**



Over 15,000 people have sought safety in the Zam Zam camp in North Darfur after fleeing the latest outburst of violence in the South Darfur region of Sudan, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported today. OCHA is concerned that with more people arriving each day, the large influx of internally displaced persons (IDPs) is putting a strain on the provision of water to camp residents.

The fighting which broke out last month around Muhajeria and Shearia in South Darfur between Government troops and other armed groups against the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) exposed tens of thousands of civilians to violence. Earlier this month, the two sides signed an agreement of "goodwill and confidence-building," which Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon welcomed as a "constructive step" in the ongoing efforts to negotiate a peaceful conclusion to their conflict. Meanwhile, the joint African Union-UN peacekeeping mission to Darfur, known as UNAMID, reported that an additional 150 Senegalese peacekeepers arrived today in El Fasher, capital of North Darfur and the mission's headquarters, bringing the total to 834 in the Senegalese infantry battalion. The main duties of the battalion, which is based in El Geneina, West Darfur, include conducting escorts for humanitarian convoys, and conducting patrols to enhance security for civilians in the area and encourage confidence within the local population. One year after taking on the task of suppressing the violence, UNAMID has some 12,753 blue helmets - of the 19,555 authorized by the Security Council - across Darfur, where an estimated 300,000 people have been killed and another 2.7 million have been forced from their homes since fighting erupted in 2003, pitting rebels against Government forces and allied Janjaweed militiamen.

**Sudan: Darfur - Thousands Flee to African Union-UN Peacekeepers Base for Safety: 22 February 2009: UN NEWS SERVICE.**

Aerial bombardments over the South Darfur town of Muhajeria, the scene of recent violent clashes between Sudanese Government forces and a rebel militia, have forced thousands to a United Nations peacekeepers base in search of safety, the joint African Union-UN mission to the region (UNAMID) reported today. UNAMID estimated that about 5,000 people have fled to its base in search of safety for a second time since fighting broke out in the middle of last month between the Government of Sudan and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) rebels, exposing tens of thousands of civilians to the deadly violence. Earlier this week, the Deputy Governor of South Darfur gave assurances that the UN would receive continued access to provide emergency humanitarian assistance to around 100,000 people caught up in the latest outburst of hostilities on Sudan's western flank. There was further hope for stability in the region when Government and JEM representatives met on Tuesday for the first time in two years to sign the "Agreement of Good Will and Confidence Building for the Settlement of the Problem in Darfur."

The hybrid AU-UN peacekeeping force also reported that its police unit will conduct night patrols for the first time at a new community policing centre (CPC) constructed between two large camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) near El Fasher, the

capital of North Darfur. The move, which starts tonight, means that the interim CPC will provide continuous 24-hour operations as part of UNAMID's efforts to enhance its protection of the tens of thousands of residents taking shelter at the Abu Shouk and El Salaam camps for IDPs. A delegation of IDPs from El Salaam camp has also thanked UNAMID Police for its help in securing the recent release of several IDPs from detention by Sudanese national intelligence officers. Construction will start within the next two weeks on another interim CPC near Zamzam, an IDP camp close to El Fasher, according to UNAMID. The hybrid force was set up by the Security Council to protect civilians on the western flank of Sudan, where an estimated 300,000 people have been killed and another 2.7 million have been forced from their homes since fighting erupted in 2003, pitting rebels against Government forces and allied Janjaweed militiamen. One year on from transferring the task of suppressing the violence to UNAMID from the AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS), some 12,374 blue helmets are now in place across Darfur, just over 60 per cent of the 19,555 military personnel authorized by the Security Council.

**Uganda: Karamoja Needs Sh150 Billion – UN: Henry Mukasa and Raymond Baguma: 24 February 2009: THE NEW VISION.**

Kampala — AID agencies are in need of sh150b (about \$77m) this year to address the humanitarian needs in the Karamoja region, according to a UN report. The Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (COHA) said sh100b (about \$52.6m) would go to food assistance. The funding will also support the coordination of education, food, security, health and protection. Other projects include nutrition, therapeutic and supplementary feeding, water, sanitation and hygiene initiatives.

COHA said the amount requested for was 34% of the \$225m required for Ugandan programmes this year. It said the sub-region had experienced a dry spell for three years, which had affected crops, livestock and food security. Throughout the last quarter of 2008, the basic living conditions and welfare of the population across the sub-region continued to deteriorate, the report added. Rains came late and were light, the report said, adding that this led to a third year of harvest failure and worsened the already precarious health of the livestock. The sub-region has the worst development indicators, with a low life expectancy, insecurity, malnutrition, high maternal and infant mortality rates, low immunisation coverage, poor sanitation, low access to safe water and low literacy.

According to the report, the World Food Programme (WFP) and other aid partners estimate that many people in Karamoja will continue to require food assistance, given the small harvest in 2008. The semi-arid sub-region comprises five districts of Abim, Kaabong, Kotido, Moroto and Nakapiripirit. With an estimated population of over 1.1 million people, most of them survive on agro-pastoral or purely pastoral livelihood. The report observes that the problems faced by the region were symptoms of climate change. Over the past 30 years, shorter cycles between drought years have been recorded, decreasing from a 10 year cycle, to a five and then two-year cycles and finally to the successive droughts in the past three years, the report said.

**Uganda: In Search of Peace And Justice: Joshua Kyalimpa: 27 February 2009: INTER PRESS SERVICE NEWS AGENCY.**

Kampala — Alice Anywar lives in the Pagak resettlement camp in Gulu and at 39 is a multiple victim of the over 20 year-old Lords Resistance Army (LRA) insurgency in northern Uganda. The rebels first attacked her home in Kilak village in 1987 killing both her parents and abducting her 12-year old brother. In 2002 they murdered her husband whom she had met in a refugee camp.

The rebels have retreated into the jungle in neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) but Anywar, like many other residents fear they could re-enter Uganda. "I never went to school because of this war, what I want is peace so I can till the land and look after my children." The elusive peace was dealt a near deathblow, many argue, in 2004 when Yoweri Museveni's government requested the International Criminal Court (ICC) at The Hague to indict and prosecute the rebels. The body has since become a source of further tension between the warring parties. The LRA has accused the ICC of bias for not charging their adversaries in the Ugandan army.

"I am not opposed to the [ICC] indictments per se but I am concerned about the impact they are having on the peace process," explained Gulu Archbishop, John Baptist Odama, who led a peace effort at a time when the government was hell bent on militarily putting down the insurgency. A flicker of hope emerged in July 2006 when the government and the rebels converged in Juba, the capital of Southern Sudan to negotiate a comprehensive peace agreement. The talks failed. But a framework, referred to as the Juba peace protocols, laid the basis for traditional forms of justice and national courts to handle cases against the rebels. The ICC indictments were again catapulted into prominence by recent reports that the LRA second-in-command wanted to surrender after sustaining injuries during skirmishes in the DRC. Okot Odhiambo allegedly contacted the International Organisation for Migration two months ago seeking safe passage into Uganda and assurances that he would not be prosecuted. "Ours is to facilitate the return of the rebels but not to prescribe what should be done to them," army spokesperson, major Felix Kulaigye told IPS. At a press conference on 9 Feb President Museveni, prompted by questions about Odhiambo's imminent surrender, confirmed that the LRA would face national courts and traditional justice. Just how close local initiatives by traditional leaders of the Acholi tribe came to bringing peace to northern Uganda, is documented in research by the Beyond Juba Project at the Makerere University in Kampala. In 2005 the elders traveled to The Hague and implored the ICC to drop indictments against LRA commanders. They ventured into the jungles of the DRC and Sudan and pressed the LRA to abandon their rebellion. The chiefs and religious leaders asked that the "Mato Oput" traditional justice system be given a chance to resolve the conflict.

The Mato Oput ritual is initiated by one side of a conflict sending an emissary to the elders seeking their help in reconciliation. The guilty party has to crush a raw egg "Nyono Togweno" to symbolise a new beginning and step over a bamboo stick or "opobo" to represent a move from the past. The offending party provides a goat that is shared equally with the other party as a sign of unity. The guilty party has to drink a bitter

juice extracted from Oput leaves as a promise that they never wish to taste such bitterness again. More serious offences require offenders to compensate victims. According to Leandra Komaketch of the Refugee Law Project the ritual has inbuilt mechanisms to prevent a recurrence of violence. "A person who goes through the ritual would be banished by the community if they committed the sin again and to the Acholi being banished is worse than even life imprisonment."

What the people of northern Uganda desire is justice that allows for healing, Acholi paramount chief, Rwot David Onen Acana, told IPS. "Some people have argued that Mato Oput will breed impunity, what the people want now is peace and not revenge." But not everyone has been won over. Justice should not be sacrificed for peace, retorts Livingstone Sewanyana of the Foundation for Human Rights based in Kampala. "The solution lies in catering for peace and justice." The ICC office in Kampala also maintains that Mato Oput has its weaknesses: it will not give redress to victims and war crimes were committed outside Acholi territory where the ritual is widely accepted. Traditional justice is applied across northern Uganda and southern Sudan to resolve conflicts at a community level. Their foundation is all the same; they are built on the principle of victims and the community forgiving and integrating.

#### 18. HEALTH (HIV/AIDS, TB, MALARIA etc)

West Africa

#### **West Africa: Nigeria, Eight W-African States in Polio: Chinyere Amalu:26 February 2009: Vanguard.**

The Federal Government through the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA), in collaboration with key partners, has concluded plans to participate in massive synchronized polio campaign in eight West African countries.

Other West African Countries that would participate in the campaign which will hold between Saturday, 28 February and Tuesday, 31 March 2009 include Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Niger, and Togo.

Briefing newsmen yesterday in Abuja on the event, the Executive Director of NPHCDA, Dr. Muahammed Ali Pate said that during the first round, Kano, Kastina, Kebbi, Kaduna, Kogi, Kwara, Jigwa, Yobe, Borno, Bauchi, Sokoto, Zanfara, Plateua, Gombe, Niger, Delta, Ogun and the Federal Capital territory will participate. According to him, "During the second round, all the states of the Federation will participate in the polio eradication campaign. Over hundred and fifty thousand health workers, volunteers and monitors including the members of the press will participate in the polio campaign".

He pointed out that adequate, potent and safe vaccines have been deployed to all implementing states of the federation, and appealed to Governors and Council chairmen of implementing states and local governments to sustain their direct involvement and

supervision and monitoring of the campaign for maximum results. On the level of compliance by the traditional and religious rulers especially in northern states, Pate said that they are very much committed to the campaign, citing Kano state as an example where a religious leader even immunized his own child as a way of telling the people that the exercise is a welcome development.

He therefore enjoins all parents, and traditional rulers, to welcome vaccinators into their homes and ensure that all eligible children are reached with safe and potent OPV during the campaign. According to a fact sheet on the synchronized polio campaign, Nigeria, Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan are the only four countries where poliomyelitis is endemic.

"Since June 2008, polio virus in northern Nigeria has spread to Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Togo and Niger. Nigeria is the last polio endemic country in Africa with a high polio transmission in some states/LGAs", he said.

**Nigeria: Bird Flu - Country to Benefit From \$1.8 Billion World Bank Grant: Kehinde Akinyemi: 26 February 2009: DAILY TRUST.**

About 200 countries are to assess a grant of \$1.8 billion released by the World Bank to combat the avian influenza disease globally. The grant, which was released by the bank last year, will cover the purchase of vehicles and some equipment by the benefiting countries, including Nigeria. This may not be unconnected to the target by poultry farmers in Nigeria to increase production of birds from 166 million to 249 million annually by 2011. The Belgium-based poultry specialist and director of Compact Europe Institute, Mr. Alami Abdelkaber, who made this known at the opening ceremony of the Nigeria International Poultry conference in Abeokuta yesterday, however, said despite the gesture, the bank and the EU still have to do more to ensure that the disease is flushed out completely from the globe.

**Ghana: Kath Scores Another First: ebastian R. Freiku: 23 February 2009: THE CHRONICLE.**

Kumasi — THE KOMFO Anokye Teaching Hospital (KATH) in collaboration with the Cardio Start International Compassionate Medical Assistance, a heart surgery team from the United States of America has performed a maiden heart surgery for six adults in Kumasi. The team also performed two heart surgeries on teenagers: Kofi Sarpong, 13 and Christiana Kyeremeh, 19. Afia Adowaah, 31, Juliana Amponsah, 41, Regina Boakye, Rebecca Asirifi, both 57, Georgina Pam, 63 and Afia Serwaa, 76, were the patients who benefited from the free heart surgery which normally costs 6,000 Euros at the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital.

Dr. Aubyn Marath, the Head of the U.S. team, briefing newsmen said 30 patients with two thirds being women were screened for the exercise. He said the initiative was based on an appeal made by the hospital, adding that, the group's duty is to help save lives of people in the undeveloped countries in the world through heart surgery. The Cardiac

Therapist assured that the team would be back in Ghana soon urged Ghanaians to take advantage of the exercise on the next visit.

Dr. Anthony Nsiah-Asare, Chief Executive Officer of the Hospital said the exercise, which was the first of its kind at the hospital is to prepare it towards the establishment of a second Cardio Centre after that of the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital within a matter of two years to help reduce the load on Korle-Bu. He noted that the operation was also to test the multi-purposed emergency centre commissioned last year. Dr. Nsiah-Asare mentioned that, to sustain the exercise, a fund would be set up to cater for those who could not afford to pay their hospital bills or buy prescribed drugs after the free surgery. In October 2007, a team of 20 medical personnel and four volunteers led by Dr. Francis Fynn Thompson of the department of the Cardiac Surgery of Boston's Children's Hospital of the Harvard University in the USA, carried out the first open heart surgery on six year old Samira Rashid at the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital (KATH) in Kumasi free of charge. About of 45 congenital heart diseases patients screened for the exercise, have since benefited from the free heart surgeries for children by the team.

A Ghana Paediatric Heart Fund has since been launched towards the establishment of the proposed Cardiac Centre at KATH and to serve as a global drive to source for funds. Otumfuo Dr. Osei Tutu II, the Asantehene is the Patron of the Fund.

### **Benin: Sorcery-Linked Infanticides Persist in North:26 February 2009:IRIN.**

Cotonou — In northern Benin a baby born with a tooth, in silence or feet first is likely to be killed out of fear that the infant is cursed, according to local NGOs. Despite efforts to stamp out sorcery-linked infanticides, the practice persists. Mohamed Alidou with the Association for the Protection of Unfortunate Children (APEM) told IRIN that customs and ignorance about childbirth lead people to label some babies as cursed "abnormalities" who must be destroyed immediately - by throat-slitting, poisoning or drowning, or slowly through abandonment and starvation. "Whatever the method, the goal is always the same: the physical elimination of the child," said Alidou. Ya Mouda, 70, in the village of Ségbana - 500km north of the commercial capital Cotonou - said children with what are seen as deformities are feared. "Children born with teeth are considered as having come to this world to devour people, and especially if it is a girl. [The belief is that] she will kill her mother's family and her own mother." Babies who emerge feet first are believed to have come to this earth to dominate, added Mouda.

Local author Victor Akpovi, who started documenting child ritual killings in 2004, told IRIN that communities practicing sorcery - mainly the Baatonou, Boko and Peul ethnic groups - vilify deformed or otherwise atypical babies as "witches out for human blood, man-eaters, criminals and cursed children." Akpovi said family members secretly decide whether a newborn should be sentenced to death. APEM's Alidou said the secrecy thwarts attempts to measure the problem, but that ritual infanticide contributes to the country's high infant mortality rate. Some 60 percent of children who are judged "abnormal" are killed, according to the Ministry of Family's director Nicolas Biaou, who oversees the northern regions of Borgou and Alibori - two heavily affected areas. "Cultural pride

explains why the phenomenon persists. The Baatonou people, for example, want their group to be pure. Anyone judged as impure is eliminated."

## **Saved**

For years, non-profit organisations, religious leaders and community members have intervened to rescue babies. APEM's Alidou said there are neighbourhoods made up of survivors. "Many children were saved by a traditional [village leader] chief, Omar Ky-Sama...They live in peace in Ségbana in a big neighbourhood."But he said that children who escape ritual killings are still regarded as being cursed as adults. "There are moving testimonies [in northern communities Ségbana and Kalalé] of 50-year-old men who were able to escape one 'sentence,' only to face another," said Alidou."Even with our awareness campaigns, the phenomenon has not decreased," Alidou told IRIN. "We ask ourselves why people do not understand."The government's Biaou told IRIN national attention to infanticides is limited because it is seen as a regional ethnic concern. "Because this is not considered a national problem affecting all ethnic groups, it is hard for us to push for a national law criminalising it."

## **Nigeria: Trovan - FG Gives Pfizer Terms to End Charges: Godwin Haruna With Agency Reports:27 February 2009:THIS DAY.**

Lagos — The Federal Government has offered Pfizer Inc. its final terms to end civil and criminal charges against the company over the 1996 drugs trial, the prosecutor in charge of the case said yesterday, according to agency reports.The sources added that Pfizer and families of the victims of the drug trial have reached an out-of-court settlement in principle and have agreed to meet in Rome in March to put the deal in writing.

"We've given them a final figure below which we'll not go," said the Attorney-General and Commissioner for Justice of Kano State, Aliyu Umar, where the trial of the drug, Trovan, took place. If Pfizer doesn't accept the terms, the case will proceed on April 4," Umar said without specifying the amount demanded.The Federal Government is seeking \$7 billion in damages for the 1996 drug trial by Pfizer, the world's pharmaceutical giants, during the outbreak of a meningitis epidemic in Kano, which it claims was illegal as a result of which some lives were lost and others maimed.

Criminal charges have also been brought against Pfizer officials accused of using the untested meningitis drug in a trial involving 200 children during an epidemic.Pfizer is also facing a separate civil suit brought by the Kano State government, which is seeking \$2.75 billion in damages.The Federal Government and Pfizer representatives have been negotiating an out-of-court settlement since last year.Prosecutors allege 11 children died and scores were permanently disabled as a result of using the drug and have laid charges against eight Nigerian and expatriate employees of Pfizer believed to have been involved in the experiment.

Pfizer denies any wrongdoing and insists that the drug saved many lives. The company says it secured the consent of the government, the regulatory agencies and the families

involved before administering the drug and that the trial conformed with ethical practices. However, government officials have disclaimed the multi-national drug firm, which had donated some drugs during the epidemic in which many lives were lost and several others paralysed.

The settlement follows months of negotiations between Pfizer and the Kano State government which represents the victims. The talks were allegedly brokered by Nigeria's former head of state, Gen. Yakubu Gowon, and US former president, Jimmy Carter.

### **Ghana: Disability Movement Call for Ministerial Positions: Frederick Asiamah:27 February 2009:Public Agenda (Accra).**

The Disability Network is urging President John E. Atta-Mills to fulfill his promise of forming an all-inclusive government by giving at least one deputy ministerial position to a person with disability (PWD). Members of the network are of the view that such an appointment is overdue.

A few weeks ago, a delegation of the disability movement, called on the President at the castle and tabled a number of requests including the appointment of PWDs as ministers. With the President already naming substantive ministers, the disability movement has turned its attention to the few deputy ministerial nominations yet to be made; bearing in mind that a list of 23 deputy minister designates was released over the weekend. At its first meeting for 2009 held in Accra on Tuesday, members of the Disability Network felt the need to rehash their call. Mr. Emmanuel Sackey, Communications Officer of the Ghana Federation of the Disabled (GFD), noted that it was regrettable that no PWD was named among the ministers or their designated deputies.

Mr. Alexander Kojo Tetteh, Executive Director of the Centre for Employment of Persons with Disabilities, agrees with Mr. Sackey but adds that the appointment is even more warranted by the President's own acclaimed commitment towards all-inclusiveness. "I think the time has come because we are talking about all-inclusive government," he told Public Agenda. He indicated that such an appointment will ensure that the marginalized forms part of the decision making process. "That individual will bring more support to disability issues." The opinion of Mr Charles Appiagyei, acting Executive Director of Action on Disability and Development (ADD) was that the governing National Democratic Congress (NDC) "has long expressed interest in persons with disabilities once expressed, they must live it." If appointed as minister, a PWD will give better representation to issues raised by the GFD and its member organizations, as well as their



affiliates, he pointed out. Mr. Appiagyei added that a minister who is disabled "will serve as a role model and bring inclusion."

He said PWDs are a set of heterogeneous people and cut across various facets of the society - they are women, men, children, employed, unemployed, educated, uneducated, etc. - therefore, such an appointment can positively affect many lives. "PWDs have a constituency that can be leveraged," he stated. Miss Rita Kyeremaa Kusi, Executive Director of GFD, also shared the view that disability was a cross-cutting issue. She said the disability movement was still hopeful that a PWD would be appointed among deputy ministers. On his part, Mr. Joseph Adu-Boampong, the First Vice President of the GFD, said PWDs could better present their issues through a minister who is disabled because he would have fellow-feeling.

"I believe that PWDs will be able to speak better for PWDs," according to Mr. Humphrey Kofie, Community Programmes Coordinator of BasicNeeds-Ghana. In his view also, "It is time that they (PWDs) took the mantle themselves." He adds that PWDs will feel more comfortable channeling their concerns through one of their own.

### **Mali: Spoonfuls of Sugar Could Save Malaria Patients: 26 February 2009: IRIN.**

Dakar — Spoonfuls of sugar could save the lives of children with severe malaria, according to a recently published study on patients in Mali. In severe cases of malaria, a child who is vomiting and not eating properly may have low blood sugar, which can lead to coma and death, according to Peter Olumese with the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Malaria Programme. "It [hypoglycaemia] requires rapid treatment and if not treated quickly is more liable to kill the patient than the malaria itself."

In remote malaria-endemic areas with no trained medical staff or intravenous equipment to drip glucose, spoonfuls of sugar held under the tongue for quick life-saving absorption is a "child-friendly" emergency remedy, according to the Swiss-funded study of 23 children with severe malaria. In the study, 14 children with severe malaria received water-moistened sugar every 20 minutes held under the tongue while nine others received glucose intravenously. Researchers found that the teaspoon of sugar worked as well as the drip to increase blood sugar; among children who kept the sugar under their tongues, the sugar levels of all but one increased to normal levels within 10 minutes.

But WHO's Olumese said while sugar is a potential life-saver, it can also be deadly without proper follow-up. "There are patients who may be cured of malaria, but who may be killed from improperly administered glucose. The good thing is that glucose can be absorbed into any surface, but it [sugar under the tongue] is not an ideal treatment." He said in the absence of qualified medical staff, as often is the case when the sugar remedy is used, it is hard to know how much glucose has been given and to ensure proper follow-up after the first "high dose" is given to jolt the patient to recovery.

Olumese told IRIN another risk of the treatment is that comatose patients in the severe stages of malaria lose their "gag-reflex" to prevent sugar from entering the lungs and

causing infection. Thomas Bisika, University of Pretoria public health professor and former head of the African Union's health division, told IRIN the practice is promising because of its practicality. "In many settings, this may be the only care people have." But he said more research is needed before sugar can be recommended as a standard treatment for hypoglycaemia. "We do not know the factors that could have affected the [study's] outcome. What were the children eating, for example? It could have been something else [other than sugar] doing most of the work. What worked in this community may not work in other communities."

He added: "Unfortunately, there will be no shortage of people to test." There are some 400 million people infected with malaria every year, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa, according to the World Health Organization.

**Nigeria: CSM Claims Three in Sokoto: 26 February 2009: VANGUARD.**

Three persons have been confirmed dead from suspected cases of Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis (CSM) in Gwadabawa Local Government Area of Sokoto State, in the last three weeks. The Council Chairman, Alhaji Abdullahi Sidi, confirmed this yesterday in Gwadabawa.

He said that the deaths were among 79 cases recorded in eight villages in the council area.

The chairman gave the names of the affected villages as Chanchan, Takarawa, Dan-Barunje, Zango-Asara, Here, Matse, Gala and Kalaba. Sidi said that his council had established isolation camps in the rural health centres in Gwadabawa and Kalaba as well as Matse Village which had no health centre. He further disclosed that his council had bought assorted drugs worth over N600, 000 for the treatment of the victims. Sidi, who recently received Gov. Aliyu Wamakko, disclosed that the state government donated 3,000 doses of CSM vaccines to his council.

Southern Africa

**Angola: Regional Countries to Hold Joint Campaigns Against Polio: 25 February 2009: Angola Press.**

Luanda — Angola and Namibia will hold in June, this year, an additional vaccination campaign against poliomyelitis. This decision was reached at a meeting of the Technical Counselling Group for the eradication of this disease, which closed on Tuesday, in Luanda.

In this ambit, Angola will hold on 14-28 June a vaccination campaign against polio and measles, during which will also be administered vitamin A and albendazole medicine, whereas in Namibia this will take place on 16-19 June. In the second phase the campaigns will happen on 24-26 July (Angola) and 21-24 July (Namibia), with the administering of albendazole and vitamin A.

According to the mentioned meeting's report, the simultaneous campaign in Angola, DR Congo and Zambia will take place in accordance with recommendations from the Technical Group. The meeting, among other recommendations, also decided that the inter-state flow of information should be done through the World Health Organisation (WHO). The meeting that started on Monday was attended by technicians from Angola, Namibia, D.R Congo and Zambia, as well as by staff of the WHO, UNICEF, USAID and the NGO CORE International. The event was intended to assess the epidemiologic situation in the mentioned countries, as well as outline activities for 2009.

### **Zimbabwe: Too Much Cholera, Too Little Food - UN Mission: 26 February 2009: IRIN.**

Johannesburg — Zimbabwe will gladly receive any and all humanitarian assistance, but with a cholera epidemic expanding rapidly into rural areas and millions still food insecure, much more will be needed for months to come, a United Nations inter-agency mission to the country concluded. "From what we have heard from members of the international community, and seen from our visits to several areas in the field, it is obvious that humanitarian needs in the country remain grave," Catherine Bragg, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, who led the mission's five-day visit to Zimbabwe, told reporters in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 26 February. The mission met with President Robert Mugabe, Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai, and a number of cabinet ministers. "We were given assurances of full cooperation. We spoke of having further engagements as we widened the scope of our cooperation," Bragg said.

#### **Acknowledging the problem**

"We must stress that the welfare of the people is the responsibility of the government - we trust that the all-inclusive government will take the necessary steps to address the fundamentals of governance that would allow stability and economic recovery," she commented. She said President Mugabe acknowledged the severity of the crisis. "He has recognized that there is one ... [and] in our discussions with the rest of the cabinet ministers they quite freely used the terms, 'humanitarian situation', and 'humanitarian crisis'. Both the president and the prime minister expressed appreciation for the support Zimbabwe has been receiving from the humanitarian community," Bragg noted.

#### **Too much cholera**

They quite freely used the terms 'humanitarian situation' and humanitarian crisis' According to Daniel Lopez Acuna, Director of Recovery and Transition Programmes at the World Health Organization (WHO), the cumulative number of cholera cases as at 25 February was 83,265, with 3,877 deaths. While weekly observed cases showed a decline, Acuna said the case fatality rate remained stubbornly high at 4.7 percent. The WHO has noted that the acceptable level should be below 1 percent. "One of

the things that the mission had been discussing with the different stakeholders ... has been that the actions ... to curb the cholera epidemic need to go beyond just immediate measures, and need to address the more structural problems of water and sanitation and the sewage system, and of the health system."The critical action now is to go closer to where the problem is, and that is in the communities that don't have access to adequate water, where sewage is a problem, and that have no access to cholera treatment centres (CTC). Most of the deaths that happen do not even reach the CTCs, and that's where we need to make sure that the humanitarian action is intensified."

Robin Nandy, Senior Health Advisor to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), said the challenge now was dealing with the outbreak in rural areas. The collapse of infrastructure meant that peripheral health services were interrupted."When the cholera outbreak started it was mainly in the urban areas, which ... has been addressed. Now the disease has spread to more remote areas with access to very few services ... [where there is a need] to interrupt transmission, to prevent people from getting the disease and, if they do get sick, to try to ensure that treatment services are provided. This shift is now currently taking place," Nandy said.

### **Too little food**

"Food security is another mayor issue," Bragg said. "A growing number of households are reducing the number of meals they have per day. The people of Zimbabwe have shown considerable resilience in the face of hardship, but everyone has his or her limit. We expect there will be continued need for food assistance through 2009."According to Timo Pakkala, the World Food Programme's (WFP) Deputy Regional Representative, "On the food aid side, obviously requirements have been very high. During the peak lean season, where we are now, in Zimbabwe some seven million people are receiving [food] assistance until the next harvest, expected in April."

Zimbabwe's population is officially estimated at around 12 million, but several million are believed to have left the country in recent years in search of work."The cost of such a large-scale operation has been very high. We have been providing assistance worth US\$240 million in 2008/09," Pakkala said. New assessments after the April harvest would give a better indication of needs."The indications are that the harvest prospects are not very good, so it is likely that food aid will continue this year," Pakkala warned. With the WFP's programme projected to continue into 2010 - subject to the post-harvest assessment results - "The budget that we are still resourcing is about US\$350 million - that is the current shortfall," he said.

### **Moving forward takes money**

"This is therefore the time to step up our action," Bragg said. "If we do not ensure farmers have the necessary inputs for the next agricultural season, which begins in September and October [2009] we could end up next year with situations similar to what we have today. Seven million in need of food aid should not become the new norm in 2010."The humanitarian community "will continue to provide food aid where needed; to

continue to establish and operate cholera treatment centres, especially further in the periphery, and we will continue to intensify community public health outreach," she told reporters.

"It is going to be very important to continue getting support from the international community to carry out these actions," Bragg said, noting that "with adequate resources" the humanitarian community would be able to quickly mobilize the required material and personnel to strengthen the response to the humanitarian needs in Zimbabwe. The international community has been very generous to the people of Zimbabwe, Bragg said, adding: "We will be approaching them again with requests for additional resources, based on new assessments of the evolving situation. We are counting on their continued generosity."

**ANGOLA: Vaccination Quality to Help Eradicate Polio in Africa, Says Minister:23 February 2009:AngolaPress.**

Luanda — The minister of Health, José Van-Dúnem, this Monday here recognised that the eradication of poliomyelitis in Angola and in neighbouring countries depends on the effectiveness of the quality of vaccination campaigns. The minister made these declarations at the opening ceremony of the 5th session of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on polio eradication in Angola, DRC, Namibia and Zambia, which will happen until Tuesday, at the Trópico Hotel in Luanda. He added that Angola has been facing big challenges in the last periods, such as the rabies outbreak in the country's capital (Luanda), but with improved immunisation and vaccination systems, the circulation and importing of the wild poliovirus and other preventable diseases can be curbed. According to the minister, Angola was free from polio for three years (2001-2004), something that shows the capacity of Angolans in eradicating the disease, as long as there are logistics and technical conditions. To the chairperson of TAG, Ciro de Quadros, the eradication of polio is within range, and only depends on a greater attention. To him, the main hindrances to polio eradication in Africa are based on the insecurity witnessed within various countries and the poor management of vaccination campaigns.

In these two days, health experts of Angola, Zambia, Namibia and DRC and of TAG will assess the state of the situation of combat to this disease in these countries and plan actions for the year 2009. Angola and DRC are among the countries that have been frequently registering cases of poliomyelitis, since 2005.

**South Africa: Neglected Group Has HIV/Aids Support: Linda Ensor:27 February 2009:BUSINESSDAY.**

Cape Town — The relative neglect of the homosexual community in the roll-out of HIV/AIDS treatment and counselling has been addressed by the launch yesterday of a new organisation, Health4Men. The Perinatal HIV Research Unit (PHRU) at Soweto's Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital initiated the programme to address the needs of under-served populations, including men who have sex with men .

The programme chose to target men who have sex with men rather than the gay community, the unit's executive director Prof James McIntyre said, because there were many men who had sex with men and women and did not define themselves as gay. The entire spectrum would form part of Health4Men's target group. Health4Men operates a clinic in Cape Town and will be opening another larger one at Woodstock Hospital in partnership with the Western Cape health department to provide services such as free HIV tests, CD4 counts, treatment of sexually transmitted infections and psychosocial services. "Men, and in particular men who have sex with men, have been neglected in most of the South African programmes in the past that have focused on the dominant heterosexual and female HIV epidemic," McIntyre said.

"PHRU has been working in this field since 2003 and results from a recent survey conducted in Soweto in collaboration with the University of San Francisco found that about 21% of men who have sex with men were HIV-positive. About 44% said they had also had sex with women and 41% reported unprotected anal intercourse among their last five partners."

HIV physician Kevin Rebe will head Health4Men.

**South Africa: Many Aids Assumptions 'are Wrong': Sue Blaine:25 February 2009:BUSINESS DAY.**

Johannesburg — A NEW report on the effects of AIDS and poverty on children adds to the growing realisation that mistaken assumptions have rendered ineffective many of the world's attempts to help.

A meeting was held this month in London with international organisations to invite them to commit to specific actions recommended in the report, said Linda Richter, director of the Human Sciences Research Council's (HSRC's) Child, Youth, Family and Social Development unit. These efforts would continue over the coming months with the African Union, other regional bodies, and through international conferences and other media, she said.

The report proposes tangible actions which are meant to shift the global AIDS response. The recommendations, targeted at governments and partners, if taken up, will contribute to the improvement of children's wellbeing and life chances, said Richter's HSRC colleague Vuyiswa Mathambo. The HSRC is part of the Joint Learning Initiative on Children and HIV/AIDS (JLICA), a global alliance of researchers, activists, policy makers and people living with HIV, which has used several forums to disseminate the findings of the two-year investigation that has produced the report.

More than 25 years into the AIDS pandemic, over 90% of the more than 2-million children living with HIV are infected before or during birth, and only a third of pregnant HIV-positive women in low- and middle-income countries receive the treatment they need to prevent them infecting their babies, according to the JLICA report, released yesterday. Statistics also showed a small proportion of HIV-positive children received

antiretroviral treatment and children in sub-Saharan Africa were significantly less likely to receive antiretrovirals than adults. Only 8% of children born to HIV-positive women were tested for the virus before they were two months old, meaning they lost their chance to benefit from treatment. Teenage girls in southern Africa were two to four-and-a-half times more likely to be infected than teenage boys, and an estimated 15m children alive today had lost one or both parents to AIDS, 12m of them in sub-Saharan Africa. The JLICA claims significant gains are achievable if the world is willing to ditch those of its HIV/AIDS interventions that are based on misconceptions and adapt or develop its policies. To help children vulnerable to HIV/AIDS means countries would have to develop their social protection schemes, provide benefits based on need and not on HIV status or orphanhood, reinforce families' ability to provide long-term care, strengthen community support systems, provide family-centred services integrating health, education and social support, redress the social and economic inequalities that increase girls' and women's vulnerability to HIV infection, and strengthen and act on the evidence for policies that work for children. The JLICA said this new agenda would require "significant new resources" at a time when, because of the global financial crisis, mobilising for additional funding was difficult. "At the same time, strained economic conditions aggravate the hardships of those affected, and so increase the urgency of rapidly implementing the policies JLICA recommends. The very conditions that make policy action difficult also make it more imperative," the nongovernmental organisation (NGO) said.

One of the most destructive of the misconceptions that had thus far shaped policy on HIV/AIDS prevention and control was that only orphaned children were affected by the pandemic. This had fed the "powerful myth" that the majority of children who had lost a parent to AIDS lacked family and social networks and needed to be cared for in an orphanage. JLICA's research showed 88% of children designated as orphans actually had a surviving parent. The NGO called on the United Nations to change its definition of an orphan as "a child who has lost one or both parents" because the definition had distorted programme goals by obscuring the fact that most of the children defined as AIDS orphans continued to receive support from their families or extended kin.

"The overwhelming majority of children who have lost a parent to AIDS can and should remain in the care of their families, provided that those families receive appropriate support," JLICA said in its report. The NGO stated clearly that "poverty does not cause AIDS", although it added that extreme poverty was the backdrop to much of the AIDS pandemic and AIDS did cause and compound poverty. "Over 60% of children in southern Africa live in poverty. Families who are already poor when HIV strikes may be unable to compensate for further loss of income that occurs as a result of AIDS-related illness or death. Poverty is the single biggest barrier to the scale-up of HIV treatment and prevention. "Poor people's capacity to access and benefit from services is limited when they lack the resources to purchase food and medicines, pay for transport to service facilities and compensate for income that is sacrificed to healthcare," JLICA said. Continuing its myth-busting mission, JLICA said focusing prevention campaigns on attempts to change behaviour overlooked the "harsh realities" of many children's and young people's lives. The NGO said its research showed this type of focus was

insufficient to protect teenage girls from HIV infection, because too many of them lived in situations in which they were extremely vulnerable to sexual harassment and abuse. Instead, governments should put money into increased efforts to ensure girls' physical safety at school and work, on public transport and in places of recreation. It was also important to tackle the "behaviours and attitudes that allow men to take sexual advantage of girls and young women with impunity", to keep girls in school and to improve their economic independence. 'Economic conditions aggravate the hardships of those affected, and increase the urgency of implementing policies'

**Zambia: Mystery Illness Needs Quick Identification:27 February 2009:editorial:TIMES OF ZAMBIA.**

THE mysterious illness that has hit the people of Chisomo area in Serenje District needs to be quickly identified and contained to curb further loss of life among the villagers. Since Wednesday when nine people died as the strange disease broke out, the death toll has quickly risen to 11 and could climb even further if the problem was not identified. This may explain the panic that the disease has sent among the residents of Chisomo who are reportedly running away from medical authorities investigating the killer disease.

Be that as it may, it will not help these important investigations if the people of Chisomo do not cooperate with those tasked to address their problem. It appears that the people of Chisomo may be running away from the health authorities out of ignorance and there is need to step up publicity on the importance of cooperating with the probe team.

The office of the district commissioner in Serenje can help address this problem by mobilising the opinion leaders such as teachers, pastors and traditional leaders to educate the people about the investigation. The mobilisation of local opinion leaders needs to be done as a matter of urgency because any further delays may result in more deaths. The local leaders have a duty to help in the sensitisation of the community and ensure that villagers there co-operate with the medical staff. The staff on the ground have already ruled out cholera and we hope that those studying the samples will expedite the process and identify the disease. From the reports, the disease may spread further as it appears to be highly infectious and kills quickly. The fact that 11 people have died within a matter of days in itself renders the problem in Serenje an emergency and hopefully the ministry of Health will move in quickly. It is also hoped that movement to and from the area will be strictly monitored to avoid the spread of the disease.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Uganda: Country Produces ARVs, Malaria Drugs;Anthony Bugembe:20 February 2009:THE NEW VISION.**

Kampala — QUALITY Chemical Industries in Luzira has started full scale commercial production of anti-retroviral and anti-malarial drugs. The first batches of the drugs were launched on Thursday by the Vice President, Gilbert Bukenya. Originally, the company



was providing ARVs and anti-malarial drugs courtesy of CIPLA, a leading Indian pharmaceutical firm. The two companies are in a joint venture.

"We have had to contend with a lot of challenges. But beginning this month we started full commercial production," said Emmanuel Katongole, the Quality Chemicals chief executive officer. He said the factory is manufacturing the latest AIDS drug - DUOVIR-N, which is a combination of three drugs in one tablet (Zidovudine, Lamivudine and Nevirapine). "This product is Uganda's first line treatment of AIDS and it revolutionised Anti-retroviral therapy to ease administration and hence improve adherence to treatment by sufferers," Katongole said. He appealed to the Government to ensure that the factory has a ready market and to effect the promised ten-year tax holiday. "We hear of funding bodies wanting regional governments to enter into supply agreements that will bind us for years without taking into account that we also have our own manufacturing capacity.

"Quality Chemicals has the capacity to supply the entire Great Lakes region. The Government should also protect us by putting a 15% tariff on imported pharmaceuticals which can be locally manufactured including ARVs and Artemisinin-based combination therapies. This should be extended to other local manufacturers as well," Katongole added. Bukenya pledged full government support to the factory and said the time had come for Ugandans to use medicines manufactured in the country.

**Zanzibar Dumps Malaria as Uganda Runs Out of Coartem: Moses Talemwa: 25 February 2009: [The Weekly Observer](#) (Kampala).**

A team of Ugandan health workers, who last week visited Dar es Salaam for the launch of the anti-malarial drug Coartem-D by US Conglomerate Novartis, were stunned to hear that Zanzibar had eradicated malaria in just four years. And Tanzanian Minister of Health, James Mwakyusa, pledged that the move would be replicated on the mainland over the next the years.

The minister revealed that Zanzibar had realised the feat by cutting infection rates from 45,000 cases a year to none today, using a combination of three methods. The government employed indoor residual spraying, distribution of mosquito nets, and treatment using Coartem. By contrast, Uganda's delegation, headed by outgoing State Minister for Primary Healthcare, Dr. Emmanuel Otaala, could only offer lamentations as to why they had not been able to conquer malaria. "More investment is needed to fight malaria using the known combined methods," he said. Health officials actually admitted that Uganda was losing the battle to malaria, as evidenced by available statistics. More than 400 people are infected with malaria daily, and according to the minister at least 30% of them, mostly children, are likely to die from the disease. "Apac District alone has the highest prevalence of malaria in the world at 1,490 infections a month and my own district of Tororo is not any better at 591 infections a month," said Otaala in his speech.

A World Health Organisation (WHO) status report on malaria rates Nigeria, DR Congo, Tanzania and Uganda as the countries with the highest infection rates in the world. And a

malaria specialist in the Ministry of Health, Dr. Myers Lugemwa, is upset at the government's failure to effectively respond to the disease. "If we were losing 100 people daily from another phenomenon, government would have moved faster by now," he said. Instead, the government has halted indoor residual spraying following a High Court injunction by maverick politician, John Ken Lukyamuzi. Dr. Lugemwa says government should place a counter injunction to stop Lukyamuzi's legal action and save more lives. Dr. Lugemwa, who led the DDT spraying exercise in Katakwi and Apac in 2008, argues that the likely side effects of DDT are too insignificant to compare with the lives lost to malaria on a daily basis. "People in Apac had DDT in their blood well before the spraying had started and they were not sick at all," he charged. But Lukyamuzi is not moved at all. In fact, he dismissed as false reports that Zanzibar and South Africa had eradicated malaria through the use of DDT. "Those countries are too sophisticated to allow their people to die from cancer," he said. Other health specialists, including Dr. Edwin Mworosi and Dr. Ambrose Talisuna, are equally miffed, arguing that the government should act in the public's best interest by going ahead with indoor residual spraying, as well as the ongoing distribution of mosquito nets and treatment with the newly approved drug Coartem.

In response, Minister Otaala says the matter has been referred to the Attorney General's office for advice. For now, more people are dying of malaria, more so after health centres around the country ran out of the new anti-malarial drug Coartem. Health officials say the National Medical Stores ran out of Coartem four months ago due to late payment. National Medical Stores officials have declined to comment on the matter, but Health ministry officials say suppliers cut off supplies after donors delayed to disperse funds to buy the drug. The Director General of Health Services, Dr. Sam Zaramba, told The Weekly Observer in Kampala that the country's Coartem order was still five months away from delivery. For now, health workers have been advised to resort to Quinine.

### **Tanzania: Home Deliveries Contribute to Mother, Child Deaths: 26 February 2009: IRIN.**

Stone Town — More than half Zanzibar's mothers deliver their children at home without access to medical help at health facilities, an official said. "Fewer than 50 percent of the pregnant women in Zanzibar give birth in health facilities; the rest give birth at home with assistance from traditional birth attendants," said Hanuni Waziri, manager of the maternal and child health programme in the Zanzibar Ministry of Health and Social Welfare.

Maternal mortality was estimated at 377 per 100,000 live births, Waziri said at the launch of a roadmap to accelerate the reduction of maternal, newborn, and child deaths in Stone Town on 25 February. According to the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), about half a million women die every year in childbirth worldwide. In Tanzania, approximately 8,000 women die every year due to pregnancy and childbirth and 57 percent deliver at home. While the country had achieved a 30 percent reduction in child mortality and a 20 percent decrease in newborn deaths in the past five years, infant mortality remained high at nearly 10 deaths per 1,000 live births. Close to one-quarter of all births are unplanned

and 40 percent of women remain in dire need of reproductive health services. Maternal mortality in Zanzibar, Waziri said, was mainly a result of severe bleeding during and after delivery and eclampsia, exacerbated by inadequate skilled attendants, a negative attitude among staff and lack of facilities in primary healthcare units. UNFPA executive director Thoraya Obeid, who was on five-day visit to Tanzania, said maternal and child deaths had remained a big problem in the past 20 years despite global efforts.

"We need political will and availability of funds to reduce deaths," Obeid said at the launch of the eight-year programme. UNFPA, she added, was committed to supporting the programme in the islands. "A country is judged on how it treats its women and children," she said. "Medical doctors and experience show that access to family planning, skilled care, and emergency care has a great impact on reducing maternal deaths." Zanzibar President Amani Abeid Karume said the semi-autonomous island of one million people planned to reduce maternal and child deaths by 2015. "We have recorded dramatic success in combating malaria; through unity and determination we will also reduce maternal and child deaths." Waziri said the focus of the programme would be to increase skilled personnel and advocate for family planning.

### **Somalia: Agencies Alarmed By Child Malnutrition: 23 February 2009: IRIN.**

Nairobi — One in six children in Somalia is acutely malnourished because of high food prices and lack of access to staple foods due to ongoing conflict, according to an [early warning report](#).

The emergency is driven by a combination of conflict, hyperinflation and below-normal Deyr (October to December 2008 rains), the Food Security Analysis Unit for Somalia (FAO/FSAU) and the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS Net) stated in a joint report on 20 February. Lower and Middle Shabelle regions were the worst affected, although the situation had also deteriorated in central Somalia. FSAU and partners conducted 17 nutrition assessments between October and December 2008 and "from these assessments, eight reported global acute malnutrition [GAM] rates below the emergency threshold of 15 percent, three reported rates between 15 and 19.9 percent, with the remaining six reporting rates below 20 percent". The report said nearly 43 percent of the population, or some 3.2 million people, were "in need of emergency livelihood and life-saving assistance". The urban food crisis is growing and affecting some 705,000 people.

"Of this total, 565,000 are in Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis [AFLC]), requiring emergency livelihood support and 140,000 are in Humanitarian Emergency [HE], requiring both emergency livelihood and life-saving assistance." Equally affected by the food price crisis are at least one million new internally displaced persons (IDPs) plus 275,000 long-term IDPs. Moreover, food access for the urban poor is severely constrained as people struggle with record prices. Prices of imported rice and local cereals increased by between 230 and 350 percent from early 2008. "These price increases are significantly greater than global cereal price increases," said the agencies. Although prices declined

from October 2008, providing some benefits, they are still 450-780 percent above normal.

The problem is worse in rural areas, where "650,000 people are in HE, requiring emergency livelihood and life-saving interventions. Another 565,000 are in AFLC, requiring emergency livelihood support." "The severity and depth of the rural crisis is greatest in the Galgadud, Mudug, Hiran and Middle Shabelle regions, where 50-70 percent of the total rural population is in crisis and where the number in HE exceeds the number in AFLC," the agencies said.

### **Somalia: Child Deaths Linked to Acute Water Shortage in Galgadud:24 February 2009:IRIN.**

Nairobi — An acute water shortage has hit central Somalia's Galgadud region, with local leaders linking the deaths of two children to a lack of water and food.

"We buried two children, aged four and one-and-a-half, yesterday; they died of lack of water and food," Yusuf Guled, the deputy district commissioner of Dhabad, told IRIN on 24 February. He said the problem was most acute in Dhabad, 130km north-west of the regional capital Dusamareb, in Hanan Buuro, 30km west, and in Ada Kibir, 150km north-east. Guled said the local administration was receiving reports from outlying villages of more deaths. "There are more dying out there but we cannot help them." The region has had no rains in the past two years and the district's only functioning borehole has broken down, he said.

He added that livestock - the economic mainstay of the area - and the population were equally affected by water shortages. "We have been trucking water from as far as 40km away," Guled said. "People in the diaspora have been helping but it is not enough and we need more help." He appealed to aid agencies, saying the Dhabad area was safe. "We have an administration and police who are capable of protecting anyone who comes here," he said. "If help does not come soon, a lot more people and livestock will die."

In Ada Kibir, the situation was equally bad. "The drought here has never really gone away; for five consecutive years we had very little rains or none at all," Tahalil Aden, a resident, told IRIN. He said the only water available was being trucked from a borehole 45km away. "One drum [200 l] costs 150,000 Somali shillings [US\$6] - that is three times the average daily wage," he said.

Aden said the situation was deteriorating by the day. "We have had no help from anyone and we have reached our limit; not many here can afford these prices," he said. A journalist in Dusamareb told IRIN most of the region was suffering the effects of prolonged drought. "These are the worst affected but there are other parts in the region that are also in bad shape," he said. He said the situation was exacerbated by past insecurity. "Until recently, it was a battle zone between warring factions and aid workers were abducted here," he said, in turn forcing aid agencies to curtail their activities. However, the journalist said the security situation was improving. "There is no

more fighting and most districts have set up administrations and are trying to woo aid agencies to return."

Central Africa

**Cameroon: Eliminating Malaria in Children: Brenda Yufeh; 24 February 2009: CAMEROON TRIBUNE.**

Experts, last Friday in Dakar ended discussions towards malaria elimination with particular focus on children. After discussing the legacy of Coartem Dispersible, the first artemisinin-based combination therapy (ACT) which is an innovation in treating children with malaria, experts from Africa and beyond last Friday in Dakar, Senegal, delved into other aspects geared towards malaria elimination. A disease which accounts for the first cause of hospitalisation in almost all health services in Cameroon.

Pr. Marie-Thérèse Abena Obama, pediatrician at the Yaounde Central Hospital, said it is not supposed to be difficult to handle malaria with children since they know the signs and symptoms of malaria and can treat them. But the basic problem is on convincing families to take their children to any health facility from the moment the child is not feeling fine. According to Pr. Marie-Thérèse Obama, if parents could take their children to any health unit when they start feeling sick, and if health personnel could examine the children, it will be possible to make a proper diagnosis and treatment of malaria after excluding any other cause of the fever. But because this is not done in Africa, malaria kills over 700,000 children under five every year- the equivalent of one child every 30 seconds. Pediatricians said at the Dakar conference that parents usually take their sick children to traditional doctors for treatment and only bring them to hospitals when it is already late, with very little blood in their system for them to survive. It was also stressed that rural health units should be stock with anti-malaria drugs and the workers trained to identify signs of simple malaria and give first hand treatment before any sick child is taken to hospital.

With the current new drug, Coartem D that have been launched recently to combat malaria with children, Pr. Obama said the drug in itself does not have any problem as it is an artemisinin-based combination therapy and Cameroon had already opted for ACTs in treating malaria. But children never had any appropriate combination of malaria treatment that was in a fixed form. They had to take two tablets of artemisinin and the other associated drugs. Hence, when Coartem D will be added to the list of drugs in the Cameroon national programme against malaria, this will ease malaria treatment in children, as it is an appropriate fixed combination since it is a drug that has both ingredients in one tablet with a flavoured taste.

**Rwanda: Drop in Malaria Thanks to Indoor Spraying: Sam Ruburika; 20 February 2009: Focus Media (Kigali)**

The indoor residual spraying program (IRS), which is a major part of the efforts to eradicate malaria, seems to have significant results in Kigali city, with some health centers reporting of drop of 30% in malaria cases. Residents of Kigali have benefitted

from each of the three rounds of spraying that have been held since the program was introduced in 2007. This has apparently led to impressive results; for instance, at the Kicukiro health center, malaria cases have reduced by 30 %. "We have been receiving significantly fewer malaria-related cases since the IRS program started," says Steven Kanamugire, a doctor at the center.

And the beneficiaries of the program, the residents of Kigali, are also seeing a noticeable difference. Anatole Bihoyiki, who lives in Kicukiro, testifies that malaria cases in his family have reduced dramatically. "Before, there was somebody suffering from malaria every month," he says. "My wife was especially prone to the disease, and was often bedridden. Yet since the second spraying seven months ago, she has not suffered from malaria anymore. We are very happy now." Yet as has been the case from the very first round of spraying, some people are still suspicious. They claim that the chemicals used for IRS have side effects that they are not willing to risk.

"When the chemicals are sprayed in the house, we get itchy eyes, headaches and sometimes it becomes even hard to breath," explains Claire Uwamahoro, also living in Kicukiro. Another resident of the area, who refused to be named, has similar complaints. "I cannot allow these people into my house because I fear that the spray could lead to other complications that I cannot handle."

This shows that PNILP, the national program against malaria which is in charge of the IRS program, should probably step up its sensitization campaign, given that from the start it has recognized the possibility of side effects, but also announced that students from Kigali Health Institute would accompany the spraying teams and that hospitals in the treated areas are on standby to treat such cases.

Moreover, it has also stressed that such side effects are temporary and that the chemicals do not have lasting negative effects. Apparently, this message has not reached everybody. Other people, however, argue that the program will not be effective without outdoor spraying, pointing out that mosquito breeding areas such as swamps, marshlands and stagnant water should also be treated. "Indoor spraying is good but the problem is that mosquitoes will continue to invade our houses if their breeding areas are not dealt with," claims Canisius Muremangingo, a resident of Kabeza cell.

Another regular complaint also used to refuse spraying in the second and third rounds was that even after IRS treatment, mosquitoes quickly come back. Here, it should be noted that the chemicals only kill the female anopheles mosquitoes which spread malaria. Therefore, although the remaining mosquitoes might be annoying, they do not pose a health threat. The local authorities, for their part, seem to be running out of patience with people refusing their house to be sprayed. Silas Hitimana, a local leader in Niboye sector, points out that such refusals might undermine the success of the entire IRS campaign. "If ten households reject the spraying at the village level, then the mosquitoes in those houses will continue to spread malaria even to those who have accepted the treatment," he explains. And Hitimana threatens to get tough on those residents. "We will have to make hard decisions on those people; they can expect heavy fines."

**Rwanda: Illicit Drugs Worth Rwf33 Million Destroyed:Sam Nkurunziza :21 February 2009:THE NEW TIMES.**

Kigali — Police in Remera yesterday destroyed illicit drugs worth over Rwf33 million, collected over the past two months.The drugs include 15 jerry cans of local brew commonly known as Kanyanga, 600 kilograms of Marijuana and 3,500 litres of Suzi Waragi.

Illicit drugs have been blamed for slowing down the ability of the body to fight diseases and greatly affect the brain cells. They are also blamed for crime increases, especially violence.Most of the drugs and illegal liquor were seized from smugglers who are in police custody in various detention centres.

According to the Commander of Remera Police Station, Chief Inspector Methode Muvunyi, all the drugs were collected during the festive season from within Gasabo District."We should work together to avoid such acts of smuggling into the country dangerous drugs which do not only affect the public but also the users," Muvunyi appealed before the drugs were set ablaze.He condemned people involved in drug trafficking and attributed the high level of crimes to drug consumption especially among the youth.Recently police ranked Kigali city with the highest number of crimes and this was as a result of illicit drug consumption which is reportedly said to be on the rise.Last month, Police in Nyarugenge destroyed illegal drugs and alcohol worth over five million Francs that had been seized in recent operations as they were being sneaked into the country through neighbouring countries; the DR Congo and Uganda.

## 19. ENVIRONMENT

West Africa

**Nigeria: Oil Spill - Unep Team Unveils Work Plan:Onyebuchi Ezigbo:24 February 2009:THIS DAY.**

Abuja — A team of experts from the United Nation's Environment Programme (UNEP) yesterday unveiled its work programme in a collaborative venture with the Federal Ministry of Environment to clean up oil spill impacted sites in Ogoniland in the Niger Delta region.

Speaking during a meeting with the Minister of Environment, Mr. John Odey, the leader of the UNEP team and the Director of the Regional Office in Africa, Mr. Mounkaila Goumandakoye, said his team had come to kick-start the implementation of the remediation work on the oil spill incidences in Ogoniland.He said as part of the preparation for the commencement of the project, the team intends to familiarise with the key officials of the Ministry of Environment."We intend to hold discussions with officials of the Ministry of Environment, especially those in the relevant agencies. We have come to Nigeria with a team of engineers and we are going to consult and discuss issues of the programme implementation and financial issues involved so that this time the project is effective. We are ready to move UNEP to the area and we would appreciate the support

of the President and the minister. "We are going to consult with the community leaders to ensure that everybody knows what we are doing and they will be welcome to be part of the programme," he said. He said UNDP and UNEP had made a commitment to the implementation of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and intends to work hard to complete the work within a scheduled time frame.

Federal government had earlier set up a committee headed by Reverend Father Mathew Kukah with the Chair of the Ogoni Council of Chiefs, Minister of Environment, National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA), Representative of Rivers State Government, UNEP and United Nations Development Program (UNDP) as members to facilitate the execution of the project. As part of its engagement, UNEP said it would ensure total clean-up of all the impacted areas in the affected communities and in addition provide capacity-building programmes and infrastructure for the local populace to improve their living conditions.

**Gambia: 25 Environmental Journalists Undergo Training: Lamin A. Darboe; 25 February 2009: FOROYAA Newspaper (Serrekunda)**

A three day training workshop for 25 environment journalists has started on Monday, 23 February, at the Gambia Press Union headquarters in Bakau New Town. Speaking at the opening session, Mr. Madi Ceesay, Director of Media Agenda, said his media house attaches great significance to building the capacity of journalists. He said it is an important element yet the area has not been navigated well.

According to Mr. Ceesay, the Gambia is one of the very few countries in the sub region that does not have a media training institution and that most of those practicing journalism today have their training on the job, through the experienced ones they are working with. "It is against this background that the Media Agenda, which was founded in 2006, focuses on training. Colleagues, as the last group of trainees, we would like you to seriously take this training workshop seriously so that we prove our detractors wrong" said the Media Agenda Director. Mr. Ceesay appealed to the National Commission for UNESCO/NATCOM to closely look at the provision of long media training for the Gambian journalists in the form of medium Certificate Courses to Diploma. He said that when this happened, the graduates from those courses can, in the future, feed the faculty of journalism at the University of The Gambia. He thanked UNESCO/NATCOM for coming to the aid of the media in The Gambia. This workshop marks the end of a three months long training project sponsored by UNESCO/NATCOM in partnership with the Media Agenda, at a tune of four hundred and forty-one thousand dalasi (441,000).

Southern Africa

**Namibia: No End to the Deluge; 23 February 2009: THE NAMIBIAN.**

WEEKS of wet weather have left large parts of Namibia soaked so far this month - and more of the same can be expected this week. Rainfall conditions remain favourable for most of the country this week, weatherman Simon Dirkse told The Namibian



yesterday.He said the northern half of the country is expected to have a 60 per cent chance of rain up to Friday, while in the southern part of Namibia a 30 per cent chance for rain is forecast.

A continuation of the wet weather appears set to push up rainfall totals in some areas of the country so far this rainy season to levels last seen during Namibia's near record wet season of 2005-06.A large part of Mariental was flooded in early 2006, after a massive inflow of water into the Hardap Dam prompted the opening of the dam's gates and the release of water at a rate that overwhelmed the confines of the Fish River below the dam wall.With huge quantities of water flowing into the Hardap Dam from the dam's catchment area over the past two weeks, the dam's sluice gates were kept open over the weekend.NamWater's Manager for Corporate Affairs, Johannes Shigwedha, told The Namibian yesterday that the inflow into the dam had increased to 1 000 cubic metres per second.

"We have kept the gates opened since last week Wednesday," said Shigwedha. He said the dam was releasing water at a rate of 500 cubic metres per second.Heavy rains that fell in Windhoek for about an hour on Thursday evening flooded some areas, created potholes in many roads, and led to some areas of the city recording rainfall totals so far this month that have come close to the city's total rainfall in an entire average rainy season.

In the Eros area of Windhoek, rain gauges were filled to the 70 mm to 80 mm marks after a heavy thunderstorm on Thursday evening.Continuing downpours over the rest of the weekend have brought the amount of rain measured in parts of the city to over 300 mm so far this month - well ahead of the total of 158 mm measured during the whole of February 2008 and more than three times the city's normal February rainfall total of some 91 mm.The full force of Thursday's downpour missed the Windhoek Met Office near the city centre, though. At the Met Office, a total of 55,4 mm of rain was measured from Thursday to Saturday, said Dirkse.He said although only 7,8 mm was measured at the Met Office on Friday and 5,4 mm on Saturday, 42,2 mm was recorded on Thursday.Also on Thursday, 30 mm was measured at Suiderhof in Windhoek, while 34,9 mm was recorded at Grootfontein.On Saturday, 29,3 mm was measured at Hosea Kutako International Airport outside Windhoek.Elsewhere in the country, 35 mm was recorded at Katima Mulilo on Friday while 19,9 mm was recorded at Rundu.

On Thursday, Oshikuku in the Omusati Region recorded 15 mm. On Tuesday last week, 90 mm of rain had also been recorded at Oshikuku.In the south of Namibia, 25,5 mm was recorded at Noordhoek at Keetmanshoop on Friday.At Mariental, 16 mm of rain was measured on Friday, followed by 20,8 mm on Saturday, while at the Keetmanshoop Airport 15,5 mm was recorded on Friday.

**SOUTH AFRICA: Climate Change Threatens Livelihoods Along Continent's Coast: Miriam Mannak:19 February 2009:INTER PRESS SERVICE NEWS AGENCY.**

Cape Town — Environmental experts warn that climate change will lead to oceanic acidification and increase surface water temperatures, especially around the African continent. This will affect fish stocks and, as a result, threaten the livelihoods of small-scale fishing communities. "Acidity levels of our oceans predominantly affect fish larvae, which depend on calcium carbonate in the seawater to build their shells, skeletons and cell coverings," explained professor Geoff Brundritt, chairperson of the Global Ocean Observing System in Africa (GOOS Africa). "A higher acidity level hampers this process."

"Fish larvae thus have a slimmer chance of reaching adulthood, which hampers the fish from reproducing and keeping the stocks in shape," he added. "This not only threatens the future of fish stocks, it also poses a threat to communities that depend on fishing for their survival." Fishing communities in the developing world, including southern Africa, are already among the most vulnerable population groups in the world. According to the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), their living conditions are characterised by overcrowding, low levels of education as well as lack of access to schools, health care facilities and infrastructure, such as roads or markets to sell their ware. Operating like enormous "vacuum cleaners", oceans naturally absorb CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere, said Brundritt. But because levels of this acidic gas in the air have increased due to climate change, oceans have been sucking up more CO<sub>2</sub> than previously, which has contributed to oceanic acidification. The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reported in 2007 that the oceans' pH - currently between 7.9 and 8.2 - will fall by a further 0.14 to 0.35 units before the turn of the century. The lower the pH, the more acidic the water; the ideal pH level in saltwater systems should lie between 7.6 and 8.4.

### **Rising temperatures**

To make matters worse, rising temperatures of sea surface waters also negatively affect fish stocks. "Higher sea surface temperatures do not kill fish as such, but they do seem to chase them away from their grounds, which has an impact on the communities who rely on these stocks," said Larry Hutchings, marine and coastal management researcher for the City of Cape Town in South Africa. As a result, small-scale fishermen will have to go further and further out to sea to cast their nets, but most of them cannot afford to invest in the necessary boats and technology to do so. Already in 2007, South African Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism deputy general, Monde Mayekiso, publicly warned about the averse effects climate change is likely to have in fishermen's livelihoods.

"Scientists have not categorically stated that migration of sardines, for example, is caused by climate change but we do note that the reduction of fish along the West Coast has been associated with extraordinarily warmer water," he told The Citizen newspaper. "This suggests that it could be [related to] climate change." Mafaniso Hara, senior researcher at the South African Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) agrees: "We suspect that the migration of sardines to the South Coast, in the area of Mossel Bay, indeed has to do with rising sea surface temperatures. The catches

have declined from 300,000 tons a few years ago to 100,000 tons per year."As a result, fishing communities along South Africa's West Coast are feeling the pinch, even though schools of another fish species, horse mackerel, have moved closer to shore. But these fish are less valuable on the market and harder to catch than sardines."Horse mackerels live at greater depths, where the water is cooler," Hutchings said. "As a result, these fish can only be caught with big trawlers and are therefore out of reach of small-scale fishermen."The migration of the sardines has already had a negative impact on employment along the West Coast, Hara said: "There is not enough fish for processing, so jobs have been cut and people retrenched. This has a big impact on communities along the West Coast, which already struggle with poverty."

### **Job cuts**

According to PLAAS, many fishing communities along the West Coast fully depend on the fishing industry and government grants, like child support grants, for their survival. With the fishing industry declining, communities will rely more and more on being supported by the grant system."In Hondeklipbaai, a small fishing community on the West Coast, for instance, people are fully dependent on government grants for their survival, as the fishing industry there has almost vanished," said PLAAS researcher Moeniba Issacs. "If these grants would be pulled out for one reason or another, this community would be doomed."Fishing communities on the country's West Coast are also taking strain because rock lobsters, another major source of income, have started to migrate southwards.

Figures by the South African department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) show that 30 years ago, 70 percent of rock lobster was caught along the West Coast. Today, 90 percent is caught about 300 kilometres further south, close to Cape Point. But, Hutchings said, both the sardine and rock lobster migration are a two-edged sword: "While fishermen along the West Coast are struggling as a result of migrating fish and rock lobster, communities along the South Coast and around Mossel Bay have gained employment and are better off."Theoretically, one could suggest that fishing communities along the West Coast should move with the fish, but this is easier said than done, explains Hutchings, as the distance between for instance Hondeklipbaai and Mossel Bay is approximately 800 kilometres."As I pointed out, most West Coast fishermen are very poor," agreed Isaacs. "They can't pack their bags and leave, because they don't have the financial means to do so."Sustained livelihoods for more than 30,000 who live in fishing communities along South Africa's coast are also limited by quotas, which allocate the majority of allowable catches to the commercial fishing industry.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

### **Uganda: Climate Change And Conflicts:23 February 2009:IRIN.**

Johannesburg — Karamoja, a semi-arid region in northeast Uganda, is in crisis: a potent mix of the impact of climate change - 14 droughts in 25 years - border conflicts, armed cattle-raids, and difficult development and sustainability issues are the main features, delegates at a recent conference on Climate Change and Security in Africa learned. The

humanitarian impact has meant that the UN World Food Programme (WFP) has an ongoing food aid programme in Karamoja for the last 40 years.

The situation in Karamoja was highlighted to raise awareness about the complex links between climate change, conflicts, migration and human security among pastoral communities in Africa by the France-based Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), a relief NGO which organised the conference, with Brussels-based think-tank Egmont Institute. Shortages of food and water brought on by the impact of climate change could escalate existing conflicts and generate others, warned a new report prepared by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and its Expert Advisory Group, which is coordinated by a Canadian policy think-tank, the International Institute for Sustainable Development.

The report called for more research on how the impact of climate change could increase vulnerability to conflict, and how early warning could address the issue. Armed cattle raids - using mainly AK-47s - which in the past had been a survival response when disease and famine struck a community, had now become a common occurrence perpetrated for commercial gain, said ACTED's Victor Onenchan. The humanitarian crisis in Karamoja has long been forgotten, said David Knaute, another speaker from ACTED. "Since the Great Famine of 1980, during which 20 percent of the total population perished, several consecutive droughts have elevated the risk of food insecurity." WFP is feeding at least 970,000 of the 1.1 million people in Karamoja. "Insecurity problems and the presence of weapons have also caused serious displacement and humanitarian challenges, with hundreds of women and children fleeing to major Uganda towns (Kampala, Mbale, Jinja, Soroti) to make a living by begging, and most vulnerable populations settling near urban centres with no source of income," said Knaute. Much research is still required to establish the links between climate change, human security, migration, and conflicts

### **No direct links**

Environmental factors could trigger conflicts in an unstable political situation, commented Daniel Compagnon, who teaches at the Science Po Bordeaux, an institute of political studies at the University of Bordeaux in France. Experts at the conference cautioned that "sensational" statements such as "climate change will lead to conflicts" should be avoided. Much research is still required to establish the links between climate change, human security, migration, and conflicts, said Fabrice Renaud, Associate Director of the UN University's Institute for Environment and Human Security. A 2007 UNEP report on the conflict in Sudan noted that the competition for natural resources brought about by climate change was "considered to be directly related to the conflict in the region, as desertification has added significantly to the stress on the livelihoods of pastoralist societies, forcing them to move south to find pasture."

A number of analysts and reports have focused on pastoral communities, who live in some of the harshest conditions, and on the rising incidence of conflicts in such areas, which have often been attributed to competition for increasingly scarce natural resources

due to global warming. About 40 percent of Africa's land is used by pastoral farmers, who are often semi-nomadic. This type of land use is as high as 80 percent in Kenya, according to Ali Wario, chair of the Specialist Task Force for the African Union Pastoralist Policy Framework for Africa. Romain Benicchio, of the development agency, Oxfam, noted in his presentation at the ACTED/Egmont conference that dry and pastoralist areas occupy 70 percent of the Horn of Africa. Pastoralists represent 10 percent of the total population in Kenya, 20 percent in Uganda and 10 percent in Tanzania, and most are extremely poor: around 90 percent of such communities in Kenya live in poverty compared to the national average of 50 percent, he said. Countries in the Sahel belt have also suffered several long and recurring droughts in the past few decades, and the region has recently been dubbed the "ground zero" of climate change.

### **A multifaceted solution is needed**

Years of political and economic marginalization, inappropriate development policies, a rise in abnormal climate events, and competition for natural resources had affected the ability of pastoralists to maintain a sustainable livelihood, said Benicchio. He called for weather insurance, improved market access, microfinance and cash-transfer social welfare programmes to build resilience. The new UNEP/Expert Advisory Group report said any attempt to bring lasting peace to the Sahel region would need to place adaptation at the centre of their development and conflict prevention plans. Governments would need to rehabilitate the natural resource base, and address tensions related to access and tenure. A policy initiative by the African Union, in collaboration with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, hopes to address some of the issues. Wario, who heads the Specialist Task Force for the African Union Pastoralist Policy Framework for Africa, said they were in the process of establishing an agenda for the framework.

### **Uganda: Garbage War Threatens Sh2.3 Billion Waste Project: John Eremu and James Kabengwa: THE NEW VISION. 25 February 2009.**

Kampala — A row has erupted between two rival companies over the lucrative garbage collection business in Kampala. Great Waste and Recycling Foundation, a newly-registered company has dragged Nabugabo Updeal Joint Venture to the Police over accusations of sabotaging its operations in the city. Great Waste director Ali Kigongo says his Danish partner, Preben Nielsen, has put on hold the importation of 20 modern garbage trucks over allegations that Nabugabo UpDeal plans to burn them.

Each used truck costs sh60,000, Kigongo says. Preben, who owns a 55% stake in Great Waste, has reportedly also halted the shipment of 2,000 plastic waste bins over the same threats and following persistent theft and vandalism of the bins already deployed in Kampala. Each bin costs \$150 (sh292,000), according to Kigongo. "Our 132 modern-wheeled dustbins imported from Denmark have been confiscated by Nabugabo Updeal and we have reported the matter to the Police, but in vain. Our Danish partner has been scared away," Kigongo said in a November 5, 2008 letter to the director of the Criminal Investigations Department.

"We have been victims of terror by Nabugabo Updeal Joint Venture and our lives are in danger. Recently, one of our workers was stabbed nearly to death. Nabugabo Updeal are terrorising our business and threatening to kill me. We work in the garbage collection sector with our Danish partner but Nabugabo has denied us space." But Nabugabo Updeal managing director Hajji Musa Ssenyondo dismissed the accusations as lacking in substance. "If someone claims we have beaten them, threatened their life or damaged their garbage skips, that's criminal and we should be reported to the police," Senyondo says.

But Kigongo says they have filed several cases with the Kampala Central Police Station (CPS), but that investigations have been slow. The cases filed were registered as SD/19/31/08 for theft; SD73/4/11/08 for assault; SD/95/04/09/08 for theft and malicious damage and SD/55/08/09/08 for life threats. Senyondo also says his company had exclusive rights to manage garbage collection in the city and is paid directly by KCC. He, however, declined to disclose the contract terms or how much they are paid.

However, Kampala town clerk Ruth Kijjambu dismissed the claims. "We have no contract with any company, although many have expressed interest in managing city garbage. The council decided to put all interested companies on trial," Kijjambu says. "Companies can collect garbage from their clients until the council gives further guidelines," Kijjambu warns. The private garbage companies charge about sh25,000 a month per client. The licensed companies include Bison Consult International, Aron Waste Limited and Bins Uganda Limited, among others.

Kampala generates about 1,500 tonnes of garbage a day, three quarters (900 tonnes) of which rots uncollected. Although there are 43 registered garbage collection companies, they can only dispose of 600 tonnes a day. Kigongo says Preben is also a director in Nord-Ren, a waste management company operating in the Danish cities of Hjørring, Slikerborg and Fredkshawvn. "He has over 100 garbage compactor trucks and was willing to bring in 20 to Uganda, but has suspended the idea following the threats," Kigongo says. When contacted, Preben remained guarded about the threats, but confirmed that 2,000 plastic bins in various sizes are ready for shipment and that by the end of the year, at least six trucks will be in the country.

While insisting the number of trucks have been scaled down from 20, Kigongo says the modern trucks shall revolutionise garbage collection in the city. He says each truck has a capacity of 15 tonnes, an equivalent of about 10 Isuzu Elf trucks, the ones commonly used by the other garbage companies in Kampala. Kigongo says a new compactor truck costs \$160,000 (sh312m), while used one costs about \$60,000 (sh117m). Great Waste has finalised a feasibility study for a waste separation project in which DANIDA has picked interest. They intend to supply plastic waste to the recycling companies in Uganda and also to manufacture compost manure from organic waste. They plan to procure their waste disposal area since the main dumping ground in Kitezi is almost full. KCC's solid waste engineer, Michael Mudanye, says the problem with private city waste management is lack of co-operation. He says they spend about sh7m daily to collect and dispose of about 500 tonnes of garbage.

Central Africa

**Burundi: Conserve Nile Waters – VP:Edwin Musoni in Burundi:23 February 2009:THE NEW TIMES.**

Kigali — Burundian First Vice President Yves Satinguvu has called upon countries surrounding the River Nile to use the waters in a productive way. River Nile is the world's longest river. Speaking at the celebrations of the third Nile Day held in Bururi Province, Satinguvu said that the water resources of the River Nile constitute richness to a big population living along the river.

"We will have to bequeath these water resources to our children. We have a duty to preserve them in spite of the problems of climatic change which we currently observe," This year's Nile Day was marked under the theme: "United in Diversity by the River Nile - Our Heritage, source for Regional Cooperation."

The first celebrations were held in Rwanda in 2007. Satinguvu also stressed that experts predict that water resources could become scarce in the years to come and become sources of conflicts.

"Our respective countries should take into account this threat of which the effects are already felt by our populations in the Nile Basin. For this purpose, the means we have are our will to link us and our will to cooperate in order to carry out our dream," added the Burundian VP. The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) maintains that there is continued recognition of the seriousness of watershed degradation and experience exchange in practical measures to address the degradation and taking practical work on ground by all countries that fall within the Basin.

The organization is also looking forward to harmonisation of policies across the basin countries and a framework for sustainable management of the Nile basin environment, exchange of information and knowledge among the member countries. The Nile Day was celebrated in efforts to bolster socio-economic development of the nine countries sharing the Nile waters and the day was commemorated by a series of events and festivals. Jose Endundo Bononge, Minister in Charge of Environment from Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) said that the event is not only regarded as a landmark of the history of the Nile Basin Countries but also for the international community as a whole. **This year's Nile Day celebrations coincided with the tenth anniversary of the Nile Basin Initiative.**

## 20. ECONOMY AND ENERGY

West Africa

**Nigeria: Yar'Adua Has Plans for Vision 2020 – Tanimu: Abdulfattah Olajide:27 February 2009:DAILY TRUST.**

The Seven-Point Agenda being implemented by President Umaru Musa Yar'adua is the launching pad for the realisation of the Vision 2020 projections set by the Federal Government, contrary to insinuations that the government has no plan of action for achieving the vision, the Chief Economic Adviser to the president, Alhaji Tanimu Yakubu said yesterday in Abuja. Reacting to a recent report by Daily Trust insinuating that the Yar'adua administration has neither plan of action nor budgetary provision for achieving Vision 2020, Alhaji Yakubu said in a statement that the 7-point Agenda was designed to lead to the realisation of the long-term developmental projections.

Alhaji Yakubu said "While the Nigeria Vision 2020 remains what its name connotes: a vision, an aspiration and a long term view of where we intend to be by the year 2020, the administration's ongoing development agenda is defined by the 7-Point Agenda. The implementation of the 7-point Agenda has already commenced and it is important to note that the 2009 National Budget is a clear demonstration of the Government's determination to achieve its long-term vision objective through the faithful implementation of the Agenda as a medium term development strategy." According to him, "the Yar'adua administration is convinced that the meticulous implementation of the 7-Point Agenda will widen opportunities through provision of functional infrastructure, enhanced human capacity, wealth creation and increased emphasis on food security and affordable housing. The administration also believes that achieving the key Agenda objectives in the short and medium-term, namely: addressing the challenges of the critical infrastructure gap, resolving the chronic socio-economic crises in the Niger Delta, achieving enhanced human capital development, ameliorating the inadequacies of our food sector, implementing land tenure and home ownership reforms aimed at freeing the wealth in our land resources, addressing the challenges of national security and creating a conducive environment for wealth creation, will impact positively and most significantly on the realisation of the 2020 vision."

**Nigeria: Shell Plans U.S. \$3 Billion Loan to Lift Oil Sector:22 February 2009 :THIS DAY.**

Lagos — Royal Dutch Shell plans to lend Nigeria more than \$3bn to sustain oil production and investment threatened by the lack of government funding. The unusual move reflects Shell's reliance on Nigeria, its second-largest source of oil and gas after the US. In 2007, Nigeria provided more than a tenth of Shell's global production of about 3.3m barrels of oil equivalent per day. Shell, which is Europe's biggest oil company and has very low gearing, will use its financial strength to support Nigeria, which has some of the world's largest oil and gas reserves but is short of capital.

Nigeria's oil industry has been hit not only by militant attacks that flared up in the Niger Delta in 2006, but also by a shortage of investment finance from the government. Shell and other western oil groups work in the country in partnerships with Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), which has majority stakes of between 55 and 60 per cent. The government's strained finances have prevented it meeting its share of the funding requirements, restricting their ability to invest. The lack of funds has hampered the development of Nigeria's resources. It has also mean that Shell has failed to meet its



target to end routine flaring - burning off surplus gas - by the end of 2008. It has cut flaring in half, but needs a further \$3bn of investment to stop it altogether. To attract fresh capital, the Nigerian government plans to restructure the industry into joint ventures, possibly with NNPC reduced to a minority shareholding, that can raise funds on world markets. But those new joint ventures are unlikely to be set up until next year, threatening the industry with another year starved of capital.

To fill that gap, Shell is offering Nigeria \$3.1bn in bridging loans at very low interest rates, and project finance. Some \$1.1bn of the loan has already been agreed, and the remaining \$2bn is expected to be confirmed soon. Militant attacks have cut Nigeria's oil production by about 500,000 barrels per day, according to Jeroen van der Veer, Shell's chief executive. Nigeria's production was estimated at about 1.9m b/d last month. Shell's share of that lost production has remained steady at about 180,000 b/d since the violence in the Delta flared up in 2006, but it has not always been the same fields affected.

Shell has been making progress in restoring production in the west of the Delta, around the Forcados oil terminal, but the volumes flowing through the Bonny terminal in the eastern Delta have been cut sharply. A raid on Shell's Bonga offshore oil facility last June raised fears that the threat from militant groups was growing. But industry executives say they do not believe the level of militant violence against oil companies has escalated. In a related development, the company also said oil companies are losing as much as \$1.6 billion of crude a year to theft in Nigeria, the London-based Times said, citing the company's estimates.

As many as 100,000 barrels a day are stolen by thieves boring holes in pipelines or taking oil directly from wellheads on a "commercial scale," the newspaper said. The stolen oil is exported by barges as far as Brazil and Eastern Europe, the newspaper said, citing no one. A Shell spokesman, who did not wish to be identified, declined to comment when contacted by telephone today.

#### **Nigeria: NBC - Govt, Cameroon Yet to Check Oil Fields: 24 February 2009: THIS DAY.**

Lagos — National Boundary Commission (NBC) weekend in Abuja said Nigeria and Cameroon were yet to ascertain the oil fields that straddled their maritime boundary. Director, Maritime Boundary, Alhaji Aliyu Umar, said both countries had agreed on the boundary demarcation but that "what is left is to check and confirm the oil fields." He said that the straddling oil fields could only be ascertained by proof and not by merely looking at the map.

"We have oil fields that seem to be straddling but it is not something you can go ahead and say they are straddled by looking at the map, it has to be proved." You have to take samples from Cameroon and Nigeria, compare them and be convinced that the fields are straddling. Then you decide on what to do," he said. According to him, Nigeria had resolved its maritime boundaries with Equatorial Guinea and Benin Republic while that of Sao Tome and Principe was still pending.

"We have signed a treaty with Equatorial Guinea and ratified it while we have a joint development zone with Sao Tome and Principe."The boundary between Nigeria and Sao Tome and Principe can only be discussed after a period of 40 years" he said.Right now, it is pending."We have an agreement with Benin Republic which we have ratified in 2006," he said and hailed Nigeria for being one of the first West African countries to resolve her maritime boundaries with her neighbours.

**Nigeria: FG Finally Removes Subsidy on Petrol: Chesa Chesa:27 February 2009;Daily Independent (Lagos)**

Abuja — The Federal Government has finally approved the full deregulation of the petroleum sector to end subsidy for 'inefficient and fraudulent' operations.Given by President Umaru Yar'Adua, the approval is sequel to the recommendations of the Steering Committee on the Global Economic Crisis which met at the Villa in Abuja on Thursday and convinced him on the "institutional deficit and structural bottleneck" which the Petroleum Products Pricing and Regulatory Agency (PPPRA) has become.

Finance Minister, Mansur Muhtar, who chairs the Committee briefed reporters on the deliberations. He was accompanied by Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Governor, Chukwuma Soludo, and Petroleum Resources Minister, Rilwanu Lukman.Mansur recalled that N640 billion was spent to subsidise petroleum products last year alone, yet leakages continue in a system characterised by corruption, inefficiency, which showed that the "whole system has been compromised."He said there will be a review of the PPPRA template, and a Competition Bill is in the works to combat oligopoly in oil and other economic sectors.According to him, money saved from subsidies will be spent in other areas of need. The Committee endorsed the reversal of the last increase in pump price of diesel.His words: "The huge fiscal burden we cannot continue to meet. We have found out that we are really subsidising inefficiencies, fraud, racketeering in the whole production chain and in that context basically given the competing needs for scare resources, government felt we needed to do something. We are also subsidising other countries."

A committee headed by Bauchi State Governor, Isa Yuguda, has been set up to devise the action plan and time frame for the deregulation process.Other members of the committee are the federal Attorney General, Presidential Economic Adviser, Ministers of National Planning, Finance, Labour, and Petroleum, representatives of Labour and the private sector, as well as Edo State Governor, Adams Oshiomhole.Muhtar also announced the government's resolve to stop pumping money into the refineries which have become drain pipes. Crude oil will be sent abroad for refining and freighted back home without necessarily selling crude to the refineries.

Only the cost of refining will be paid to supplement imported refined products until the local refineries are privatised and private ones come on stream.Yar'Adua also approved the resumption of the sale of foreign exchange (forex) to licensed bureau de change, a reduction by 25 per cent of the fees charged by the Nigeria Stock Exchange (NSE) and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), and a review of risk management

procedures by financial players. Mechanisms will be strengthened to effectively coordinate financial system through a committee chaired by Soludo, and there is removal of five per cent excise duty on all products, except cigarette and alcohol.

**SIERRA LEONE: Zain Introduces Mobile Banking: Sahr Morris Jnr:25 February 2009. [Concord Times](#) (Freetown)**

Freetown — The leading mobile telecommunications provider, Zain Tuesday announced plans to bring mobile banking to over 100 million people in Africa with the launch of its new service, Zap. Providing the most comprehensive and accessible package of mobile banking features currently available on the African continent, Zap will be initially available in Kenya and Tanzania prior to the launch in Uganda. Zap represents the most comprehensive mobile banking service ever launched and will provide millions of people with access to banking for the very first time.

Zain is partnering with leading international and regional banks, including Citigroup and Standard Chartered to launch Zap, which will allow Zain customers in the three countries - with others to follow - to use their mobile phone to: pay bills and pay for goods and services, receive money and send money to friends and family, send and receive money to the bank accounts, withdraw cash, top up their own airtime account or top up someone else's, send airtime to Zain customers in Africa, and manage their bank accounts. Dr. Saad Al Barrak, Zain group's chief executive officer said: "The launch of Zap represents the latest chapter in our work to push the boundaries of mobile communications. For any market in the world, the combination of services we are providing would be exciting; but when set in an African context, the implications are especially profound."

He further added, "With a potential customer base of over 100 million people in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, many of whom have never had access to formal financial services, we believe Zap will reshape the future of banking in Africa."

Zain customers can sign-up for free for the new Zap banking and payment services by completing an application form and handing it over to registered Zain agents in tens of thousands of villages, towns and cities across East Africa. Zain will then provide the customer with a mobile wallet, which will allow them to use their mobile phone in much the same way as a bank account debit card and manage their money through their handset. The service is supported on all handsets, including ultra low cost handsets (ULCH) which Zain is successfully rolling out across the continent. Chris Gabriel, CEO Zain Africa said: "Research has shown that m-banking and m-payments can help lower the transaction costs of money transfer, increase the flow of money by making it easier to send smaller amounts and introduce those without bank accounts to a means of secure financial management. By enabling people to use their mobile phones as mobile wallets, we hope to deliver lasting benefits not just for our customers, but also for the economies of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda."

Zain plans to roll-out the enhanced Zap service to the rest of its African and Middle East network following the East Africa launch in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. During a three

month trial phase the service was used by several international companies, including Coca Cola who used it to pay their dealers in Tanzania. Zain was the first mobile company to introduce phone-to-phone airtime credit transfer service in 2005 (Me2U). Currently over US\$10 million worth of airtime transfers take place in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda each month. It is currently the fourth largest mobile network in the world in terms of geographic presence, with a footprint in 22 countries spread across the Middle East and Africa and providing mobile voice and data services to over 60 million active customers.

**Ghana: EU Rep Walks Out of Forum: Frederick Asiamah :27 February 2009: Public Agenda (Accra).**

A representative of the European Union, on Tuesday, stormed out of a public forum on oil because he disagreed with criticisms directed at some of Ghana's development partners. Mr. Jannik Vaa reportedly told the moderator of the forum that "This is not the way to dialogue" and stormed out of the forum, which was jointly organized by the Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC) and Oxfam America with sponsorship from the Ghana Research and Advocacy Programme (G-RAP).

It is believed Mr. Vaa was referring to earlier criticisms directed at the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the private sector financing arm of the World Bank Group. The IFC was mainly criticized for last week's approval of a joint bid from Kosmos and Tullow Energy seeking a \$215 million finance package for the development of the Jubilee Oil Field, despite objections from Ghanaian civil society groups and their international partners.

The CSOs had argued there was no completed Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), which had been approved by the Environmental Protection Agency of Ghana. It is internationally accepted that the purpose of an ESIA is to assess the potential impact of a project prior to approval to determine whether, and under what conditions, it should be approved. The CSOs had emphasized that the absence of the ESIA meant "IFC undermines an international professional norms and drags down international good practices."

A participant at the forum was of the view that the World Bank Group, the EU and other "development partners" did not have the interest of Ghanaians at heart. Instead, they were only interested in what they could take away from Ghana. He justified his position, citing the case of the mining sector where various rights had been abused by mining companies and yet the "development partners" found no wrong in those acts. Ironically, Kyle Kelhofer, who represented the IFC, took no offence. Responding to the comments, Mr. Kelhofer said an IFC team was expected in Ghana next week and they were prepared to hear some of the concerns raised and react appropriately. He stressed that they would engage all stakeholders.

Representing the World Bank, Mr. Kofi Tsikata said Ghanaians should not only hold their governments accountable but also development partners. The public forum was

organized to offer a platform for various interest groups to deliberate on some of the critical steps for the Ghanaian government, donors, oil companies, and civil society to partake in order to maximize gains from the coming oil boom. The occasion was also used to launch a research report titled: Ghana's Big Test: Oil's Challenge to Democratic Development. The report essentially reviews goings-on in the sector so far and makes recommendations that will help Ghana avoid the "oil curse". Among others, it recommends that Ghana should develop policy principles, a master plan, and regulations in sequence and as a package. It also encourages the disclosure of all petroleum agreements and licenses. It says "The government will be in a better bargaining position and receive better outcomes if all actors know that agreements will be disclosed." Presenting an overview of the report, Ian Gary, the author and a Senior Research Advisor of Oxfam America in charge of Extractive Industries, stated that oil could easily undermine the progress that has been made.

**Ghana: Country's Oil Can Erode Democratic Accountability: Masahudu Ankiilu Kunateh: 26 February 2009: THE CHRONICLE.**

The much anticipated onset of Ghana's oil wealth in 2010 and beyond could erode democratic accountability and institutions in the country. Already, incipient tensions are on the rise in the Western Region, where fishing communities are concerned about continued access to the ocean's resources and District Assemblies are jockeying for prime positions as the "most affected" area. The civil society groups also expressed concern that key information was not being disclosed, while important policy discussions would be made behind closed doors.

In addition to this, the promised broad and inclusive process for the development of a fundamental policy and master plan for the oil and gas sector had been more closed than open to the Ghanaian public. At the launch of the Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC) and Oxfam America report, entitled 'Ghana's big test: Oil's challenge to democratic development' in Accra, Mr. Ian Gary, a Senior Policy Advisor on Extractive Industries of Oxfam America, stressed that the needed institutions, regulations, and transparency measures should be in place early enough, to avoid the corrosive and corrupting effects of oil booms seen elsewhere in Africa. As the Jubilee field is in development process, the government does need to move at deliberative speed to be able to manage this large project.

At the same time, Ghana needs to be careful to control the pace of the development of the petroleum sector to avoid letting commercial developments outstrip the capacity of the government and society as a whole to meet the challenges, Mr. Gary advised. Ghana should set its own timetable for further development of the petroleum industry. By moving quickly, the country could make mistakes that could decrease its take from the sector and undermine accountable management of the resource. For instance, the government would need to sequence tasks in developing the laws, regulations and institutions for the sector, rather than negotiating many deals at once. The government could learn from experience and negotiate better deals over time. Also, allowing for civic participation takes time but will benefit the country in the long run through better policy

decisions and greater ownership of these decisions. On transparency, Mr. Gary called on the government and Ghana National Petroleum Corporation (GNPC) to provide regular publication of all materials on Oil and Gas payments received, as well as making all disclosed information free of charge and available on government Web sites.

The government should enact a moratorium on new exploration licenses to allow Ghana's legal and regulatory framework development process to catch up with the well-known best practices. This would ensure that the oil wealth benefit the people of Ghana.

**Nigeria: 100 Trillion Cubic Feet Gas Reserve Abandoned - NLNG Boss: Ese Awhotu: 26 February 2009: [Leadership](#) (Abuja)**

The Managing Director and Chief Executive of the Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG), Chima Ibeneche has disclosed that 100 trillion cubic ft of the nation's 200 trillion estimated gas reserve are stranded and not available for use. Speaking before a gathering of both local and international investors, managers and players in the oil and gas industry at the 2009 Nigeria oil and gas conference in Abuja, Ibeneche said "though Nigeria has 200Tcb/f of gas reserve, 100Tcb/f are stranded, so we prefer to talk of 100Tcb/f as our gas reserve". He wondered why Nigeria was exporting when it could not supply the domestic market adequately, noting that the priority in gas use should be domestic.

On the rationalisation of the law governing the industry, he said the law and the gas master plan needed to be harmonised quickly such that investors are guided in their investments. The NLNG boss observed that for Nigeria to hold its position as a respected and significant member of the world's LNG export community, it must make more effort to create local industry and carry out a proper clarification of investors before embarking on any project. Also yesterday, Total warned the Nigerian government that without investments, it would fail to meet its gas and LNG export commitments and its requirements for domestic power generation. The Senior Vice-President, Exploration and Production, Africa Total, Jacques Marraud des Grottes gave the warning at the 2009 Nigeria oil and gas conference saying that the Nigerian domestic gas network was not yet mature. "Without substantial investments, Nigeria will fail to meet its gas and NLNG export commitments and its requirements for domestic power generation", he emphasised.

He disclosed that flared gas projects will deliver an additional 1 billion cubic feet of gas daily to the market by 2010.

**Gambia: Wind Power, a Diversification of Energy: Pateh Baldeh : 25 February 2009: [FOROYAA Newspaper](#) (Serrekunda)**

Mr. Walter Klotz, the NAWEC task force team leader cum senior electrical engineer has revealed that the recently inaugurated wind mill project in Batokunku is a diversification of the country's energy sector. He said NAWEC's mission is to provide reliable and environmentally sensitive water and power services to meet customer needs at the required quality and quantity at sustainable prices that will ensure the financial viability of the company and support the social and economic development of The Gambia.

He said their objectives are investment and technical improvement in rural electrification. Their plan is to commence this year in the North Bank, Central and Upper River Regions. The Batokunku project he said has several aspects, among them, the provision of sustainable and affordable energy to the community. He added that the Batokunku Turbine project can be the gateway to further development projects in the framework of renewable energy within the Gambia.

With the completion of the wind turbine project, a milestone of diversification in the energy sector was laid, he said. The results so far obtained from the operation of the project, he added, indicate that wind energy will be a source of energy which can be harnessed in the Gambia. Wind speeds measured are far higher than initially expected, he remarked. NAWEC, he said is proud to have contributed to the success of the project. He noted that although he said the first contact entailed lengthy discussions but an agreement was finally made. Mr Klotz explained that in May 2008 a simplified but fully applicable and operational power purchase agreement was prepared and signed. This, he said, was then a breakthrough for the project to be granted a generation and distribution licence by PURA, which finally led to the erection of the plant. He noted that immediately after this NAWEC executed the connection of the electrical installations to its network. In addition he said NAWEC has handed over to the community of Batokunku 50 electricity meters which will allow the project to better control the consumption. He also revealed that such projects will motivate tourists visiting the Gambia as it is a green electricity system which is clean energy and will protect the environment. He said the community of Batokunku will use the proceeds generated for other development projects and will empower the grassroots in their development process.

He indicated that meanwhile the wind turbine operates to the satisfaction of the community. He said that for any excess energy which is injected into the NAWEC network, NAWEC will pay that amount to the community account which is meant to support the village development projects for more empowerment. He pointed out NAWEC's desire to further encourage the development of renewable energy projects.

Southern Africa

**Southern Africa: SADC Experts Recommend Approval of Usd 53 Million Budget:26 February 2009:AngolaPress.**

Experts from Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) member countries on Wednesday in Cape Town, South Africa, recommended the organisation's Cabinet Council to approve a Usd 53.9 million budget, Angop learned. According to figures made

available to Angop, of the above amount, USd 19.9 million come from contributions from member countries, 2.5 million from reserve funds, 2.5 from contribution balance, 850,000 from other incomes and 28.0 million from international partners.

The drafting of the SADC budget took into account the current world financial crisis. The funds from contributions in previous years amounted to Usd 25.0 million while, this year, exceptionally, the states will contribute a global amount of Usd 19.9 million. Due to the world economic and financial crisis, the experts defend that from this year on, the balance of the organisation's budget be transferred to the following economic budget, instead of going to the reserve fund. This is to reduce the burden caused by the contributions.

Last year, Angola contributed Usd 2.3 million. With the update of its current Gross Domestic Product, the country's contribution might rise to Usd 2.8 million, which represents the biggest amount of the organisation, only second to South Africa's Usd 4.6 million. The SADC region has a Gross Domestic Product of more than Usd 220 billion. It comprises Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

### **Zimbabwe: A Donor-Dependent Region Seeks to Bail Out Country:27 February 2009:IRIN.**

Johannesburg — Southern Africa's finance ministers are mulling over a US\$2 billion rescue package for Zimbabwe - 60 percent less than a 2008 estimate by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) of the financing required to haul the country out of its economic malaise. A two-day meeting of the Southern African Development Community's (SADC) 15 finance ministers in the South African coastal city of Cape Town is being dominated by discussions about how best to avert the collapse of the once prosperous country.

Zimbabwe's Prime Minister, Morgan Tsvangirai, who was put under intense pressure by the SADC to embrace Zimbabwe's unity government, has appealed for US\$5 billion to rebuild the shattered country - mirroring the amount UNDP said was required. Trevor Manuel, South Africa's finance minister and chair of the Cape Town SADC meeting, told local radio: "I was present when Prime Minister Tsvangirai gave the number, but it was just a number. There's a document ... that actually splits the immediate costs over the next 10 months into two amounts of about a billion dollars each." "This included a US\$1-billion loan to "restimulate retail and all kinds of things ... that's one billion we are exploring", said Manuel. "The other [is] about a billion dollars for emergencies in education, health, municipal services and some infrastructure."

Zimbabwe's economy is a twentieth of what it was in 1997 - the government stopped counting the inflation rate in July 2008, when it reached 231 million percent - seven million people, or more than half the population, are dependent on food aid, infrastructure has collapsed, and a cholera epidemic has killed nearly 4,000 people and infected over 83,000 people in six months. Cheryl Hendricks, a senior research fellow at the Institute



for Security Studies, a political think-tank based in Pretoria, South Africa, told IRIN: "SADC is in a catch-22 situation. It needs the unity government to work, but for it to work you need a peace dividend, so you have to put money into it." However, Hendricks said the SADC region, which is heavily donor dependent, was feeling the effects of the global slow-down on its commodity-based economies and would probably not be able to provide the US\$2 billion without donor assistance.

### **Lift sanctions call**

South Africa's foreign minister, Nkosazana Zuma, used the Cape Town meeting as a platform to call for the lifting of European Union (EU) sanctions targeting more than 200 of the ZANU-PF elite. Mugabe has blamed the country's woes on the sanctions, but the EU maintains that the country's collapse is a consequence of gross mismanagement and anti-democratic practices. The EU has maintained a wait-and-see attitude towards the unity government to determine whether or not it will succeed in re-establishing democratic and good governance norms before it reviews sanctions.

Reports of a US\$250,000 birthday bash for Mugabe's 85th birthday and an attempt by ZANU-PF vice-President Joyce Mujuru to sell US\$90 million of gold bullion to a London brokerage are unlikely to change the EU's position, but it is ZANU-PF's flouting of the unity agreement that causes greatest concern. In an interview marking his birthday, Mugabe dismissed calls by Tsvangirai's Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) to dismiss central bank governor Gideon Gono and attorney-general Johannes Tomama. The MDC said these unilateral appointments were contrary to the terms of the unity deal, which demands consensus from all parties. "I don't see any reason why those people should go, and they will not go," Mugabe told the state-run newspaper, The Herald. Gono's governorship of the central bank has seen the inflation rate reach 6.5 quincillion novemdecillion percent, while Tomama has frustrated the release of detained MDC activists, contrary to the terms of the unity agreement.

### **South Africa: Switch to Clean Fuels 'To Cost SA R40 Billion': Siseko Njobeni:27 February 2009:BUSINESS DAY.**

Johannesburg — THE move towards cleaner exhaust emissions would require investments of up to R40bn to upgrade existing refineries and change fuel specifications, the South African Petroleum Industry Association (Sapia) said yesterday. The switch to cleaner fuels not only has financial implications for the oil industry but could affect security of supply. The conversion to unleaded fuel led to fuel shortages in 2005 as refineries shut down to undergo necessary modifications.

Fuel produced in SA complies with the Euro 2 level emission standard, while European countries are already at the Euro 5 level, the highest standard, because of its low carbon dioxide emissions. The higher the standard, the cleaner the fuel emissions. SA aims to reach the Euro 4 level by 2012. Speaking at a seminar in Johannesburg yesterday, Sapia

environmental adviser Anton Moldan said that, due to the long lead times involved in the conversion to cleaner fuel, it could take up to five years to complete the switch. He said factors that needed to be considered in the conversion included investment, which he said was estimated at between R20bn and R40bn, possible reductions in refining capacity and the availability of skills. He said a phased-in approach was preferable to a "big-bag" implementation of the changes. The switch to cleaner fuels would also affect local component manufacturers. Stuart Rayner, the National Association of Automobile Manufacturers of SA's fuel and emissions working committee chairman, said SA had to move to the Euro 4 level by January 2012 for the country to fully benefit from expected vehicle engine technology improvements.

Lower-sulphur fuels were linked to the introduction of ultra-fuel-efficient diesel and petrol engines in Europe. Meanwhile, minerals and energy director-general Sandile Nogxina urged the petroleum industry to accelerate investment in infrastructure and not allow the reduced fuel demand to lull it into a false sense of security. Nogxina said the accelerated investment would ensure that SA was ready for periods of heightened economic activity. "It is our understanding that the (fuel) industry would require about four to five years to make required plant modifications to produce products that comply with more stringent specifications. Naturally, this timetable will come under attack from those who are reluctant to make the necessary refinery investments," he said. With the rest of the world moving towards cleaner fuels, major oil companies, which own the country's four refineries, are under pressure to upgrade their facilities if they are to remain competitive. "Moving to higher levels of fuel specifications is a certainty. I am in the process of consulting my colleagues at the environmental affairs and tourism department to include this matter in their priority list." The introduction of cleaner fuels in SA was not a single event but rather a process marked by key milestones. It, regrettably, had to be driven by government regulation rather than industry leadership or market forces and that statement alone gives you an indication of the kinds of challenges that have been encountered along the way," Nogxina said.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

### **East Africa: Worst Financial Crisis Hits EAC: 21 February 2009: THE ARUSHA TIMES.**

Arusha — When leaders the East African Community member-states comprising Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda and Burundi are talking tough about forging a common market and subsequently a federation, their actions do not match their words. East African Community established in 1996 is already facing deep financial crisis following failure by member states to remit their contributions to the secretariat in Arusha. Reliable sources say if the funds are not remitted as soon as possible the secretariat may fail to meet operational costs at the secretariat, run some projects and even be unable to pay staff salaries for February. The secretariat which has a staff of about 120, many of them professionals, has appealed to member states with outstanding contributions to settle them before the situation gets worse.

Statistics availed early this week to Arusha Times indicated that only 34 per cent of \$ 23.4 million being EAC annual budget for 2008/2009 had been remitted to the secretariat.

Under the budget proposals approved by the East African Legislative Assembly in June last year, each partner state, except Burundi, was supposed to pay \$ 5,604,733 to the secretariat mainly to cover the operational costs of the secretariat and some projects. However, until yesterday only \$ 7,858,651 had been remitted being contributions by the members with \$ 15,643,503 yet to be contributed for the 2008/2009 financial year.

EAC, a regional bloc made up of Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda, has a combined Gross Domestic Product of \$ 41 billion. According to figures made available, Uganda is the only country which had settled most of its contributions. It has already paid \$ 3,932,971 which is 70 per cent of the total amount it is supposed to contribute. Uganda, the founding partner state of the Community, currently has an outstanding contribution of only \$ 1,671,765. Tanzania and Kenya owe the secretariat \$ 3,681,326 and \$ 3,602,460 respectively. Tanzania and Kenya have so far remitted \$ 1,923,407 and \$ 2,002,273 respectively being 34 per cent and 36 per cent of what they were supposed to pay to the secretariat for the current financial year.

But in a twist of what seems to worsen the crisis facing the regional body, Burundi and Rwanda have each to date paid no single cent amid reports that the two countries were still waiting for legal formalities to become full members of EAC. Both countries were admitted into EAC on July 1, 2007 and during last June's EALA budget session, Burundi until recently hit by internal strife was required to pay only \$ 1m as its budget contribution. Rwanda was requested to pay \$ 5,604,733 as Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. Senior officials of the five EAC member states who met here recently described the financial situation at the secretariat as "critical", needing the quick intervention of the governments.

"If no funds are availed within a month, EAC will not be able to pay salaries by the end of February," said part of the report which is to be presented to the Council of Ministers which will convene here next week to discuss the crisis. It went on; "Partner states have been urged to settle the outstanding contributions to facilitate implementation of EAC's planned activities". EAC secretary general Juma Mwapachu was not available to comment on the situation as he had been involved in closed door consultations and meetings with key officials from the member countries in the last two days. One senior official who spoke on condition of anonymity said this was the worst financial crisis to face the Arusha-based regional organisation since the secretariat was launched in March 1996. He added that Kenya and Tanzania governments, have been contacted over the matter and that the delay could be caused by cumbersome bureaucracies and failure by respective ministries responsible for EAC affairs to act fast.

The crisis over the remittance of funds to EAC secretariat is likely to be compounded by conflicting legal positions of Burundi and Rwanda after they became full members of the regional bloc in July 2007. The two countries became full members upon ratifying the

instruments of Treaty of Accession and depositing the same with the secretary general by June 30, 2007 upon which consequently attended all statutory meetings of the organs and institutions of the Community as full members.

"What is debatable, however, is the date when the full rights and obligations of Rwanda and Burundi came into force and thus committing them to meeting full financial obligations to the Community," said a note which has been circulated to EAC staff. Article 9 of the Treaty of Accession invokes a strict requirement that Rwanda and Burundi "shall upon accession be subject to the financial and budgetary obligations and requirements of the Treaty on the partner states". EAC has so far recruited 22 professional staff from Rwanda and Burundi to work in the secretariat. There are also plans to appoint two deputy secretary generals from the two states to join three already working there from the founding members. The financial crisis facing the regional Community nearly disrupted the holding of the fourth meeting of EALA's second session which started in Arusha on Wednesday.

In response to the crisis, the secretariat insisted yesterday that the financial stress was temporary and that it would not deter the on-going projects and programmes nor undermine the morale of the staff. "The situation is not out of hand and is being addressed by the partner states. What we are going through is not unique at all," said a note e-mailed to this reporter. The financial crisis facing EAC secretariat started to emerge last week in Kigali, Rwanda when the vocal Tanzania's minister for East African Cooperation Dr. Diodoris Kamala revealed that ministers from member states have directed that all meetings organised by the secretariat be held in Arusha in order to cut down costs. "If a meeting is held outside Arusha, then the host country will have to meet the costs," he insisted when speaking to this reporter from Dar es Salaam.

**Eritrea: Micro-Dam Constructed in Zerben: 26 February 2009: [Shabait.com](#) (Asmara).**

Areza — The construction of a micro-dam in Zerben, Areza sub-zone, at an expenditure of about 1.6 million Nakfa has been finalized and the provision of potable water supply to the local inhabitants is already underway. Eng. Solomon Tareke from the Ministry of Agriculture indicated that the newly constructed micro-dam is expected to provide clean water to more than 2,500 families along with their cattle, in addition to promoting irrigation farming in 10 hectares nearby. The inhabitants of Adi-Tsanfa, Zerben, Adi-Beza, Embagudad and others who have already become beneficiaries of the micro-dam took active participation in the undertaking, he explained. The local inhabitants expressed satisfaction with the initiative taken to ease the potable water supply problem they have been encountering. Zerben lies 32 km west of Mendefera town.

**East Africa: East Africa Cable Firm Expands: 26 February 2009: THE NEW VISION**

Kampala — ONE of the leading local cable manufacturing firms, East African Cables, has unveiled a Ksh1b (about sh25b) three-year continental expansion plan. The firm's

expansion plan would see the firm establish branches in 12 African countries up from five countries by 2012, the chief executive officer, George Mwangi, said. He said they would commission a new copper cables production line and do major upgrades at the Nairobi copper production line later this year. He said this would boost their capacity by 60%.

"Our affiliation with Nexans, the global expert in cables and cabling systems, is bearing fruits," he said. Currently operating in the five East Africa countries of Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi, East African Cables has grown its export portfolio which accounted for 57% of its turnover in 2008 compared to 31% the previous year. On the downside Mr. Mwangi sited fluctuations in aluminum business to the local utility-K.P.L.C this accounted for about 10% of the group turnover down from 28% the previous year. This on a positive note serves to eliminate concentration risk.

Central Africa

**Cameroon: Fuel Trafficking - A Well Organised Disorder: Lukong Pius Nyuylime:18 February 2009;CAMEROON TRIBUNE.**

*Sealed tankers are opened and fuels extracted and mix with Kerosene for higher profit.*

The Nsam tragedy, in which a leaking fuel tanker exploded killing over 200 people in the process of extracting free fuel, has not stopped adventures in petrol smuggling business for higher gains. It is difficult to state with precision how much actors involved in the business draw in terms of profit but the business has almost completely defied all legal and repressive measures aimed at phasing out the practice. The smuggling takes several forms, some of which include: destroying sealed tankers, extracting fuel from train wagons and mixing of fuel with other products.

**Destroying stickers** This is one of the commonest smuggling devices used on big cities. Tankers get loaded at the Petrol depot or at SONARA; transport the product to the city where the stickers on the tanker leads are removed. Some of the fuel is then extracted and mixed with kerosene to increase the quantity. In Yaounde, this activity takes place around the SCDP depot in the Nsam neighbourhood in Yaounde not far from the area of tragedy. The signs are there. In fact, the area, a big open building at the entrance to the Cocoa Development Authority, is littered with remnants plastic stickers removed from tanks.

**Extracting from Train Tanks** Several litres of fuel are extracted every time trains transporting the product are stationed. Smugglers use all sorts of containers to drain fuel from the tanks. They will carefully loiter around the train, usually during odd hours and wind open the tank leads for fuel to flow out. Of course, once such fuel is in the black market, it sells like hot cake not because it is of higher quality but because it is sold at cheaper rates.

**Mixing with Kerosene** This is a long standing practice. Authorities of the Ministry of Energy and Water have on several occasions sealed pumping stations identified with the

act. In effect, the exercise consists in getting fuel, usually of "SUPER" quality and mixing it with kerosene to increase the quantity. The control brigade of MINEE has had to track down culprits transporting several 40-litre gallons full of kerosene to mix with fuel just from SONARA. Once this has been done, it is pumped into the tank at the petrol station for consumption.

**East Africa: Rwanda to Host Stock Markets Meet in June: Alex Ngarambe:27 February 2009:THE NEW TIMES.**

Kigali — EASEA is an association that brings together the region's stock markets of Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda. Burundi is yet to acquire a stock market. Rwanda joined the association last year after signing the memorandum of understanding with the rest of the members.

"The association helps to promote the development of the capital markets in the region, training of the members of the association such as brokers," said Capital Market Advisory Council (CMAC) Operational Manager, Celeste Rwabukumba. Some of the objectives of the association include, developing and promoting a data bank of information, exchanging of information and materials on the capital markets, and promotion of common standards on issuing, listing and trading of securities.

"Burundi as the only country in the region that is not part of the association, has been invited to follow the regional initiative" added Rwabukumba. Rwanda has also joined the East Africa Securities Regulatory Authority (EASRA) a body that brings together regional security exchange, regulatory institutions.

The East Africa Securities Exchange Association has registered achievements for the members which range from cross boarder trading and cross-listing of companies for example Safaricom, Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB) which is set to list on the Rwandan market later this year. The association has also established a smart order routing system model which will enable a trading platform. EASEA has identified a company that will implement the model. In order to strengthen the financial markets, EASEA closely supervises the markets and brokers and monitors what is going on in the brokerage houses. However, the association is faced with numerous challenges such as the on going financial crisis that affects the markets, lack of capacity for the participants and lack of liquidity and products on the markets.

**Rwanda: Railway Construction to Begin Next Year – Bihire: Robert Mugabe:26 February 2009:THE NEW TIMES.**

Kigali — The long awaited construction of the railway line that will connect Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania will begin next year. The development was confirmed Tuesday by the Minister of Infrastructure, Linda Bihire, during an exclusive interview, with The New Times. She said that the construction had been planned to begin from Isaka in Tanzania, to Kigali but due to the upgrading of the infrastructure currently going on there,

construction works will begin from Dar es Salaam and will kick-off at the beginning of 2010.

"The project is promising and exciting; all stakeholders are positive and responding. Very soon we will have a cheap link to our neighbours which will ease movement of goods and people," Bihire reiterated. She added that the project is facilitated by the three countries and implementation will be based on equity share, based on the Public Private Partnership (PPP) model which was adopted for the development of the railway line. Bihire said that upon completion, the railway line will create jobs for Rwandans and ease the burden of expensive transportation of goods and personnel. She revealed that next month, a roundtable will be convened in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa bringing together the three partner States and African Development Bank; the main development partner in the Multi-million project, to discuss the feasibility report that will be delivered by TPS Engineering.

"The railway will be locomotive but there is a possibility of switching it to electrical. It's a standard gauge moving 120KMH different from the one now operating in Tanzania which is narrow gauge," Bihire said. The cost of the project is estimated at between \$2.7bn and 3.5bn. The three governments have agreed to establish a Joint Technical Monitoring Committee (JTMC) responsible for monitoring and managing the technical aspects while Rwanda has been tasked with coordinating the railway project.

## 21. POLITICS

### West Africa

#### **Nigeria: Senate Moves to Make EFCC Independent: Andrew Oota, Stanley Yakubu, and Adesuwa Osunde: 25 February 2009: Leadership (Abuja)**

Abuja — The Senate has commenced the process of amending the Act establishing the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) by removing the anti-graft commission from the control of the president and the attorney-general of the federation. As part of the efforts to reposition the EFCC, the Senate is also determined to place the commission on the first line charge. Similarly, the upper legislative chamber is seeking to restrict the EFCC to investigate and prosecute elected or appointed federal and state government political office holders. Addressing Senate correspondents yesterday, the chairman of the Senate Committee on Information and Publicity, Senator Ayogu Eze, said the primary reason for the amendment of the EFCC Act was to give the commission the prosecutorial powers that would enable it prosecute corrupt persons rather than slow down the prosecution process by the office of the attorney-general of the federation.

According to Eze, the EFCC, under the presidency and the office of the attorney-general, has been reduced to a toothless bull dog, where it functions on the whims and caprices of some individuals who are vested with the powers of appointing the chairman of the anti-graft commission. His words: "The constitution gives the power of prosecution to the attorney-general; and unless we amend the constitution, the EFCC or any other agency for that matter on such matters will continue to be under the direction of the AG. But one

thing we want to do to help improve the authority and independence of the EFCC is to ensure that the appointment of the EFCC chairman will have to be cleared with the Senate, the removal will also be clear with the Senate. That way, we hope that their independence will a little bit be more assured."The issue is that we are trying to amend the Constitution to give relevant agencies such as the EFCC adequate authority to prosecute cases because a lot of cases are bogged down because of the processes of prosecution because they are all clustered up through one channel. If, like the case of the ombudsman, for instance, they can generate their own case and follow it up to a logical conclusion, may be that will help."The fact that they say that prosecution goes through the attorney-general does not mean that an agency like the EFCC cannot be an IPO, for instance, but it has to be under the direction of the AG. And this is time-consuming. But we are saying because of the kind of special role that EFCC is playing, it can have a straight channel so that they can work faster. As it is now, anything that has to do, if it has to be properly done, must go through the directorate of public prosecution. And then it is from there that they will now write whether there is a case to answer or there is no case to answer; it is after that that they can go to court. That is a circuitous journey, if you will agree with me."Let me clarify it. There is no way anybody can take the power away now. It is not possible. The power of prosecution lies up till now with the office of the Attorney-General until the constitution is amended. The only hope is that since this is coming at a time we are also talking about amending the constitution, we can amend the constitution in such a manner that will give the EFCC the kind of power that we expect.

"But there are other things that we can do to help EFCC, which is what we want to put in the law. One is putting them on first line charge so that they can receive their money and at least give them some measure of independence. The second is to ensure that the appointment and removal of the chief executive of the EFCC is cleared by the Senate. But the issue of prosecution will continue to be a touchy one because of the constitution."The other amendments contemplated as contained in the lead debate by the chairman of the Senate Committee on Drugs, Narcotics and Financial Crimes, Senator Sola Akinyede, include: first line charge; security of tenure; and prosecutorial powers.\*First Line Charge: Amendment of Section 44-Except in accordance with the provisions of Section 22 (2) and Section 30 (4) of this Act and without prejudice to the provision of Section 174 of the Constitution, in the exercise of its functions, the Commission shall not be subject to the direction or control of any authority or person.

\*Section 6 (r): It shall be the primary responsibility of the Commission to investigate and prosecute elected or appointed federal and state government political office holders\*Security of tenure: Section 8 (4) - Where any officer or person is appointed under sub-section 3 of this section, such officer or person shall hold such appointment for a minimum of four years unless the Commission decides otherwise; (5) Any person approving the deployment or secondment of such officer or person shall be deemed to have consented to the release of such officer or person for the period mentioned in subsection (4) above.Akinyede: Under the present EFCC (Establishment) Act 2004, the proposed amendment seeks to guarantee the tenure of office for deployed officers for a particular period unless the Commission decided otherwise for incompetence, misbehaviour or other reasons.



"With special powers of the Commission, under Section 7 of the Act, the EFCC Act as presently constituted does not specifically confer on the Commission the power to prosecute individuals or corporate bodies identified to be involved in economic and financial crimes."The Act merely empowers the Commission to investigate with a view to identifying individuals, corporate bodies or groups involved. This lacuna in law may be exploited by defence lawyers in the near future. One of the amendments being proposed is to empower the Commission by specifically conferring the power of prosecution on it."The Senate also mandated its standing committees on Drugs, Narcotics and Financial Crimes and the Judiciary to report back in two weeks.Meanwhile, the House of Representatives yesterday announced that it would consider the report of the Ndudi Elumelu-led committee on Power and that of the Igo Aguma chaired ad hoc committee into the activities of the oil sector next week.

The report, which was presented to the House about six months ago, investigated the alleged expenditure of \$16 billion on the power sector in eight years by former President Olusegun Obasanjo without commensurate results.The deputy speaker, Hon. Usman Bayero Nafada, who presided over the day's plenary session, urged the lawmakers to also study the report of the ad hoc House committee that investigated activities in the oil and gas sector within the same period so that they could make a meaningful input during the debate.Announcing it, Nafada said, "Honourable members, we may start the consideration on power probe report and that of NNPC probably next week."We advise members to study their reports to enable them contribute meaningfully when we start the consideration."

Southern Africa

### **Zimbabwe: New Constitution in Two Years: Mabasa Sasa:26 February 2009:THE HERALD(HARARE)**

Harare — Zimbabwe is likely to have a new constitution within the next 18 to 24 months after which voters will head back to the polls for fresh elections, President Mugabe has said.

In his traditional birthday interview at Zimbabwe House yesterday, President Mugabe said the inclusive Government bringing together Zanu-PF and the two MDC formations was not a permanent arrangement and in addition to working on economic recovery, would put forward a draft constitution in preparation for the elections.He pointed out that the parties would most likely work with a draft document that has already been agreed upon, which would be subjected to a referendum before any parliamentary procedures could be initiated to give it legal effect."We are an interim arrangement, we are not a permanent inclusive Government. Ahead of us is a whole constitutional process which requires that we address the issue of the constitution."There is already a draft that the three parties agreed on, they call it the Kariba Draft because that is where they came up with the document.We shall all look at it and when we are all satisfied, it shall be put to the people in a referendum."If the people say yes, then the draft will be allowed to pass through Parliament. The schedule, the timeframe that was agreed on by the parties, was

that within 18 to 24 months we should have a referendum."We will then have an election thereafter, perhaps in about two years' time," President Mugabe, who turned 85 on February 21, said.He also said the creation of the inclusive Government did not nullify any statutory appointments legally made in the recent past.

This was in apparent reference to the appointment of Mr Johannes Tomana as the Attorney-General and Dr Gideon Gono's re-appointment as Governor of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe for another five years.The President said the appointments had been made legally and the individuals occupying the various offices in question had been vetted by the responsible authorities to ascertain their suitability for the job."I do not see any reason why those people should go and they will not go."He said the inclusive Government must be united on the principles of national sovereignty and independence, reiterating that land tenure and agrarian reforms were irreversible.Anyone who rejected such principles, the President said, would in turn be rejected by the Government, adding that undue foreign meddling in the country's affairs would not be tolerated.He urged members of the inclusive Government to engage each other constructively and follow due procedures when making criticisms of policy or of their fellow officials in the executive.

President Mugabe indicated that he would soon meet with the Minister of Finance, Mr Tendai Biti, to discuss the status of the Zimbabwe dollar and the use of foreign currencies, particularly the South African rand."I do not see us adopting the rand as our main currency. Even in Sacu, the South African Customs Union, the members have their own currencies even though they use the rand. Botswana has its pula, Namibia has its dollar, Lesotho, Swaziland, they all have their own currencies."But they base them on the rand and that is something that we might consider doing here. At the moment we are using all international currencies.

"When it was first mooted, the idea of paying people in US dollars, I was against it and I still am because we just do not have enough (foreign currency). It is a problem that confronts us even now."Personally, I think we should revalue the Zimbabwe dollar in a manner that fixes its relationship with the rand for a while. We will protect it for a while, for a while as we increase production. But we should protect it."We do not expose it to fluctuations of the market. The problem is that the people of Zimbabwe have become speculators. There are some people who, if you say the (Zimbabwe) dollar is four to one with the rand, they will immediately make it eight to one and 10 to one."So there is this escalation on a daily basis. We should fix it (the value of the local currency) legally and keep it there for now. I want to discuss this with Biti. And how do you make it go? Through production in agriculture, manufacturing, mining and the people get goods and services and then we can expose it to the fluctuations of the market," he said.

**Eritrea: No Dialogue With an Aggressor:25 February 2009:Shabait.com (Asmara).**

Asmara — In keeping with its deceptive nature the TPLF regime has resorted to its habitual political dramas that hold no logical resonance whatsoever has recently made claims of wanting to engage in dialogue with Eritrea. Not having acquired even a small measure of wisdom in all its years in power, the TPLF regime failed to recall that its past attempts at initiating a 'dialogue' had been rejected even before the virtual demarcation of the border; for it is the same regime that has previously rejected the Algiers agreement as well as the ruling of the International Court of Justice and the overall supremacy of Law.

Lately the regime has been claiming that it needs to engage in political dialogue with Eritrea when a while back it used to declare that there won't be any dialogue with Eritrea whatsoever. The peoples and government of Eritrea are one and the same. There won't be any dialogue so long as the regime violates the rule of law, and still holds annexed Eritrean territories. The people of Eritrea will not waver with Eritrean Sovereignty and the rule of law for generations to come.

**22. PEACEKEEPING, CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND SECURITY MATTERS**

West Africa

**Nigeria: U.S. Spends \$17 Million on IMET for African Soldiers - Defense Attaché:Benjamin Auta:26 February 2009; DAILY TRUST.**

The United States government spent \$17 million last year to train 500 African soldiers on Informational Military Education and Training (IMET) programmes, the US Defense Attaché in Nigeria Lieutenant Colonel Hoffman has said. He said this while addressing participants of course 17 of the National Defence College (NDC) on the gains of the US, Africa relationship, in Abuja. Colonel Hoffman said that under the IMET, International Students are trained with US students on the same equipment and to the same standard.

He said that courses available under IMET include professional military education such as War Colleges, Command and Staff Colleges and Senior Non Commission officers' (NCOs) development as well as military skills training like Armour, Infantry and Artillery courses. Colonel Hoffman said the US military offers counter terrorism fellowship programme aimed at combating terrorism. On the US Africa command, Colonel Hoffman stated that it is designed to focus on existing programmes and resources as it seeks "to align with and work through existing African security Organization such as the African Union and ECOWAS." One of the guiding principles of the command is to encourage African solutions through enhanced African capacity, helping to develop institutions and capacity via delivering services," he said.

**Côte d'Ivoire: Top UN Envoy to Tour 1000 Micro-Projects for Peace:24 February 2009: UN NEWS SERVICE.**

Starting at a chicken coop and a pig farm outside the city of Bouaké, the top United Nations envoy to Côte d'Ivoire today started a five-city pilgrimage through the divided West African country to visit projects that aim to help ex-combatants and other at-risk youths re-enter civil society. "The realization of these projects has been positive and I have great hopes they will make a difference," Y. J. Choi, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's Special Representative for Côte d'Ivoire, said of the "1000 micro-projects for peace" programme backed by the UN Mission in the country, known as UNOCI, which Mr. Choi heads.

At the kick-off of his tour, Mr. Choi also inaugurated two classrooms constructed by UNOCI in the village of d'Olienou as part of an effort to provide support for communities that are welcoming ex-combatants in the country's civil strife, which has divided it into a Government south and a rebel-dominated north since 2002. Around 1,200 Ivoirians have already benefited from the "1000 micro-projects for peace" programme, which was launched in August 2009 and financed by the UN's Peacebuilding Fund, which is dedicated to helping post-conflict countries keep from sliding back into strife.

Southern Africa

**Zimbabwe: National Healing Process Urged - Victims of Violence and Church and Community Leaders Call for New Unity Government to Establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Chipso Sithole: 5 February 2009: [Institute for War & Peace Reporting](#) (London).**

Harare — Emmanuel Chiroto, an opposition councillor and mayor of Harare, is moved to tears as he recalls the abduction and brutal murder of his wife, Abigail, by armed militia loyal to President Robert Mugabe and his ZANU-PF party during the blood-soaked period preceding the June 27 presidential run-off election. "Nothing will ever bring my wife back, but the perpetrators of this are still there roaming the streets," he told IWPR. "Justice must be served and if [the newly formed] inclusive government fails to deal with this issue there will never be national healing. How do I work with people who murdered my wife? They must tell me who sent them to kill my wife and how they did it. There has to be a way to secure justice. Our hearts are sore." In terms of the agreement signed in September by Mugabe, Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change, MDC, and Arthur Mutambara, leader of a breakaway MDC faction, which provided for a government of national unity, to which the MDC finally agreed on January 30, also calls for a process of national healing in Zimbabwe, but does not say what form this should take.

It also omits to mention whether senior members of ZANU-PF and the military, who are accused of masterminding the political violence, including the murder of more than 200 people in the run-up to the June vote, should face justice. According to prime minister-designate Tsvangirai, senior members of ZANU-PF should face trial for political violence, though he does not believe Mugabe himself should be tried. ZANU-PF, however, and Mutambara's faction of the MDC believe that any action taken should be aimed at "achieving national healing rather than punishment and retribution".

Chiroto, one of 45 MDC councillors in Harare, is unequivocal on the issue - for him punishment of those who murdered his wife is the only acceptable option."I have problems forgetting and forgiving the people who killed my wife," he said. "Justice must one day be meted out to whoever organised the killing. What do I tell my son when he grows up?"A hit squad descended on Chiroto's Hatcliffe home on June 16 last year, the day after he was elected mayor, firebombing the house and reducing it to cinder. The attackers then seized 27-year-old Abigail and the couple's four-year-old son, Ashley, and bundled them into one of two double-cab trucks with no number plates. Some of the kidnapers wore military uniforms, said witnesses. Chiroto was not at home at the time.

On June 18 the dreaded phone call came - Abigail's body had been discovered on a farm near Borrowdale - her head crushed, her tongue sliced off, probably to muffle her screams, and her eyes gouged out.Church leaders in Zimbabwe have called on parties to the inclusive government to establish a truth and reconciliation commission, TRC, similar to that set up in South Africa to expose apartheid-era crimes, to investigate the violence that followed the disputed March 29 general election which was won by the MDC but without a sufficient majority for Tsvangirai to become president without a run-off vote.

A 20-strong church delegation comprising representatives from the Zimbabwe Council of Churches, the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference and the Zimbabwe Christian Alliance, ZCA, met Tsvangirai on February 2 and agreed to support the new government, but requested the establishment of a TRC.ZCA spokesman Raymond Motsi told IWPR that there was a need to resolve the divisions and injustices of the past. However, he said this would only be possible if there was full disclosure by perpetrators of human rights violations and other wrongs as well as some form of justice for victims."Churches are saying the truth, justice and reconciliation process should start once a new inclusive government is in place. That should mark the beginning of the transitional justice system," Motsi said. "This process should not be left to the political parties alone. It should not be elitist and should not be a political decision between ZANU-PF and the MDC."

A spokesman for the civil society group the Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition believes that "joint peace rallies should be convened by leaders of all parties to promote peace and reconciliation. True peace and lasting unity will only be achieved once past human rights abuses are fully addressed".The former archbishop of Cape Town and Nobel peace laureate, Desmond Tutu, who led South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission and, in the past, has called for a military invasion of Zimbabwe to topple Mugabe, has now urged world leaders to back the inclusive government in the interests of reconstructing the shattered lives of the Zimbabwean people. He has also appealed for an end to the "totally unacceptable" violence.

"My heart aches for Zimbabwe. Your countrymen and women have suffered greatly," he said. "It is in your power to stop the violence if you act as one. You have an opportunity now to stand up for peace."But a defiant Mugabe, who has denied orchestrating the election-related violence that killed and injured hundreds and displaced thousands, has demanded security guarantees for himself and his Joint Operations Command - a think

tank of army generals who reportedly planned and executed the violence. Official sources say secret guarantees of immunity against prosecution were negotiated between Mugabe and Tsvangirai, facilitated by SADC-appointed broker, former South African president Thabo Mbeki, and include crimes committed as far back as the 1980s, when thousands of opponents of ZANU-PF were massacred in Matabeleland; the murders that took place during the land grab initiated in 2000; the brutal army-led Operation Drive Out Filth of 2005, which left more than 700 000 homeless after bulldozers moved into townships and flattened homes; and last year's election-related violence. *Chipo Sithole is the pseudonym of an IWPR reporter in Zimbabwe.*

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Somalia: Islamic Clerics And Elders Condemn Mogadishu Fighting:25 February 2009:Shabelle Media Network (Mogadishu).**

Mogadishu — Somali Islamic clerics has denounced the fighting in Mogadishu which killed more civilians in the city. Sheik Bashiir Ahmed Salad, the chairman of the Council of Islamic clerics has strongly denounced and called for the warring side to stop the fighting immediately. He condemned yesterday and today's fighting in Mogadishu which killed and displaced more innocent civilians.

The council also condemned what it was described as indiscriminate shelling of AMISOM troops. The chairman of Hawiye traditional elders also condemned the fighting and described as regrettable actions. Mohamed Hassan Haad, the chairman of Hawiye Traditional Elders said they started mediation efforts between the government and the Islamist rebels. The fighting which restarted in Mogadishu on Wednesday killed about 30 people and wounded 120 civilians for the second day. The fighting stopped and the situation is calm now.

**Somalia: African Union to Re-Assess Forces in Mogadishu:24 February 2009:AngolaPress.**

Addis Ababa — The African Union Peace and Security Council currently chaired by Angola, met Monday in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), following the recent attack by gunmen on the continental body forces based in Mogadishu, Somalia (Amison). As a result of the attack, 11 Amisom soldiers from Burundi were killed and another 15 wounded. On the occasion, the president of the African Union Peace and Security Council, ambassador Manuel Domingos Augusto, spoke of the need for a re-assessment of the Amisom, particularly concerning its mandate and means at its disposal. The Angolan diplomat also spoke of preventive and effective measures where there are African Union

structures. However, the Amisom commander, gen. Okelo, said the situation on the ground is under control, despite the incident. The members of the Council condemned the attack and said appropriate measures should be taken to take those responsible to court.

The Council also expressed its full support for the Somalia transitional federal government, in its effort to consolidate peace in that country. The members of the Council also appealed to the United Nations to act promptly in implementing the 18/63 resolution of the world body security council, that is in deploying a UN peacekeeping force in Somalia. The members also expressed the Amisom's determination and commitment to helping restore peace in Somalia.

**Sudan: 150 Senegalese Peacekeepers Arrive, Raising UNAMID's Overall Troop Level to 12,753:25 February 2009: [United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur \(El Fasher\)](#).**

An additional 150 Senegalese peacekeepers arrived today in El Fasher, North Darfur, to bring the total number of members in the Senegalese infantry battalion to 834. The principal duties of the battalion, which is based in El Geneina, West Darfur, include conducting patrols to enhance security and encourage confidence within the local population, and conducting escorts for humanitarian convoys.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1769 (2007) authorized the deployment of up to 19,555 military personnel, including 360 military observers and liaison officers, and up to 3,772 police personnel and 19 formed police units comprising of up to 140 personnel each. To date, the total number of military forces deployed in Darfur totals 12,753. The Senegalese battalion was part of the original troops that transferred from AMIS to UNAMID on 31 December 2007.

**Somalia: President 'Begins Talks' With Armed Opposition:28 February 2009: [Garowe Online \(Garowe\)](#)**

Somalia's president has begun talks with members of the armed opposition in a bid to restore order to the chaotic Horn of Africa country, Radio Garowe reports. Suleiman Olad Roble, the country's new Minister of Sports, told reporters Friday that President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed has began "telephone conversations" with armed opposition leaders.

He did not name specific faction leaders, but Islamist rebel groups Al Shabaab and Party of Islam have staged violent attacks including suicide bombings targeting the African Union peacekeeping mission in Mogadishu (AMISOM). "We are deeply saddened by the civilians who died in the AMISOM bombardment, and we warn the African soldiers to not use excessive force," Sports Minister Roble said. Somalia's new 'unity government' has a two-year interim mandate to strengthen security and governance institutions in a country wracked by 18 years of war.

**Somalia: Islamist Hardliners Oust Pro-Government Militia From Bakool:25 February 2009: [Garowe Online \(Garowe\)](#)**

Islamist rebels in Somalia violently expelled pro-government militias from the frontier region of Bakool Wednesday, Radio Garowe reports. Al Shabaab guerrillas backed by armed trucks attacked the town of Huddur, the provincial capital of Bakool region, from three different directions. Witnesses said a three-hour battle erupted in the middle of the town, as Al Shabaab guerrillas and pro-government militias fought for control of the town.

There were no casualty reports immediately available. Al Shabaab fighters seized control of Huddur and the pro-government militia was forced to flee, residents reported. The fighters reportedly seized weapons and trucks from the fleeing pro-government militia. Adan Saransor, a former Baidoa warlord who fled Huddur, admitted to reporters that they were attacked by Al Shabaab, but declined to mention where he is.

Some reports said the pro-government militia and their leaders had fled to the town of Yeed, which is near the Ethiopian border. Al Shabaab fighters seized control of Baidoa, seat of the Somali parliament, last month after Ethiopian troops withdrew, forcing government officials to flee to neighboring Bakool. Ethiopian forces reportedly returned to parts of Bakool region last week, where they are reportedly organizing a front against Al Shabaab expansion.

**Somalia: Security Council Condemns Deadly Attack On African Union Base:25 February 2009:UN NEWS SERVICE.**

The United Nations today condemned in the strongest terms the suicide attack on the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) base in Mogadishu, which caused the deaths of 11 Burundian peacekeepers and injured 17 others on Sunday.

"The members of the Security Council express their condolences to the families of the victims, to the people and the Government of Burundi, and to the African Union," Ambassador Yukio Takasu of Japan, which holds the Council Presidency for the month, said in a press statement. "The members of the Council reiterate their condemnation of all acts of violence and incitement to violence against AMISOM" following reports of further attacks yesterday, he added. The 15-member body reiterated its commitment to supporting a strengthened AMISOM, which it said played a vital role in helping to bring peace and security to Somalia, and commended the Governments of Uganda and Burundi for their contributions.

In its statement, the Council applauded the ongoing political process in Somalia that led to the expansion of Parliament and the election of a new president, Sheikh Sharif Ahmed, who has made taken steps to "strengthen the political process and improve security." Mr. Takasu said that "the members of the Security Council call on all Somalis to reject violence and extremism, to embrace peaceful means of resolving conflicts, and to support the government towards this goal," stressing the body's "determination to combat all forms of terrorism."



**Sudan: After Last Month's Flare-Ups, Relative Calm Returns, UN-African Mission Says: 26 February 2009.UN NEWS SERVICE.**

The joint African Union-United Nations peacekeeping force Darfur (UNAMID) today reported that relative calm had returned to the war-ravaged western region of the Sudan although concern remained over continuing violence in some areas.

UNAMID noted that there had been reports of banditry in North Darfur, the state that recently witnessed an influx of thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to its camps due to a fresh outburst of violence in South Darfur. In South Darfur, where heavy fighting broke out last month between Government troops, other armed groups and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), locals have told UNAMID that armed militiamen continue to attack and harass civilians.

For its part, UNAMID said, its blue helmets continue to intensify their routine patrols as well as their investigations, their escort functions and their confidence-building measures throughout the area. The hybrid force was set up by the Security Council to protect civilians in Darfur, where an estimated 300,000 people have been killed and another 2.7 million have been forced from their homes since fighting erupted in 2003, pitting rebels against Government forces and allied Janjaweed militiamen. One year on from transferring the task of suppressing the violence to UNAMID from the AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS), some 12,753 blue helmets are now in place across the region, a little more than 60 per cent of the 19,555 military personnel authorized by the Security Council.

**Sudan: 'Peace On the Rocks'?:23 February 2009: IRIN.**

Nairobi — Two years before a referendum on self-determination is held in Southern Sudan, confidence in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) is falling, the Enough Project said in a report. The agreement, which ended years of conflict, has been hamstrung by the National Congress Party's intransigence, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement's growing pains, and the international community's neglect, states the paper, *Peace on the Rocks: Sudan's Comprehensive Peace Agreement*.

Confidence in the CPA, it noted, was diminishing, mistrust between the parties mounting and both sides were arming in preparation for a possible resumption of hostilities. A possible arrest warrant against President Omar al-Bashir could add an additional layer of uncertainty to the CPA's fate. "The CPA is not a lost cause," report author and Enough field researcher Adam O'Brien, said. "However, it badly needs focused support from the international community in terms of both incentives and pressure to send a clear and consistent message that full implementation of the agreement is the essential foundation for peace in Sudan." "The cost of the CPA's collapse would be immense," said Enough's executive director John Norris. "If the United States and its allies do not get the CPA back on track, they could face a new civil war in Sudan and the violent dissolution of Sudan as a state."

## **Sudan: Clash Sends Civilians Fleeing Malakal:5 February 2009:IRIN.**

Juba — Clashes between Southern Sudanese government forces and fighters loyal to a militia leader in Malakal town, Upper Nile State, have forced "a sizeable number" of civilians to flee their homes, an official said.

The flare-up, according to observers, has renewed fears that conflict could resume in the region, two years before the end of the six-year interim period designated by the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). "So many civilians were displaced," said Changson Chang, Southern Sudanese government spokesman and part of a committee monitoring the clashes. "Most of the civilians are displaced outside Malakal and they are suffering." Chang said the number of displaced was "sizeable because [the fighting] involved heavy weapons" and lasted the whole day. "We hope some of them will come back, and we will ascertain the numbers soon," he added. The fighting broke out after Gabriel Tang returned to Malakal, a town on the undemarcated border between south and north Sudan. He came from Khartoum where he had sought sanctuary and, according to local officials, resisted an attempt to arrest him for crimes committed in 2006. Hours later, Southern President Salva Kiir named a committee to monitor the situation. His government has since appealed for aid for those affected.

"Tang is a spoiler," said Major General James Hoth, deputy chief of staff of the Southern Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). "He has never been in the SPLA. He has been with the government militia." Under the CPA, all militia forces were to be aligned to either the SPLA or the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF). Tang aligned his militia to the SAF. The SAF in turn dispatched Tang's militias to join its component of the Joint/Integrated Units. Under the CPA, the JIU is comprised of equal numbers of troops from the SAF and SPLA.

### **"Difficult transition"**

The latest flare-up is the second time Tang's fighters have engaged the SPLA. In 2006, fighting left hundreds dead and displaced thousands. Kiir called on the Khartoum government to arrest Tang. A statement issued by the government committee said Tang was asked by the SPLA to leave Malakal or hand himself over. Instead his men attacked government forces. Some JIU components from the SAF declined to join Tang, officials added. "Tang is trying to put Sudan back to where [it] was before 2005," said SPLM deputy secretary-general Ann Itto. Hoth said the commanding officer of the SAF component of the JIU, alongside 200 SAF/JIU forces, handed himself over to the SPLA during the fighting, saying he did not want to be part of the chaos. The UN Mission in Sudan urged the SPLA and Tang to resolve their differences. It was essential for the military leadership of the SAF and the SPLA to ensure that the JIUs functioned together to protect civilians, Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, UN special envoy to Sudan, said in a statement. "It is a very difficult transition and if it is not managed well [Southern and Northern Sudan] can go back to war," Chang said.

Central Africa

**Rwanda: African Union Chief Lauds Operations Against FDLR:Eugene Kwibuka :27 February 2009; THE NEW TIMES.**

Kigali — The head of the African Union Commission, Jean Ping, yesterday commended the cooperation between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to uproot rebels of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and restore regional peace. Ping made the remarks following his meeting with President Paul Kagame, at Urugwiro Village, after making a similar visit to Congolese President Joseph Kabila on Tuesday.

The joint operation that was launched in January came to an end yesterday, with widespread expressions of satisfaction, as many called it a success. "It is clear and we fully support the ongoing process and I came here to reaffirm this," Ping told journalists shortly after the talks with Kagame. He explained that his visit to Rwanda and its neighbour, the DRC, aimed at evaluating the security situation especially in the DRC but also on the continent in general. The AU Commission boss specifically commended joint efforts between Rwanda and the DRC to pacify eastern Congo, emphasizing that cooperation between neighbours remains the greatest strength. "We have always been affirming that Rwanda and DRC are neighbours, they should talk, exchange views and cooperate in solving problems," he observed, explaining that issues of all the rebels in eastern Congo can only be resolved through cooperation.

Ping said that he had demonstrated the same support for the offensive against FDLR rebels during his Kinshasa visit, earlier this week. He is quoted by agencies as having told journalists following his meeting with President Kabila that the solution adopted to deal with the crisis in the Eastern DRC is close to what the AU had advocated for. "The results taken as a whole are positive." The region has been a battlefield for the past 15 years and the FDLR, whose members include suspects of the 1994 genocide against Tutsis in Rwanda, is considered to be at the centre of insecurity. The rebels are accused of killing innocent civilians, raping, looting and causing various forms of insecurity in the region. Rwanda and DRC governments said that their joint military operation against the Rwandan rebels; helped to repatriate thousands of Rwandan refugees back home, destroyed FDLR's positions, killed many rebels while hundreds surrendered. The two governments vowed on Tuesday to continue pursuing the FDLR and completely rout them out of the region.

**Congo-Kinshasa: UN Condemns FDLR Massacres in Country:Edmund Kagire ;21 February 2009:THE NEW TIMES.**

Kigali — The United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in the DRC (MONUC), yesterday came out to condemn the "cowardly terror tactics" employed by the FDLR rebels in the ongoing operation rout them out.

The joint operation code-named 'Umoja Wetu', was launched last month by Rwanda and the DRC to neutralise the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) out of Congo. MONUC, playing the mediator role on behalf of besieged citizens as the offensive gains more ground, has accused the FDLR of conducting a campaign of terror, systematically raping, murdering, looting and abducting civilians in an attempt to frustrate the operation. "MONUC condemns these cowardly terror tactics. The tactics used by the group (FDLR) are aimed at frustrating efforts at restoring state authority to its former strongholds," a statement from MONUC reads in part. The FDLR rebels who are largely composed of perpetrators of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi and have mainly stayed in the eastern DRC for the last 15 years. The rebels have been accused of using civilians as human shields as the operation, which has disorganised them, gains momentum. According to a statement from the UN mission, MONUC peacekeepers have intensified day and night patrols in a bid to prevent the threat and exactions of fleeing FDLR on the civilian populations. Meanwhile, as the operation which has been code-named 'Umoja Wetu' draws to an end, DRC citizens have expressed fear that the FDLR would come back to unleash terror on them. Since the operation was launched, hundreds of FDLR officers have been captured; including senior officers while thousands of their former captives were rescued. MONUC maintains that members of the FDLR who have refused to surrender have resorted to using human shields as the joint forces close in on them. The operation has recorded successes on several fronts, with over 300 combatants and 2,557 non combatants having surrendered to the Joint Task Force. An estimated 100 FDLR insurgents have been killed in the two-month offensive.

### 23. MILITANCY ,REBELS,TERRORISM AND THE ‘WAR ON TERROR’

West Africa

**Nigeria: Six Militants Killed in Bayelsa: Segun James :28 February 2009:THIS DAY.**

Yenagoa — Men of the Nigerian Army on Thursday invaded the camp of Woki Godswill Ibralayu alias Kitikata who last week attacked the multi-billion dollar Brass Oil Terminal belonging to Italian oil giant, Nigeria Agip Oil Company (NAOC).

Six militants were reportedly killed during the invasion, but Kitikata himself escaped with gun wounds. Joint Task Force (JTF) invaded the Ewoama community base of the ruthless killer who murdered three soldiers along the Nembe Creek in July last year. Kitikata and his men were caught off guard as the soldiers over-ran their camp. Kitikata however escaped through a hitherto unknown little creek located behind the camp with gunshot wounds as a trail of blood was found leading to the waterside. The invasion of the notorious militant's camp was coming on the heels of the attack on an helicopter working for Agip and the attack on the Brass terminal, operations believed to have been masterminded by Kitikata .

Coordinator of the Joint Media Campaign Center (JMCC) of the JTF, Col. Rabe Abubakar confirmed the invasion in a statement yesterday in Yenagoa. According to him, "The militants from the camp, controlled and operated by one Mr. Woki Godswill Ibralayu a.k.a Kitikata, were responsible for the killing of 3 soldiers at Nembe, last year."Also, the frequent armed robbery operations along Port Harcourt - Yenagoa axis, recently, were perpetrated by Woki and his men."More so, incessant attacks on JTF locations and oil companies in recent times were all the handiworks of Kitikata and his blind loyalists.

Consequently, the JTF carried out a cordon and search operations in Daroama General Area close to militant camp in the early hours of 26 February, 2009. This operation was met with unwarranted shooting at the JTF troops who were there only to look for illegal arms and ammunition and apprehend criminals. So, according to the JTF's internal security mandate, which permits self-defense, the force defended itself accordingly, "but, as we are writing to you, a very significant part of Daroama Militant Camp has been destroyed, severe casualties were suffered by them and some quantities of arms, ammunition and charms were recovered".

"The JTF is reassuring all law-abiding citizens, oil workers, both local and foreign expatriate friends, to go about their normal businesses without fear of molestation, as we are ready, more than ever before, to protect all. Enough is enough!" Colonel Rabe Abubakar, Coordinator, Joint Media Campaign Centre (JMCC) has said.He also maintained that the JTF would continue to carry out its duties within its operational guidelines without compromising security. He added, "we shall see to the end of this crisis in no distant future", and asked the general public to support the JTF in its urge to realize a permanent peace in the Niger-Delta. "This exercise is on-going", Abubakar stated.Abubakar could however not say anything on the whereabouts of 'Kitikata' the dreaded militant leader who has been terrorizes the creeks and waterways of the area, just as arms and ammunition were recovered during the invasion of the militant camp.

### **Nigeria: Gunmen Hit Aero Helicopter in Bayelsa: Segun James I N Yenagoa With Agency Report:26 February 2009:THIS DAY.**

Lagos — Gunmen in the restive Niger Delta appear to have changed their tactics as they shot at an Aero Contractor operated helicopter working for the Nigeria Agip Oil Company (NAOC) yesterdayThe attack occurred at the Tebidaba flow station in Southern Ijaw Council area of Bayelsa State.THISDAY gathered that the chopper was on a routine operation service between the Tebidaba and Ogboinbiri flow stations when shots were fired at it.The aircraft had 11 passengers comprising Agip engineers and contractor staff as well as two crew members on board.One passenger was wounded during the attack but the helicopter was said to have returned to its base in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.The management of Aero Contractors confirmed the attack.According to a press statement made available to THISDAY last night, Aero's Head of Commercial, Mark Snoxel, said: "Today, 25th February, an Aero Contractors Sikorsky 76 helicopter operating a contract service, was damaged by gun fire whilst on a routine flight in the Tebidaba area in the Niger Delta."As a result, one passenger was wounded, but the aircraft safely returned to

its base in Port Harcourt; the injured party is now receiving hospital treatment and the helicopter is undergoing appropriate checks from Aero's maintenance team."

Snoxel added: "further flights to this area have been suspended whilst we work with the local authorities to investigate the source of the attack."Although no militant group has claimed responsibility for the attack, the Tebidaba/Ogboinbiri areas have been under the control of a militant group allegedly controlled by one Captain Africa.All effort to get Agip's reaction last night failed but the Commander of the Joint (Military) Task Force (JTF) in the state, Lieutenant-Col. Nkana Efik, confirmed the attack.Efik said the helicopter appeared to have been hit by a single shot. But it was not clear who fired the shot.

The Niger Delta, from where Nigeria gets its biggest oil and gas, has been plagued by pipeline bombings and the kidnapping of oil workers. Reuters reported that attacks on helicopters in the area are not unprecedented but are comparatively rare.The Tebidaba flow station and its pipelines, which ship crude oil to the Brass River export terminal, have been attacked several times over the past few years.

The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), the region's main militant group, warned this month of attacks on Italian firms including Agip because of what it said was an Italian offer to supply two attack boats to the military.Italy said it had offered cooperation and assistance to the Nigerian government in fighting drug trafficking and crime but that there had been no specific offer of military vessels.

Nigerian security forces repelled an attack by gunmen on Agip's Twon Brass oil terminal, also in Bayelsa, last Saturday night but oil production at the facility was not affected.Meanwhile, Bayelsa State Governor Timipre Sylva has called for a naval base in the state as a means of warding off militants operating along the creeks and rivers of the Delta in the name of freedom fighters.

Sylva made the call when the Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Ishayi Ibrahim, and other top naval officers paid him a visit at the Government House, Yenagoa.Sylva lamented that only a few days earlier, the multi-billion dollar Brass Liquefied Natural (LNG) was attacked by unidentified gunmen, saying it took the combined efforts of some security personnel to repel the onslaught.The governor noted that Bayelsa has the longest coastline in the country, stretching from Agge in Ekeremor Local Government Area of the state to Rivers State and also produces a quarter of the nation's crude oil.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Uganda: UPDF Gives Kony Deadly Blow: Richard Mugisha:25 February 2009:[The Weekly Observer](#) (Kampala)**

Ugandan, Congolese and South Sudan forces have been pursuing LRA rebels inside DR Congo jungles since mid December, 2008. RICHARD MUGISHA, a soldier and journalist, has been in and out of the war zone since the offensive began and exclusively

reports on how upbeat the UPDF are about their success so far. Whereas no one can rule out the possibility of Joseph Kony personally surviving the on-going 'Operation Lightning Thunder', one thing is for sure, the LRA as an organisation has been dismantled.

The Joint Task Force (JTF) operation that was launched late last year has seen the Kony-led rebels dislodged from what its commanders hoped was a safe haven inside the vast Garamba jungle. Aerial bombardment followed by a ground offensive by the joint Uganda, DR Congo and Sudan forces, have put the LRA on the run, splitting into small groups as they seek to hide from the relentless onslaught. Although the rebels took advantage of the UPDF's unfamiliarity with the terrain in the first month of the operation, it was not long before the Ugandans got used to it. Initially the tactic of splitting their fighters into small groups somehow worked for the rebels as they managed to spread in a very wide area, killing civilians, torching houses, and abducting for both training and labour as they scattered themselves. They were also buoyed by the publicity and criticism that their actions generated from critics who felt that the operation had been poorly planned and executed without taking into account the safety of the civilians.

### **Ground realities**

To those unfamiliar with such terrain, vast jungle and Kony's tactics, this argument carries some water, but realities on the ground here are very different.

According to UNICEF in Dungu, in just one month of the operation, between December 14, 2008 and January 16, 2009, Kony killed more than 900 people. But since that time, less than 30 people have died. And this number has accumulated with time, from isolated cases of one or two people killed after unluckily bumping into the rebels as they run away from the joint forces. Others are found in the jungle while hunting. Denying Kony abduction sources and substantially reducing his killings has been a great achievement; it means that his rebel outfit cannot recruit, has less labour to carry his loot, and of course no more publicity. At Dungu, the JTF tactical headquarters, Brig Patrick Kankiriho, the overall operation commander, is full of optimism. "I want to assure you this is the end of Kony and the LRA, just give us time," he said. Asked now they are going to do it, the Brigadier says they have already managed to flush him out of his bases which he thought they couldn't; now even his small groups are being driven out of the civilian areas back to Garamba. According to Kankiriho, the joint forces have also divided into small squads to follow up every small rebel group marauding in the area. As a result, the rebels cannot easily abduct, kill or get food any more, he explained. The rebels are believed to be depending on the food they hid before the attack, which the UPDF expects to get finished soon. Besides, Kankiriho noted that when they get into contact with them, the rebels are forced to abandon much of these supplies.

### **High morale**

Talking to both soldiers and commanders in the field, I could see their enthusiasm, morale and resolve to finish off this rebellion. As a journalist working with visual images

(photos and video), I couldn't hold the anxiety of waiting for that million dollar shot of 'General' Joseph Kony either in hand cuffs after being captured, or dead."I have no doubt we are going to finish off Kony this time, whether he likes or not," says an excited Lt. Sekabila of the 45th battalion. He was now taking me though the area where he had just commanded his soldiers in a battle that left 10 LRA fighters dead. As he showed me the LRA's dead, he repeatedly said that had it not been for the tricky vegetation here, Dominic Ogwen, one of the top rebel commanders, would be among the dead. Ogwen apparently got injured in this attack but other rebels who survived managed to sneak him away."I regret it; it would have been a great achievement and we would have killed many more [rebels], had it not been for my instructions to the soldiers not to shoot whoever is willing to surrender," he said. Six AK47 guns with several rounds of ammunition were recovered. Two women and four children were rescued. One soldier pointed at one dead woman and told me, "This woman had a gun and I tried to tell her to throw the gun down and put her hands up, but she just aimed at me, I had no option but to shoot her." Still, he was remorseful. "I regret, but what could I have done?" Captain Deo Akiiki, the Joint Forces Spokesperson, says that LRA fighters are in a tight corner where the only option available to them is to either surrender, be captured or killed."We are fixing them in a tight corner, they will not have any option but only to surrender, be captured or killed," Akiiki said confidently. According to Brig. Patrick Kankiriho, the joint forces' mission was to force Kony back to the signing table after he reneged on signing the Juba peace agreement following years of negotiations with the Ugandan Government. The other aim of the mission was to kill or capture Kony and his commanders, free the abducted children and women, and more importantly decapitate LRA's capacity to wage war. He reckons that whether Kony is killed or not, without his fighters he would just be an ordinary criminal that can be dealt with effectively by the Police. Kankiriho is confident the joint forces have largely achieved this mission.

## NORTH AFRICA

### **Tunisia: 200 Tunisian Doctors Currently work in South Africa:27 February 2009;TUNISIA ONLINE NEWS.**

Tunis — There are about 200 Tunisian doctors currently working in South Africa, it was announced on Thursday by the South African online news site News 24 that quoted South Africa's President Kgalema Motlanthe as saying that "we have already close to 200 Tunisian doctors in our rural villages".The announcement was made on Thursday in Pretoria while the South African President received the letters of credentials of the new Ambassadors accredited in South Africa, among whom Tunisia's new Ambassador, Mr Ahmed Mahjoub.

Tunisia and South Africa have an existing health cooperation agreement since 1999. From 2000 to 2002 Tunisian ophthalmologists visited South Africa to perform eye operations. In 2007, following several visits by senior officials from both countries, Tunisian doctors started to be recruited on a contractual basis by South Africa's Department of health, as part of an agreement signed between the department and the



Tunisian Agency for Technical Cooperation. Most of the physicians work in the provinces of Kwa Zulu Natal, Eastern Cape and Northern Cape.

**Gambia: Egypt Hails Jammeh's Regard for Medical Cooperation:Frederick Tendeng:1 March 2009:The Daily Observer (Banjul).**

Dakar — The secretary general of the Egyptian Fund for Technical Assistance, Ambassador Never Ashmawi, has expressed heartfelt pride for the Gambian leader, Professor Alhaji Dr Yahya Jammeh, for his unflinching support to the Egypt-Gambia medical cooperation. This happened at the end of a brief visit by Ambassador Ashmawi to The Gambia, recently. The Egyptian was particularly appreciative of President Jammeh's high consideration and regard for the Egyptian medical and pharmaceutical support to The Gambia. "The Gambian leader, President Yahya Jammeh has expressed thanks to his Egyptian counterpart, President Hosni Mubarak, and the Egyptian government for the pharmaceutical aid provided by Egypt to his country," she told reporters during an encounter with the media upon arrival in Cairo. She was reported as saying that President Jammeh was keen to attend the official ceremony at the presidential palace when the pharmaceutical assistance from her country to The Gambia was being delivered. "This," she said, "is a testimony of the Gambian leader's consideration and commitment for the cooperation between Egypt and The Gambia."

Madam Ashmawi was particularly proud of President Jammeh's sense of humour for remembering the long way that has characterized the relationship between the two countries. She recalled that President Jammeh "pointed out during the ceremony that Egypt was the second state in the world and the first in Africa, which agreed to send doctors to The Gambia during the early days of the July 22nd Revolution. Commenting on President Jammeh's statement that "The Gambia will never forget this historical fact," Ambassador Ashmawi said her country will continue to stand by The Gambia whenever the need arises.

**Egypt: Five Journalists Fined for Defying Reporting Ban:27 February 2009:press release: Reporters sans Frontières (Paris)**

The editors of two independent daily newspapers and three of their reporters were each fined 10,000 Egyptian pounds (1,400 euros) by a Cairo court yesterday for defying a reporting ban on a prominent industrialist's trial for the murder of a Lebanese singer.

"We condemn these heavy fines even if the judge stopped short of imposing prison sentences on the reporters, as he could have done under the law," Reporters Without Borders said. "Judicial double-standards are yet again in evidence, since three pro-government newspapers that carried similar reports were not prosecuted. Egypt needs to overhaul its legislation in order to truly reflect the democratic principles that President Hosni Mubarak claims to follow." The industrialist who has been on trial in Cairo since 18 October is well-known in political and business circles and is a leading supporter of the ruling National Democratic Party. He is accused of paying a former Egyptian

policeman 2 million dollars to murder Lebanese singer Suzanne Tamim, with whom he had reportedly had an affair.

Al-Masri el-Youm editor Magdy El-Gallad and two of his reporters, Yousri El-Badri and Farouk El-Desouki, and Al-Wafd editor Abbas El-Tarabili and one of his reporters, Ibrahim Qura'ah, were prosecuted for reporting the testimony of one of the witnesses on 20 November, four days after the judge had banned the media from covering the trial. Three pro-government newspapers, Al-Ahram, Al-Akhbar and Al-Goumhouria, which also reported the witness's testimony, were not prosecuted.

As well as a fine, the three reporters had faced the possibility of a one-year prison sentence under article 190 of the criminal code. The fines imposed on the two editors represented the maximum penalty to which they were exposed under article 200 of the criminal code and article 54 of press code law 96.

**Tunisia: ICT - Microsoft Launches 'BizSpark' Program in Gafsa:26 February 2009:TUNISIA ONLINE NEWS.**

Tunis — Microsoft launched its "BizSpark" initiative in the southern city of Gafsa, in Tunisia, on Tuesday. The program which aims at supporting ICT start ups , to create new software and web design has already been launched in several countries throughout the world, including in Jordan.Launching the program, Mr Walid Abu- Hadhba, Microsoft vice- president in charge of group development, said that the choice of Tunisia, and especially the city of Gafsa, shows that Tunisia's technological achievements have attracted the attention of international ICT companies.He added that "an unprecedented and unique governmental support to anchor economic culture as well as the financing of high added value projects, and the attraction of young Tunisians to ICT professions, are the main assets which have qualified Tunisia , to benefit from the "BizSpark" program", he said.On her part, Mrs Salwa Smaoui, Microsoft executive director for Tunisia said that the program will enable Tunisia ICT start ups to have access to technological platforms at little cost, thus saving precious financial resources.The program will be carried out in collaboration with the ministry of communication technologies, the ministry of industry, energy and small and medium enterprises, the ministry of higher education and scientific research, the ministry of employment and professional training, as well as with the partnership of the Gafsa Phosphates company (CPG), and the Arab Tunisian Bank (ATB).

In 2007, President Ben Ali met with Mr Steve Balmer, Microsoft's CEO in Tunis . Several partnership agreements between Tunisia and Microsoft were signed following the meeting.

**Marking Nile Day, NBI Urges Egypt, Sudan to Sign Agreement Nile Day Marked Here for Third Time: Binyam Tamene:20 February 2009: DAILY MONITOR (ADDIS ABABA).**

**Addis Ababa** — The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) on Sunday called for Egypt and the Sudan to finalize the Nile Cooperative Framework Agreement that provides for the establishment of a permanent River Nile Basin Commission. The Cooperative Framework aims to provide an overall vision to achieve sustainable socio-economic development through the equitable utilization of, and benefit from, the common Nile Basin water resources. The 39-article agreement was supposed to be adopted by all basin states before June last year and then ratified before going into force as an international treaty. DR Congo's Minister of Environment, Conservation of Nature and Tourism and Chairman of the Nile Council of Ministers José Endundo Bononge said CFA process was far from conclusion. But he said he remained positive as a result of recent meeting which he described as promising. "I remain positive that this legal document, which is expected, not only by the member countries of the Nile Basin but also by our development partners, will be adopted and finally signed," he said. Ministers in charge of Water of the Nile Basin countries gave the task leading consultations to countries that have expressed their reservation with regard to Article 14 in its point b on 'water security' of the basin countries. **Article 14 that talks about water security that indicates the negotiations may have not yielded much after all in terms of real benefits for the downstream states.**

**Egypt and Sudan are said to be reluctant to sign the agreement.** Bononge however said the outcome from those meetings was very encouraging. "I am positive that with everybody's will, the transitory period of the Nile Basin Initiative is nearing its end," he said, urging the Nile Basin countries to sign this legal document which he said: "will fulfill our mission aimed at reducing poverty and protecting the environment on the other hand." In a message read out at the celebration of Nile Day here in Addis, the Executive Director of NBI Henriette Ndombe, reiterated the need to sign and ratification of the CFA was critical more than ever before.

"The decision that countries are being called upon to take is major. It is a decision to act independently of history, geopolitics, the limits of sovereignty and boundaries and in some cases, national interest," he said. "This is why the theme of this year's Nile day celebration in: United in Diversity by the River Nile- Our Heritage, Source of Regional Corporation," he said in a statement read out at the celebration of Nile Day, last Sunday.

This year's event was officially marked in Bujumbura, Burundi. Other member countries celebrated the day in their respective capitals with their partners and stakeholders. In that respect, Ethiopia marked Nile Day on Sunday at the Nile Center where the Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO) and the Regional Water resources Planning and Management SVP Project of the Nile Basin Initiative are based.

Ndombe said in the message, the celebration is about refocusing and redoubling efforts to deal with some of the most critical issues facing the Nile Basin countries today. Nile Day marks the day in 1999 when the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) was conceived by the Council of Ministers of Water Affairs of the Nile Basin Countries in order to create opportunity to focus on stimulating region-wide awareness of the development, protection, conservation and management of the River Nile Basin and its resources.

**Tunisia: Country Eyes Energy Surplus in 2009:20 February 2009: TUNISIA ONLINE NEWS.**

**Tunis** — Following ten years of energy dependency, Tunisia is eyeing a small energy surplus of 0, 6 million ton of oil equivalent, it was announced at an international energy forum organized by the weekly magazine, Realités on Friday in Tunis.

This improvement -in 2007 the balance showed a deficit of minus 0,2% (TOE)- is mainly due to the increase in the country's production of natural gas from 2,2 tons of oil equivalent in 2007 to 3,2 TOE during the current year. In his opening address to the forum, Mr Abdelaziz Rassaa, Secretary of State in charge renewable energies and food industries said that recent gas extraction projects such as the "Hasdrubal" gas field or the "gaz du sud" project, will allow Tunisia to enjoy a gas surplus that is expected to reach 2 million tons of oil equivalent by 2012. He also said that investments in the energy sector had increased five fold from 2005 to 2008, from 500 million dinars to 2700. Thirty eight oil wells were also dug during the same period, against only 14 in 2005, including some 20 new findings made during the same period. Mr Rassaa added that in the period 2004-2008, the number of household connected to the gas network increased from 220,000 to 460,000 with a set objective of 700,000 households in 2011.

He also said that one of the aims of Tunisia's energetic policy is to establish a convergence between the price of energy on the local market and that of the international market.

**Algerian minister says 120 militants killed: Another 322 militants linked to al-Qaida have been arrested: March 1, 2009.**

**ALGIERS, Algeria** - Security forces have killed 120 militants linked to al-Qaida in Algeria over the past six months and arrested 322, the government said Sunday. Speaking at a police academy diploma ceremony in the capital, Interior Minister Yazid Zerhouni attributed the results to increased security efforts in the North African country since August, when al-Qaida's local offshoot claimed responsibility for a series of suicide bombings that left over 100 people dead. Zerhouni said another 22 militants gave themselves up, and 150 weapons have been seized. Those in custody include some high-ranking militant chiefs, such as Ali Bentouati — a senior "emir," or commander, for the zone of central Algeria. He surrendered to police in January. The minister pointed to the combined efforts police, paramilitary, intelligence and military forces used to fend off a resurgent Islamist militancy in Algeria.

## **'Evolving intelligence techniques'**

The security sweeps are mainly due to "a better penetration of terror support networks and terrorist groups," he was quoted as saying by the state news agency, APS. "This is the proof of evolving intelligence techniques." He also said enhanced collaboration with former militants, who benefit from an amnesty program if they turn themselves in, was bearing fruit. Some 2,000 militants have surrendered since 2005 when the program began. Zerhouni said security would be beefed up before the presidential election on April 9. Police forces, currently at about 160,000, will be raised to 200,000 by the end of the year, he said.

The minister's rare comments on security issues came after the local branch of al-Qaida, known by the French language acronym AQMI, claimed responsibility for nine attacks in February that killed or wounded 47 people, mainly security forces. AQMI rose from the remains of a Salafist militant group in the 1990s, when a near-civil war between secular-leaning government forces and Islamists killed up to 200,000 people. Since joining Osama bin Laden's terror network in late 2006, the group vastly stepped up attacks, but it appears weakened following the latest security crackdown. Last month, Hassan Hattab — Algeria's former top terror chief, and the founder of the Salafist group that later became AQMI — urged militants to surrender in an audio message broadcast by pan-Arab TV station Al-Jazeera.

## **Police results quantified for first time**

Zerhouni has often declared in recent months that militants were being cornered, but his comments Sunday were the first time he quantified police results. Though critics say Algerian counterterrorism statements are sometimes inflated, several Western intelligence officials working in North Africa said the country has indeed achieved significant results in recent months. An intelligence official told The Associated Press the country is spending a considerable amount of its budget on security, and it's paying off. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because of the nature of his activities.

**Nigeria: Govt, Algeria Meet On N1.8 Trillion Saharan Gas Pipeline: Ese Awhotu: 20 February 2009: [Leadership](#) (Abuja)**

The Nigerian government yesterday held talks with the Algerian government on the 4,300km long, 48-56 inches diameter Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline (TSGP), which would connect the Niger Delta in Nigeria and Niger, to existing gas transmission hubs to the European Union at El Kala or Beni Saf in Algeria's Mediterranean coast. It is expected to cost \$12 billion (about N1.87 trillion naira). The Group Managing Director of the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Alhaji Sanusi Barkindo, who led the Nigerian delegation to the meeting held at the NNPC towers Abuja, described the project as one that would have multiplier effect on the economies of the nation involved and the consumers of the product. "The project has multiplier effects on our economies. It is a competitive project, a source of diversifying sources of energy and strengthening the global interdependency of both consumers and an avenue for producers," he noted

Barkindo stated that the project, which is already attracting the interest of consumers, participants and financiers, is strategic to the European Union (EU) and should not be bedeviled with commercial and technical issues. He therefore called for the signatures of the governments concerned with the project in all commercial and technical issues relating to it. "The immediate challenge is to clean up the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between our countries including Niger for the signatures of our three governments. All the commercial and technical issues relating to this project should be signed to the joint venture agreement," he offered. The NNPC boss said the MoU would be the umbrella document setting in broad terms, the objective of going into the project and would demonstrate to the international community, the preparedness of the respective countries involved to pursue it to a logical conclusion.

He declared that the Nigerian Gas Master Plan would be the blue print for both the development of domestic and export gas and would provide infinite flexibility to meet the market demand of consumers. Barkindo said the project is fully in tune with the gas master plan, seeking to balance domestic and export of gas for Nigeria. Speaking at the meeting the leader of the Algerian delegation and Chief Executive of Sonatrach, Mohammed Meziane disclosed that the project would gulp \$12 billion and would be completed between 2015 and 2017. He said the project was very complex one and Algeria already agreed to accelerate its development.

Sahara gas pipeline faces 'immense' terror threat: [The Observer \(LONDON\)](#), Sunday 1 March 2009.

**Al-Qaida** terrorists and Niger rebels pose an "immense challenge" to oil companies who want to press ahead with a \$20bn project to build a pipeline through the Sahara desert to bring new gas supplies from west Africa to Europe, analysts warn.

The ambitious scheme was considered a fanciful dream until Total of France gave its verbal backing to the project, seen as a way of bringing gas from [Nigeria](#) to lessen Europe's dependence on Russia. Global Insight, a financial and political consultant, believes the scheme is still fraught with danger. Samuel Ciszuk, Middle East analyst at the firm, said: "Niger's Tuareg rebels or al-Qaida in the Maghreb pose formidable obstacles in the vast, sparsely populated expanse." The national oil companies of Nigeria

and Algeria originally proposed building the Trans-Sahara Gas Pipeline, but Total is the first western oil major to voice support - and give it credibility.

Algeria to erase all farm debt: report: **Sat Feb 28:**

ALGIERS (AFP) - The Algerian government will erase all farming debts to prime up the agriculture sector, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika said Saturday. The debt amounts to 41 billion dinars (410 million euros, 520 million dollars), according to the APS news agency. "The state has decided to erase all the debt of farmers and breeders, and it is the public treasury that will buy up the debt," the agency cited Bouteflika as saying. The move is aimed at "encouraging the agricultural sector to make a major effort to modernise its activity and to increase the diversity of its products," he said.

Bouteflika, speaking at a conference at Biskra, about 425 kilometres (264 miles) southeast of Algiers, also spoke about other steps the government is taking to advance healthcare, education and sports. The 72-year-old leader, first elected in 1999, is seeking re-election after parliament voted to eliminate a previous two-term limit for president. Algeria's two main legal opposition parties are boycotting the April 9 poll, claiming the vote is already a "done deal" set up in Bouteflika's favour. Meanwhile, 11 candidates have formally submitted their papers to challenge Bouteflika and the constitutional council will rule before March 6 on their eligibility.

Algeria to erect nuclear Power plant: [afrol News](#),

**26 February** - The Algerian government has announced its plans to erect the first ever nuclear power plant by 2020, Energy and Mining Minister Chakib Khelil has said. Minister Khelil said Algeria will also build new plants every five year after the erection of the first station.

The Minister said Algeria has already signed civil nuclear agreements with Argentina, France, China and the United States. "Algeria presently has two experimental nuclear plants in Draria, in the suburbs of Algiers and another one in Ain Oussera, near Djelfa about 300 kms from capital Algiers," he said, stating that further negotiations were underway with Russia and South Africa. He said the draft bill on nuclear energy, which had been submitted to the government, foresees notably the setting up of a National Agency for Nuclear Safety and Security, stating that it would be a major achievement for the country. "The agency, coming under the Algerian state, will be assigned to monitor the use of nuclear energy, and the setting up of development and research firms in the field of electro-nuclear energy," he said.

Mr Khelil said the solar energy would also be granted greater importance for being environmental friendly. According to forecasts on Algeria's renewable energy sources, 60 percent would be from solar power while the rest would be from wind or nuclear. The largest part of energy sources will be generated from natural gas according to the government statement. Algeria is currently building a pilot hybrid solar-gas power station

in Hassi Rmel in the Sahara that would be able to generate 150 MW, of which 35 percent would be generated by sunlight, the government said in a statement. The oil cartel member, Algeria, has plentiful oil and gas reserves but wants to develop other energy sources to free up more hydrocarbons for lucrative export or to make petrochemicals.

**EGYPT: Deficit in Egypt balance of trade during the first half of FY 2008/ 2009 increasing to \$ 14.6 billion up from \$ 11.2 billion for the same period of FY 2007/ 2008: February 26, 2009 Al-Ahram:**

Deficit in Egypt balance of trade during the first half of FY 2008/ 2009 increased to \$ 14.6 billion up from \$ 11.2 billion for the same period of FY 2007/ 2008. This was shown in a report recently released by the Central Bank of Egypt & quoted in the media indicating that commodity imports during the period increased by 15.8 % to \$ 28.2 billion, up from \$ 24.3 billion in the comparison period, while commodity exports increased by 3.8 % only to \$ 13.6 billion up from \$ 13.1 billion in the comparison period. Report further showed that tourism revenues during the period reached \$ 5.2 billion and that non refundable transfers reached \$ 4.6 billion (and both figures are expected to witness tangible decline in the second half of FY 2008/ 2009 as long as the international financial and economic crisis are continuing).

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## BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

Weekly Presentation: March 11, 2008

### Sub-Saharan Africa +Focus on the Sudan

Abbas S Lamptey

Period: From 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2009

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#### 24. FOCUS ON THE SUDAN

- a. **Sudan: International Court Issues Bashir Arrest Warrant:4 March 2009:ALLAFRICA.**
- b. Sudan: Govt Condemns Bashir Arrest Warrant: 5 March 2009: document: ALLAFRICA.
- c. Sudan: Africa Suspicious of Court's Motives in Taking On Bashir: Paul Moorcraft: 6 March 2009: BUSINESS DAY.
- d. Sudan: Peacekeepers Will Stay in Darfur Even If President Indicted - UN Official: 2 March 2009: UN NEWS SERVICE.
- e. Sudan: The Conflict in Darfur: 4 March 2009: IRIN.
- f. Who are Sudan's Darfur rebels? BBC News.
- g. African Union defers Darfur issue: By Adam Mynott: BBC News, Khartoum:
- h. Sudan: The Question of Land: Alex de Waal:14 July 2006:analysis:allafrica.
- i. Sudan: Expulsion of Aid Groups From Darfur Will Have Wide Impact, UN Agency Warns: 6 March 2009: UN NEWS SERVICE.
- j. Gambia: President of Sudan And the International Criminal Court:6 March 2009:editorial:[FOROYAA Newspaper](#) (Serrekunda) .
- k. UGANDA: Continent's Despots Will Never Prosecute Their Own: Samuel Olara: 5 March 2009: column:[The Weekly Observer](#) (Kampala) .
- l. Arrest Warrant for Sudan's Al Bashir is a Warning for Dictators: Lance Guma: 5 March 2009: analysis: [SW Radio Africa](#) (London).
- m. Sudan: Ending Violence in Darfur Remains a Top Challenge for Obama: Jim Fisher-Thompson:2 March 2009:[America.gov](#) (Washington, DC)
- n. Sudan: Bashir Should Be Held Accountable, Says Clinton: David Mckeeby:5 March 2009: [America.gov](#) (Washington, DC).
- o. Sudan: The Case Against Bashir: 4 March 2009: IRIN.
- p. Sudan: Archbishop Tutu Welcomes Arrest Warrant for Al-Bashir:4 March 2009:[Catholic Information Service for Africa](#) (Nairobi).
- q. Sudan: Catholic Church Says Bashir Arrest Won't Bring Peace:6 March 2009:[Catholic Information Service for Africa](#) (Nairobi).
- r. Rwanda: Have We Sacrificed Plain Justice at the Altar of Political Independence and Legalese? Sunny Ntayombya: 6 March 2009: column: THE NEW TIMES.

#### 25. CHINA-AFRICA RELATIONS

## West Africa

- a. Nigeria: House Summons Julius Berger, Chinese Firm Over Rail Projects: Onwuka Nzeshi:2 March 2009:THIS DAY.

## Southern Africa

- b. Botswana: Botswana Urged to Exhibit in China's Prime Show: 27 February 2009: Mmegi.
- c. Mozambique: Further Chinese Funds for National Stadium: 3 March 2009: Agencia de Informação de Moçambique (AIM).
- d. Zambia: Chinese Embassy Ops Grounded:3 March 2009:TIMES OF ZAMBIA.

## East Africa/Horn of Africa

- e. Sudan: China, Russia Should Vacate UN Debate Says Church Leader: Fredrick Nzwili:5 March 2009:[Ecumenical News International](#) (Geneva)
- f. Uganda: China Holds 52 Locals: Madinah Tebajjukira:4 March 2009:THE NEW VISION.

## 26. PAN AFRICA

### North Africa

- a. Libya: Africa commits to water development to fight hunger: [afrol News](#), 18 December: By staff writer.

### West Africa

- b. Ghana: Why the Richest Continent is Also the Poorest: Miriam Mannak: 5 September 2009:Inter Press Service News Agency.
- c. Nigeria: Religious Pluralism is Good for Continent – Study: Ekiverhere Oboh: 6 March 2009:[Leadership](#) (Abuja) .
- d. Nigeria: 'Africa is Almost Halfway to Malaria Milestone': Sola Ogundipe: 3 March 2009.Daily Trust.

### Southern Africa

- e. South Africa: Poor Countries Need U.S.\$25 Billion Up Front – IMF: Mariam Isa:4 March 2009:BusinessDay.
- f. South Africa: Continent Not Up for Maritime Challenges - Naval Chiefs: Wyndham Hartley: 5 March 2009.BusinessDay.

### East Africa/Horn of Africa

- g. Mauritius: Citizens Also Competing for Land in Africa: Nasseem Ackbarally: 27 February 2009: INTER PRESS SERVICE NEWS AGENCY.

## Central Africa

- h. Rwanda: Pan-African E-Network Project Launched: Odeth Mutarayire: 1 March 2009: THE NEW TIMES.

## 27. HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER AND SOCIAL ISSUES

### West Africa

- a. Nigeria: Death Sentence for Kidnappers - Amaechi Explains Stance to Amnesty International: 2 March 2009: Vanguard.
- b. Niger: Woman Honored for Courageous Work to End Slavery: 6 March 2009: [America.gov](http://America.gov) (Washington, DC) .
- c. Liberia: Rural Women Need Justice Too: 4 March 2009: IRIN.
- d. Guinea Bissau: Armed Forces Briefly Silence Broadcast Media After Chief of Staff and President Murdered: 2 March 2009: press release: Reporters (Paris).

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- e. Zimbabwe: Bennett Bail - State Wins Right to Appeal: Wongai Zhangazha: 6 March 2009: Zimbabwe Independent.
- f. Zimbabwe: Eight Abductees Granted Bail At Last: Edgar Gwеше: 28 February 2009: The Standard.
- g. Botswana: Media Laws Stir Dissent Within Ruling Party: Sello Motseta: 28 February 2009: INTER PRESS SERVICE NEWS AGENCY.

### East Africa/Horn of Africa

- h. Sudan: Govt Condemns ICC Arrest Warrant: Constance Ikokwu and Chinwe Ochu in Abuja: 6 March 2009: THIS DAY (NIGERIA).
- i. Sudan: Bashir Should Be Held Accountable, Says Clinton: David Mckeeby: 5 March 2009: [America.gov](http://America.gov) (Washington, DC).
- j. Uganda: Sudanese Envoy Shuns Bashir Warrant: Fortunate Ahimbisibwe: 5 March 2009: THE NEW VISION.
- k. Somalia: Demonstrations in Favour for Clerics Take Place in Mogadishu: 5 March 2009: [Shabelle Media Network](http://Shabelle Media Network) (Mogadishu)
- l. Kenya: Assassination of Human Rights Defenders: 5 March 2009: press release: Pambazuka.
- m. Kenya: Top UN Official Calls for Investigation of Killing of Human Rights Figure: 6 March 2009: UN NEWS SERVICE.
- n. Kenya: Kwekwe Squad Disbands: 3 March 2009: [Nairobi Star](http://Nairobi Star) (Nairobi).
- o. Eritrea: Plea to EU to Suspend Development Aid in Light of Fresh Crackdown On Journalists: 6 March 2009: press release: Reporters (Paris).

### Central Africa

- p. Cameroon: 139 People Died in 2008 Protest – Observatory: Joe Dinga Pefok: 27 February 2009: THE POSTNEWSLINE.COM.
- q. Central Africa: Rwanda/DRC Sign Joint Operation Final Report: Martin Tindiwensi: 3 March 2009: THE NEW TIMES.
- r. Congo-Kinshasa: North Kivu - 880 Children Associated With Armed Groups Demobilised By Monuc:4 March 2009:[United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo](#) (Kinshasa) .

## 28. REFUGEES, IDPs AND MIGRATION

### West Africa

- a. Nigeria: FCTA Gives 744 Houses to Displaced Natives: Mustapha Shehu: 5 March 2009: This Day.

### Southern Africa

- b. Zimbabwe: 700 Families Displaced As Fresh Farm Invasions Continue: Alex Bell: 6 March 2009: [SW Radio Africa](#) (London).
- c. Zimbabwe: Thousands Stranded As SA Shuts Refugee Camp: Alex Bell: 5 March 2009:[SW Radio Africa](#) (London) .

### East Africa/Horn of Africa

- d. Sudan: Govt Bans Aid Agencies From Darfur: Faatimah Hendricks:5 March 2009:allafrica.
- e. Sudan: More Aid Agencies Under 'Investigation':6 March 2009:IRIN.
- f. Somalia: Merka IDPs Virtually Out of Food:6 March 2009:IRIN.
- g. Somalia: President Sharif Says That His Government Plans Collecting Contribution for Displaced: 1 March 2009:[Shabelle Media Network](#) (Mogadishu)

### Central Africa

- h. Congo-Kinshasa: IDPs Returning to North Kivu Despite Violence: 6 March 2009: IRIN.

## 29. HEALTH (HIV/AIDS, TB, MALARIA etc)

### West Africa

- a. Senegal: Diabetes - Deadly, Underfunded And Unidentified:3 March 2009:IRIN.
- b. West Africa: Meningitis Emergency Vaccine Stock Tapped Early:5 March 2009:IRIN.
- c. Nigeria: 'Africa is Almost Halfway to Malaria Milestone': Sola Ogundipe:3 March 2009: Vanguard.
- d. Nigeria: Lagos Procures Mobile Field Hospital for Rural Dwellers: Olasunkanmi Akoni:5 March 2009:Vanguard.
- e. Nigeria: HIV/Aids Bill Scales Second Reading:3 March 2009:THIS DAY.

- f. Ghana: Nutritionist Worried Over High Cases of Malaria: William N-Lanjerborr Jalulah:4 March 2009:THE CHRONICLE.
- g. Ghana: Keeping the Promise On Education And Health On Course:2 March 2009:[Public Agenda](#) (Accra).

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- h. Zimbabwe: Cholera Cases Projected to Reach 123000 Infections: Lance Guma:4 March 2009:[SW Radio Africa](#) (London)
- i. Angola: Countries to Cooperate on Aids Combat at Common Border: 27 February 2009: AngolaPress.

#### East Africa/Horn of Africa

- j. Uganda: Mass Polio Immunisation Planned: Raymond Baguma and Anthony Bugembe: 4 March 2009: The New Vision.

#### Central Africa

- k. Cameroon: Female Genital Mutilation Persists: Elizabeth Mosima:6 March 2009:IRIN.

### 30. ENVIRONMENT

#### West Africa

- a. West Africa: Ending the Race to the Bottom: 28 February 2009: Interview: Inter Press Service News Agency.
- b. Gambia: Calls for Common African Voice, As Environmental Change Confab Kicks-Off:3 March 2009:[The Daily Observer](#) (Banjul).
- c. Nigeria: Lagos - The Threat of Climate Change: Victor Omoregie: 4 March 2009: Vanguard.

#### Southern Africa

- d. South Africa: Climate Change White Paper to Be Drafted By 2010:6 March 2009:[BuaNews](#) (Tshwane).
- e. Angola: Environment Ministry, Unesco Sign Memorandum of Understanding: 28 February 2009: AngolaPress.
- f. Mozambique: Country to Make Use of Carbon Credits:6 March 2009:AIM
- g. Blueprint to Process E-Waste Developed: Naomi Antony:5 March 2009:[SciDev.Net](#) (London) .

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- h. East Africa: EAC's Energy Consumption is 70 Percent Biomass:James Mwakisya:28 February 2009:[East African Business Week](#) (Kampala)

- i. TANZANIA: Youth Reach Kilimanjaro's Summit to Highlight Climate Change – UN: 6 March 2009: UN NEWS SERVICE.
- j. Uganda: Polyethene Ban to Be Extended:5 March 2009:The New Vision.

### 31. ECONOMY AND ENERGY

#### West Africa

- a. Nigeria: Explosion Rocks Shell Pipeline: Chika Amanze-Nwachuku:4 March 2009: This Day.
- b. Nigeria: N177 Billion Subsidy Unsettles Power Sector: Patrick Ugeh and Jerome Ushakang: 4 March 2009: This Day.
- c. Ghana: Ghana Would Not Over Liberalise to Its Economic Disadvantage: Chris Twum:3 March 2009:The Chronicle.
- d. Ghana: U.S. Has No Interest in Country's Oil, Says American Navy Officer: Zabaga Rufai Saminu:5 March 2009:The Chronicle.
- e. Ghana: Report Warns of 'Resource Curse' Ahead of Oil Boom: Marina Litvinsky: 5 March 2009: Inter Press Service News Agency.

#### Southern Africa

- f. South Africa: Solar Power Initiative Casts New Light On Sustainable Energy: Michael Appel: 4 March 2009:[BuaNews](#) (Tshwane)
- g. Mozambique: Great Potential Claimed for Biofuel Expansion:5 March 2009:AIM.

#### East Africa/Horn of Africa

- h. Somalia: Oil Exploration Triggers Deadly Clan Battle in Puntland:6 March 2009:[Garowe Online](#) (Garowe).
- i. Ethiopia: IMF Sees Country's 12 Percent Economic Growth Slowing to Six Percent IMF Says Downturn to Take Toll on Country's Economy: Yonas Abiye:6 March 2009:DAILY MONITOR.
- j. Kenya: Govt, Iran in Nuclear Energy Talks: Andrew Watila: 28 February 2009: [East African Business Week](#) (Kampala).
- k. East Africa: Eldoret-Kampala Pipeline Compensation for March: Paul Mwijagye: 28 February 2009:[East African Business Week](#) (Kampala).
- l. Cameroon: Bauxite Exploitation - Hydromine to Tap Energy from Mbakaou Dam: Lukong Pius Nyuylime: 6 March 2009: Cameroon Tribune.

### 32. POLITICS

#### West Africa

- a. Guinea Bissau: President, Army Chief Assassinated:2 March 2009:ALLAFRICA.
- b. Guinea Bissau: Key Political Events: 2 March 2009:IRIN.

- c. West Africa: Ecowas Will Restore Democracy in Guinea Bissau - Chambas - African Union Condemns Killings: Abdulfattah Olajide:3 March 2009:Daily Trust.

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- d. Mozambique: GUEBUZA CONDEMNS ASSASSINATION OF GUINEA-BISSAU PRESIDENT: Maputo, 3 Mar (AIM).
- e. Zimbabwe: Susan Tsvangirai Dies in Car Accident Near Chivhu: Tichaona Sibanda:6 March 2009:[SW Radio Africa](#) (London) .

#### East Africa/Horn of Africa

- f. Somalia: New President to Rule Country Using Islamic Law: 28 February 2009:[Garowe Online](#) (Garowe).

### 33. PEACEKEEPING, CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND SECURITY MATTERS West Africa

- a. Senegal: Assassinations Breed Uncertainty in Neighbouring Casamance:5 March 2009:IRIN
- b. Nigeria: Niger Delta - Searching for Peace Through Community Development: Etim Imisim:4 March 2009:This Day.

#### Southern Africa

- c. South Africa: SANDF to Host Major Military Exercise in September: Wilson Johwa:3 March 2009:Business Day.

#### East Africa/Horn of Africa

- d. Somalia: Massive Demonstrations Support Peace, New Govt: 5 March 2009:[Garowe Online](#) (Garowe).
- e. Somalia: 500 African Union Peacekeepers Arrive in Mogadishu:3 March 2009:[Garowe Online](#) (Garowe).
- f. Sudan: Southerners Prefer Diplomatic Route:4 March 2009:IRIN.
- g. Eritrea: President Isaias Holds Talks With Sudanese Government Delegation:2 March 2009:[Shabait.com](#) (Asmara).

#### Central Africa

- h. Rwanda: Research Institute Launches Rwf 149 Million Documentation Centre: Eugene Kwibuka: 4 March 2009: The New Times.

### 34. MILITANCY ,REBELS,TERRORISM AND THE ‘WAR ON TERROR’

#### West Africa

- a. Nigeria: Police, Militants in Gun Duel: Jimitota Onoyume: 3 March 2009: Vanguard.

#### East Africa/Horn of Africa

- b. East Africa: Fighting Kills 20 in the Regional Administration of Somalia in Ethiopia: 6 March 2009:[Shabelle Media Network](#) (Mogadishu) .
- c. Eritrea: TPLF Regime Increasingly Instigating Conflict Among Various Ethnic Groups, Defecting Soldier Says:4 March 2009:[Shabait.com](#) (Asmara)
- d. Ethiopia: Fighting Kills More People in Ethiopia: Ahmednor Mohamed Farah: 7 March 2009:[Shabelle Media Network](#) (Mogadishu)
- e. Somalia: Kenya Accepts Seven Alleged Pirates From U.S. Navy for Trial: Jacquelyn S. Porth: 5 March 2009:[America.gov](#) (Washington, DC).
- f. Uganda: Army Captures Five LRA Rebels: Raymond Baguma and Barbara Among: 5 March 2009: The New Vision.

#### Central Africa

- g. Congo-Kinshasa: Upsurge in Attacks As Militia Group Returns to North Kivu, UN Agency Reports:6 March 2009:UN NEWS SERVICE.

#### 35. NORTH AFRICA

- a. Tunisia: President Ben Ali Focuses on Implementation of Agricultural Strategy: 2 March 2009: Tunisia Online News.
- b. Tunisia: 'Aerospace Meetings Tunisia' to Showcase Country's Aeronautical Capacities:4 March 2009:Tunisia Online News.
- c. Sudan: Unamid Welcomes Additional Egyptian Peacekeepers:2 March 2009:press release: [United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur](#) (El Fasher) .
- d. Tunisia: 'Viva Palestina' Caravan Leaves Country:28 February 2009:Tunisia Online News.
- e. Tunisia: Maghreb Moulded Conference Opens in Kairouan:4 March 2009:Tunisia Online News.
- f. Egypt: Dana discovers 100 billion cubic feet of gas: [afrol News](#), 24 February: By staff writer.
- g. Egypt: Egypt to raise \$11.7bn for agro-industrial zones: Sunday, March 08 – 2009:AME Info.
- h. Egypt:Egypt finds 30 mummies: [afrol News](#), 9 February: By staff writer.
- i. Libya: Parliamentarians delay Gaddafi's oil revenue plan: [afrol News](#), 4 March: By staff writer.
- j. Morocco: Morocco convicts 18 terrorists: [afrol News](#), 27 February: By staff writer.
- k. Morocco: Allow Sahrawis self determination – UN envoy: [afrol News](#), 23 February: By staff writer.
- l. Algeria: Algeria announces presidential candidates for April polls: [afrol News](#), 3 March :



- m. Algeria: Government restricts opposition ahead of elections: [afrol News](#), 5 March: By staff writer.
  - n. Algeria: Bouteflika to seek third term as independent candidate: [afrol News](#), 13 February: By staff writer.
  - o. Algeria: Algeria to embark on health infrastructure development: [afrol News](#), 12 February: By staff writer.
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### 36. SPECIAL FEATURE ON THE SUDAN

#### **Sudan: International Court Issues Bashir Arrest Warrant:4 March 2009:ALLAFRICA.**

The International Criminal Court (ICC) issued a warrant Wednesday for the arrest of President Omar al-Bashir of Sudan on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity arising out of the war in Darfur. Court spokeswoman Laurence Blairon told a news conference in The Hague, Netherlands, that Bashir was suspected of responsibility for attacks in which forces backed by the Sudanese government had been guilty of "murdering, exterminating, raping, torturing and forcibly transferring large numbers of civilians, and pillaging their property." However, two of three judges on the court panel which issued the warrant declined on the evidence currently before them to press charges of genocide. It said the prosecution had failed to provide reasonable grounds for believing that the Sudanese government had the specific intent to destroy three ethnic groups in Darfur. Bashir becomes the first sitting head of state to be indicted by the ICC for war crimes and crimes against humanity. Blairon said Bashir's status "does not exclude his criminal responsibility nor does it grant him immunity against prosecution." The charges related to what the court called a five-year counter-insurgency campaign, beginning in April 2003, against the Sudanese Liberation Movement/Army, the Justice and Equality Movement and other armed groups fighting the government. Blairon said it was alleged the campaign was the result of "a common plan agreed upon at the highest level of the government of Sudan by Omar al-Bashir and other high-ranking Sudanese political and military leaders." She added: "A core component of that campaign was the unlawful attack on that part of the civilian population of Darfur belonging largely to the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa groups perceived to be close to the organised armed groups opposing the government..." "The... civilian population was to be unlawfully attacked by government... forces, including the Sudanese armed forces and their allied Janjaweed militia, the Sudanese police force, the National Intelligence and Security Service and the Humanitarian Aid Commission." The judges found that Bashir was suspected of having "co-ordinated the design and implementation of the counter-insurgency campaign..."

#### **Sudan: Govt Condemns Bashir Arrest Warrant: 5 March 2009: document: ALLAFRICA.**

*The Sudanese government has attacked the International Criminal Court for issuing an arrest warrant against President Omar al-Bashir, accusing the court of "double*

*standards" and saying the move emboldens Darfur rebels and undermines peace efforts. This is the full text of the government's statement, as posted on the website of the Sudanese Embassy in the United States: Sudan strongly condemns the decision of the International Criminal Court's (ICC) Judges.*

We reject this decision on the basis that it has no jurisdiction over us, as we are not a party to the Rome Statute that established it. We reject its pretension to authority over our sovereignty on the same principle that the United States, India, China and many others who aren't signatories stand on. We reject it because our own judicial institutions are as capable and independent as those of any other well functioning democracies in the world. We are greatly concerned of the consequences of this politically motivated action and the security implications it portends for our people and country. For how else can such a pronouncement be perceived but as an attempt to derail our efforts? It's a decision that will only work to escalate the immense suffering in Darfur as it without a doubt undermines the essential ongoing peace process in Doha. Compounding to this is the negative impact it will have on significant achievements so far made by the Sudanese, most saliently, on the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. It jeopardizes the current UN-AU Peacekeeping mission. Above all, this decision, to the rebels, is a gesture that only emboldens them to continue employing violence against civilians to achieve political ends. It is a signal of encouragement for them to abandon the current negotiations for peace as clearly illustrated by rebel groups who've already stated their intention to storm the capital and now await this decision fully armed and ready to wreak chaos.

Sudan deems the court guilty of double standards in making decisions regarding the cases it goes after. Its pursuits to date are localized in Africa despite the fact that far more egregious crimes are being committed outside the continent. Iraq and Gaza suffice as examples. Some of the more powerful non-signatory countries have gone as far as adopting measures that would allow the use of force to retrieve nationals detained by the Court. This reality alone is worrisome and unfortunate for it renders the ICC as a body that can only pursue cases selectively. Its credibility as an objective and impartial body is instantly weakened. Its case against Sudan is only an exercise of flexing muscles by targeting those it perceives as easy prey, those whose sovereignty, integrity and authority it can violate and override without international bother. It is a reality that exposes the court as a tool of the more powerful countries while typifying the appalling and misguided notion that Africans are incapable and must be patronized. Sudan reiterates its traditional commitment to protect the UN Mission, diplomats and International community members. We are committed to resolving the outstanding issues and we reach out to those who seek peace in Darfur to support efforts currently underway to bring about a semblance of stability in the country. Security for our citizens is a chief concern and ICC's decision is an impediment to this agenda. It should be cautious that its actions do not contribute to the suffering of our people. We reiterate that Sudan is not a party to the court. We retain our own very capable and vital institutions that have in the past prosecuted individuals deemed to have acted unlawfully in the course of this tragedy and will continue to render justice in the future. We will steadfastly oppose any attempts to infringe on our sovereignty. The fair minded people of the world standing with us now will continue to stand with us in support of our efforts for Peace and Justice.

**Sudan: Africa Suspicious of Court's Motives in Taking On Bashir: Paul Moorcraft: 6 March 2009: BUSINESS DAY.**

Johannesburg — LOCKING up President Omar al-Bashir (or Robert Mugabe) might send a shiver of delight down the spines of western liberal intellectuals. Both presidents are nasty despots. But what will be the effect in Africa? On Wednesday the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague issued an arrest warrant for alleged war crimes committed in Darfur, Sudan's western province. And the ICC blames Bashir, the first sitting head of government targeted by the court. Bashir came to power in an Islamist coup in Khartoum in 1989. Since then constant rumours of a coup against him have circulated. But now many Sudanese, both opponents and allies, are likely to rally around him. Except for the insurgents in Darfur, the ICC action is seen domestically as an assault on Sudan. Nationalism will be fired up. Sudan is the proving ground of the law of unintended consequences. By 1996, the Clinton administration in Washington had succeeded in isolating Sudan. The regime was fighting wars on several fronts and its back was to the wall. Then, in August 1998, the Americans attacked a medicine factory in Khartoum, claiming the factory was making weapons of mass destruction. Washington's claim was subsequently shown to be false.

Almost overnight, Sudan was embraced by the developing world. The African Union and Arab League, previously hesitant about the Khartoum regime, kicked out against a perceived injustice. The Africa group at the United Nations nominated Sudan to take the African seat on the security council (ultimately blocked, with difficulty, by Washington). Diplomatically -- even taking Darfur into consideration -- the Sudanese have not looked back. And in a further twist, the US economic sanctions against Sudan, in place since 1997, have served to insulate Sudan from the western economic meltdown. The cranes dominating Khartoum's skyline are evidence of Sudan's booming oil-based economy. The law of unintended consequences has again manifested. The ICC action has made Bashir a poster-boy for the Sudanese, almost regardless of party. He will probably win the presidential election later this year easily.

The Sudan of 2009 is very different from the Sudan of 1998: Khartoum is a major oil exporter, it has ended the long-running war in southern Sudan, and it's starting to flex political and economic power within a new African dispensation. And internationally, those Africans supporting Bashir over the ICC are not necessarily doing so because they admire him -- many dislike him. They do so because Sudan is the lightning rod of a growing African impatience with diktats from the west and their old colonial masters in Europe. In the interlude between the ICC's original indictment in July 2008 and the issuing of arrest warrants, Sudanese diplomacy (and others hostile to the ICC) has succeeded in positioning the issue as a Eurocentric, Franco-German-British court embracing the old "White Man's Burden" of civilising savage Africans by forcing white man's magic on them; in this instance western legal structures alien to traditional African reconciliation mechanisms. At face value they have a point. The ICC, while claiming universal jurisdiction, is simply not international. More than half the world's population is not in its jurisdiction. The US, Russia, China and India, among many other countries, are not members of the ICC.

The ICC has pursued cases only in Africa. The court has decided not to investigate any western involvement or complicity in alleged war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide, whether in Iraq, Afghanistan, or Gaza. It has chosen not to criminalise waging "aggressive" war, a charge at the heart of the Nuremberg war-crimes trials, and which more than one legal authority has compared with the 2003 Anglo-American invasion of Iraq. In its first case, regarding the alleged use of child soldiers in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the ICC has ridden roughshod over key legal procedures, violating many of the defendant's rights. And the ICC is seen to ignore those African voices, be they Ugandan or Sudanese, who say that the court's arbitrary pursuit of African leaders is impeding or delaying peace. It can be argued that the ICC has inadvertently prolonged the horrific war in northern Uganda by aborting seemingly fruitful peace talks by issuing warrants against rebel leaders. In the case of Darfur, the ICC warrants against Bashir have merely bolstered rebel intransigence regarding peace talks.

The ICC meddling has had the effect of making Sudan Africa's spokesman on issues such as the ICC. Many African countries and leaders are happy for Sudan to make the sort of stand which they support, but are politically unable to make themselves. Internationally, the ICC issue has also manifested itself at the worst possible time. With the western economic meltdown worsening by the minute, confidence in "white man's magic" is at a historic low. The only bright spot is, of course, the election of the African-American Barack Obama as US president. But he also faces difficult choices regarding Africa, Sudan and the ICC. Washington has long declared its opposition to the ICC, arguing that it would be used to exact "political" justice, and that states and individuals would be pursued for political reasons under the façade of justice.

Paradoxically, the American position on Sudan and the ICC has proved this to be absolutely the case. While attacking the ICC in the strongest terms, Washington nevertheless acquiesced in the UN Security Council referral of Darfur to the ICC (while demanding immunity for its own citizens). To many observers this is precisely the sort of political vendetta the US had itself warned that the ICC might be used for. The ICC action may serve as a warning shot across the bows of other regimes, not least Mugabe's destructive presidency. And human rights are universal. Privileging African reconciliation methods, many of which are ineffective and even inauthentic, suggests a racist exceptionalism: that Africa is not ready for international law. But, in a war-ravaged continent, peace must precede justice, whether defined as African or European. Bashir's arrest warrant could undermine the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement which ended Africa's longest war, between the north and south in Sudan. The ICC's timing has never been good. Just as the Lord's Resistance Army leaders were about to make peace directly with the Ugandan government, the court's arrest warrants for those same leaders prompted them to return to war. And, this month, Khartoum's peace talks with Darfur's Justice and Equality Movement rebels were prospering. One fatal mistiming might seem an accident, but a repetition this month might appear a conspiracy to some in Africa. Now Darfur's war could intensify. And wasn't the ICC supposed to help end the tragedy in Darfur? The ICC, for all its good intentions, may be worsening Africa's woes, not least because it has no police or military to enforce its will. If the whole regiment of crack British SAS troopers could be magicked up to arrest Mugabe, there might be cheers

throughout Europe, and probably in Africa too. But that won't happen soon. Meanwhile, to its many African critics, the ICC's arrest warrants look like the 21st-century equivalent of old-fashioned 19th -century gunboat diplomacy -- but minus the gunboats.

*Prof Moorcraft, director of the Centre for Foreign Policy Analysis, London, has visited Sudan/Darfur on numerous occasions in the past 15 years.*

**Sudan: Peacekeepers Will Stay in Darfur Even If President Indicted - UN Official:2 March 2009:UN NEWS SERVICE.**

New York — With the International Criminal Court (ICC) expected to announce its decision on seeking an arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir on charges of war crimes this week, the chief of United Nations peacekeeping operations today said that the joint UN-African Union mission in Darfur (UNAMID) will continue its patrols protecting the local population. Speaking to the press at UN Headquarters in New York, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Alan Le Roy, said that he is assured that peacekeepers in Darfur will not come under threat should the ICC indict President Al-Bashir. "The Government would assume its full duty of protecting UN missions in Sudan against any negative impact that may result from ICC possible decision against the Sudanese political leadership," Mr. Le Roy told journalists in a wide-ranging briefing on the work of the 18 UN peacekeeping missions around the world. He added that the UN did not have any information on whether the ICC will issue an arrest warrant, stressing that the Court in The Hague is an independent body and will announce its decision on 4 March.

"We are not informed of their final decision. Anyone can guess," said Mr. Le Roy. "Of course, we are making some plans as any country would have contingency planning to try to react to any situation," he said of the 25,000 personnel deployed in the Sudan that could be affected by the ICC decision. Mr. Le Roy underscored, however, that there is no plan in place to scale down or move the two UN peacekeeping missions in the Sudan, the UN mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) and UNAMID. As part of his briefing of the state of peacekeeping for the some 112,000 UN blue helmets on the ground, Mr. Le Roy touched on the challenges in Afghanistan and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). On the intention of President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan to bring forward the planned 20 August national elections, Mr. Le Roy considered it would be very difficult to organize the logistics and security before July, and that there must be a consensus on the date of the election among Afghan political parties in conformity with the constitution. In the eastern region of the DRC, Mr. Le Roy reported that the UN mission to vast African nation, MONUC, had provided technical and logistical support to the joint DRC and Rwandan military offensive aimed at ridding the region of the ethnic Hutu militia, Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda (FDLR). Now that the operation is over and Rwandan government forces have left the region, MONUC is tasked with helping the Government repatriate the remaining fighters of the FDLR, which has been involved in a recent flare-up of clashes mostly in North Kivu that caused some 250,000 civilians to flee their homes, in addition to the 800,000 already displaced by violence in recent years. Mr. Le Roy was keen to highlight some peacekeeping successes, noting that the president of

Timor-Leste, Nobel Laureate José Ramos-Horta, told the Security Council recently that without the UN mission, his country would have been in complete chaos."He even quoted that the UN mission got in Timor something like 75 [per cent] rate of approval and the Government had only 66 per cent," said Mr. Le Roy, stressing that "In Timor the UN is performing fully its mandate. The president of Timor said that clearly in front of the Security Council the other day."Reporting on his visit to Haiti, Mr. Le Roy said that "100 per cent of the politicians I have met were all, all of them, praising the work of our UN mission in Haiti, MINUSTAH, politically, on the humanitarian side [and] of course on the security side."In Cité Soleil, the impoverished neighbourhood of the capital Port-au-Prince that was formerly controlled by gangs, people in the street told the peacekeeping chief that thanks to MINUSTAH they could walk in the streets day and night.Highlighting Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's visit to the Caribbean nation next week with former United States President Bill Clinton, as well as the upcoming donor conference for Haiti, Mr. Le Roy spoke of the "allure of hope" in the impoverished country.

### **Sudan: The Conflict in Darfur: 4 March 2009: IRIN.**

Nairobi — The conflict in Sudan's western Darfur region escalated in 2003 when the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) principally, took up arms, accusing the government of neglecting the region. The areas of Northern, Southern and Western Darfur, along Sudan's border with Chad, are home to about a quarter of the 25 million pastoral, mostly nomadic, Arabic-speaking communities and African groups - mainly the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawah. As a response to the insurgency, the government is alleged to have armed Arab Janjaweed militias. The government denies arming Arab militias, but the militias are accused of attacking, raping and pillaging Darfur's black communities. There are now fewer deaths from the conflict compared with the peak in the fighting, 2003-2004, but it has mutated and the confrontations multiplied. Groups such as JEM have since splintered.

Fragmentation has also led to in-fighting and a divided stance during negotiations. In May 2008, JEM launched an unprecedented assault on the Northern capital, Khartoum, and warned of further attacks. In April 2007, the ICC issued arrest warrants for a government minister, Ahmed Harun, and a Janjaweed commander, Ali Kushayb, for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Darfur. The two have yet to be handed over for prosecution. Meanwhile, violence continued, prompting the ICC on 14 July 2008 to apply for a warrant of arrest for President Omar el-Bashir for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in Darfur. According to the UN, at least 4.7 million people have been affected by the conflict with about half displaced. An estimated 300,000 people are believed to have died.

A peace agreement was signed by the government and one SLA/M faction (led by Minni Minnawi, SLA/MM) in May 2006, but was undermined by the absence of other parties, including JEM. Critics say the devastating attacks in Darfur, in which mainly the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawah have been targeted, have left civilians killed, forced off their land, abducted and raped. Militia activities have continued despite the 2004 deployment of the

African Union Mission in Sudan. A combined UN-African Union peacekeeping force began deploying in 2008, taking over from the small, overstretched AU force, but it has yet to stop the violence. Talks between parties to the conflict, including ongoing dialogue between the government and JEM in Doha, Qatar, have yet to bear fruit. The conflict has, over the years, severely curtailed efforts to deliver adequate humanitarian aid to Darfurians. Aid workers have been killed, vehicles stolen and delivery of food hampered by violence.

**Who are Sudan's Darfur rebels? Bbc.com.**

**When conflict broke out in Darfur early in 2003, there were just two major rebel groups - since then the insurgents have splintered into a confusing array of competing factions, making a peace deal infinitely more difficult to reach.**

### **Jem**

The Justice and Equality Movement (Jem) was founded by Darfurians drawn mostly from among former supporters of Islamist leader Hassan al-Turabi. He was a partner in President Omar al-Bashir's 1989 coup against Sadeq al-Mahdi's elected government. Jem is led by a doctor, Khalil Ibrahim, who was one of the authors of the "The Black Book", which documented the disproportionate power of three northern Arab tribes.

Jem is currently the most significant fighting force in Darfur, armed with weapons that Sudan says come from neighbouring Chad. It has bases inside Chad. Khartoum says Jem is supported by Chadian President Idriss Deby, who is from the same Zaghawa ethnic group as Khalil Ibrahim. In May 2008, Jem launched an unprecedented attack on the Sudanese capital. In February the following year it was invited to one-on-one talks with Sudan's government in Doha, Qatar. Jem signed a "declaration of intent" for a peaceful settlement of the war. Fresh talks may follow.

Many Darfurians distrust Khalil Ibrahim because of his Islamist past and suspect he is focused on political power in Khartoum for his clan.

### **SLA**

Until he attacked the capital, Jem had limited support on the ground in Darfur.

With Jem, the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) was one of the two original Darfur rebel groups, composed mainly of Fur, Zaghawa and Masalit - the three largest non-Arab tribes of Darfur. Existing divisions along largely ethnic lines widened, pitting Zaghawa (led by Minni Arkou Minnawi) against Fur (led by Abdel Wahid Mohamed el-Nur).

### **SLA-Minni faction**

Minnawi was the only rebel leader to sign the 2006 Darfur peace agreement (DPA) and was rewarded with the largely symbolic post of special adviser to President Bashir. His group had been losing ground before the DPA, and lost more after.

His presence and power on the ground in Darfur today is minimal.

### **SLA-Abdel Wahid**

Abdel Wahid has lived in self-imposed exile in Paris for nearly three years.

His faction controls part of the central Jebel Marra mountain area and has wide support among Fur in Darfur's massive displaced camps. But it is losing support as a result of Abdel Wahid's refusal to return to Darfur. He insists on being the only rebel interlocutor and says he wants security in Darfur, including the disarmament of the Janjaweed militias, before peace talks.

### **SLA-Unity**

SLA-Unity grew out of dissatisfaction with both Minni Minnawi and Abdel Wahid.

Based in North Darfur, it is composed mainly of ethnic Zaghawas and has itself split.

The International Criminal Court has blamed SLA-Unity, in alliance with Jem, for the 29 September 2007 attack on an African Union base in Haskanita in which 12 AU soldiers were killed. Its most prominent members include Suleiman Jamous, the humanitarian co-ordinator of the original SLA, and Sherif Harir, an anthropologist and long-time exile.

### **URF**

The United Resistance Movement was formed in April 2008 when five small rebel movements came together. Its chairman is Bahr Idriss Abu Garda, formerly deputy in Jem to Khalil Ibrahim and now loosely allied to SLA-Unity. Another component is the National Movement for Reform and Development.

The URF says it will not take part in any Qatar talks.

### **African Union defers Darfur issue: By Adam Mynott: BBC News, Khartoum:**

**When African leaders arrived in Khartoum for their annual summit the issue of who should assume the chairmanship for the coming year should have detained them for just the first hour of the first day.**

But in the run up to this year's conference in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum, it had become clear that Sudan's candidacy to be the leading African nation for the next 12 months would cause problems. By tradition the chairmanship of the AU revolves around the five African regions, and it was East Africa's turn. No other East African country had put their name forward and Sudan had the region's backing. North African countries also indicated that Sudan and its President Omar Hassan al-Bashir would get their support. But there were rumblings in the south and the west of the continent, and human rights groups were asking how Sudan could be given the leadership of the AU when it was confronted by accusations of a catalogue of human rights abuses in the Western Sudanese state of Darfur.

The security situation in Darfur has not only failed to improve, many think it has got worse. People are still being attacked and killed on a daily basis and there are new



arrivals at the dozens of camps for internally displaced people. One southern African diplomat told me that it was not credible for Africa to be headed by Sudan for the coming year when the Darfur crisis remained out of control. The AU chairman is also required to perform a role as mediator in African conflicts and disagreements. If Sudan was chairman it would be hopelessly compromised over Darfur.

## 'Unity'

The entire first day was taken up with the chairmanship issue. Congolese President Denis Sassou-Nguessou has now taken over the chair of the Khartoum summit. There were the usual opening speeches, but closed sessions of AU leaders were all about who should take over for the coming year, and the corridors of Friendship Hall in Khartoum where the summit is taking place were abuzz with diplomatic chat - much of it misinformed - about who was to be the new chairman. It was getting dark before the heads of state emerged from their closed-door afternoon discussions, and word started to get out that Sudan had, in the interests of 'unity' agreed to back down. Though official Sudanese sources were denying they had yielded. Overnight a small committee of countries was given the task of coming up with a compromise. What emerged in the middle of the morning of the second and final day was the decision to give the chairmanship for 2006 to the central African state of Congo-Brazzaville, and its president Denis Sassou-Nguessou. Sudan is to get the chairmanship next year. This was being hailed by Sudanese officials in Khartoum as a triumph. Human rights campaigners were asking if Sudan had been unsuitable for the chairmanship for 2006 what made it acceptable in a year's time? The summit then struggled to move on to what was left of the agenda - 95% of it. The theme this year: 'Education and Culture'.

## **Sudan: The Question of Land: Alex de Waal:14 July 2006:analysis:allafrica.**

*This is the tenth in a series of articles concerning the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), explaining how different parts were negotiated, what the paragraphs mean, and how they should be implemented. One of the reasons for this is that it is important for the Sudanese people as a whole--and the people of Darfur especially--to understand the spirit and letter of the DPA, so that it can be implemented so as best to serve the interests of the people and bring lasting peace to Darfur. This article focuses on central question of land tenure. Conflict over land is one of the major reasons for the war in Darfur.*

A year ago, the Declaration of Principles for the Darfur peace agreement was signed by all the main parties in Abuja. This made reference to traditional land ownership and how it must be respected. But land is a very complicated issue and the controversies over land ownership cannot be resolved quite so simply.

There is a contradiction between traditional land tenure and ownership, especially the hakura system, and Sudanese land law. According to Sudan's land laws all unregistered land belongs to the state, which can allocate leases without reference to who is actually living on the land. These land laws have disadvantaged rural communities at the expense of commercial farmers and state development schemes which have not brought benefits

to the local population. In the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile this was a major reason for people to take up arms and join the SPLA. In the case of Darfur there are few cases of major commercial farms or mechanized schemes, and in fact the largest rural development projects have promoted smallholder farming. Instead, the main challenge to traditional land tenure has come from migration, especially north to south migration on account of desertification in northern Darfur, which has led to widespread settlement of northern Darfurians on land in other parts of Darfur, and the immigration of Chadians including large numbers of nomads.

Environmental change and migration means that the hakura system must be applied with some flexibility. Traditionally, the concept of hakura is not equivalent to "tribal land ownership." The idea of a tribal "dar" is different. Each hakura was an individual grant of jurisdiction over land. The individual in question could often be a tribal leader in which case he exercised that jurisdiction on behalf of his people, or alternatively people would congregate in his hakura and thereby identify themselves with the hakura (e.g. the Birgid). The hakura system has historically included a principle of hospitality--newcomers are entitled to settle on free land provided that they respect the customs of their hosts. It also made a distinction between the native administration office holder, who adjudicates disputes over land, and the person who actually allocates the land.

One of the causes of Darfur's conflict has been the inability of the land ownership and land management systems to cope with the demand for farms and pasture. The numbers of people and animals have grown while the land itself has become degraded through over-use and because of declining rainfall. Darfur's land can certainly support many more people than the six million people who live in the region today. But for Darfurians to not only survive but prosper, the land must be used more efficiently than in the past. Experience of rural development the world over demonstrates that small farmers are usually the best custodians of the soil--and Darfur is no exception. Darfur's developmental challenge is to enable its capable farmers and livestock owners to apply their skills to gaining a livelihood, without creating conflict and without degrading the natural environment.

The DPA is not a blueprint for social and economic development. But it does provide some important guiding principles that can enable Darfur to achieve sustainable development. At various points the Agreement makes reference to the need for land ownership systems and ecological management to ensure equitable development and avoid environmental degradation. It refers to policies to address the challenges of access to pasture and water and to overcome tensions arising from competition between farmers and herders. But the DPA's most basic principle is the rights and equality of Darfurians. For that reason, and in line with the 2005 Declaration of Principles, it has a clear bias in favour of traditional land ownership. This is asserted in two main ways. Paragraph 110 clearly recognizes that hawakeer have legal standing and priority over other claims on land. This is a very important concession made by the GoS, which makes it clear that the Government is not free to grant whatever leasehold rights it desires over unregistered land.

The second main principle is the right of return of refugees and IDPs to their places of origin. This is asserted at a number of points in the DPA, for example Paragraph 108. In Paragraph 176, this right of return of refugees and IDPs is fleshed out by specifying that these people must be provided with protection including access to courts. Other provisions for the security of returning refugees and IDPs, such as the community police and the possibility of deploying integrated units in areas of return, have been detailed in the second paper in this series. While the right to return is deeply enshrined in the DPA, there may be instances in which it is simply not practical for an individual to take his or her piece of land back. For example Paragraph 175 makes reference to major development projects that may be inconsistent with land legislation. Paragraph 159 reads: "All displaced persons and other persons arbitrarily or unlawfully deprived of rights to land shall have those rights restored to them. No person or group of persons shall be deprived of any traditional or historical right in respect of land or access to water without consultation and compensation on just terms."

The correct interpretation of this paragraph is important. It is crystal clear that every Darfurian has his or her right to land restored. There is to be no large-scale transfer of land from one group to another. However, land use changes may occur, for example in order to halt environmental degradation or to make the best use of limited land resources. In some cases, individuals may not keep their previous farmland or their earlier rights of access to water, and in such cases they must first be consulted and then compensated. This is an important advance on what has sadly been the normal practice in Sudan, in which customary rights to land are swept aside when mechanized farms are set up or the authorities lay claim to land used by small farmers. Restoring traditional rights to land will be a complicated business. There are bound to be disputes. Paragraphs 197-198 set up Property Claims Committees to adjudicate any disputes arising as people return to their lands. One important land issue that will need to be addressed by the Property Claims Committees is women's right to land. In the traditional land tenure system of the Fur and other Darfur farming peoples, women have tenure of land in their own right. It is particularly important this aspect of customary land tenure is preserved as people return to their villages. The issue of nomadic routes and land rights is addressed at several points in the DPA. While both GoS and Movements' negotiators recognized that nomads have always been part of Darfur's social fabric, and that they have the right to continue to practice their livelihoods, there was much controversy and disagreement over how this should be implemented in practice. The Movements argued that it would be enough to include a general provision for freedom of movement, while GoS representatives wanted every nomadic migration route to be mapped out in accordance with the recent work of state committees. In particular, the Movements' negotiators insisted that many problems had arisen in the last few years because certain nomadic groups had tried to open up new migration routes, cutting through farming areas and impinging on the land rights of other groups.

A compromise was agreed, which hinges on the words "customary" and "historic"--the nomads' rights to migrate with their herds are respected, but in accordance with the same old and well-established principles that grant farmland to settled communities. So Paragraph 158 asserts that the right to "traditional or customary livestock routes" is to be

respected. Recognizing that nomadic migration is a security issue of immediate relevance, the chapter on security arrangements also includes provisions for ensuring that nomads' security is ensured, and that they do not create security problems for the populations they move amongst. Paragraphs 288 and 289 require AMIS to draw up plans for regulation of movement along "historic" nomadic migration routes. This falls under the ceasefire provisions, indicating that it must be done quickly, but also that the arrangements made by AMIS are only interim ones until a lasting settlement of this issue is reached. This means that, with immediate effect, "historic" nomadic routes should be opened up for the movement of nomads, under the regulation of AMIS. Next, the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation should consider "the locations and regulation of nomadic migration routes" (Paragraph 484(d)). And finally, Paragraph 158 indicates that Sudan's land laws must be reformed in order to take better account of customary land rights: "Tribal land ownership rights (hawakeer), historical rights to land, traditional or customary livestock routes, and access to water, shall be recognised and protected. All levels of government shall institute a process to progressively develop and amend the relevant laws to incorporate customary laws, practices, international trends and practices and protect cultural heritage." This is a general requirement for overhauling the land laws and it is reiterated in Paragraph 162.

At this point, the negotiators in Abuja faced a problem. Darfur is part of Sudan and a basic principle of national sovereignty is that one set of laws should apply across the country. Residents of other parts of Sudan face similar problems over land ownership and there is a need for a comprehensive national approach to land law and land use planning--an approach that takes into account everyone's needs for land, the importance of good land use planning especially because of the problems of desertification, as well as customary land rights which vary from place to place. It would not make sense for Darfurians to have one set of laws while other Sudanese have another legal regime controlling land. Apart from anything else, there are many people of Darfurian origin living in other parts of Sudan, and if Darfur were to be given a privileged land law status, the original inhabitants of other parts of Sudan might start demanding that too, which would disadvantage Darfurians residing there.

Fortunately, the CPA recognized this problem and established a National Land Commission specifically for this purpose. What the DPA therefore does is to establish a Darfur state Land Commission as the mechanism for protecting Darfurians' land rights, to coordinate with the National Land Commission. Paragraphs 163-169 detail Darfur's state Land Commission, its composition and powers. This will oversee all the land tenure questions discussed in this article, such as arbitrating disputes over land tenure, establishing and maintaining records of existing and historical land use, the application and reform of land laws, and recommending measures for land use planning. It should also ensure that women's customary land rights are not lost. Its head is to be a nominee of the Movements and its membership is to include representatives of all the groups that have interests in land ownership and use. The Darfur states are also required to establish a Planning Authority for the purpose of land use management plans. At the insistence of the Movements' negotiators, who were well aware of how governmental land planning can violate the rights of ordinary people, the guidelines for land use planning and

development are laid out in some detail in Paragraph 171. The three paragraphs that follow it place safeguards on how these plans are to be developed, implemented, regulated and monitored. Among other safeguards, the state Land Commission is required to review the merits and legality of land use planning decisions. The head of the Land Commission will shoulder onerous responsibilities.

The issue of land ownership is certain to be one of the most important questions debated at the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation. While the DDDC cannot reopen the DPA for renegotiation, the clauses of the Agreement provide plenty of scope for Darfurians to find means of managing and resolving their land ownership challenges in a way that is satisfactory to all.

**Sudan: Expulsion of Aid Groups From Darfur Will Have Wide Impact, UN Agency Warns: 6 March 2009: UN NEWS SERVICE.**

Adding its voice to the deep concern expressed by Secretary-General Ki-moon and the rest of the United Nations system over the ordered departure of at least 13 aid organizations from Sudan, the UN refugee agency warned today that the effects could shake the region. The Sudanese action came immediately after the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir on Wednesday, for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Darfur. "With some 4.7 million Sudanese - including 2.7 million internally displaced - already receiving assistance in Darfur, we are very concerned over the prospect of new population movements in the region should the fragile aid lifeline inside Sudan be disrupted," Ron Redmond, spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), said today in Geneva. Noting that there are also 40,000 Chadian refugees in West Darfur, he said: "Our experience shows that when vulnerable populations are unable to get the help they need, they go elsewhere in search of protection and assistance."

Support for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Darfur keeps them as close to home as possible and relieves pressure on neighbouring Chad, where UNHCR and its partners are already caring for nearly 250,000 refugees from Darfur, he explained. These isolated camps and the remote communities surrounding them are already struggling to provide the basics needed to sustain those refugees in addition to some 180,000 IDPs in eastern Chad. "Any influx to Chad would be an additional challenge for UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies because of ongoing insecurity and instability in the country, as well as limited resources such as water," Mr. Redmond said. In addition to some 3 million displaced, an estimated 300,000 people have died in Darfur, where rebels have been fighting Government forces and allied Arab militiamen, known as the Janjaweed, since 2003. With such major actors as Oxfam, Care International, International Rescue Committee and Save the Children, and some 6,500 staff, affected, a UN relief official said yesterday that the expulsions will cut humanitarian capabilities in Darfur by at least one half.

**Gambia: President of Sudan And the International Criminal Court:6 March 2009:editorial:FOROYAA Newspaper (Serrekunda) .**

On Wednesday March 4th 2009 The International Criminal Court issued its first ever warrant against a sitting head of state, namely, president Omar al Bashir of Sudan for war crimes and crimes against humanity. The 65 year old Bashir is to face five counts of crimes against humanity and two of war crimes. Opinions are now divided on the development. The Chief prosecutor Luis Moreno - Ocampo said that Sudan is legally obliged to execute the warrant. The prosecution claims that Bashir and other high level Sudanese political and military leaders have issued the orders and therefore bore direct responsibility of killing, raping and forcibly transferring a large number of civilians. The African Union Commission Chairman Jean Ping has indicated that while they support the fight against impunity and that the crime perpetrators should not go unpunished, they are of the view that peace and justice should not collide. Hence they would want the warrant to be deferred to facilitate the completion of the implementation of the comprehensive peace agreement between Northern and Southern Sudan and ensure the end of the Darfur crisis. Sudan's envoy to the AU called on African member states to withdraw from the Rome Statute. It is important for our readers to understand what the International Criminal Court is all about.

In 1998 many countries decided to subscribe to the idea of establishing an International Criminal Court. The Rome Statute was drafted and put out for signature and ratification by countries to facilitate the establishment of the International Criminal Court. According to the preamble of the Treaty the signatories were conscious of the fact that all peoples are united by a common bond and shared heritage. They were mindful of the fact that "over the centuries millions of children, women and men have been victims of unimaginable atrocities that deeply shock the conscience of humanity," that such grave crimes threaten the peace, security and well-being of the world. Hence they resolved to establish an Independent Permanent International Criminal Court with jurisdiction over the most serious crimes which are of concern to the International Community as a whole. This is designed to guarantee lasting respect for and enforcement of International Justice. 60 countries needed to sign and ratify the Rome Statutes before it could enter into force. This was achieved by 11th April 2002. Most African countries including the Gambia ratified the Statute. Gambia signed the Statute on 7th December 1998 and ratified it on 28 June 2002 thus becoming the 73rd state party to be a member. The following speech was given by the permanent representative of the Gambia to the UN, Mr Crispin Johnson on agenda. Item 146 in support of the International Criminal Court.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me take this Opportunity to assure you of my delegations cooperation during your chairmanship of our Committee. Our intervention on agenda item 146 International Criminal Court is born out of The Gambia's deep commitment to the promotion of justice and international rule of law. These are not mere concepts. They are quintessential in today's intercourse between states as they constitute the bedrock of multilateralism. The International Criminal Court has come a long way and is here to stay.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation is very pleased that all the institutional arrangements of the court are now fully operational. With the two referrals from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda, the constitution of pre-trial chambers and opening of investigations in the referred situations, we can confidently say that the credible march towards combating impunity is well underway. This in itself is a victory for, and affirmation of, confidence in the court. Every true believer in the pursuit of justice and the rule of law should be energized by this fact alone.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation fully welcomes the signing of the Relationship Agreement between the UN and the Court as another milestone in the annals of international justice. Our two organizations share the overarching goal of the maintenance of international rule of law and justice. Nothing can be more lofty than these goals in an era of impunity. The UN needs the ICC and the ICC needs the UN. It is this symbiotic relationship that the organs of the UN, especially the Security Council need to enhance in a constructive manner as soon as possible."

The Court is to deal with issues such as war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. For the purpose of this Statute crimes against humanity means any of the following acts when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack; that is, murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation or forcible transfer of population, imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law, torture, rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy or any sexual violence of comparable gravity persecution against any identifiable group or collectively on political, racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender or other grounds, enforced disappearance of persons, the crime of apartheid. On the other hand war crimes means

(a) Grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, namely, any of the following acts against persons or property protected under the provisions of the relevant Geneva Convention:

(i) Wilful killing;

(ii) Torture or inhuman treatment, including biological experiments;

(iii) Wilfully causing great suffering, or serious injury to body or health;

(iv) Extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly;

(v) Compelling a prisoner of war or other protected person to serve in the forces of a hostile Power;

(vi) Wilfully depriving a prisoner of war or other protected person of the rights of fair and regular trial;

(vii) Unlawful deportation or transfer or unlawful confinement;

(viii) Taking of hostages.

It is therefore important for state signatories to know what they are signing so that they will respect its provisions. It is very simple to respect the rights of others and very shameful to subject other human beings to inhuman or degrading punishment. Foroyaa envisages the day when African countries will be vocal on what they are doing to enlarge the liberty and prosperity of their people rather than protesting and pointing accusing fingers at other countries to claim that their leaders are also guilty of perpetrating atrocities against other populations.

**UGANDA: Continent's Despots Will Never Prosecute Their Own: Samuel Olara:5 March 2009:column:The Weekly Observer (Kampala) .**

At the recent AU meeting in Addis Ababa, President Museveni asked for a delay in the issuing of an arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar el-Bashir, until investigations by the African Union are completed. The African Union has supposedly set up a committee, headed by former South African President Thabo Mbeki, to investigate the "alleged" war crimes against the Sudanese president.

Bashir is facing indictments by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur. ICC judges found credible grounds for indictment. It is the first warrant sought against a sitting head of state. The Bashir government, by commission or omission, is responsible for serious rights violations, including mass murder committed by forces and militias allied to the state. In all cases, their hapless victims are guilty only of being Fur, Masalit, or Zaghawa, the three tribes that took up arms to defend themselves against state excesses. Any measures that aim to hold those accountable for these crimes are undoubtedly bold steps in the right direction. Much as actions around Bashir's indictment by the ICC create more questions than answers, leaving it to African despots and mass murderers to investigate their own is like sealing international justice with the kiss of death. First, the issuance of arrest warrants should have remained sealed and only made public once Bashir had traveled outside Africa, where he could easily be apprehended. Unlike Joseph Kony and company, Lubanga, Bemba, etc, Bashir is a sitting president.

The court's jurisdiction over the crimes in Darfur has been established pursuant to a binding decision of the United Nations Security Council, which means that even states that are not parties to the ICC statute must execute the court's orders and warrants. But it is unlikely that Sudan will comply, unless Bashir hands himself in. Secondly, why seek a warrant for only Bashir and leave out his associates in political and military leadership, including leaders of the Janjaweed militia? What this means is that had Adolf Hitler been alive in 1945, the trials and convictions of the 21 defendants at Nuremberg would have



been unlikely! In arguing the case against Bashir, the ICC Chief Prosecutor, Moreno-Ocampo, maintained that there were "reasonable grounds" for believing that Bashir bore criminal responsibility on 10 counts of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Bashir had allegedly "masterminded and implemented a plan to destroy in substantial part the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa groups, on account of their ethnicity" after they rebelled. According to Moreno-Ocampo, Bashir's "motives were largely political", while his "alibi was a 'counterinsurgency'", and his "intent was genocide." Pro-government militias allegedly followed Bashir's orders to attack and destroy villages from the three groups, pursuing survivors into the desert. The crimes against humanity centered on inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about these groups' physical destruction, by forcing over 2.3 million people into dehumanising conditions in the camps. Those who reached the camps also constantly faced further violence, according to the ICC charge sheet. Moreno-Ocampo accused the Sudanese president of using his "absolute control" of the state apparatus to conceal the truth and protect his subordinates "in order to secure their willingness to commit genocide." If Bashir bears sole responsibility for the simple reason that he is the personification of the Sudanese government, the Commander-in-Chief and the protector of his people, then why are the same logic and standards not applied universally or even regionally in the Great Lakes region? For instance, over 4.7 million people were slaughtered in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where Uganda was convicted by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for crimes against humanity and plundering, but surprisingly, the ICC only went after Thomas Lubanga - a rebel client and protégé of the Uganda Government - on charges of "forcefully recruiting children into armed combat."

Jean Pierre Bemba, a former Congolese warlord and another protégé of the Ugandan Government on the other hand, has been charged with mass rape and mass murder in the Central African Republic's conflict in 2002-2003, but his crimes in the DRC are not in the spotlight. In Uganda, in direct contravention of the Geneva Conventions, Article 17 of Protocol 2, over 2 million Ugandans were forcibly banished to the dehumanizing conditions of the government "protected villages" - in some instances bombed out of their villages with lives, property and food destroyed. The international community, especially Britain and America, are leaning heavily on Mr. Ocampo not to investigate their proxies around the globe and the same international community is now split on the arrest warrants of Omar Bashir. The United States which is not a signatory to the ICC statute, Britain and France, want Bashir prosecuted, but China and Russia, who maintain strong political, economic and military links with Sudan, are opposed to the possible idea of trying Bashir. For the ICC to gain credibility, it must desist from being used as a political tool in the prosecution of war crimes or else it is doomed. *Samuel Olara, The writer is a son of the late Gen. Bazilio Olara Okello and a human rights advocate based in UK.*

**Arrest Warrant for Sudan's Al Bashir is a Warning for Dictators: Lance Guma:5 March 2009:analysis: [SW Radio Africa](#) (London).**

The days of brutal dictators getting away with violence and murder are slowly coming to an end, after the International Criminal Court put its foot down and issued an arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir. It marks the first time since the

Hague Tribunal was set up in 2002 that a sitting head of state has been indicted for war crimes and crimes against humanity. Zimbabweans will have no doubt greeted the news with some comfort knowing that Robert Mugabe, whose own regime has slaughtered thousands of innocent civilians in its 28 year reign, might soon get his day in court. For years legal experts were bogged down by issues relating to diplomatic immunity, but the Bashir case now provides a new legal benchmark that effectively throws out all those impediments. Amnesty International Secretary General Irene Kahn said; 'This announcement is an important signal, both for Darfur and the rest of the world, that suspected human rights violators will face trial, no matter how powerful they are.' Despite resistance from some quarters who felt the ruling might prejudice a fragile 2005 peace agreement the ICC ruled that Bashir was 'criminally' responsible for directing attacks on the civilian population including the use of rape, torture, murder and the pillaging of property.

The Sudanese dictator however escaped charges of genocide after the ICC judges ruled that prosecutors had failed to provide sufficient evidence. This is despite the death of 300 000 Sudanese people and the displacement of over 2,7 million because of fighting in the western Darfur region since 2003. The international arrest warrant against Bashir means any of the 108 member nations of the ICC are obliged to arrest him. His only free areas of travel will now be Asian and African nations, who have not signed up to the international court. Experts are divided on the applicability of the new ruling in the case of Zimbabwe. The country has not signed up to the Rome Statute that set up the ICC so some argue Zimbabwe is not bound by the court and Mugabe cannot be prosecuted. A new school of thought however argues that even dictators, who have not ratified international treaties, can be prosecuted in the ICC, if the Rome Statute is deemed to have acquired customary international law status. They say this would make it binding on all states, regardless of their membership.

**Sudan: Ending Violence in Darfur Remains a Top Challenge for Obama: Jim Fisher-Thompson: 2 March 2009: [America.gov](http://America.gov) (Washington, DC)**

Washington DC — When rebels attacked Sudanese forces in Darfur in February 2003, they sparked a government-backed genocide that has led to the deaths of more than 400,000 civilians and an international crisis that remains a high-priority foreign policy challenge for the United States. Now, with senior officials like President Obama, Vice President Biden, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice having spoken out on the crisis, acting Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Philip Carter told [America.gov](http://America.gov) February 20, "There is no question that this [Obama] administration is dead set on solving Darfur and bringing peace to the region.

"We're doing that in large part," said Carter, who formerly served as U.S. ambassador to Guinea, "by bringing in UNAMID and by supporting the peace talks" in Doha, Qatar, between the government of Sudan and rebel movements. UNAMID is the U.N.-African Union Mission in Darfur, the hybrid peacekeeping force created in July 2007 that includes troops from African Union (AU) member nations. Total U.S. government

support to Darfur is approximately \$1 billion a year, including support for peacekeeping - - 25 percent of the cost of UNAMID -- as well as humanitarian assistance, Carter said. President Obama recently voiced his support for Darfur during a meeting with the actor George Clooney, who has been a vocal advocate for the protection of Darfurians and a peaceful negotiation of the crisis in Sudan. A February 24 posting on the White House Web site following the meeting reported, "Bringing relief to the battered region of Darfur is a top priority of the Administration, the President and Vice President assured the actor and activist George Clooney last night."

#### UNAMID PROVING EFFECTIVE

Carter said that in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where he attended the AU summit in early February, a senior Sudanese official "told us they were going to ask UNAMID to leave this area called Muhajiriya [in south Darfur] while they conducted a bombing campaign. Instead, UNAMID refused to leave. They held their ground and protected civilians even while the [Sudanese] government bombed the outskirts of the city -- even near their compound." That was a "forthright and courageous act," Carter said, considering that UNAMID is "still in the process of building its capacity and is up to only 64 percent of its mandate of 26,000 troops." Tim Shortley, head of the State Department's Sudan Programs Group, agreed with Carter. "UNAMID has established itself in Darfur but still requires full strength," he told America.gov. Noting that his office and the State Department were beginning a policy review on Sudan, he said the protection of vulnerable civilians in the region is and will remain a prime concern for the Obama administration.

Ambassador Rice touched on the recent Darfur bombing when she told a February 3 news conference at U.N. headquarters in New York, "The United States is gravely concerned by reports of intensive aerial bombardment" in south Darfur. "The [U.N.] secretariat reported 28 bombs dropped just this morning in Muhajiriya." So this is clearly a very worrisome situation, and the risk that the violence will escalate, that the government will continue its bombing and indeed a ground campaign, despite the fact that the JEM is not in Muhajiriya any more, is of grave concern," she said. Following Rice's comments, the government of Sudan signed an agreement with a major rebel group, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), that included a process to aid refugees in Darfur as well as a commitment to continue peace negotiations for the region. "We look to this agreement as a tangible first step forward toward an inclusive framework for the resolution of the Darfur conflict," State Department spokesman Gordon Duguid said. He added, "The United States supports these talks and encourages all parties, including armed groups, civil society and political leaders, to come together to stop the violence in Darfur and join in the search for peace." Ambassador Carter said the February agreement and ongoing talks in Doha "will start to build confidence over the coming weeks that allow us to sit at the table with both sides willing now to talk about a broader peace agreement built on a foundation of national unity."

**Sudan: Bashir Should Be Held Accountable, Says Clinton: David Mckeeby:5 March 2009: [America.gov](http://America.gov) (Washington, DC).**

Washington — After an international court issued an arrest warrant for Sudan President Omar al-Bashir for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton called for calm and reiterated America's commitment to peace, justice and security for Africa's largest country. "Governments and individuals who either conduct or condone atrocities of any kind, as we have seen year after year in Sudan, have to be held accountable," Clinton told reporters March 4. "We are going to hope that there is not any increased violence on the part of the government in Khartoum." Earlier in the day, the International Criminal Court in The Hague indicted Bashir on two counts of war crimes and five counts of crimes against humanity for his government's alleged targeting of civilians during its 2003-2008 campaign against rebel groups in Sudan's western Darfur region. "He is suspected of being criminally responsible ... for intentionally directing attacks against an important part of the civilian population of Darfur, Sudan," the international court said in a press release, "murdering, raping, torturing, and forcibly transferring large numbers of civilians and pillaging their property." At least 300,000 people have been killed in the conflict and 2.7 million others have been driven from their homes, according to the United Nations. American officials have joined many in the international community in calling Bashir's actions "genocide." International court officials did not include that charge, but stressed that the indictment could be amended to include genocide based on the case presented by prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo.

"Those who committed atrocities in Sudan, including genocide, should be brought to justice," Susan Rice, America's ambassador to the United Nations, said in a written statement. "The people of Sudan have suffered too much for too long." Demonstrators rally at the United Nations in New York in support of the arrest warrant for Bashir. The United States is the leading international donor to Sudan, contributing more than \$5 billion in humanitarian, development, peacekeeping and reconstruction assistance. It has actively supported a U.N.-African Union mediation initiative in Darfur, as well as efforts to implement the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement that ended a 12-year civil war between northern and southern Sudan.

Sudan's government has rejected the international court's indictment, staging mass protests and ordering the expulsion of at least 10 major international humanitarian relief organizations currently serving 2.7 million displaced people in Darfur. While it remains to be seen if Bashir -- the first sitting president to be served a world court arrest warrant -- will be delivered to The Hague, U.S. officials urge both the Sudanese government and rebel groups to exercise restraint. "No one should use the [International Criminal Court's] decision as a pretext to incite or launch violence against civilians or international personnel," Rice said. President Obama recently voiced his support for Darfur during a meeting with the actor George Clooney, who has been a vocal advocate for the people of Darfur and a peaceful negotiation of the humanitarian crisis in Sudan. A February 24 posting on the White House Web site following the meeting reported that "bringing relief to the battered region of Darfur is a top priority of the administration, the president and vice president assured the actor and activist George Clooney last night." "The [International Criminal Court] issued an indictment based on a very long investigation,

and it is now in a judicial system," Clinton said. "If he believes that the indictment is wrongly charged, he can certainly contest it."

**Sudan: The Case Against Bashir: 4 March 2009:IRIN.**

Nairobi — Presenting evidence against President Omar el-Bashir on 14 July 2008, ICC Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo said Bashir had committed the crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in Darfur. Bashir denies all the charges, describing them as "not worth the ink they are written in". Ocampo argued that he bore criminal responsibility in relation to 10 counts of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Bashir, he argued, masterminded and implemented a plan to destroy in substantial part the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawah groups, on account of their ethnicity. "His motives were largely political, his alibi was a 'counter-insurgency', his intent was genocide," Moreno-Ocampo said. For more than five years, the prosecutor argued, armed forces and the militia/Janjaweed attacked and destroyed villages on Bashir's orders. Then they pursued survivors into the desert. Millions of civilians were uprooted from land they had occupied for centuries, all their means of survival destroyed, their land inhabited by new settlers. "In the camps, Bashir's forces kill the men and rape the women. He wants to end the history of the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawah people," Moreno-Ocampo argued. "Bashir organised the destitution, insecurity and harassment of the survivors," according to Moreno-Ocampo. "He did not need bullets. He used other weapons: rapes, hunger, and fear. As efficient, but silent."

Sudanese foreign ministry spokesman Ali Al Sadiq said Sudan was not a signatory to the Rome Charter and would not heed the ICC. Some analysts said the ICC had the authority to indict and have Bashir arrested and tried on the basis of UN Security Council Resolution 1593 of 31 March 2005, which referred issues relating to the Darfur situation to the ICC. The ICC, they argue, has jurisdiction over Darfur crimes by virtue of the Rome Statute, which includes genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and crimes of aggression, as crimes that can be tried by the ICC. Announcing their decision on 4 March, the pre-trial chamber excluded the charge of genocide, but announced seven counts of crimes against humanity and war crimes. Five of these are for crimes against humanity and include murder, extermination, forcible transfer, torture, and rape, while the other two are for war crimes, ICC spokeswoman Laurence Blairon, said. "In order to speak about genocide, you need to have a clear intent that a person wishes to destroy, in part or as a whole, a targeted group, a specific group," Blairon said. "In this specific case, the Pre-Trial Chamber 1 has not been able to find that there were reasonable grounds to establish the genocidal intent." The court held Bashir criminally responsible for "intentionally directing attacks against an important part of the civilian population of Darfur, Sudan, murdering, exterminating, raping, torturing and forcibly transferring large numbers of civilians and pillaging their property". The official capacity of head of state did not exclude criminal responsibility or get Bashir immunity, Blairon told a news conference at The Hague.

**Sudan: Archbishop Tutu Welcomes Arrest Warrant for Al-Bashir: 4 March 2009: Catholic Information Service for Africa (Nairobi).**

New York — South African anti-apartheid crusader and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu is looking forward to the issuance of a warrant by the International Criminal Court for the arrest of Sudan's president. The ICC was expected to make a decision on the matter on Wednesday. At the same time, the ICC has said if it issues a warrant against President Omar al-Bashir, he would be arrested when he leaves the country. "As soon as Bashir flies outside of Sudan he could be arrested," ICC prosecutor Luis Moreno Ocampo, who is seeking to prosecute al-Bashir on charges of war crimes and genocide in Darfur, told the Arabic-language news network Al Jazeera on Tuesday. "There is no immunity from international law."

Writing in the New York Times, Archbishop Tutu said an arrest warrant for President Omar Hassan al-Bashir would be "an extraordinary moment for the people of Sudan." He described the African leaders' opposition to the ICC indictment of Bashir as shameful. "Because the victims in Sudan are African, African leaders should be the staunchest supporters of efforts to see perpetrators brought to account. Yet, rather than stand by those who have suffered in Darfur, African leaders have so far rallied behind the man responsible for turning that corner of Africa into a graveyard." In response to news last July that Moreno-Ocampo, was seeking an arrest warrant for President Bashir for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, the African Union issued a communiqué to the United Nations Security Council asking it to suspend the court's proceedings. "Rather than condemn the genocide in Darfur, the organization chose to underscore its concern that African leaders are being unfairly singled out and to support President Bashir's effort to delay court proceedings," Archbishop Tutu said. More recently, the Group of 77, an influential organization at the UN consisting of 130 developing states and including nearly every African country, gave Sudan its chairmanship. The victory came after African members endorsed Sudan's candidacy in spite of the imminent criminal charges against its president.

"I regret that the charges against President Bashir are being used to stir up the sentiment that the justice system and in particular, the international court is biased against Africa. Justice is in the interest of victims, and the victims of these crimes are African. To imply that the prosecution is a plot by the West is demeaning to Africans and understates the commitment to justice we have seen across the continent," the archbishop said. He noted that more than 20 African countries were among the founders of the International Criminal Court, and of the 108 nations that joined the court, 30 are in Africa. "That the court's four active investigations are all in Africa is not because of prosecutorial prejudice - it is because three of the countries involved (Central African Republic, Congo and Uganda) themselves requested that the prosecutor intervene. Only the Darfur case was referred to the prosecutor by the Security Council." Tutu also dismissed the argument by some African leaders that the ICC action will impede efforts to promote peace in Darfur, saying that there can be no real peace and security until justice is enjoyed by the inhabitants of the land. "The issuance of an arrest warrant for President Bashir would be an extraordinary moment for the people of Sudan - and for those around the world who have come to doubt that powerful people and governments can be called to account for inhumane acts. African leaders should support this historic occasion, not work to subvert it."

**Sudan: Catholic Church Says Bashir Arrest Won't Bring Peace:6 March 2009:Catholic Information Service for Africa (Nairobi).**

The Catholic Church in Sudan says that arresting President Omar al-Bashir will not bring peace to the war ravaged country because what is needed is genuine reconciliation among the people. Bishop Rudolf Deng, the chairman of the Sudan Catholic Bishops Conference, further warned that the arrest would breed more suspicion and obstruct peace efforts in Darfur. "What we need is more sincerity from the leaders and the rebels, and a more serious dedication from the international community to save the Sudan," Bishop Deng of Wao Diocese told CISA. He spoke after the Hague-based International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant for al-Bashir for war crimes and crimes against humanity allegedly committed in Darfur. Sudan immediately said it would defy the order and the president would go on discharging his duties within and out of the country. In response to the ICC warrant, the Sudanese government expelled 10 humanitarian organizations claiming that they were spying on the country for the West. The U.N. estimates that since 2003 nearly 300 000 people have been killed by Pro government militia in Darfur. Meanwhile South Africa's retired Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu supported the warrant saying it would be an extraordinary moment for the people of Sudan - and for those around the world who have come to doubt that powerful people and governments can be called to account for inhumane acts.

**Rwanda: Have We Sacrificed Plain Justice at the Altar of Political Independence and Legalese? Sunny Ntayombya: 6 March 2009: column: THE NEW TIMES.**

Kigali — First of all, I think that the International Criminal Court arrest warrant out for the Sudanese president, Omar al Bashir, is one that's based on shaky legal grounds. Whether the Court even has a right to issue such a warrant is confusing. The Rome Statute, which gives the ICC its legality, is not clear cut on certain issues. For example, it explicitly makes it impossible for the ICC to prosecute an individual whose nation isn't a signatory to the Rome Statute, because it doesn't have jurisdiction. That should be the end of the debate. Since Sudan isn't a signatory of the Rome Statute, Omar Bashir should have been sitting pretty in his presidential palace. However, there is a small sting in the tail. The ICC is allowed to investigate any matter which is referred to it by the United Nations Security Council- even though the matter being forwarded pertains to an action made by an individual, who's a national of a nation that isn't a signatory of the Rome Statute. Well, Bashir is being taken through the wringer because, in 2005, the Security Council did refer the Darfur mess to the ICC Prosecutor; and, as the judges in The Hague decided, when giving the ICC Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo permission to issue the warrant, Sudanese nationals, including its sitting president, could be dragged before the court. Without getting into the differing legal arguments [many lawyers, I included, think that the ICC is in violation of the spirit of the Rome Statute and the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties of 1969], I'd like to talk about the larger issue of international justice and plain old morality. The international justice system is, without a doubt, extremely controversial. Especially in these times when international jurisdiction is being used to undermine nation's sovereignty, as Louis Bruguière did with his infamous indictment of Rwanda's national leadership. Certainly, I believe that there is a

slight tinge of racism and the 'mighty' lording it over the 'minnows'. I mean, if the Guantanamo prisoner phase of the United States 'War On Terror' and the Israeli blockade and bombing of Gaza aren't crimes against humanity and war crimes I don't know what is. So, when poor nations [the ones who've borne the brunt of the international justice system are African states] feel as if there is blatant hypocrisy at play, they have a point.

However, should international justice be thrown to the scrapheap of history? I think not. You see, while various African leaders go on about the fact that the ICC indictment is, as al Bashir said yesterday, "a conspiracy aimed at destabilizing the country". But while he, and many Pan-Africanists, go on and on about the neo-colonialism, they forget one undisputable fact. They forget, quite conveniently I believe, there were acts of barbarism perpetrated by the Sudanese army against the peoples of Darfur. Should we, as an international community, turn our backs to the cries of the poor unfortunates, who are being treated abominably by their leaders, because there have been a few abuses of the entire international justice system? I think not. The system certainly has its faults but at its very best, it is the one weapon that can protect citizens from a bloodthirsty despot. Sure, a potential arrest warrant might not deter another Idi Amin; however, at least the same potential Idi Amin wouldn't die peacefully in his sleep, surrounded by his wives and children, in a comfortable exile in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. He'd have to hang on to power by all means possible, indefinitely while not being able to move a step beyond his border. Sure at present the whole international justice system is being rightly challenged by various parties. However, we shouldn't be quick to throw the baby out along with the bathwater. Let's look at reforming the international justice system, not turning our backs on it because, though it might seem corrupt and unfair, there is still no alternative to it.

### 37. CHINA-AFRICA RELATIONS

West Africa

**Nigeria: House Summons Julius Berger, Chinese Firm Over Rail Projects: Onwuka Nzeshi: 2 March 2009: THIS DAY.**

Abuja — House of Representatives has summoned construction giant, Julius Berger and the China Civil Engineering Construction Company (CCECC) over the abandonment of two strategic rail transport projects. The contracts for the projects were awarded by the administration of former President, Olusegun Obasanjo as part of the Federal Government's agenda to transform the land transport sector.

The summon is designed to enable the lawmakers unravel the circumstances surrounding the non-completion of the Ajaokuta-Itakpe-Aladja rail project specifically meant to boost developments in the steel sector as well as the Lagos-Kano rail line designed to re-open the country to commerce through a modern rail transport system. Chairman, House of Representatives Committee on Land Transport, Honourable Bernard Udoh, who disclosed this at the weekend said the lawmakers were set to conduct a comprehensive investigations into these "failed projects" with a view to compelling the contractors to return to site. Also summoned is the Minister of Transport, Alhaji Isah Bio, who is billed



to explain the payment by the Ministry of about N6.4billion debt allegedly owed Julius Berger in respect of the stalled Itakpe-Ajaokuta-Aladja line.

According to Udoh, the committee has the mandate of the House to get to the root of the matter and would seek detailed clarifications on the award of Lagos-Kano railway project to CCECC by the Obasanjo administration. The Committee will also re-examine the agreement entered into between Nigeria and China on the development and upgrading of the nation's rail system. The lawmakers are to find out why the projects expected to have been completed have remained stalled and verify claims in some quarters that the projects were being deliberately sabotaged by some unknown interests within and outside the government. There have been series of petitions alleging that payments were made for the contracts even when they were yet to be executed. In one of the petitions received by the House Committee on Land Transport, Julius Berger allegedly connived with a consulting firm, Technics Engineering Architectural Marketing Ltd. (TEAM) to defraud the nation of several billions of naira in respect of the Itakpe-Ajaokuta-Aladja rail project. The petitioners claimed that the contract for the construction of Ajaokuta-Itakpe-Warri rail line was awarded on unit rate basis, an arrangement that has been to the detriment of Nigeria and made the country lose billions of naira.

Southern Africa

**Botswana: Botswana Urged to Exhibit in China's Prime Show: 27 February 2009: Mmegi.**

Botswana entrepreneurs have been urged to take advantage of this year's China Import and Export Fair to further trade and business opportunities with Chinese businesses. Addressing industry captains and entrepreneurs at the Gaborone International Convention Centre on Tuesday, the visiting Chairman of the Council of China Foreign Trade Centre Zhang Zhigang, said the show - also known as the Canton Fair - will showcase over 150,000 types of products and attract over 200,000 professionals from 210 countries.

"Businesspeople in Botswana have a great opportunity to foster better relations with their Chinese counterparts through this fair while opening new business opportunities in China at the same time," Zhang said. He heads a delegation from the China Foreign Trade Centre, which is marketing the fair in African countries. The team has already visited Kenya and South Africa as part of the mission. "We cordially invite friends from industrial and commercial circles all around the country to visit, exhibit and source in the Canton Fair," Zhang said. "Persisting in our mission of providing good service to enterprises and customers from home and abroad, we will do our utmost to satisfy the requirements of exhibitors and buyers and create a perfect negotiating environment by updating the fair's degree in internationalisation, specialisation, marketing, and by improving various services," he added.

This year's will be the 105th edition of the show and will be held in the city of Guangzhou from April 15 to May 7. The Deputy Director in the Chinese Foreign Trade

Centre, Liu Quandong, said Botswana businesspeople interested in the fair may apply on-line or seek assistance from the Chinese embassy, where they can get advice regarding hotel booking and transportation. This show still has three phases. With 55,000 stands and exhibition space of 1.1 million square metres, there is a deliberate attempt to exceed the scale of the last session. "Phase One is from April 15 to 19, exhibiting seven categories of electronics and household electrical appliances, hardware and tools, machinery, vehicles and spare parts, building materials, lighting equipment and chemical products," Quandong said. "Phase Two is from April 24 to 28, exhibiting three categories of consumer goods, gifts and home decorations. Phase Three is from May 3 to 7, exhibiting five categories of textiles and garments, shoes, office supplies, cases and bags, recreation products, medicines and medical devices, health products, food and native produce." The Canton Fair Complex, which is operated and managed by China Foreign Trade Centre, boasts the most advanced facilities and the most complete functions in Asia.

Trade between Botswana and China has been growing significantly over the years, with China importing mainly minerals from Botswana while most imports from China are mainly consumer goods. The trade volume between the two countries reached US \$62 million in 2006. In the first half of 2007, the figure reached US \$47 million. Speaking to Business Week in an earlier interview, former Chinese ambassador to Botswana, Ding Xiawoen, said there is still considerable potential for increasing the trade volume as well as in addressing the current trade imbalance, given that Botswana ranks first in diamond production by value and China has become the largest diamond consumer in Asia with a domestic purchase of US \$2.5 billion and an import of US \$1.66 billion of luxury diamonds in 2004. Chinese companies have also been actively involved in the economic development of Botswana, with emphasis on contracted projects notable among which is the expansion of the Sir Seretse Khama International Airport and the Morupule B Power Plant.

**Mozambique: Further Chinese Funds for National Stadium: 3 March 2009: Agencia de Informação de Moçambique (AIM).**

Maputo — The Chinese government has pledged a further 2.5 million US dollars to finance work to remove soil from the site where the new Mozambican national stadium is being built. The schedule remains unchanged, that is, that the stadium will be complete before the football World Cup to be held in South Africa, in 2010. To this end, Mozambique and China signed a memorandum of understanding in Maputo on Monday, according to which the money, that had not been initially budgeted, but was shown to be necessary because of the nature of the soil, is to be disbursed in time to complete the work on schedule. The document was signed between Mozambique's Minister of Tourism, Youth and Sports, Fernando Sumbana, and the Chinese Ambassador Tiang Guang Feng. This means that the national stadium, the biggest and most modern sports infrastructure in the country, with a capacity for 42,000 seats, will now cost 60 million US dollars. Paying a visit to the site, in the outer Maputo suburb of Zimpeto, for the first time as Youth and Sports Minister, Sumbana expressed satisfaction with the progress of the work, and with the transfer of know how by the Chinese technical staff.

"Here, at the national stadium, we had the opportunity to see that the work is progressing at a satisfactory pace, with the involvement of the knowledge that our Chinese partners are dispensing and also the involvement of the Mozambican multi-sector team, that is fully dedicated to this work", said Sumbana. The technical team on the site said that the construction of the foundations will be completed before the end of this month, and that, of the 850 planned pillars, only 100 are still to be installed. Speaking of his other visits to sports facilities, Sumbana said that the stadium in Pemba, capital of the northern province of Cabo Delgado, is also making good progress, and should be ready for use by 2010. As for the "Mario Esteves Coluna" stadium, in the town of Namaacha, on the border with Swaziland, Sumbana said that only a few details are left to turn it into a true training ground for new Mozambican athletes.

**Zambia: Chinese Embassy Ops Grounded: 3 March 2009: TIMES OF ZAMBIA.**

OPERATIONS at the Chinese embassy in Lusaka were yesterday grounded because of data failure by the system. That resulted in a shutdown of the premises by the authorities. A check by the TIMES showed that the embassy offices had been closed and there was no official to attend to visitors. Instead, a notice was placed at the entrance to the embassy, stating that the premises would remain closed until further notice. "Because of the data system failure, the consular section of the Chinese embassy is closed until further notice," the notice reads. The notice placed by the embassy officials was dated March 2, 2009.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Sudan: China, Russia Should Vacate UN Debate Says Church Leader: Fredrick Nzwili: 5 March 2009: Ecumenical News International (Geneva)**

Nairobi — "They [China and Russia] should withdraw from the council debate, since they are supplying arms to Sudan," Arthur Shoo, the director of programmes at the All Africa Conference of Churches told Ecumenical News International in Nairobi on 5 March. He was speaking after the Hague-based International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant for al-Bashir for crimes against humanity committed in Darfur, in Sudan's west.

"They should not say no [to the ICC warrant], when they are the ones supplying the arms," Shoo of China and Russia. The Eurasia Daily Monitor reported on 11 February, "The Sudanese military is embarking on a massive modernisation campaign and appears to have found a willing partner in Russia, which seeks to extend its influence in Africa. China has also become Russia's main competition in arms sales to Africa and is frequently able to supply Chinese-built Russian-designs for significantly less than Russia's arms industry." In response to the ICC warrant, President al-Bashir announced on 5 March, "We have expelled 10 foreign organisations ... after monitoring activities that act in contradiction to all regulation and laws." Al-Bashir was speaking at a public rally in Khartoum, the capital of Sudan. On the same day, China, which purchases much of Sudan's oil, and Russia opposed the ICC decision. China urged the U.N. Security Council

to suspend the case against al-Bashir, who had been indicted for seven counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including murder, rape and torture.

Russia's Ambassador to Sudan also criticised the decision. "The untimely decision of the International Criminal Court creates a dangerous precedent in the system of international relations and could have a negative effect both on the situation inside Sudan and on the general regional situation," the envoy, Mikhail Margelov, was quoted as saying in The Sudan Tribune on 5 March.

In 2007, Shoo, a Tanzania, warned that China was selling arms to African countries that were being used to fuel regional violence. He also mentioned two countries in the former Soviet bloc, Ukraine and Bulgaria. "If arms were food, Africa would not starve," said Shoo, adding that most the weapons manufactured in the countries he mentioned were sent to Africa. "The money could be used to buy food for Africa especially during this global financial crisis and the drought. Many people are dying of hunger." Shoo urged Russia, China and other countries to halt the supply of arms and armaments and to look at the impact their exports have there. Church-related organizations are part of the world's largest humanitarian operation in Darfur, where the Janjaweed, a pro-government Arab militia has been accused of atrocities. The U.N. estimates that since 2003 nearly 300 000 people have died in Darfur, a region the size of France.

#### **Uganda: China Holds 52 Locals: Madinah Tebajjukira:4 March 2009:THE NEW VISION.**

Kampala — Fifty Ugandans are held in China and Iran over drug trafficking, Ugandan ambassadors there have said. Three of the detainees are Makerere University graduates, they said. Thirty-eight Ugandans are held in China, eight of whom are on death row, 11 on life imprisonment, while the rest are serving 20-year sentences. A few are still battling with court proceedings, according to Ugandan ambassador to China Charles Wagidoso Madiba. Dr. Muhammad Ahmed Kisule, the Ugandan ambassador to Iran, yesterday said 12 Ugandans were being held in Iran. Eight were sentenced to death while four are serving life imprisonment. The Ugandans held in Iran and China were arrested between 2006 and 2008. "All prisoners have been to courts without legal representation, charged and sentenced. The minimum is life imprisonment and maximum sentence is death on conviction," Kisule said.

The news came to light yesterday when the Ugandan ambassadors briefed the parliamentary committee on foreign affairs on the new foreign policies. A total of 27 ambassadors attended the meeting held at Parliament. Wagidoso said there was a racket of foreigners in Uganda, particularly from Nigeria and Pakistan, who use Ugandans as conduits for drug trafficking. He said the Ugandans were promised between \$3,000 and \$4,000 per trip. The Police are investigating the matter, Wagidoso said. The group targets youth between 20 and 35 years, he added. "Most of these detainees are young people and three of them graduated from Makerere last year. They confessed to the charges against them," he said. Wagidoso said of the Ugandans held in China, 21 are women, while in Iran, four women were convicted. Wagidoso said the Government was lobbying the

Chinese government to sign an extradition treaty to have the detainees serve their sentences in Uganda. The ambassador to Cairo, Omar Lubulwa, said the problem had been aggravated by the high unemployment level in Uganda.

As a result, he argued, fresh graduates preferred going abroad hoping to get high paying jobs. According to Lubulwa, the traffickers target girls who, she said, work as slaves in the homes of rich Arabs under harsh conditions. "On arrival, the Arabs withdraw their passports, deny them access to communication gadgets and they are severely mistreated," Lubulwa said. "A year back, we rescued three girls from those homes, but one of them became mentally perturbed because of the mistreatment," the ambassador added.

The ambassadors urged the Government to institute tougher laws against drug trafficking. The committee chairman, Umar Lule Mawiya, promised to forward the matter to the Cabinet. Betty Akech, Uganda's new representative to Khartoum, asked the Government to monitor foreign employment agencies which claim to have jobs with good pay yet they are middle-men for the drug business. The ambassadors also complained of little pay which they said had made them unable to execute their duties effectively.

### 38. PAN AFRICA

North Africa

**Libya: Africa commits to water development to fight hunger:** [afrol News](#), 18 December: *By staff writer.*

The pan-African ministerial conference which ended in Libya yesterday has pledged to promote water development throughout the continent and to fully exploit Africa's agricultural and hydroenergy potential as key to eradicating hunger and poverty. In a final Declaration, the conference, on Water for Energy and Agriculture in Africa: the Challenges of Climate Change, noted that water is a key resource to economic and social development as well as to hunger and poverty eradication in Africa, and that food and energy security are prerequisites for the development of Africa's human capital.

The Conference, which brought together ministers from 53 African countries, also recognised that the challenges faced by the continent concerning food security, achieving the Millennium Development Goals, increased energy demand and combating climate change required all countries to move together. "Implementation of integrated water, agriculture and energy programmes to enhance sustainable development in Africa should be considered a priority," the Declaration said. It stated that this would involve expansion of the area under sustainable land management and reliable water control, and accelerated investment in water for agriculture and energy.

The conference further declared its support of efforts to enhance clean energy production in the continent, particularly in developing hydropower potential and in strengthening regional power pools. On climate change, which is said will likely have a severe impact across Africa, the conference agreed to foster research and development of renewable

energy and agriculture in Africa in order to increase resilience and adaptation to climate change. It called on countries bordering Lake Chad to double their efforts, and on donors and development partners to provide immediate assistance to help save the lake and its basin from "looming human and environmental disaster". Once the world's sixth largest lake, Lake Chad has shrunk to one-tenth of its size in the last 35 years, endangering the livelihoods of local populations, the conference noted.

In conclusion, the conference also welcomed a proposal by FAO to convene a World Summit of Heads of State and Government in 2009 to agree on the rapid and definitive eradication of hunger from the planet through improved governance of world food security and by finding \$30 billion a year to invest in water and rural infrastructures and in increasing agricultural productivity in the developing world. The three days conference was organised by FAO together with the Libyan government and in collaboration with stakeholders including the African Union, the African Ministers' Council on Water Development, the African Development Bank and the Economic Commission for Africa.

West Africa

**Ghana: Why the Richest Continent is Also the Poorest: Miriam Mannak:5 September 2009: Inter Press Service News Agency.**

Accra — The ecological impact of natural resource exploitation on the lives of the poor in Africa and other regions is not being addressed sufficiently in aid effectiveness and development discussions, aid experts say. "Africa is known as one of the richest parts of the world when it comes to natural resources, yet it is also the poorest region - despite the natural wealth and the aid flow," said Charles Mutasa, executive director of the African Forum and Network on Debt and Development (AFRODAD) - a Zimbabwe-based NGO working on Africa's debt problem. Mutasa was participating in a discussion at the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF3), which took place in the Ghanaian capital of Accra from September 2-4. "The ecological debt caused by natural resource exploitation plays a crucial role in this scenario," Mutasa added. "It keeps the continent down, prevents the region from breaking out of the circle of poverty, and triggers the need for more aid." The term ecological debt refers to the debt accumulated by rich countries toward developing nations on account of resource exploitation, which often leads to environmental problems such as air and water pollution. "Very few parties that are part of the development debate see the necessity of addressing ecological debt and its impact on people's lives," says Brenda Mofya, debt cancellation activist and the writer of a recent study on the ecological impact of copper mining in Zambia. The report will be launched at the end of September 2008.

Zambia is the world's seventh biggest producer of the metal. In 2007 the country generated 521,984 tonnes of copper; this year the government expects production to increase to 600,000 tonnes. However, Mofya said, the Zambian government and people are not seeing much from the wealth generated as most of the copper mines are in hands of the private sector - including many foreign companies. "The Zambian government receives only 0.06 percent of the annual profit. Meanwhile the mining companies are

getting richer, and ecological problems keep accumulating. These things have a profound impact on people's lives," she said. She told IPS about the poor air quality in the copper belt, which does not meet international standards. "Fugitive mine dust and dumped waste are causing health and environmental problems. We found that of the 45 waste dumps, 32 are overfull. This waste and fugitive dust have a negative impact on water quality too." According to Mutasa, rich countries involved in resource exploitation in Africa need to come to the table and repay the debt that has accumulated in Africa. "If we want Africa to develop, we need to have a critical and serious look at this issue."

**Nigeria: Religious Pluralism is Good for Continent – Study: Ekiverhere Oboh: 6 March 2009:Leadership (Abuja) .**

Abuja — Religious pluralism in sub-Saharan Africa can promote rather than impede development and democracy in that region, according to research findings presented at the University of Birmingham.

Doctor Robert Dowd, from the University of Notre Dame, presented 'Christianity, Islam and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: Evidence from Nigeria, Senegal and Uganda' at the annual seminar coordinated by the Religions and Development Research Programme, University of Birmingham. Dowd examined the impact of Christian and Muslim religious involvement on indicators of development, such as those concerning the role of women in society, the relationship between religious and state authority, interpersonal and social trust, and tolerance of differences of opinion.

The research highlighted the results of a mass survey that the researcher conducted in three African countries: Nigeria, Senegal and Uganda. According to Dowd, "Religious involvement often has a more significant and positive impact on the indicators of development and attitudes thought to be conducive to development in the most religiously plural settings than in the least religiously plural settings." Robert's findings questioned the conventional wisdom which holds that religious/cultural homogeneity is better for development than religious/cultural pluralism. Professor Kunle Odumosu, from the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, also presented findings of his research on the activities of faith-based organisations and development in Nigeria. Odumosu revealed that, "Within most faith-based organisations, a strong associational infrastructure at the national and local levels exist. Such an advantage is particularly vital in rural areas, as many development-related NGOs are concentrated in cities and towns. In Nigeria, this existing infrastructure means that religious organisations are the first to increase awareness of development issues and encourage discussion among the population." Odumosu's research also showed that most faith-based organisations rely heavily on volunteers, and their jurisdiction often includes morality, beliefs and the rules of family lives.

**Nigeria: 'Africa is Almost Halfway to Malaria Milestone': Sola Ogunjide: 3 March 2009. Daily Trust.**

WITH over 40 per cent of the population in malaria endemic African nations now having access to Insecticidal Nets (LLINs), the African continent is gradually inching closer towards achieving the 2015 declaration of near-zero case of preventable death from malaria by 2015.

Four years ago, less than 10 per cent of persons in the region had access to the life-saving nets. In actual numbers, more than 140 million mosquito nets have been distributed to date, offering protection to nearly 300 million people (each net protecting two people) in sub-Saharan Africa, epicenter of the world's malaria control activities, where 90 per cent of all malaria deaths occur on the continent. This was the highpoint of the report presented to the United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, by Mr. Ray Chambers, the UN Special Envoy for Malaria, who cites important progress toward achieving the Secretary-General's goal of providing all endemic African countries with malaria control interventions by the end of 2010. But the report notes that more intensive effort will be needed to meet this deadline. In the new report, which coincided with the one-year anniversary of Chambers' appointment as the first Special Envoy for Malaria, he noted that it ... "signifies perhaps the most encouraging development in a year that featured many noteworthy accomplishments." The report, which also underscores last year's announcement that the world can reach near-zero deaths from malaria by 2015, stresses that while malaria-related objectives are within sight, a failure to increase momentum further still will result in falling short of targets.

Noting that only 671 days remain until the Secretary-General's deadline for universal coverage, Chambers said: "At this unique moment in history, when dedicated leadership, proven interventions, available resources and collective will have converged to turn the tide against this scourge, we cannot permit complacency to dull our resolve." He said with over 140 million LLINs distributed over the past three years, African countries are making the necessary preparations for the "over 240 million LLINs already financed for delivery between now and December 2010." Chambers emphasised that the "same thought and energy that guided LLINs in 2008" will govern efforts pertaining to other essential interventions, such as treatment in public health facilities, the provision of rapid diagnostic tests and the production of an adequate number of antimalarial medicines - artemisinin-based combination therapies (ACTs). The Special Envoy asserted augmentation of current initiatives to ensure the completion of the Secretary-General's mission, including the fulfillment of financial commitments by donors. Along with funding and implementation partners, he is tracking key indicators on a quarterly basis, exposing advances and impediments alike, in an effort to overcome obstacles and maximize efficiency.

Southern Africa

**South Africa: Poor Countries Need U.S.\$25 Billion Up Front – IMF: Mariam Isa:4 March 2009:BusinessDay.**

Johannesburg — POOR countries urgently needed at least \$25bn in low-cost finance this year to help their economies ride out the global financial crisis, the International



Monetary Fund (IMF) said yesterday. IMF MD Dominique Strauss-Kahn warned that there was a real risk the world economy would contract this year. He said this would be reflected in the IMF's updated growth forecasts next month. News and data had worsened since the IMF predicted the global economy would grow 0,5%, he told reporters in a video conference link between Washington and Johannesburg. This meant "the probability of our next global forecast being lower than that is very high".

The risk of a forecast below zero was a serious risk, he said. If the global downturn worsened, the number of the most vulnerable economies could almost double from 20 now, while their funding needs could rise to \$140bn, the Washington-based lender said. Most of those countries were in sub-Saharan Africa, expected to grow just more than 3% this year, compared with 4% for low-income countries overall, the IMF said in a report. "I believe we have to scale up the support we supply to Africa. We are urging donor countries not to reduce aid flows," Strauss-Kahn said. This was necessary despite the fact that advanced economies were grappling with what is set to be the worst global financial crisis for 80 years. The report said, "At a time when the advanced economies are spending hundreds of billions of dollars on fiscal stimulus and financial sector restructuring, we must find room to help low-income countries." Strauss-Kahn said there were also plans to help Zimbabwe. Finance Minister Trevor Manuel had contacted him on how to "resume normal relations" with Zimbabwe, and they would discuss this further at an IMF conference in Tanzania next week. "No decisions have been made," he said. Antoinette Sayeh, head of the IMF's Africa department, said the IMF was preparing to send a mission to Zimbabwe. "The international community will have a significant challenge with Zimbabwe's arrears. They will have to be cleared before we can engage with Zimbabwe," she said. "We have a mission going to Zimbabwe to discuss with the authorities their policy ambitions and reform agenda, to assess whether the international community can support in a way which is significant," Sayeh said. IMF officials said Zimbabwe's arrears with the IMF stood at about \$130m, but the country would also have to clear much larger amounts owed to the World Bank and the African Development Bank.

It has been about two years since the institution last sent a mission to the country. Southern African Development Community ministers decided last week to push for donor aid for Zimbabwe but deferred a decision on a rescue package to a regional summit. The international community is sceptical about whether the unity government of President Robert Mugabe's Zanu (PF) and Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai's Movement for Democratic Change will last. Sayeh said the IMF was also looking at its growth forecasts for SA, which the government predicts will reach 1,2% this year. But analysts are increasingly revising their growth forecasts for SA below 1%, with some now predicting the country faces recession. "SA has done reasonably well on the financial sector, and it's not very dependent on international funding ... but as the domestic economy slows, concerns over the quality of bank assets rise," Sayeh said. Poor countries were being hit by falling demand for their exports, the commodities prices slump and drying up of investment and aid. The IMF report said lower growth would have serious implications for poverty and political stability so social safety net programmes

should be ramped up. The \$25bn needed by the most vulnerable countries amounted to 80% of yearly aid to all low-income countries in recent years, it said.

**South Africa: Continent Not Up for Maritime Challenges - Naval Chiefs: Wyndham Hartley: 5 March 2009.BusinessDay.**

Cape Town — African naval chiefs had to recommend to political leaders "with an overwhelming voice" that resources be provided so that African countries could make a contribution to combating the growing scourge of piracy in African territorial waters, chief of the navy Refiloe Mudimu said yesterday. Briefing the media yesterday ahead of next week's Sea Power for Africa Symposium in Cape Town, Mudimu was asked what contribution SA's navy and other African navies were making to combating piracy on the east coast of Africa, particularly near Somalia and the horn of Africa.

This follows persistent speculation that SA, with its modern and efficient navy, has been asked to assist with escort duties but has failed to respond. In his initial response, Mudimu indicated that the decision to deploy the navy in support of anti-piracy operations was a political one. A further dimension to the problem was that African navies generally did not have the capability to do the job and that naval chiefs at the symposium should recommend to their political leaderships that the capability to protect territorial waters be provided. He said SA's navy was ready to be used where and when the "powers that be" decide. Compared with other African navies, SA was in a good position with regard to equipment. He also announced a far reaching plan for a special patrol vessel to be developed in Africa. The idea was that vessels of the same design be built in a number of African countries for patrolling inshore and off shore waters. Admiral Rusty Higgs explained that the project was in concept stage and the specific requirements of such a vessel were being determined. The target for getting the vessel operational was 2012.

Mudimu said, "A viable solution would be a joint partnership between regional economic communities to enter a programme for the design and building of an indigenous, non-sophisticated off-shore patrol vessel that could be built in such countries as Nigeria, Algeria, SA and others." Niches of expertise and capacity exist on the continent where such a programme can be effectively undertaken. These platforms will contribute to the security and stability of the states." Mudimu said that the maritime challenges were many and included poaching, arms and drug smuggling, human trafficking, piracy, and oil theft "under the control of crime syndicates".

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Mauritius: Citizens Also Competing for Land in Africa: Nasseem Ackbarally: 27 February 2009: INTER PRESS SERVICE NEWS AGENCY.**

Port Louis — Soaring food prices and lack of land have forced Mauritius, a net food importing country, to launch an ambitious initiative. The island state is starting to grow its food in other African states where land is lying fallow and labour is cheap. Mauritian agro-entrepreneurs Murveen Ragobur and Gansham Boodhram are back from

Mozambique where they cultivated rice on a trial basis last year, as well as potatoes and onions for the local market. They have been working in the southern African country for some years after launching Greenworld Ltd, their agro-enterprise which produces food for Mauritius and other countries in the region.

Mauritius produces vegetables but no wheat or rice. It tops up its production of potato, onion and garlic with annual imports. "We all need to go to Mozambique because we lack land and labour here. In Mozambique, you hire people very easily," Ragobur told IPS. Plenty of land that belongs to the state is also easily available, according to him, and it is not sold to anybody. One can get a lease for a renewable 50-year period. Land is limited in Mauritius, an island of about 2,000 sq km with a population of 1.2 million people. It presently produces only 25 percent of the 700,000 tons of food products it needs annually for locals and the millions of tourists who visit the island annually.

"Our intentions can be good and we can mobilise the resources we need but we have a limit regarding land," agro-industry and food production minister Satish Faugoo said at the launch of the 2008/2015 food security strategic plan in January this year in the capital of Port Louis. "It is thus important for us to develop a partnership with countries in the region in order to produce food for our own people and for other countries." Jean-Cyril Monty, an agricultural diversification specialist, argues that "we have a deficit to fill; if we want to produce more food and reduce our import bill, we should turn towards Madagascar and Mozambique." The plan focuses on improving local as well as regional production. The priority crops identified are maize, potato, onion, rice, pulses and soybean for both the local and regional markets. In this regard, two memoranda of understanding (MOU) have been signed with Madagascar and Mozambique in early 2008. About 5,000 hectares of land are available to Mauritian entrepreneurs in the province of Manica in Mozambique for agricultural production.

Dhaneshwar Dumur, director of the Mauritian government's agricultural research and extension unit, who visited the Mozambique some time back, says that the climatic cycles are quite interesting and many crops can be cultivated year-round. "Crops like potatoes that cannot be grown in Mauritius in specific periods can be done during the same periods in these two countries, thus ensuring a regular supply," he observes. Two major constraints are political instability and poor sanitary and phytosanitary conditions that stand in the way of a regional initiative. Dumur explains there is need to establish and vigorously enforce international norms in Mauritius and in countries where local operators will be investing. These are essential prerequisites for achieving success in regional and international trade endeavours, he says.

Mauritians are not yet in Mozambique in large numbers because of several other reasons: absence of production on an industrial scale, lack of irrigation facilities and a proper road network and absence of post-harvest infrastructure such as storage facilities, post-harvest treatment units for sorting, grading and packaging. Time for thinking is over, claim Ragobur and Boodhram, "because Mozambicans do not need Mauritians." "It is we who need them," Ragobur declares, and delaying such an occasion will affect the Mauritian food security plan. Ragobur recalls that Mauritians are not alone exploring land for agro-

industry in either Mozambique or Madagascar. Chinese, Indian, South African and European entrepreneurs are also in this race for land because "everybody in this world is affected by the food crisis". However, Mozambicans are still open to Mauritians because of ancestral relations. About a third of the Mauritian population ancestors were brought from Madagascar and Mozambique as slaves two centuries back.

"We should take advantage of such a situation and finalise the projects announced so far rapidly," insists Ragobur, adding that Mauritius stands to lose in this game. They would not get the best land and will not be able to achieve economies of scale if the land obtained is scattered in several small plots far from another. "As time passes, our strategic plan would no longer serve its purpose because the environment is changing fast. What is good today will not be good tomorrow," he adds.

"The future of Mauritius lies in the region, mainly in Mozambique," Boodhram reiterates. Ragobur and Boodhram are not alone in this adventure. Another Mauritian, Nassir Arzamkhan, has opened a factory with Indian partners for the transformation of coconuts - available in large quantities in Mozambique - into oil. Another one is cultivating the jatropha plant for bio-diesel, Mauritian ambassador to Mozambique, Alain Laridon, informs IPS. The call is coming from Madagascar as well where Mauritius has obtained land concessions a year ago. From this large island state nearby, the chief executive officer of the Economic Development Board (EDBM) Prega Ramsamy appealed to Mauritian entrepreneurs to act rapidly if not do not wish to compete with other countries for land.

"If you see the rise of agricultural prices since 2007, you cannot sit back and keep on thinking," Ramsamy, a Mauritian himself, told IPS some time ago. He admits that there may be problems, recalling that both countries have signed bilateral agreements regarding sanitary and phyto-sanitary norms. "It is time to apply them," the CEO argued. But some Mauritian entrepreneurs who have travelled to these countries last year find it difficult to operate because of the absence of roads, telephone and electricity in the country. Others talk about malaria and other health risks, snakes, lack of water while some blame the "lack of work discipline" of Mozambicans and of the Malagasy people. But Boodhram differs, saying there are no snakes in the fields because wild animals move away as forests are cleared and people start exploiting the land. They are never to be seen again. Language is certainly a barrier in Mozambique as everybody speaks Portuguese and one rarely finds anybody speaking English in the rural region. "Malaria also is of concern but the necessary precautions have to be taken while staying in this country," he believes. Prembhodass Ellayah, who invested in Madagascar last year, deplors the "attitude" of the local people. "They just want money from foreigners; that's why I am back" in Mauritius, he complains, promising never to return there again.

Central Africa

**Rwanda: Pan-African E-Network Project Launched: Odeth Mutarayire:1 March 2009:THE NEW TIMES.**

Kigali — The Indian government on Thursday launched the Pan-African e-Network project which will serve as an extended support for African Union (AU) States. The launch took place at Kigali Institute of Education (K.I.E) in Kimironko in the presence of the Indian Ambassador to Rwanda Mr. Niraj Srivastava, and the Minister of Education, Daphrose Gahakwa. The Pan-African e-Network project provides citizens with adequate Educational facilities and affordable healthcare, which are the two prominent challenges encountered by many developing countries.

India will fully finance the establishment of three centres for all AU States including; a learning centre for tele-education, patient-end for tele-medicine and VVIP centre which is a private communication network for all Heads of state. Gahakwa said that the Government of Rwanda signed up to be part of the Pan-African e-Network project and a team from Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) travelled to Kigali to start the project in May 2008. "The three project sites have been established in Rwanda. Telemedicine will be taken to King Faysal Hospital (KFH), tele-education at (KIE) and VVIP at the office of the President" said Gahakwa. The IT installation at all the three sites has been completed; the classroom at KIE has been prepared but for the patient -end at KFH, the medical equipment is not yet in place pending completion of construction works. She said that one engineer from India has arrived and will stay in Rwanda for one year to train local personnel, and ensure transfer of know-how in the maintenance and support for the system. "This engineer will work with RITA/RDB staff and one staff from new Artel and technical personnel from the various host institutions for transfer of knowledge", Gahakwa added. She thanked the Indian Ambassador and praised cooperation between India to Rwanda in the field of teaching, commerce and industry. Ambassador Srivastava said that the basic objective of the Pan-African e-Network project is to help Africa in capacity building by imparting quality education from some of the best Indian educational institutions. "It will provide tele-medicine services by way of on line medicine consultation to the medical practitioners in the patient-end locations, from Indian medical specialists and other services provided by the Indian Universities to the participating countries in different courses; Post- graduate, under-graduate, certificate and diploma courses selected by the AU" said Srivastava.

10,000 students in Africa will be trained in the courses over a period of five years. "This project was funded by the Government of India and the budgeted cost is 5429 million Rupees, equivalent to over US \$125 million. It will be implemented in a phased manner in all 53 African nations over 18 months", Srivastava added. Of the 53 member states of the AU, 33 have signed up for the Pan-African e-Network.

### 39. HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER AND SOCIAL ISSUES

West Africa

**Nigeria: Death Sentence for Kidnappers - Amaechi Explains Stance to Amnesty International: 2 March 2009: Vanguard.**

Governor Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi of Rivers State has again explained why kidnapping should be made a capital offence. Amaechi spoke at the weekend in a meeting with some top officials of Amnesty International at the body's international secretariat in London. Deputy Director, Africa Programme, Tawanda Hondora led the Amnesty team at the meeting while Governor Amaechi was accompanied by his Media Consultant and key adviser, David Iyofor. At the forum, the human rights body expressed concern over the governor's decision to push for capital punishment for kidnappers in Rivers State but Amaechi was emphatic on why kidnappers should be made to pay the ultimate price.

"I appreciate your concern", Amaechi told them. "But what you don't know is that we are faced with a very unusual and peculiar criminality that kidnapping in the Niger Delta has become. Strong punitive measures must be put in place to stop these criminals from kidnapping. And the law must be enforced when these crimes are committed. The other day a little girl was killed as the kidnappers made away with his brother." "Armed robbery is when you take away material things from someone with the use of force. And what is kidnapping? Using force to take away human beings. So, why should the punishment for armed robbery be death sentence and the other is not." Amaechi allayed the fears of the organization that the kidnappers may decide to kill their victims if they know that they will get death sentence for kidnapping. He said, "the criminals are in the business for the money. If they kill their victims how will they get the money? They need their victims to be alive so that they can collect huge ransom money." "And don't forget that this thing has become one massive operation with a lot of money spent in kidnapping and keeping a victim, and they will need to make money from the victim by way of ransom. And they can't get that if they kill their victims".

Amnesty International also asked Governor Amaechi about the demolitions going on in Port Harcourt and the proposed development of waterfronts and what will be the fate of the present inhabitants of the waterfronts, considering that they are mostly poor people. Amaechi made it abundantly clear to them that the State government is only demolishing illegal structures that violates the Port Harcourt master plan, in accordance with the laws of the State and these are mainly fences of buildings.

On waterfronts, he said that the State government will value and pay compensation for the properties of the present inhabitants for them to relocate to other parts of the State before development of waterfronts would commence. "We understand that they are poor and may not be able to afford another accommodation, that is why we putting all these measures in place... And Amnesty International is free to come to Rivers State at anytime to assess the situation on ground. It is even better to visit and see, than relying on information that seems to be usually inaccurate or at best exaggerated", Amaechi said.

**Niger: Woman Honored for Courageous Work to End Slavery: 6 March 2009: [America.gov](http://America.gov) (Washington, DC) .**

One of the winners of the U.S. secretary of state's 2009 International Women of Courage Awards was just 12 years old when she was sold as a slave. "I was negotiated over like a goat," said Hadizatou Mani of the Republic of Niger. She was sold for \$500 in

1996. Mani was a slave because her mother was a slave. Her status -- and her future, and the future of her children -- was attached to her caste. She was purchased by a man in his 60s who beat her, sent her to work long hours in the field, raped her and made her bear him three children.

Although Niger criminalized slavery in 2003, Mani's master first kept the news from her and later tried to convince village authorities that she was not a slave but one of his wives. When Mani finally won her "certificate of liberation" in 2005 and married a man of her choosing, her former master charged her with bigamy. She was sentenced to prison for six months. Mani worked with the local nongovernmental organization (NGO) Timidria, and later with the British NGO Anti-Slavery International, to bring her case to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), charging that the government of Niger had not successfully protected her rights under its anti-slavery laws. "It was very difficult to challenge my former master and to speak out when people see you as nothing more than a slave," Mani said in comments published by Anti-Slavery International. "But I knew that this was the only way to protect my child from suffering the same fate as myself. Nobody deserves to be enslaved. We are all equal and deserve to be treated the same. ... No woman should suffer the way I did." Despite direct and indirect pressure to drop her suit, Mani pressed forward with her case. On October 27, 2008, ECOWAS condemned Mani's enslavement, held that the government of Niger had not protected her rights and ordered it to pay her a fine of 10 million CFA (Communauté Financière Africaine), or approximately \$19,800. The ECOWAS court decision is a strong message to the government of Niger and other countries in the region that anti-slavery laws must be more than words on paper.

Before this verdict, Nigerien NGOs such as Timidria had suggested that Niger's anti-slavery laws are a "charm offensive" and were "passed for Westerners." Mani's victory was not only for herself, but for the people still enslaved in Niger, offering them a bright ray of hope. Mani was selected for the U.S. State Department's International Women of Courage Award, instituted in 2007 to honor exceptional courage and leadership in advocating for women's rights and advancement.

#### **Liberia: Rural Women Need Justice Too: 4 March 2009: IRIN.**

Monrovia — As Liberians hail the launch of a court dedicated to prosecuting sexual violence crimes, a rural women's group told IRIN people in the interior of the country should not be deprived access to this new legal route. "Rural women also need justice," said Hawa Nimely, head of the Liberia Rural Women Network. One year after it was announced the special court for rape and other forms of sexual violence opened in the capital Monrovia on 24 February. The court has exclusive original jurisdiction over cases of rape, sodomy and other forms of sexual assault including abuse of minors. Liberia's 14-year civil war was marked by widespread brutal violence against women and girls. But the end of the war has not ended sexual violence or impunity. In 2005 the country enacted a law making rape a crime punishable by life imprisonment, but the crime is still common, according to rights advocates.

"This [court] is indeed a victory for the protection of women and children who have been abused over the years but could not seek legal redress," Deweh Gray, head of the Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL), told IRIN. AFELL has pushed for the special court for years, arguing that the slow progress of rape cases in existing courts - which cover other crimes - deprives women of justice and feeds impunity. But the rural women's group said the same problem still hampers justice in rural zones. "What we want is for such special courts to be established in all of Liberia's 15 counties," Nimely told IRIN. "Women, girls and minors are being regularly abused. They have no place to seek redress. Courts in other parts of Liberia are too busy especially handling murder and theft cases, but [are not paying enough attention] to sexual violence cases."

But Justice Minister Philip Banks told IRIN the special court will deal with cases all over Liberia, not just in Monrovia. He did not provide details on how but said: "We have county attorneys stationed in all 15 counties. They are the first line to prosecute criminal cases." The minister said the lawyers would forward sexual violence cases to the special rape court. But the women's rural network said a permanent presence of prosecutors devoted to rape cases is needed close to where they live to ensure cases are handled without delay. "If we cannot have this court in all of [Liberia's] 15 counties, at least it [should] be established in the four regions of the country [southeastern, western, northern and central]." Nimely said coalition plans to meet in the coming weeks with President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Justice Minister Banks. The Liberian National Police said 780 rape and other sexual violence cases were reported to its special protection unit for women and children in 2008, of which fewer than a quarter were pursued in court.

**Guinea Bissau: Armed Forces Briefly Silence Broadcast Media After Chief of Staff and President Murdered: 2 March 2009; press release: [Reporters sans Frontières \(Paris\)](#) .**

Reporters Without Borders is relieved to learn that Guinea-Bissau's broadcast media were allowed to resume operating shortly after midday today after being ordered off the air last night following the murder of the armed forces chief of staff, which was followed in turn early today by the murder of President Joao Bernardo "Nino" Vieira. "Amid the current instability, we urge all of Guinea-Bissau's actors, especially the armed forces, to respect press freedom," Reporters Without Borders said. "More than ever, the circumstances require that journalists be protected and that their ability to work freely be guaranteed." At around 9 p.m. yesterday, about an hour after the bomb attack at the headquarters of the armed forces that killed the chief of staff, Gen. Tagmé Na Waié, the army ordered the capital's privately-owned radio stations and the national television station to stop broadcasting for "security reasons."

This morning, the local radio and TV stations broadcast only music, while the international media broadcasts continued to be received. The resumption of normal broadcasting took place at about 1 p.m. today. In reprisal for yesterday evening's attack on the armed forces headquarters, soldiers loyal to the slain chief of staff went to President Vieira's private home in the early hours of this morning and killed him as he was trying to flee. In a November 2007 report entitled "Cocaine and coups haunt gagged nation" about



the precarious situation of Guinea-Bissau's journalists, Reporters Without Borders asked the armed forces to follow the law in the event of any conflict with the media and to publicly recognise the importance of a vigorous, free and well-informed press for the success of the country's reconstruction. The military authorities never acted on this request.

*Reporters Without Borders defends imprisoned journalists and press freedom throughout the world. It has nine national sections (Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland). It has representatives in Bangkok, London, New York, Tokyo and Washington. And it has more than 120 correspondents worldwide.*

Southern Africa

**Zimbabwe: Bennett Bail - State Wins Right to Appeal: Wongai Zhangazha:6 March 2009:Zimbabwe Independent.**

THE Supreme Court yesterday granted the state leave to appeal against the granting of bail by the lower courts to MDC-T treasurer-general Roy Bennett who has been in detention since mid last month. The ruling means he remains in custody until the appeal hearing. The defence team was yesterday engaged in frantic efforts to have Bennett released on bail following a High Court order granting him bail last week. High Court judge Justice Tedious Karwi last week granted Bennett US\$2 000 bail and ordered him to surrender his passport and report to a police station twice a week. The state prosecutors were given seven days to lodge their appeal. This week Justice Karwi dismissed the prosecutors' application for leave to appeal to the Supreme Court against the lower court's ruling.

His ruling was presented to the Mutare magistrates' courts by his lawyer Trust Maanda ordering Bennett's release. However, yesterday Supreme Court judge Justice Paddington Garwe granted the state leave to appeal against Justice Karwi's order and the former Chimanimani MP remains in custody until the Supreme Court determines the merit of the state's appeal. Defence lawyer Beatrice Mtetwa told journalists that she was not surprised by the Supreme Court ruling. "I am not surprised, that's how it goes. If the court believes the state should have a second bite of the cherry then that's it," said Mtetwa adding that the state did not have any prospect of success on the granting of bail, only on the bail conditions. The date of the appeal hearing had not been set at the time of going to press.

Bennett was arrested on February 13, shortly after returning to Zimbabwe for the swearing in of a unity cabinet appointed by President Robert Mugabe and Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai. The deputy Agriculture minister-designate faces charges of plotting terrorism, insurgency and banditry. He denies the charges. Meanwhile three Ruwa commercial farmers who were arrested in January on charges of recruiting and training terrorists with the intention to remove President Robert Mugabe's government were yesterday removed from remand. John Naested (57), Bryan Baxter (67), and Angus Thompson (53), were yesterday set free by magistrate Gloria Takundwa who said there was no reasonable suspicion that the trio committed an offence. The trio, who own small

adjoining plots in the Acturus area of Goromonzi and a campsite called Kudu Creek, were due to be released yesterday from Chikurubi Maximum Security Prison.

**Zimbabwe: Eight Abductees Granted Bail At Last: Edgar Gweshe:28 February 2009:The Standard.**

Harare — A Harare Magistrate on Friday granted bail to eight MDC-T supporters and human rights activists who were abducted by state agents last year on accusations they were involved in the recruitment of alleged bandits. Magistrate Mishrod Guvamombe ordered the release of Concelia Chinanzavana, Fidelis Chinanzvavana, Fidelis Chiramba, Violet Mupfuranhewe, Colin Mutemagawu, Manuel Chinanzvavana, Pieta Kaseke, Audrice Mbudzana and Broderick Takawira on US\$600 bail each.

The activists, some of them still battling to recover from injuries caused by weeks of torture by state agents, were also ordered to report to their nearest police stations on Mondays and Fridays. They were abducted between October and November last year on what the MDC-T insists were "trumped up charges" of banditry, sabotage and terrorism. Takawira is an employee of the Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP) whose director Jestina Mukoko remains in custody on the same charges. Takawira failed to attend his father's funeral on Thursday. Guvamombe set March 4 as the trial date for the activists.

However, the activists had not been released by yesterday morning as the defence team, led by Alec Muchadehama, was still battling to raise the amount required for the bail which he said was "too much". He described the conditions of most of the activists as grave since they had no access to adequate treatment. "Their conditions are very severe and they need urgent medical attention," Muchadehama said. During the first week of last month, the Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights (ZADHR) reported that Chiramba, the MDC-T district chairperson for Zvimba South showed signs of cardiac failure caused by severe hypertension. The defence team is also alleging that most of the activists were subjected to various forms of torture and inhuman treatment from their day of disappearance and during the incarceration period. Muchadehama said that they were seeking urgent medical treatment for the activists most of whom he said might need to be hospitalized, once released from jail.

Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai has demanded the unconditional release of all political detainees in the spirit of the power-sharing agreement that ushered in the new inclusive government. On Wednesday he said: "With respect to detainees, the Principals to the Global Political Agreement, namely myself, President Mugabe and Deputy Prime Minister Mutambara, last week agreed that all political detainees who have been formally charged with a crime should be released on bail and those that have not been charged should be released unconditionally. This has not yet happened." Indeed, rather than allowing the judicial process to take its course with regard to the granting of bail, the Attorney General's office is willfully obstructing the release of all detainees by abusing the appeal process and this must stop forthwith." But President Robert Mugabe who has been accused of acting in bad faith insists the courts should be allowed to determine the cases on merit and at their own pace.

**Botswana: Media Laws Stir Dissent Within Ruling Party: Sello Motseta:28 February 2009: INTER PRESS SERVICE NEWS AGENCY.**

Gaborone — There is growing dissent in the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) over laws that enable the government to regulate the media. Member of parliament, Keletso Rakhudu, broke ranks with his party by publicly criticising the Media Practitioner's Act as an "assault" on the "fundamentals" and "undermining" free and independent media. He claims a number of his colleagues shared his dismay but were fearful of speaking out. "I am bound to accept the majority decision but I believe that government has no business regulating the media. Part regulation or weak regulation is untidy. The fervour with which the Bill was embraced creates the impression that we have an ulterior motive," Rakhudu, the MP for Gaborone North told IPS. "The Minister was emotionally charged. It was the Bill or nothing. But we wanted her to listen to others nationally and internationally to reflect and introspect why she was receiving so much resistance. She agreed to put the Bill in abeyance to allow further consultation." Rakhudu said that he was out of the country when the Bill was passed without debate in parliament.

"If the media is less than fair or honest then I believe there are ample avenues to address that. I believe that self-regulation of the media is part of the democratic dispensation of Botswana." And there's support for this view from citizens. An Afro Barometer survey on press freedom conducted by the University of Botswana in October 2008 reveals that 80 percent of Botswana are in favour of the news media reporting stories as "they see fit". "These figures confirm that a large majority of Botswana support the view that the media are an important means for making sure that their leaders are held accountable," explained Mogopodi Lekorwe, a senior lecturer in the department of political and administrative studies at the university. "In the last few months there seems to be increasing indicators of growing intolerance of free speech, such as political parties clamping down on free-speaking members and government coming down hard on critical press. The ruling? BDP has institutionalised its parliamentary caucus such that its decisions are binding on its members of parliament, irrespective of how their constituents feel on the matter."

The preliminary results of the survey were released on Feb. 16. The Media Practitioner's Act, which sailed through parliament on Dec. 10, 2008, seems to fit the bill of this growing intolerance. Opposition politicians walked out of parliament in protest at the refusal of the ruling party to allow debate on the law. It empowers a state-appointed Media Council to assume a similar role to that of a court. It can impose penalties of more than \$600 and prison terms not exceeding three years for transgressions. "It is a very repressive law because one cannot practice journalism in Botswana without the consent of the Media Council, whose executive committee excludes media practitioners, publishers or anybody with an interest in the media from its decision making structures," said Thapelo Ndlovu the Botswana director of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA). He claims the minister is on the "warpath" against MISA because of their opposition to the media laws.

"It shows her low regard for civil society and dissenting views. She wants everyone to toe the line. The minister insists that she wants publishers to go and register with the Media Council. If they are not forthcoming she says she will choose her own Media Council. This confirms long held fears that political involvement in running the Media Council is designed to control media."Ndlovu said they are weighing up their legal options and will mobilise public support through newspaper adverts, radio interviews and workshops. The government is however contemptuous of criticism."The express purpose of the Media Practitioner's Act is to establish a Media Council whose objectives are to preserve media freedom, uphold standards of professional conduct and promote good ethical standards and discipline among media practitioners," said Dr Jeff Ramsay, presidential spokesperson.

"In March 2003 the Press Council of Botswana a non-statutory body itself agreed at a meeting of the Media Advisory Council to engage in a process that could strengthen its mandate through legislative recognition."Not so is the rebuke from publishers who maintain that they were not consulted. "That is why the minister ultimately postponed the debate on the Bill - to consult stakeholders," said Clara Olsen, managing editor of the Botswana Gazette.Olsen said the law would lead to self-censorship, journalism would be rendered an unattractive, even dangerous career; investigations would be practically impossible and officials will be even less likely to grant interviews or comment on issues. "It is the government's and parliament's prerogative to pass laws. If a law is bad we shall campaign for it to be repealed," said Olsen.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Sudan: Govt Condemns ICC Arrest Warrant: Constance Ikokwu and Chinwe Ochu in Abuja:6 March 2009:THIS DAY(NIGERIA).**

Washington, DC — The government of Sudan has condemned in strong terms the indictment of President Omar al-Bashir by the International Criminal Court (ICC), saying the court has no jurisdiction over the country.An international arrest warrant was issued against al-Bashir Wednesday, for war crimes and crimes against humanity by the ICC.

In a statement issued by the Sudanese embassy in Washington, D.C. Wednesday evening, the country rejected any attempt to usurp its sovereignty.According to the statement, "We reject this decision on the basis that it has no jurisdiction over us, as we are not a party to the Rome Statute that established it."

It described the ICC indictment as "politically motivated" and accused the international court of "double standards" in making decision as to which cases it goes after."Its pursuits to date are localized in Africa despite the fact that far more egregious crimes are being committed outside the continent. Some of the more powerful non-signatory countries have gone as far as adopting measures that would allow the use of force to retrieve nationals detained by the court.

"This reality alone is worrisome and unfortunate for it renders the ICC as a body that can only pursue cases selectively. Its credibility as an objective and impartial body is instantly weakened. Its case against Sudan is only an exercise of flexing muscles by targeting those it perceives as easy prey; those whose sovereignty, integrity and authority it can violate and override without international bother."

In the same vein, the country's government has said it will never hand over its President, al-Bashir or any Sudanese citizen to the ICC at the Hague. Addressing newsmen in Abuja yesterday, the Sudanese Ambassador to Nigeria, Taha Awad Mursi, said concerning the failure to cement peace talks, "it is the failure of the international community and not the failure of the Sudanese government at all." He said the international community had failed to put enough pressure on the rebel movements in Darfur to sign peace agreements after years of negotiations.

According to him, "The government of Sudan denounces in the strongest possible terms the unwise decision taken by the so-called ICC to arrest his Excellency President al-Bashir." Sudan considers this decision as an irresponsible hostile action deliberately taken against Sudan and the Sudanese people with the intention to destabilize Sudan and frustrate the peace and development process."

The envoy maintained that the decision of the tribunal was illegal, representing a flagrant disregard for international laws and the Vienna convention which obliges member states to only adhere to agreements ratified by those countries. Sudan, he said, does not recognize any verdict from the ICC, adding that, "Since Sudan is not a member of the ICC, the ICC's decision is not binding to Sudan." He noted that Sudan was holding the ICC responsible for jeopardizing the Doha peace talks as the rebels following the warrant, had stated they would no longer be involved in the negotiations.

Awad-Mursi said the 'Janjaweed' constantly referred to regarding the Darfur crisis, was a myth. "It is not a tribe; Janjaweed is a term given to any tribe of bandits. The government is not involved in Darfur and the conflict of Darfur is between tribes of Darfur which has been going on long before al-Bashir came to power," he said. The ICC, he noted, was simply a tool of Western powers such as France and Britain to re-colonize Sudan and the African continent at large. He said the 'West' had exhausted its resources and hence were lusting after the resources of Sudan which is rich in oil. "The African leaders appear to be the sole targets of the ICC. This is a reality which exposes the ICC as a tool for a new exploitative scramble for Africa," he said.

### **Uganda: Sudanese Envoy Shuns Bashir Warrant: Fortunate Ahimbisibwe: 5 March 2009: THE NEW VISION.**

Kampala — THE Sudanese ambassador to Uganda yesterday scoffed at the indictment of President Omar el-Bashir, saying the intended arrest was politically motivated by foreign powers interested in Sudanese oil. Abd El Rahim Mohammed said some international entities had manipulated the principle of universal jurisdiction against African leaders. He said issuing the warrant was intended to derail the on-going peace process in

Sudan. Addressing journalists at the Sudanese embassy in Kampala, Mohammed said: "The prosecutor of the ICC has clearly based his case and allegations on shaky grounds. The immunity of heads of states is preserved by well established international legal codes and treaties."

He said Bashir was being harassed because of his stand on oil extraction. The International Criminal Court on Wednesday issued an arrest warrant for Bashir for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur. "Some people have been telling our government to send out the Chinese companies that are extracting oil so that we can cooperate with them, but we have declined and they are not happy with Sudan." "We believe that the competition for oil is one of the reasons behind this indictment," he stated, adding that China had so far invested \$7b in the industry. Mohammed said Sudan did not recognise the jurisdiction of the international court, adding that it was not a party to the Rome statute. "We call upon the ICC to dismiss the case because it will destabilise our country," he added. "The government does not have any cooperation with the Janjaweed," he said. The ambassador said many Janjaweed militiamen had been arrested by the Sudanese government because of the killings in Dafur.

### **Somalia: Demonstrations in Favour for Clerics Take Place in Mogadishu: 5 March 2009: Shabelle Media Network (Mogadishu)**

Mogadishu — Thousands of people have gathered in Mogadishu's main football stadium and Sayidka Park Thursday in favour for the decisions made by Somali clerics in Mogadishu and to protest against the arrest warrant of Sudan's president. Somali clerics concluded a meeting in Mogadishu last month and called for the government to rule the country by the Islamic law. Sheik Ahmed Dahir Aways, who is one of the Islamic clerics and a brother of influential cleric Sheik Hassan Dahir Aways, spoke to the demonstrators and called for the Somali people to take Allah's book and work for the peace which he described the only solution for the Somali problems.

The demonstrators were chanting slogans to support the sharia and the peace of Mogadishu. People who gathered in Sayidka Park near the presidential palace were chanting slogans against the decision of the International criminal court which issued the arrest warrant against Sudan's president Omar Hassan Al-Bashir.

### **Kenya: Assassination of Human Rights Defenders: 5 March 2009: press release: Pambazuka.**

This evening, two leading human rights defenders, Mr. Oscar Kamau King'ara and Mr. John Paul Oulu (also known as GPO), both of Oscar Foundation, were executed in cold blood by a group of men in two vehicles. The two were driving to meet Mr. Kamanda Mucheke of the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights at his office. Eyewitnesses have said that the assassins were policemen. In fact, the minibus driver was in police uniform. An eyewitness at the scene was also shot in the leg and was later taken away from the scene by policemen. We are calling upon the police to reveal the whereabouts of this man since he might be the only one who can positively identify both

the assassins and their vehicles. Therefore, we fear for his life. Oscar was a trained lawyer and a human rights advocate who was the Chief Executive Officer of Oscar Foundation. He was a member of the Law Society of Kenya.

Mr. GPO Oulu was a former student leader, and an educationist who has worked for many human rights organizations, including the Youth Agenda. He left the Youth Agenda recently to join the Oscar Foundation as the Communications and Advocacy Officer. Oscar Foundation is a registered charitable organization that offers free legal services to the poor. Some of its major projects include organizing caravans to offer free legal aid to the poor around the country. They have a strong track record researching corruption in the police force, the prisons, and police brutality against the urban poor. The latest activity was researching and documenting cases of enforced disappearances and extra-judicial killings. The Oscar Foundation has been a major source of information to Parliament on atrocities playing out against the poor in the country. On February 18, 2009, before Parliament debated the motion on extra-Judicial killings, he presented Oscar Foundation's findings on ongoing extra judicial killings to Hon. Peter Mwathi, the motion's mover. Their last engagement with Parliament was a presentation to the Kioni Committee investigating organized gangs a couple of days ago.

We believe they were killed because of the sensitive information they had shared with both the Prof. Philip Alston the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, and with the MPs. Where we are in Kenya today is where the Jews were in Nazi Germany shortly before the Holocaust. The Nazis stage-managed a smear campaign that made the public hate the Jews and allow for their extermination. During the Emergency the colonial government hired collaborators to commit atrocities which they blamed on the Mau Mau to give them a bad name so that they could exterminate them. We hold the Government Spokesman Dr. Alfred Mutua complicit in the two murders for making wild allegations that the Oscar Foundation was a civil society front for Mungiki, and they were going to deal with it. What does he know about the assassinations? Was this what he meant by dealing with the Oscar Foundation? As we condole with the families of the deceased, we assure them, and the nation that their deaths are not in vain.

*Signed: Kenya National Commission for Human Rights and other Kenyan Civil Society Organisations*

**Kenya: Top UN Official Calls for Investigation of Killing of Human Rights Figure:6 March 2009:UN NEWS SERVICE.**

The United Nations human rights chief today called for an investigation after the founder of a Kenyan human rights organization was gunned down, one week after meeting with an independent UN expert investigating police killings in the East African country. Oscar Kamau Kingara, founder of the Oscar Foundation Free Legal Aid Clinic, was killed along with a co-worker yesterday as the two sat in their car in heavy traffic near Nairobi University in Kenya's capital, Rupert Colville of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) told reporters in Geneva. They were on their way to a meeting with staff of the Kenyan National Commission on Human Rights, he

added. The UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston, had met with Mr. Kingara on his visit to Kenya, during which he found what he called "systematic, widespread and carefully planned" police killings in the country. Mr. Colville said that the Oscar Foundation had provided testimonies of family members of people who had been allegedly killed by police to the Special Rapporteur and, in 2007, had published a report entitled "License to Kill - Extrajudicial Executions and Police Brutality in Kenya."

High Commissioner Navi Pillay urged the Government of Kenya to ensure the safety of the witnesses to the shooting, to investigate this killing and bring the perpetrators to justice, Mr. Colville said. "The High Commissioner also urged the Government to take all the necessary steps to ensure the safety of all people with whom the Special Rapporteur had met during his recent visit," he added. Speaking with UN Radio today, Philip Alston - who like all UN Special Rapporteurs reports to the Human Rights Council in an unpaid, independent capacity - confirmed that he interviewed both of the murder victims during his visit. He said the Government has accused the Oscar Foundation of having close links to a criminal gang, the Mungiki. "The problem of harassment and intimidation of human rights defenders has always been a very major one," Mr. Alston stressed. "It's an issue which the UN has adopted a very strong stance towards." "We try to take every possible precaution to ensure the security of those that we speak with. At the end of the day if you have a very determined and ruthless group that is going to punish and intimidate these people, there isn't much that can be done," he said.

### **Kenya: Kwekwe Squad Disbands: 3 March 2009: [Nairobi Star](#) (Nairobi) .**

Nairobi — The anti-Mungiki police unit codenamed Kwekwe was finally disbanded last week, Nairobi Star has learnt. The Kwekwe squad was set up in 2007 by the then Internal Security minister John Michuki to crack down on Mungiki at a time when beheadings and killings were rampant in Central Province. The covert squad has been active since then in Nairobi, Central Province and parts of Rift Valley. Yesterday, we established that last week four police drivers from the 14 man squad have been posted to the CID Mazingira house headquarters along Kiambu road. Another officer of the squad assumed office at the Langata police station last Friday. Sources within the police force said the remaining officers would also be re-deployed to police stations in Nairobi. As if to emphasise the need for a strong police hand, suspected Mungiki members yesterday stopped a matatu along Lunga Lunga road in Industrial Area, ordered the passengers out and set it ablaze. The Mungiki were demonstrating against the arrest of a taxi tout. Nobody was arrested.

The Kweke squad is accused by Kenya National Commission of Human Right and other human rights organisations of abducting and executing suspected Mungiki members at will. The UN Special Rapporteur on extra judicial killings Philip Alston issued a damning report last week after a 10 day visit and recommended that Attorney General Amos Wako and Police Commissioner Major General Hussein Ali be sacked for their involvement. Yesterday, the Star failed to get a comment on the transfers and the future of the anti-Mungiki squad from Police spokesman Eric Kiraithe despite numerous calls we



made to his office and cellphone."Kwekwe? I don't know why you are asking me," commented Government spokesman Dr Alfred Mutua yesterday. Government has always been evasive on the existence of Kwekwe.

Last month Internal Affairs minister Professor George Saitoti issued a ministerial statement in Parliament where he denied the existence of the squad and said it had been disbanded. During the closed door session Limuru MP Peter Mwathi tabled documents including a letter dated March last year which he said was a reply from the Internal Security Permanent Secretary Francis Kimemia admitting that 300 people had died as a result of police extra-judicial killings. The letter was in response to a query from the KNCHR. However a confidential security situation report issued by Nairobi Provincial Police boss Njue Njagi two weeks ago indicated that the squad was still active. Njagi informed his officers to be on high alert as the Mungiki were planning an oathing ceremony in Dagoretti that weekend and the report was copied to all officers commanding police division in Nairobi, including Zabedeyo Maina, the officer in charge of the squad. By 2007 the Mungiki had established a parallel government in Mathare, Mlango Kubwa and other estates in Eastlands where they violently monopolised matatu routes, real estate development, rental property and public utilities like power and water. Government then launched an intense police crackdown in which hundreds of suspects were arrested, and in many cases murdered, according to human rights organisations. After a public outcry, the unit was renamed Eagle squad but continued with the same mandate hunting down Mungiki suspects. Most squad members were drawn from the communities of Kikuyu, Embu and Meru which made it easy for them to infiltrate the sect. The promotion of Kwekwe officers raised concern with the police as many of them did not go through the procedures such as attending police college or the normal police vetting. This followed a written request by the Nairobi Provincial police boss to the Commissioner requesting the promotion of the anti-Mungiki squad members. A number of other police elite groups have been formed and subsequently disbanded during the Kibaki presidency including Spider (for general crime), Kanga (tout menace), Alfa Romeo (armed robberies) and Rhino (tout menace).

**Eritrea: Plea to EU to Suspend Development Aid in Light of Fresh Crackdown On Journalists: 6 March 2009: press release: [Reporters sans Frontières](#) (Paris)**

Reporters Without Borders has called on the European Union not to hand over aid worth 122 million euros to Eritrea, after a serious deterioration in conditions for political prisoners and as authorities were launching a new wave of arrests of journalists. "Who could still believe in the EU's commitment to human rights when a sum like this can be given to Eritrea?" the worldwide press freedom organisation asked. "Once again the EU is preparing to support the Eritrean regime when the country has shown no progress in respect for freedoms, quite the contrary". "We are extremely concerned about Eritrean prisoners, whose very existence is denied by Asmara, as well as an increase in arrests of journalists," the organisation said. "Certainly the country needs humanitarian support and development aid, but the Issaias Afewerki government does not readily allow the EU to ensure a proper follow-up of the use to which these funds are put," it said. "In this case, money given to its Eritrean 'partner' by the European Development Fund amounts to

something like a blank cheque and is seen by the people and diaspora as a sign of support for the regime," it concluded.

**Two waves of prison transfers in December 2008:** The government on 13 December transferred 113 political prisoners from jail in Asmara to Embatkala jail in Ghinda (35 kilometres north-west of the capital, on the road to the port city of Massawa). They were moved in the middle of the night in four armoured vehicles guarded by the Eritrean military under the supervision of Colonel Tesfalidet Habteselassie. Also in December, 27 political prisoners were moved to the Dahlak archipelago in the Red Sea where conditions are said to be appalling. Among them was editor and co-founder of the twice-weekly Meqaleh, Mattewos Habteab, arrested in Asmara on 19 September 2001, and the sports journalist and member of the executive board of the twice-weekly Keste Debena, Temesgen Gebreyesus, who was arrested on 20 September 2001. Conditions in the Dahlak islands are reputedly even worse than those in the prison camp at Eiraeiro already described by Reporters Without Borders. Prisoners are held in searing heat in subterranean isolation cells. Given how few prisoners return alive from the archipelago, being imprisoned in the Dahlak islands is in Eritrea synonymous with "a one-way ticket to hell".

**Dawit Isaac is in a military hospital:** The Swedish-Eritrean journalist and founder of the former weekly Setit, Dawit Isaac, who was arrested in Asmara on 23 September 2001, was among the prisoners transferred to Embatkala in December. But his very poor state of health led to him being returned to the capital on 11 January. Several sources concur that he is currently being treated in the air force hospital where only one doctor is in contact with him. The Eritrean authorities do their utmost to keep secret the state of health of this journalist, despite international campaigns in his support. The European Parliament on 7 January expressed its "deep concern at the continued imprisonment" of Dawit Isaac and called for his immediate release.

**Arrests at Radio Bana and other media:** The authorities on 22 February 2009, ordered a raid on the premises of Radio Bana, a small station in the heart of the capital that puts out educational programmes under the sponsorship of the education ministry. Its entire staff of around 50 journalists were arrested and taken without explanation to the Dobozi detention centre on the edge of the city. Some of the staff were released but several of them remain in custody. Among them are Bereket Misghina, aka Wedi Misghina, a famous actor and playwright; journalist and essayist Yirgalem Asfha, former art critic for the newspaper Zemen; teacher Basilios Zemo, aka Wedi Zemo, and a young teacher Senait Habtu, working in the radio's production studio. Unconfirmed reports suggested they had been transferred to the military prison in Adi Abeito, north-west of Asmara on the road to Keren. Bereket Wedi Misghina was tortured in 2002 after a showing of his film, *Fistametat*. Elsewhere, Isaac Abraham, a journalist on public Eri TV, Girmay Abraham, a journalist on radio Dimtsi Hafash (The Voice of the Masses), Mulubrhan Habtegebriel, journalist, writer and translator, and Meles Negusse, a young writer and poet, have just been arrested by Eritrean police. It is not known where they are being held.

*Reporters Without Borders defends imprisoned journalists and press freedom throughout the world. It has nine national sections (Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland). It has representatives in Bangkok, London, New York, Tokyo and Washington. And it has more than 120 correspondents worldwide.*

Central Africa

**Cameroon: 139 People Died in 2008 Protest – Observatory: Joe Dinga Pefok: 27 February 2009: THE POSTNEWSLINE.COM.**

The National Observatory of Human Rights, comprised of five human rights associations, says over 139 people were killed in the February 2008 nationwide protests. The information is contained in a 36-page report titled, "Cameroun - 25/29 Février 2008 - Une répression sanglante à huis clos" (Cameroon-25/29 February 2008- a Bloody Repression Behind Closed Doors). The report was released at a press briefing recently at the conference room of the Littoral Chapter of Christian Action for the Abolition of Torture, ACAT-Littoral. The Observatory noted that the deaths were a consequence of brutal suppression of the striking youths by troops. The statistics about the death stands as follows: Douala - 100, Kumba - 7, Loum - 7, Bamenda - 6, Limbe - 5, Bafoussam - 4, Mbanga - 2, Bafang - 2, Buea - 2, Njombe/Penja - 2, Muea - 1 and Dschang - 1. The Observatory, however, notes that the number of deaths is incomplete because they could not obtain credible information from Yaounde and Santa, where the Government statistics put the number of deaths at two and one, respectively.

**Massacre On The Wouri Bridge:** The Human Rights Observatory, in addition, notes that the exact number of those who died in Douala will never be known because of the "massacre on the Wouri Bridge", which occurred on February 27, 2008. The Human Rights outfit states that hundreds of protesting youths in Bonaberi had, on that day, set out to Bonanjo to present their grievances to the Governor. But, The Post learnt, when the youths were on the Bonaberi Bridge, they suddenly found themselves blocked on both sides by troops who started hurling tear gas at them. Worse still, there was a similar attack from the air by a military helicopter, the report states. The report further revealed that many of the youths, in a bid to escape from the tear gas, leapt into River Wouri, consequently drowning. The Observatory said fishermen found over 20 corpses floating in the river and that they were all warned by authorities to keep their mouths shut.

**Inhuman Treatment:** The report also notes that there were many cases of arbitrary arrests and executions during the uprising. Besides the killings, the report also talks of gross inhuman treatment which youths, who were arrested, were subjected to. According to the report, those arrested were dumped in horrible conditions in make-shift cells at military camps or in police and gendarmerie cells.

**Call For Commission Of Inquiry:** Meanwhile, in a two-page press release signed by the Coordinator of ACAT-Littoral, Madeleine Afite, the President of the "Ligues des Droits et de Libertés", Charly Tcikanda, and the Secretary General of the "Union des Syndicats Libres du Cameroun", Mbom Mefe, the Observatory calls on the international community

to get the regime to set up a judicial commission of inquiry into the February 2008 demonstrations and its bloody suppression. It also urges the regime to immediately release those still in detention as well as pay compensation to families that lost their loved ones as a result of the brutal suppression.

**Challenge To Amadou Ali:** Afite also told The Post that she is willing to face the Vice Prime Minister in charge of Justice and Keeper of the Seals, Amadou Ali, in a live TV programme to debate on the human rights situation in the country. She said following the recent publication of a report by Amnesty International, which indicted Cameroon for its deplorable human rights situation, Amadou Ali accused the Observatory of having provided the information to Amnesty International. However, Afite said she saw nothing wrong with the Amnesty International report.

**Central Africa: Rwanda/DRC Sign Joint Operation Final Report: Martin Tindiwensi: 3 March 2009: THE NEW TIMES.**

Goma — Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) yesterday signed a final report of the just concluded joint military offensive against rebels of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) in eastern DRC. The report which included details of the recent operation was signed in Goma by General John Numbi who represented FARDC while Brig. Gen. Jerome Ngendahimana signed on behalf of the RDF. Gen. Numbi said the operation was a success and thanked the Rwandan government for intervening in efforts to restore peace in the region. "We are signing this report before all of you as witnesses of our great achievements. The report included details of all the operation and the captured territories which were formally controlled by FDLR. It also indicates how FDLR soldiers are continuously returning home. Rwandan participation has helped us achieved a lot in such a short time. We had never registered such success as regards the destruction of FDLR structure" he said.

Numbi added that all Rwandan troops that were in DRC have already returned home and that FARDC will continue with the operation to restore peace in the region. "Today we are also witnessing the return of the four RDF liaison soldiers who had stayed in Goma to help us compile the report, these were the only remaining Rwandan troops on our territories and they are officially returning to Rwanda today" he said. Asked if DRC troops will manage to deal with the remaining big numbers of FDLR in the region, General Numbi said that the government troops will do everything possible to see that peace is restored in the region. "RDF has helped us to get a starting point and a foundation. The FARDC will continue the work that the joint forces have started," he said, adding that "The success achieved in such a short time is an indicator that unity is a pillar and a foundation to success" he explained. "We are all tired of FDLR. Even residents are tired and want them to return back to Rwanda" he explained. Asked why RDF had left DRC territory yet there were still a big number of negative forces in the region, RDF's Brigadier General Jerome Ngendahimana said that Rwanda's participation was a political motivated. "As an army officer, I have no comment on that because our operation was based on a political decision by the two governments. Our future plans as far as the

forceful disarmament of FDRL is concerned can be determined by both Heads of States" he told reporters

The Chief of General Staff Gen. James Kabarebe received the last group of RDF soldiers from DRC territory who also presented to him with a copy of the report denied reports. He denied reports by BBC that FDRL had retaken most of the captured territories. "I don't think it's true because I haven't received any reports from my DRC counterpart. I think I should have known it by now if the allegations were true" he said.

**Congo-Kinshasa: North Kivu - 880 Children Associated With Armed Groups Demobilised By Monuc:4 March 2009:United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Kinshasa) .**

Between 30 January and 2 March 2009, 880 children associated with armed forces and groups in North Kivu were demobilised by the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC). At the weekly MONUC press conference of 4 March 2009, MONUC spokesperson Madnodje Mounoubai said that 839 boys and 41 girls have been demobilized. The great majority of these children are Congolese, but there are also 31 Rwandans, two Burundians and two Ugandans. All these children were given to Non Governmental Organisations for their return and reintegration into their families and communities.

MONUC's Child Protection unit controlled the operation, and profited from the co-operation of the Military Integration Structure (SNI) and that of the National Demobilization and Integration unit (UEPNDDR). At the beginning of February, MONUC had separated 98 additional children from the various armed groups in North Kivu, including 37 in the "Petit Nord" region (mainly CNDP troops (30 out of 37) and 61 in the "Grand Nord" region (associated with various Mai Mai groups).

The separation of children from armed forces and groups is one of MONUC's priorities, within the framework of its support to the process of the accelerated integration of armed groups into the DRC Armed Forces (FARDC). MONUC warmly thanked the Congolese authorities for their efforts at facilitating the acceleration of this essential operation. Furthermore, MONUC invited all the actors concerned to continue to fully support these efforts, so that children are not sent to the front, and to allow all minors associated with armed groups to be able to reintegrate into civilian life as soon as possible. OCHA denounces exactions against civilians and humanitarians in North Kivu. At the MONUC press conference, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported that exactions against the civilians continue, with attacks against humanitarians on the increase in several parts of North Kivu. "Physical attacks and looting were reported in zones not very accessible to humanitarians, in particular in the localities of Kiribizi and Miragi. They are perpetrated by various armed groups taking part in hostilities in the area," declared OCHA spokesman Maurizio Giuliano.

With regard to the attacks against humanitarians, OCHA reports that five cases were reported in January, 13 in February and already four in early March. These attacks are made by armed individuals, and include harassment and looting of humanitarian material and equipment. OCHA considers this situation as an obstacle to the work of humanitarians, who are attempting to assist the most vulnerable populations. In addition, OCHA announced the return of displaced populations in several localities in North Kivu province, as in the locality of Karuba (in the south of Masisi territory), where a good part of the displaced population has returned, thanks to an improvement in security conditions. These returns also support the resumption of agricultural activities in these zones, in the gradual process of a return to normal life. However, in the camps managed by Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), those displaced often prefer to await assistance to return home, although 277 households have already left the Kibati camps near Goma for the localities of Kisigira, Rugari and Rutshuru.

#### 40. REFUGEES, IDPs AND MIGRATION

##### West Africa

#### **Nigeria: FCTA Gives 744 Houses to Displaced Natives: Mustapha Shehu: 5 March 2009: This Day.**

Abuja — Minister of State for FCT, Chief Chuka Odom, has handed over 744 houses to displaced natives of Garki, Apo and Akpanjenya areas of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The houses are part of the 856 houses planned for their resettlement. Issuing the keys and letters of allocation to the indigenes at the resettlement site in Apo, Odom recalled that the "movement to the site started three years ago with commencement of construction of various categories of resettlement houses ranging from one to three bedroom houses." With the construction and completion of 744 houses, he said, the project has "reached 87 per cent completion." Odom said 112 housing units in the same area are at various stages of completion, adding that other infrastructural facilities like water and electricity have been provided to ensure that the resettlement town is habitable. He said amenities like clinic, police post, school and health centre have been completed to ensure full functionality of the town, adding that internal roads within the town have been opened up and undergoing the procurement process for asphaltting and pledged that the "roads and drains would be completed before the end of the financial year."

##### Southern Africa

#### **Zimbabwe: 700 Families Displaced As Fresh Farm Invasions Continue: Alex Bell: 6 March 2009: [SW Radio Africa](#) (London).**

The wave of new farm invasions that were launched in earnest last month have so far displaced about 700 families, according to the General Agricultural and Plantation Workers Union. The union said this week the families, evicted along with their employers from farms across the country, are now seeking assistance from the International Organisation for Migration, and many are yet to find accommodation. It comes at a time

when 94% of the country's population is unemployed, while more than 7 million people are in critical need of food aid.

The renewed offensive against the country's remaining white farmers started just days before Morgan Tsvangirai was sworn in as Prime Minister in a unity government that is daily heading towards failure. At least 80 farms have so far been seized and about 50 are under siege by lawless thugs, with the owners facing possible violent eviction. At the same time more than 100 farmers are also facing prosecution while 140 are contesting eviction orders in the country's courts. However the courts are unlikely to offer the farmers fair trial, after the country's magistrates were last month instructed by the Attorney General to ignore any orders protecting farmers' rights to their land, in an effort to fast track prosecution against them. Even the High Court judge who this week nullified a SADC Tribunal ruling protecting white owned farms, has been implicated in the offensive against the farmers, after it emerged she was awarded land snatched from a farmer in 2005. The same High Court judgment also dismissed an order being sought by farmer Peter Etheredge, against the President of the Senate Edna Madzongwe. Madzongwe has been harassing Etheredge since 2007 in an effort to force him off his Stockdale citrus farm, which is one of the few productive farms left in a country crippled by food shortages. Last year, the farm was looted over a period of several weeks and an estimated US\$600 000 worth of goods was destroyed or stolen. Etheredge's brother and wife were also severely beaten at the time of the looting, while they were trying to reclaim their possessions that had been dumped at the roadside. The family have since been fighting off a string of invaders living on the property and Etheredge, who was supposed to be protected by the SADC Tribunal ruling, has been arrested on numerous occasions. The offensive against the farm owners has since been renewed, shortly after Justice Anne-Mary Gowora delivered her judgment nullifying the SADC Tribunal's ruling. On Wednesday Madzongwe, accompanied by a 20 strong group of people, including four policemen, arrived on the farm brandishing a copy of the state owned Herald newspaper, and ordered Etheredge to cease operations on the farm. Madzongwe's spokesperson apparently told Etheredge the Herald's report on the High Court ruling gave them the authority to carry out the order. Etheredge on Friday meanwhile raised concerns about corruption within the judiciary, explaining that four out of the country's five Supreme Court judges have been beneficiaries of Mugabe's land grab. This includes Judge Paddington Garwe who has been instrumental in ensuring MDC Treasurer Roy Bennett remains behind bars.

Meanwhile, three landowners arrested early this year on banditry charges were finally released on Thursday, two months since their wrongful incarceration. The trio, who own adjoining land in Ruwa, outside Harare, were arrested after a military style raid on their properties - where they conduct adventure and Boy Scout training. The arrests were instigated by the former chief security officer for the Reserve Bank, Joshua Banda, who promptly took up residence on one of the pieces of land after the rightful owner was behind bars. Banda used the evidence of Boy Scout training as an excuse to level banditry charges against the trio, in what their defence lawyer argued was "a case of a person who took advantage of the political situation and proceeded to manipulate it to his advantage in a savage and ruthless manner."

**Zimbabwe: Thousands Stranded As SA Shuts Refugee Camp: Alex Bell: 5 March 2009:SW Radio Africa (London) .**

Thousands of Zimbabwean refugees in South Africa have been left stranded, following the Department of Home Affairs decision to shut a densely populated refugee camp in the border town Musina. Officials this week announced the mobile 'Refugee Reception Office,' based at the Musina showgrounds, is to be closed and relocated to a military base on Friday. But on Wednesday the estimated 4000 refugees sheltering at the showgrounds were told to leave the area, with Home Affairs officials reportedly ordering that all shelters be broken down and burnt. Despite local reports suggesting that alternative accommodation arrangements had been made for the stranded refugees, aid groups said no such arrangements have been made. The medical charity Doctors Without Borders, explained on Thursday that officials within the Home Affairs department have requested that NGOs and other aid groups working in the area shoulder the responsibility of housing the thousands of refugees. But the head of the mission in South Africa, Rachel Cohen, told SW Radio Africa that only an estimated 700 refugees are left to provide shelter for, saying that the rest have fled in fear of being deported.

"Patients at our mobile clinic at the showground informed us that many people fled Musina yesterday morning, fearing they would be arrested or deported if they stayed," Cohen said. "Our medical teams know from experience that the threat of deportation serves only to force Zimbabweans into hiding." An estimated three million Zimbabweans are believed to be living in South Africa, with thousands crossing the border every night. In Musina alone, more than 200 new asylum applications have been processed per day, but Cohen explained that thousands of refugees are now at risk of deportation. "Although the showground didn't meet the standards for humanitarian assistance it was the only place in Musina where undocumented Zimbabweans, awaiting their papers, were safe from arrest or deportation," Cohen explained. The charity described in a statement the cruel nature with which authorities have already shut down the Musina refugee camp explaining that families were not even allowed to stay together. On Tuesday morning authorities started dividing the refugees into different groups, according to their legal status, gender, and age. Women with children, pregnant women and unaccompanied minors were removed from a special location that had been established for them at the showground, despite having nowhere else to go. The decision by the South African authorities has been labeled as 'ill-conceived' and the medical charity has called for the immediate halt to any Zimbabwean deportations. The group has called on the government to provide immediate, adequate humanitarian assistance - including some form of legal status - for Zimbabweans seeking refuge in the country.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Sudan: Govt Bans Aid Agencies From Darfur: Faatimah Hendricks: 5 March 2009:allafrica.**



Sudan's government has barred three leading international aid agencies from operating in war-torn Darfur as well as in the north and eastern regions of the country, putting at risk the lives of nearly two million people.

In an apparent response to the decision of the International Criminal Court to issue a warrant of arrest for President Omar al-Bashir, the government revoked the licences of British-based Oxfam International, the Dutch branch of Medicines sans Frontiers and the American-based agency, the International Rescue Committee. No explanation was provided for the decision. Amongst the vital services that the aid agencies provide are medical care, water, sanitation and education programmes for about 650,000 people in Darfur and 1.1 million in north and east Sudan. "We are extremely distressed by the forced closure of our aid operations," said George Rupp, the IRC's president and CEO. "It appears the international aid effort in the region is being shut down and that raises grave concerns about the welfare of millions of Sudanese people who rely on humanitarian aid for survival."

A press statement released by MSF stated that at the time that the decision was announced, meningitis had broken out in Kalma Campa, a temporary home to more than 90,000 internally displaced citizens. "MSF has worked tirelessly to deliver medical aid to the people of Darfur since the beginning of the crisis. It is completely unacceptable that the people of Darfur are being deprived of essential medical care," said Arjan Hehenkamp, MSF-Holland operational director. All three groups are non-governmental organisations with no affiliation to the ICC.

### **Sudan: More Aid Agencies Under 'Investigation': 6 March 2009: IRIN.**

Khartoum — More relief organisations are threatened with expulsion from Sudan, officials warned, as "investigations" continue into the activities of those suspected of collaborating with the International Criminal Court (ICC). "The process continues," the head of the government Humanitarian Affairs Commission Hassabo Mohammed Abdel Rahman warned. "More NGOs are under focus and investigation. If we find evidence, we will expel them."

Sudan has so far ordered 13 NGOs to leave, saying they provided information to the world court before it issued an arrest warrant for President Omar el-Bashir on war crimes charges. "The decision by the government of Sudan to expel 13 NGOs involved in aid operations in Darfur will, if implemented, could cause irrevocable damage to humanitarian operations there," UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon warned. These operations, according to the UN, were key to maintaining a lifeline to 4.7 million people in the western region of Darfur. About 300,000 people have died there, either in direct combat or due to disease, malnutrition or reduced life expectancy over the past five years. Bashir denies the ICC charges, describing them as a plot of western "neo-colonialism". His supporters came out in large numbers in the capital, Khartoum, on 5 March to protest. Rahman did not name any specific NGO, but said the organisations being probed worked not only in Darfur, but "all over Sudan". The fresh expulsion threat

came despite growing international pressure - including from the European Commission and US - on Sudan to allow the expelled groups back in.

**People at risk:** Campaign group Amnesty International warned that 2.2 million lives were at stake. The people in the western region of Darfur were "being punished by its own government in response to the arrest warrant", it added. The removal of key agencies would be a severe blow to the poorest, especially in Darfur where violence continues to affect large numbers of civilians, observers said. "The Sudanese authorities must immediately reverse their decision," Amnesty's deputy director for Africa, Tawanda Hondora, said. "The alternative is simply unthinkable." Ten NGOs were expelled on 5 March, and three more the next day. These included Oxfam, CARE, MSF-Netherlands, Mercy Corps, Save the Children, the Norwegian Refugee Council, the International Rescue Committee, Action contre la faim, Solidarités and CHF International.

Some of them were asked to turn over a list of their assets and banking details, while others had their computers, communications equipment and vehicles confiscated, according to Catherine Bragg, the UN Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator. While some international staff were given only 24 hours to leave Sudan, others were detained for a few hours, then released. "They cooperated with the ICC - some sent fabricated [information] to the ICC about genocide," Rahman said. The expelled aid groups have rejected the accusations. Oxfam, in a statement, said it "does not have an opinion on the [ICC's] activities, and our sole focus is meeting humanitarian and development needs in Sudan". Rebel groups in Darfur were angered by the expulsions and have demanded they be reversed. "The people of Darfur are already hungry - and now the government wants to take their food away," said Maghoub Hussein, a spokesman for the Unity faction of the Sudan Liberation Army. "This is the government wanting to make the people suffer more, and they must be made to stop." Between 200 and 300 international staff are believed to be employed by the organisations ordered to leave. A total of around 16,000 aid workers operate in Darfur, some 95 percent of whom are Sudanese. Ban pledged that the UN's humanitarian and peacekeeping operations, with some 25,000 personnel in Sudan, would continue.

### **Somalia: Merka IDPs Virtually Out of Food: 6 March 2009: IRIN.**

Nairobi — Three months after aid deliveries to the south Somali coastal town of Merka stopped, several thousand displaced people are facing a food and water crisis, sources said. "What little food we had is gone; we have had no help in almost three months," Zeinab Sheikh Hassan told IRIN. "We are in a desperate situation and we need help now." An estimated 9,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) live mostly in four camps in the town's outskirts, 100km south of the capital, Mogadishu. The camps are Buur Bishaaro, Dajuma, Shiirkole and Bufow. Most of the IDPs, community leader Abdulkadir Mohamed said, have been in the camps since early 2007, when an upsurge of violence in Mogadishu sent hundreds of thousands of people fleeing. The UN World Food Programme (WFP) halted general distributions in Merka in January because of insecurity - except for some distributions to hospitals and supplementary feeding that has continued.

"Our international staff was relocated from Merka at the end of October, but we still have national staff there," WFP spokesman Peter Smerdon said. "We are currently asking all local administrations and armed groups in South and Central Somalia to provide security commitments following the killing of two WFP staff within three days in January." WFP has reached agreements in many areas, but Merka has proved to be one of the more difficult. "We are moving toward a solution and will be able to return to full operations soon," Smerdon added. Hassan, a mother of eight, said: "I have been in this camp for nearly two years. We had some assistance and although it was never adequate, we never went totally without food for long. Now we are really suffering. It is as if we have been forgotten." Water shortages, due to the dry season, were making matters worse. "We have no water well and water is becoming more and more expensive. We cannot afford it any more," Hassan said. Mako Ahmed, a mother of six, said she arrived in Camp Buur Bishaaro in August 2007. "We came with nothing. I left Mogadishu in a hurry. It has been very difficult, now it is getting worse. My children barely eat." Her two youngest children were weak and sick. "They are passing red urine," she said. "I don't know what it means but I am worried." "We collect firewood and sell it in the town [Merka]. Some days I am lucky if I feed them one meal a day but there are days when we don't eat at all," she told IRIN. Despite the desperate situation in the camps, IDPs were not yet ready to return to Mogadishu. The latest fighting there, on 24 and 25 February, has not helped, Mohammed said. Fighting between government forces and the Hisbul Islami - a militia formed by a breakaway faction of the Alliance for the Reliberation of Somalia and three other insurgent groups - has reportedly recently killed at least 40 people and injured more than 200. In a 4 March statement, Amnesty International called on the parties to the conflict to cease indiscriminate or disproportionate attacks and to take precautions to avoid loss of life and injury of civilians.

**Somalia: President Sharif Says That His Government Plans Collecting Contribution for Displaced: 1 March 2009: [Shabelle Media Network](#) (Mogadishu)**

Somalia — The president of the Somali government Sheik Sharif Sheik Ahmed has said on Sunday that his government wants to collect contribution for the feeble and displaced people of Somalia. Mr. Sharif said in a press conference held in Mogadishu that the government prepared contribution and planning to start giving aid to the Somali people that affected the conflicts erupted in the country and he called for all the parties of the Somalis like the businessmen and the Somali communities in abroad to take part helping their people. He said that it is very important for the Somali society to give support to the Somali population who live in a critical condition as soon as possible and return the displaced ones back to their houses. "There are many Somali people who fled from the Somali capital Mogadishu as the fighting continued in the capital. Really those people need urgent help from the Somali people and return to their houses so I am calling for all the Somali people to stand helping their people," president Sharif said. The statement of the Somali president Sheik Sharif Sheik Ahmed about the contribution is a great and important step for thousands of Somalis who fled from their homes and it comes as many Somali people are in a very difficult situation but it is not known when the government will begin its plan for helping its people.

Central Africa

**Congo-Kinshasa: IDPs Returning to North Kivu Despite Violence: 6 March 2009: IRIN.**

Kinshasa — Civilians are slowly returning to their homes in the North Kivu region of eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), despite continuing violence and displacement due to militia activities, sources said. "While we are seeing tentative returns in some areas, we are also seeing new displacement due to ongoing rape, killings and looting," Bob Kitchen, country director for the International Rescue Committee (IRC), said in Goma. The IRC said it had recently registered more than 14,000 returnees from Uganda in Ishasha and Nyakakoma towns. Many of the returnees, however, found their homes looted and empty, spokeswoman Emily Meehan said. The returnees were also experiencing congestion in camps and among relatives who had temporarily housed them. "One household assisted by the IRC had 11 people living in a 3 sqm room," Meehan added.

A 35-day operation by the DRC and Rwandan armies to dislodge Hutu militias in the area ended on 25 February, with the Rwandan troops returning home. "The Hutu Rwandan groups have not been completely destroyed but their preparedness has been significantly reduced," joint operations commander Lt Gen John Numbi said. The DRC army, he added, was continuing to pursue the militias. At least one million people are estimated to have fled their homes in North Kivu as violence, mainly perpetrated by the Forces démocratique pour la libération du Rwanda (FDLR), escalated in 2008. "We constantly monitor the movement of fleeing civilians in North Kivu, in order to respond to their unfolding needs," Kitchen said. "Civilians in [the] province continue to endure chaos, displacement and suffering." Tens of thousands of those uprooted from their homes were living without adequate food, shelter, water or sanitation.

Officials at the UN Mission in Congo (MONUC) said the FDLR had regained control of some villages in the region. "The FDLR have regrouped in Nyabiondo, Kibua and Kashebere, reoccupying some of their former positions like Kalembe in Masisi territory as some towns in Walikale and Lubero," said MONUC's spokesman, John Paul Dietrich. Kalembe is 12km north of Nyabiondo in Masisi. The militias have recently launched attacks against DRC government positions. "On the morning of 2 March, the FARDC [DRC national army] were attacked in Kagheri, 30km south of Lubero," Dietrich said. They have also continued to commit atrocities against civilians, especially in Pinga area. A recent assessment mission from the IRC in Rutshuru territory found villages, homes and schools pillaged. "As is the case throughout North Kivu, different armed groups have controlled the area at various points in the past four months," Meehan said. "Sporadic eruptions of violence have spurred waves of displacement."

41. HEALTH (HIV/AIDS, TB, MALARIA etc)  
West Africa

**Senegal: Diabetes - Deadly, Underfunded And Unidentified: 3 March 2009: IRIN.**

Dakar — Even though diabetes is as lethal as HIV/AIDS and cases in Africa have nearly doubled to more than seven million within the past 15 years, according to the International Diabetes Federation, the illness receives scant attention from donors or governments in Africa. Diabetes, which the UN World Health Organization says causes about six percent of deaths worldwide every year, is a chronic condition that occurs when the pancreas does not produce enough insulin or when the body cannot effectively use the insulin it produces.

Nutritionist Stéphane Bescançon, director of the non-profit Malian Association to Control Diabetes, told IRIN that urbanisation, sedentarisation, affordable motor transport, food imports and industrialisation have taken their toll on Malians' health. "With cheaper motorbikes, people simply walk less. Artisanal oil that used to be made through drip processes are now produced and imported en masse, which has had a negative effect on diets."

In the category of internal medicine, diabetes is the second leading cause of hospitalisation after HIV/AIDS in Mali and the reason behind 40 percent of all visits according to the Health Ministry, based on the most recent data from 1996. Bescançon said diabetes data is hard to find and that the government is conducting a nationwide survey to update these figures. Bescançon said some cultural factors heighten risk, such as eating out of a communal bowl, which discourages portion control, and perceptions of obesity as a sign of beauty and prestige.

**Double burden:** International Diabetes Federation's (IDF) director for Africa, Alieu Gaye, told IRIN the continent is forced to confront chronic disease while it also battles the world's largest share of infectious diseases. "Countries have not crossed infectious diseases off their agenda and along come chronic diseases," Gaye told IRIN. "But with these diseases, there is no funding, no attention and often no diagnoses." WHO estimates that by 2025 the largest increase in diabetes cases will be in developing countries, with a projected 75 percent of the world's diabetics. But at least half of those with diabetes have not been diagnosed, which leaves many other health complications also undiagnosed, according to IDF. Diabetes is responsible for 60 percent of amputations in the developing world, according to WHO. In addition to foot disease, diabetes can cause blindness, heart disease - the world's number-one killer - kidney failure and loss of feeling in the limbs.

In a 2004 study by the Malian Association to Control Diabetes, diabetes patients with complications paid more than US\$160 for their care every month, or \$60 if they did not have complications. "Without donor or government subsidies, patients pay out-of-pocket or simply do not continue life-saving treatment," said Bescançon. Employed Malians earned on average a little over \$41 per month in 2007, according to the World Bank. Recent studies in Mali and Mozambique showed that a person requiring insulin for survival would die within less than one year, according to IDF. In Zambia, the average is 11 years. IDF's Gaye told IRIN most attention in the developing world is focused on infectious diseases while chronic diseases like heart disease, hypertension and diabetes are mistakenly considered "rich-country" concerns. Without donor money, poor governments are unlikely to pay more attention to diabetes, said NGO director

Bescançon. "It is no secret governments will promote whatever health programmes donors are willing to fund. Donor funds determine governments' priorities." Donors have given almost \$12 billion since 2001 to The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Diabetes and other chronic non-communicable diseases are rarely singled out for donor or policy attention, according to a 2004 medical journal study though they are the leading cause of mortality worldwide, according to WHO.

**Who gets saved?** In 2006 African Union and WHO spearheaded the African Diabetes Declaration and Strategy, which Gaye said has raised awareness but not significant funds. Bescançon questioned subsidising health care for one disease and not another. "An HIV patient has his treatments covered, but not a diabetic patient. The patient who is saved from HIV may very well die of diabetes." IDF's Gaye said preliminary studies on HIV/AIDS patients have shown that malnutrition and other side effects can make patients susceptible to diabetes. Bescançon said injecting money to wipe out one particular disease minimises the connection between illnesses. "It creates an ethical problem for medical practitioners who are able to save the life of a patient with a particular pathology but not another." The question is not how to raise more money or to create a duelling Global Fund, but rather how to redistribute support to the overall health system in which deadly disease complications are treated equally."

#### **West Africa: Meningitis Emergency Vaccine Stock Tapped Early: 5 March 2009: IRIN.**

Dakar — The UN World Health Organization's meningitis vaccine stockpile programme has already tapped into its inventory, weeks before the worst of the deadly illness's peak season. "These requests [from governments for vaccines] typically come in at week 12 [end March]," said WHO's Alejandro Costa with the Epidemic Readiness and Interventions team. "But this year we have already received four requests from Nigeria." The International Coordinating Group (ICG) on Vaccine Provision for Epidemic Meningitis Control was created following the 1995-96 meningitis outbreak in sub-Saharan African countries dubbed the "meningitis belt"—spanning from Senegal to Ethiopia - to ensure adequate stock of the vaccine. Current vaccines, which unlike many other immunisations, are not administered routinely because they offer at most three years of protection. WHO's recommendation for outbreak control has therefore been to do mass vaccinations in every area in an epidemic phase (10 infections per 100,000 residents) and neighbouring districts that are in alert phase (five infections per 100,000 residents). Managed by Médecins sans Frontières (MSF), International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and WHO, ICG has distributed almost 39 million meningitis vaccines in Africa since 1997.

**Perpetual shortage:** "There is always a shortage since there is no way of forecasting demand," said WHO's Costa. "Unlike other childhood immunisations, this one is administered only at the time of the outbreak. Vaccine manufacturers produce what they think might be enough, but we are never sure." Costa said epidemiologists have not been able to explain why outbreaks vary from one year to the next. "This makes it even harder [for governments] to keep stock on hand," Costa told IRIN. He said ICG gave out two

million doses in 2008 to Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Mali, Niger and Nigeria, compared to the seven million distributed in 2007 to Burkina Faso, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Togo, and Uganda. Costa said countries must provide lab confirmation of an epidemic before receiving vaccines at no cost. He said the stockpile has earmarked 12 million doses to distribute in 2009.

**First request:** Nigeria's government had purchased 1.5 million meningitis vaccines but that was not enough, according to Muhammad Ali Pate, the executive director of Nigeria's National Primary Health Care Development Agency. "We need twice as much," he told IRIN. Since 1 January, Nigeria's government has reported more than 5,200 people infected with meningitis, mostly in the north, and more than 320 deaths. ICG and UNICEF are providing 1.7 million additional vaccines, with the final one million doses expected to arrive by 7 March, said Costa.

**Niger:** Five districts in neighbouring Niger have reached WHO's epidemic threshold and eight others are on alert, according to WHO. The government reports 2,041 cases with 85 deaths since 1 January. "This year, the intensity and number of cases are worse than last year," said Stéphane Quinton, head of the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO) for West Africa. "If thousands are infected and we have an average of 10 percent mortality, the situation can become quite serious." Quinton told IRIN the US\$2.5 million ECHO set aside to fight infectious diseases in West Africa in 2009 might not be enough. "We are meeting in Brussels today [5 March] to learn if we can raise emergency funds." He added that ECHO is supporting Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) France to help the Nigerian government control meningitis, and that additional MSF country sections may join an eventual cross-border vaccination campaign in Nigeria and Niger. Health workers estimate some two million people may require vaccinations in the border region, but say this number may grow as it is still early in the season. ECHO's Quinton said MSF France is expected to donate medical kits to health facilities, help improve epidemiological surveillance and set up more than 40 mobile vaccination units in two heavily affected northern Nigerian states - Katsina and Jigawa.

**Togo:** In Togo, 74 meningitis cases and 11 deaths have been reported since the beginning of the year in the Haho district 100km northeast of the capital Lomé, according to WHO. The near 15-percent mortality rate in Togo falls under WHO's 90-percent survival threshold for "successful treatment rates". Bacteria that cause meningitis attack the spinal cord or brain lining, potentially leading to paralysis, deafness, nervous disorders or death.

**Nigeria: 'Africa is Almost Halfway to Malaria Milestone': Sola Ogunjide: 3 March 2009: Vanguard.**

WITH over 40 per cent of the population in malaria endemic African nations now having access to Insecticidal Nets (LLINs), the African continent is gradually inching closer towards achieving the 2015 declaration of near-zero case of preventable death from malaria by 2015. Four years ago, less than 10 per cent of persons in the region had access to the life-saving nets. In actual numbers, more than 140 million mosquito nets have been distributed to date, offering protection to nearly 300 million people (each net protectng

two people) in sub-Saharan Africa, epicenter of the world's malaria control activities, where 90 per cent of all malaria deaths occur on the continent. This was the highpoint of the report presented to the United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, by Mr. Ray Chambers, the UN Special Envoy for Malaria, who cites important progress toward achieving the Secretary-General's goal of providing all endemic African countries with malaria control interventions by the end of 2010. But the report notes that more intensive effort will be needed to meet this deadline. In the new report, which coincided with the one-year anniversary of Chambers' appointment as the first Special Envoy for Malaria, he noted that it .... "signifies perhaps the most encouraging development in a year that featured many noteworthy accomplishments."

The report, which also underscores last year's announcement that the world can reach near-zero deaths from malaria by 2015, stresses that while malaria-related objectives are within sight, a failure to increase momentum further still will result in falling short of targets.

Noting that only 671 days remain until the Secretary-General's deadline for universal coverage, Chambers said: "At this unique moment in history, when dedicated leadership, proven interventions, available resources and collective will have converged to turn the tide against this scourge, we cannot permit complacency to dull our resolve." He said with over 140 million LLINs distributed over the past three years, African countries are making the necessary preparations for the "over 240 million LLINs already financed for delivery between now and December 2010." Chambers emphasised that the "same thought and energy that guided LLINs in 2008" will govern efforts pertaining to other essential interventions, such as treatment in public health facilities, the provision of rapid diagnostic tests and the production of an adequate number of antimalarial medicines - artemisinin-based combination therapies (ACTs). The Special Envoy asserted augmentation of current initiatives to ensure the completion of the Secretary-General's mission, including the fulfillment of financial commitments by donors. Along with funding and implementation partners, he is tracking key indicators on a quarterly basis, exposing advances and impediments alike, in an effort to overcome obstacles and maximize efficiency.

**Nigeria: Lagos Procures Mobile Field Hospital for Rural Dwellers: Olasunkanmi Akoni: 5 March 2009: Vanguard.**

THE Lagos State Government has procured mobile field hospital for the provision of healthcare services to rural areas even as it said at least 3,000 riverine dwellers in different parts of state had so far benefitted from the free medical services of the Lagos State Ambulance Boat Programme. The beneficiaries are from 10 riverine communities of Irewe, Itogbesa and Onigbongbo in Ojo Local Government; Ikaare and Irede in Oriade Local Council Development Area; and Igbo Elejo and Ilu Titun in Amuwo Odofin Local Government. The state Commissioner for Health, Dr Jide Idris, who made the disclosure, said the field hospital was to provide on-the-spot medical services including surgeries to people at the grassroots and hinterlands.



Idris noted that healthcare service delivery in riverine areas had been greatly improved by the ambulance boat service which pays routine visits to these areas to provide free qualitative health services to the people, thereby complimenting the primary health care services available in these areas. The commissioner, who disclosed this in Lagos while evaluating the activities of the ambulance boat services, said accessing qualitative healthcare would have been quite difficult and cumbersome for residents of the riverine areas who, by virtue of their locations, would have been cut off from qualitative healthcare delivery and proper referral system if not for the ambulance boat services, adding that government was working at extending the programme to riverine areas across the state. Idris noted that the need to ensure qualitative healthcare delivery for people in riverine areas, especially in times of emergencies, necessitated the ambulance boat services, adding that it will also go a long way in easing out the problem of transportation during referral.

**Nigeria: HIV/Aids Bill Scales Second Reading:3 March 2009:THIS DAY.**

Lagos — A bill seeking to prohibit and punish discrimination against people living with HIV and AIDS yesterday scaled second reading at the House of Representatives. Hon Olajumoke Olukoya-Thomas (AC-Lagos), who led the debate, said the bill was seeking to protect the rights and dignity of HIV infected persons and persons living with AIDS. It seeks "to promote equality, freedom, fairness and respect for the rights of HIV and AIDS infected persons." To achieve employment, equity and to protect the rights and dignity of HIV infected workers, including avoiding discriminatory action against them in the provision of employment". It also seeks to prevent the discrimination of persons living with HIV and AIDS with respect to access to housing, commercial premises and medical services," Olukoya-Thomas said.

The bill, after the debate, was referred to the Joint Committees on Human Rights and HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Control. The House also mandated its Committee on Communications to expedite action and submit its report on the problems bedevilling the telecommunications industry. This was after it had considered a motion on the "Rising incidence of threat to life and other vices via the Global System of Mobile Telecommunication (GSM)". Hon Ekperikpe Ekpo (PDP-Akwa-Ibom) and 41 others, who sponsored the motion, expressed worry over the growing rate of crimes, threat to life, fraud and armed robbery through the instrumentality of GSM. Ekpo said the House was worried that so many lives had been lost, while confusion and enmity were created among friends, families and leaders through the GSM. He said that the absence of a database of subscribers made it difficult to trace the culprits.

**Ghana: Nutritionist Worried Over High Cases of Malaria:William N-Lanjerborr Jalulah:4 March 2009:THE CHRONICLE.**

Bolgatanga — THE DEPUTY Chief Nutrition Officer and Programme Manager of the Nutrition Malaria Control for Child Survival Project (NMCCSP) at the Nutrition Department of the Ghana Health Service, Headquarters, Accra, Madam Hannah Adjei, has expressed concern over the high incidence of malaria among children. Speaking at a

forum in Bolgatanga, the nutritionist said malaria remained the single largest killer of children, accounting for about 26% of deaths, and 40% of out-patient and hospital admission cases. According to her, the limited availability of preventive items such as Long Lasting Insecticide Treated Nets had been identified as a key bottleneck in the fight against malaria and associated child mortality. Madam Adjei said the disease was more frequent and severe among malnourished children, leading to higher morbidity and mortality.

She said a recent study in northern Ghana, reported that underweight children were significantly more likely to have clinical malaria and anemia. She said the main objective of the NMCCSP was to improve utilisation of selected community-based health and nutrition services for children under the age of two, and pregnant women in the target districts.

The project would also support priority areas, like nutrition and malaria control in the programme of work of the Ministry of Health and the Ghana Health Service, which were known to have strong links with child survival, but have received inadequate attention. Madam Adjei was also worried that there were challenges of communities to identify strategies to address problems of malaria and malnutrition. She gave the assurance that the project would intensify education on the fight against malaria and malnutrition in these communities, and asked for the cooperation and assistance of all stakeholders in that direction.

The Upper East Regional Acting Nutrition Officer, Madam Fati Wasai-Bobtoya, identified disease, poverty and hunger, as the major causes of severe malaria and malnutrition among children. She said when children were malnourished, it took a very long time for them to recover, and that there was the need for all and sundry to play pivotal roles to deal with the situation. Madam Wasai-Bobtoya thanked World Food Programme Emergency for Operation, for its emergency food supply towards improving the nutrition status of malnourished children at the various rehabilitation centres across the region. She advised parents to be consistent in the monthly weighing of their children by the GHS, to determine their weight, so that the appropriate food supplement could be given to keep them healthy. Parents should also ensure that they complete the immunisation of their children, as being prescribed by health workers.

**Ghana: Keeping the Promise On Education And Health On Course:2 March 2009:Public Agenda (Accra).**

A new report, "The Ghana Civil Society MDG Monitoring Report, 2008" has warned that Ghana is highly unlikely to meet most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, if the current snail-paced development is not speeded up. The report, notes that although there have been efforts to expand coverage of social interventions, real access remains patchy, as significant numbers of communities and even entire districts lag behind expected social and economic development indicators.

This timely warning must be a source of worry to policy-makers who hold the keys to the progress of the country. Out of the eight MDG's for instance, access to education and health are deemed to be lagging behind the rest of the goals. It is no more a secret that the state of financing basic education is declining so fast that the country is unable to provide the required teachers for all primary schools, especially the deprived ones. There are certain challenges being faced by teachers and pupils because consistent efforts in official circles have substituted quality with quantity. This newspaper is optimistic that the health MDGs remain largely achievable if needed investments are made now, but then time is running fast. This is why reports from some parts of the country, especially, the northern part that the National Health Insurance is on its knees should be taken seriously by the government.

Reports last week indicated at the Tamale Teaching Hospital, the hospital authorities announced that supplies of all medical essentials had ceased due to the failure of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) to pay for the services rendered. The scheme owes the hospital, which caters for more than 70% of health cases in the region, about GH¢1.7 million. The story was not different in the Upper East Region, where GH¢ 2.8m is owed the region for services rendered under the NHIS. If what the reports suggested are to be taken seriously, it can safely be concluded that the situation could reach a crisis that needs drastic decision within shortest possible time to salvage the scheme from total collapse. The long term sustainability of the NHIS had always been on the minds of many analysts who fear that due to the reluctance of the affluent in society to sign up to the scheme, it would come to a time when low contributions of those in low income group might not be able to sustain the scheme. It is the hope of this newspaper that the situation would not reach a point where patients will be allowed to die for lack of drugs. All said, education and health are the lifeblood of a thriving economy. That is why this newspaper enjoins the government to do everything to keep the dream of attaining MDGs on education and health on course.

Southern Africa

**Zimbabwe: Cholera Cases Projected to Reach 123000 Infections: Lance Guma: 4 March 2009: SW Radio Africa (London)**

Zimbabwe Doctors for Human Rights (ZDHR) has warned that cholera cases in the country could reach 123 000, more than double the 60 000 mark initially set as a worst case scenario. ZDHR Chairman Douglas Gwatidzo says that unless the country's water infrastructure and health care system are rebuilt the outbreak will continue to wreak havoc. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) the official number of people killed by the epidemic so far stands at over 3900 while the total number of cases reported is nearing 87000. The country has witnessed several cholera outbreaks but in each case a reasonably functioning health care and water sanitation system helped contain the disease. The current outbreak, which started in August last year, is probably the worst that Africa has ever seen.

ZDHR has produced a report recommending an emergency health response plan. 'This plan should begin by focusing on making primary and secondary care services (clinics and district hospitals) affordable and accessible to all,' it said. The doctors want the government to ensure the concerns of health workers are addressed and that, 'conditions in which these workers return to work and their skills can be retained are put in place (including adequate remuneration and safe working conditions).' They say this has to be matched by ensuring safe portable water for all communities and the rehabilitation of the piping infrastructure for water in the cities. 'Everyone should have access to a toilet connected to a septic tank or working public sewer system or a ventilated improved pit latrine,' the doctors said.

**Angola: Countries to Cooperate on Aids Combat at Common Border:27 February 2009:AngolaPress.**

Ondjiva — The Health Ministries of Angola and of Namibia wish to collaborate, soon, in the combat to malaria and HIV/AIDS along the common border, in order to find solutions that guarantee better living conditions of the local population. The information was disclosed at a meeting between the Angolan Health minister, José Van-Dunem, and his counterpart of Namibia, Richard Kamwi, as well as with the WHO regional director for Africa, Luis Gomes Sambo, which mainly aimed at assessing the activities of health centres lying along the common border. At the occasion, José Van-Dúnem said that this aid assistance is an example of the efforts of both countries, which invest on medical assistance for the population and creating the conditions to discuss health problems together, among other actions. On the other hand, the Namibian minister, Richard Kamwi said it is a pleasure to come to Angola to assess, together with his Angolan counterpart, the health situation along the common border.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Uganda: Mass Polio Immunisation Planned: Raymond Baguma and Anthony Bugembe:4 March 2009:the new vision.**

Kampala — UGANDA, Kenya, the DR Congo and South Sudan are to carry out a massive polio immunisation exercise starting this month. Health minister Dr. Stephen Mallinga said the programme, targeting children of five years and below, will run from March 21 to 23 in high-risk districts. He added that the exercise would continue in April in the low-risk districts. This follows a confirmed case of the disease in Amuru district, as well as two other suspected cases that are being tested at the Uganda Virus Research Institute in Entebbe. Addressing a press conference on Tuesday, Mallinga said the outbreak was a setback, adding that the World Health Organisation (WHO) had declared Uganda polio-free 12 years ago.

Last month, a polio outbreak was confirmed in Kenya's Turkana district. The disease was also confirmed in Juba and Akobo districts of Southern Sudan in August last year. Rutshuru and Miti-Murhesa districts of the DR Congo also reported cases in March last year. Mallinga said in January, the ministry carried out immunisation against the

disease in the districts of western Uganda bordering the DR Congo. He said they would intensify cross-border surveillance to ensure children of five years and below entering Uganda were screened and vaccinated against the disease. Malinga said health officials would also carry out house-to-house mobilisation and registration of children in the high-risk age group.

Dr. Joaquim Saweka, the WHO country representative, said the other countries would also carry out the exercise at the same time. The director of clinical services, Dr. Kenya Mugisha, said immunisation in Amuru district was fast-tracked and would be carried out on Tuesday next week.

Central Africa

**Cameroon: Female Genital Mutilation Persists: Elizabeth Mosima: 6 March 2009: IRIN.**

*«When I gave birth to my first child eight years ago, my mother told me one morning that I am a woman now but I did not understand what she meant. Suddenly, some women came into our house and took me behind the house. They pinned me on the ground and I could not move. In a short time I felt a sharp pain. I shouted and shouted to no avail. After the circumcision I was given no treatment. I was asked to use but hot water as treatment». This is the story of a woman who went through the ordeal of female circumcision in the South West region of Cameroon. Female Genital Mutilation is an age-old tradition which continues to be a source of controversy, pain and discord within the communities where it is practised. Men have used it to enhance their dominance over the women. Despite efforts to abolish such traditional practices, some communities continue the practice in the name of tradition.*

The regions where such practices are common in the country are the Centre, Far North, East and South West regions. According to official statistics from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family, the phenomenon affects more than 20 percent of the female population in Cameroon. Three types of Female Genital Mutilations are practised in Cameroon. There is the type of excision called "Sunna", which refers to the removal of part of the clitoris, then the "Clitoridectomy", which is a complete removal of the clitoris with labia minora and finally the "infibulation", that is an excision combined with removal of the labia majora with suturing of the two stumps. This practice is dangerous as it goes with many complications. Apart from psychological torture, women who go through such hideous practices are exposed to many risks such as STDs/AIDS contamination, tetanus, including death itself. The International Women's Day celebration will equally be an opportunity for women to reflect on such practices which continue to persist despite efforts to eradicate them.

42. ENVIRONMENT  
West Africa

**West Africa: Ending the Race to the Bottom: 28 February 2009: Interview: Inter Press Service News Agency.**

*Accra — Resource extraction in West Africa has often coincided with environmental degradation and brutal conflict. Activists further charge that the agreements between governments and transnational mining companies do little to benefit local communities. Yet in 2008, an attempt by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to change this by developing a common mining code for the region was unexpectedly challenged by civil society groups.*

*Third World Network Africa (TWN) was among those opposed, and **Abdulai Daramani**, told IPS that TWN - part of an international coalition engaged in research and advocacy on environment and development issues - supported creating a common code. However, he felt the ECOWAS initiative was premature. In his view, the process blocked citizen involvement - he says development of an inclusive code will only be possible after regional and local consultation and input. The criticisms had their effect: what is now in place is a convention, a set of broad principles of intent that may form the basis of a future common code. IPS asked Daramani about the challenges of ensuring environmental justice for resource-rich communities in West Africa.*

**What are some of the worst examples in the region?** We have numerous human rights violations which are well-documented. The Ghana Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice itself affirmed quite a number of violations in a report which it presented in 2008. In addition to that we have so many scars of environmental degradation. If you go to Mali, you have the Sadiola mine, which has taken over thousands of hectares of land and deprived communities of access. You have water problems caused by mining across the entire region. When we come to Guinea, there are also problems with the bauxite industry there where communities' environments have been degraded. In Nigeria, where apart from oil you also have mining of gold and other minerals taking place, you have severe problems of emission of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. So there are environmental, social and economic problems.

**Who is worst affected by mining?** Obviously once the community's rights are violated in terms of access to livelihoods, in terms of access to their dignity, in terms of access to housing, it affects the totality of the nation. But the ones who are exposed to all of these three impacts - social, economic and environmental - are local communities. They are usually located directly by the mines and they receive the day-to-day impact of whatever problems mining generates. But it is not just the totality of the community, because within the community there are different clusters of social groups. If you take, for example, women, they are the hardest hit because they depend on land. But in terms of compensation, women receive a very, very insignificant portion of the compensation because even though they occupy the land, they don't own the land. Then you have traditional authorities, who are a separate interest group when it comes to mining. They are direct beneficiaries of mining in local communities.

**What are some problems with the agreements signed by governments with the transnational companies that dominate mining in Africa?** The main problem is that first of all the agreements tend to lock national governments in, in terms of their capacity to reverse those agreements when they feel cheated. The agreements also tend to block the space for citizens' engagement in policy or to address some of the problems arising from mining, whether it's economic or environmental. Most of these agreements tend to diminish the national standard. For example, you have a situation where Newmont Mining entered an agreement with the government of Ghana, and set the royalty they will pay every year to the minimum. It's the same thing with AngloGoldAshanti: they all tend to pay the minimum allowable royalty.

Ghanaian law says you can pay a royalty of between three and six percent, but in those agreements these companies have agreed to pay three percent through a period of 15 years. Now this is a case where the agreement tends to lower the national standard. The Ghanaian government may come out with a regulation which says royalties of five percent should be paid, but in light of these agreements they cannot raise payments from AngloGold and Newmont beyond three percent.

**What changes would you like to see to the way mining is regulated?** During the years when economic reforms were launched in the 1980s through the early 1990s, we saw a complete lowering of standards in all aspects of mining. Talk about environment, talk about human rights, talk about economy. We see that the role of the state, which is central in catalysing mining for development has also been diminished very seriously. So its power to regulate, its power to enforce - these have all been diminished. What we want to see in the coming years is - and processes of reform have already begun at the African Union level - we want to see the state again become very strong in the development process. In fact, the current crisis of the credit crunch, where even Europe and America are calling for the intervention of the state, testifies to the argument we are putting forward, that the role of the state is central. Secondly, we also want a strong focus on the diversification from the traditionally-exploited minerals like gold and diamonds to other minerals which are very critical, but which we have tended to overlook. Third, we want to see strong value addition. That value addition must come through a strategy for processing our various minerals so we don't just remain exporters of primary commodities, but move towards a point where we begin to export finished products.

**One of the new efforts to improve things in the mining sector is the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), which works to strengthen accountability by making clear what companies pay and what governments receive.** I think that to a very limited extent, the EITI can contribute to some level of transparency, to the public knowing what companies are paying and what governments are receiving from companies. The challenge of this initiative contributing to the developmental aspirations of individual African countries is this: one, the process seeks to subvert the argument for a re-organisation of the levels of payment that companies make to governments. At the moment the levels of payment, whether it's taxes, import duties or royalties is terribly low. And the EITI seeks to subvert attempts to raise the level of taxation, so that is a major challenge. The second challenge, even though some countries like Nigeria have

moved one step from voluntary codes to a state law, is that the totality of the EITI is moving away from mandatory codes to more voluntary codes. And these are ultimately not enforceable. They depend on the gestures of the companies. And we cannot rely on the companies who are mainly seeking profits to contribute to development. Finally, the scope of the EITI is limited, because it is focused on the revenue aspect without questioning the larger environmental or human rights standards and this is very problematic when it comes to mining.

**Gambia: Calls for Common African Voice, As Environmental Change Confab Kicks-Off: 3 March 2009: [The Daily Observer](#) (Banjul).**

Yesterday, March 2, 2009, the secretary of state for Forestry and the Environment, Momodou Kotu Cham, officially opened the 3-day "Midterm Validation Workshop on the Study of the Reduction of the Vulnerability of West Africa to Climate Change." The event, which holds from 2-4 March 2009, is organised under the auspices of the Ecowas Commission and the government of The Gambia. It is taking place at the Paradise Suites Hotel in Kololi.

Speaking to the gathering, SoS Cham pointed out that Africa lost out in the development of the Kyoto Protocol. "The African negotiators had no idea about the issues involved," he stated. Thus, he emphasised, Africa profited the least from the provisions of the protocol. Consequently, he said, "there is the need to put together a common platform" and to speak with one voice. Africans, he added, need to come together to address the issues in the Kyoto Protocol. Africa, according to him, is the most vulnerable continent to climate change. He attributed this to various factors such as the fact that the continent has less diversified economies, endemic poverty, etc. Delivering the opening remarks earlier, the executive director of the National Environmental Agency (NEA), Momodou B Sarr, said "it is truly befitting that this workshop on climate change is being held in The Gambia, one of the countries most vulnerable to the effects of climate change". He then spoke of a new paradigm called "Carbon Justice". "Countries contributing more than their fair share to global climate change from their manufacturing and transportation industries should contribute the lion share of the costs associated with adaptation to the effects of climate change," he explained.

Pa Ousman Jarju, the United Nations Framework Convention on climate Change (UNFCCC) focal person in The Gambia, said "scientific evidence that climate change is a serious and urgent issue is now compelling". Consequently, he said, there is need for urgent action to mitigate the risk of "very damaging and potentially irreversible impacts on ecosystems, societies and economies". According to him, albeit contributing just about 3.8% of total greenhouse emissions, Africa will bear the brunt of the impact from climate change. Considering the magnitude of the threat, he also called for a regional strategy to combat the menace.

**Nigeria: Lagos - The Threat of Climate Change: Victor Omoregie: 4 March 2009: [Vanguard](#).**



A substantial part of the highbrow area of Lagos State may go under in the next 50 years if the predictions of experts in oceanography are anything to go by. The coastal shelf of Victoria Island is at present barely two metres (six feet) above sea level. A remarkable percentage of 15 million Lagosians see Victoria Island and its satellite peninsula, Lekki, as the best part of the State to invest in, and obtain superlative returns in real estate. Yet rising at a pace of one-metre per 50 years, the ocean surge may herald Armageddon for the city. Same goes for the Bayelsa State, a state with vast mangrove creeks which is host to multinational oil producing companies. Stefan Cramer, a director of Germany's Heinrich Boll Foundation (a think-tank group), who doubles as adviser to the Nigerian government on climate change has observed that for half of the 15 million people in Lagos to live barely two metres above sea level puts the city more at risk than any other in the world. Cramer had, on behalf of the visiting President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mr. Horst Koehler, made a representation to Governor Raji Fashola of Lagos State that Nigeria and African countries with coastal shelves should begin to take the dangers posed by global warming more seriously. Mr. Stefan Cramer may not be the first to sound the alarm on the imminent doom that may come as a consequence of not paying attention to environmental challenges as it relates to ocean surge. Foremost oceanographer, Professor Frederick Apati had made similar predictions in 1990 that Victoria Island, Lagos, may be liable to sink in the future on account of ocean surge and climate change. What has been the reactions of government to these posers at both state and Federal levels? Statutorily speaking, coastal and continental shelves come under the suzerainty of the Federal Government even though littoral states directly face the environmental impact.

The Lagos State Commissioner for the Environment, Dr Muiz Banire, claimed there is no cause for alarm as government has taken measures to pre-empt and guard against global warming and ocean surge. Such measures include the continuing shoreline protection, the Eko Atlantic City project which covers a substantial part of the Lekki Peninsula and Victoria Island shorelines, the preservation of lots of wetlands to absorb water in the unlikely event of ocean surge, the building of new as well as the dredging of existing canals and channels as de-flooding mechanisms, the acquisition of emergency de-flooding equipment, the accelerated planting of trees to absorb carbon emission, the ban on the burning of refuse, the increased reliance on usage of renewable solar energy by the state, the emphasis on multi-modal transportation through the establishment of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), expansion of water transportation channels and other measures taken to curtail carbon emission thereby reducing the risk of global warming. Quite laudable as these steps are, would they constitute reasonably sufficient measures to prevent disasters as might be occasioned by ocean surge? The sheer disregard for basic environmental principles in developing residential estates is very rampant in the way we plan our towns and cities. Elsewhere in the world such areas are at best developed for hotels gardens, parks, swimming pools and less frequented facilities. For Nigeria to have massive development of official and residential property in such an area shows our propensity for lawlessness, a misguided tendency to display our ill-gotten wealth in a manner that advertises our ignorance of sociology, geography as well as our proclivity for unbridled philistinism. Most coastal cities in Africa like Maputo overlook the Indian Ocean.

They do not have properties developed in their coastlines not to talk of building residential houses. They probably have learnt a lesson or two from the history of ocean surge magnitude of what is at stake, there is no alternative. This is where the case for the re-dredging of the canals come into play. Canals are artificial channels for water. There are two types of canals: water conveyance canals, which are used for the conveyance and delivery of water, and waterways, which are navigable transportation canals used for passage of goods and people, often connected to existing lakes, rivers, or oceans.

Some canals are part of an existing waterway. This is usually where a river has been canalised, making it navigable by widening and deepening some parts (by dredging, weirs or both), and providing locks with "cuts" around the weirs or other difficult sections. In France, these waterways are called lateral canals and in the UK they are generally called navigations, and the length of the artificial waterway often exceeds the natural. The individual cuts that make up such a canal system may each be called a reach. Smaller transportation canals can carry barges or narrow boats, while ship canals allow seagoing ships to travel to an inland port (e.g.: Manchester Ship Canal), or from one sea or ocean to another (e.g.: Caledonian Canal, Panama Canal). At their simplest, canals consist of a trench filled with water. Depending on the stratum the canal passes through, it may be necessary to line the cut with some form of watertight material such as clay or concrete. When this is done with clay this is known as puddling. Canals need to be flat, and while small irregularities in the lie of the land can be dealt with through cuttings and embankments for larger deviations, other approaches have been adopted. The most common is the pound lock which consists of a chamber within which the water level can be raised or lowered connecting either two pieces of canal at a different level or the canal with a river or the sea. When there is a hill to be climbed, flights of many locks in short succession may be used. Other cities with extensive canal networks include: Brugge in Flanders, Birmingham in England, Saint Petersburg in Russia, Hamburg in Germany, and Fort Lauderdale, Florida in the United States.

Southern Africa

**South Africa: Climate Change White Paper to Be Drafted By 2010:6 March 2009: [BuaNews](#) (Tshwane).**

Midrand — The National Climate Change Conference has laid the foundations for a Policy White Paper on climate change to be drafted by 2010 as part of government's response to the global phenomenon. Speaking after the conclusion of the conference on Friday, Department of the Environmental Affairs and Tourism Minister Marthinus Van Schalkwyk highlighted that the conference far outstripped expectations. "The 2009 Climate Summit was a seminal event. As a milestone on the road to building a national consensus on the country's long term climate policy, the summit far exceeded our expectations." There could not have been a stronger expression of political will by government and other stakeholders, a deeper understanding of the compelling scientific evidence that will inform policy-making, or a greater commitment to moving forward with implementation than what we have witnessed over the past four days," said the minister.

The conference, he said, laid the foundations for a participatory process that will culminate in a Policy White Paper on climate change by 2010, and the translation of this policy into a legislative, regulatory and fiscal package by 2012. After intensive deliberations by 700 delegates from government, business, labour and civil society, the 2009 Climate Summit concluded with strong guidance on the strategic direction for an effective climate policy as well as an ambitious work programme for policy development. The summit was designed to be forward-looking, translating political will and the best available scientific evidence into policy and action. "Since the first climate summit in 2005, we have made major strides by integrating climate change issues with the daily work of government, business and civil society. We have much to be proud of," said Mr Van Schalkwyk. Important challenges and tough decisions still lie ahead said the minister, adding, however, that he was encouraged by the strong resolve to meet the dual challenges of adaptation and mitigation by placing sustainable development and poverty eradication at the forefront. The strong consensus on making the transition to a climate resilient and low carbon economy and society will underpin government's future work, he highlighted. The minister explained that early gains can be achieved in the fight against climate change by massively up-scaling the country's efforts in respect of energy efficiency and renewable energies.

**Angola: Environment Ministry, Unesco Sign Memorandum of Understanding: 28 February 2009: Angola Press.**

Luanda — The Ministry of Environment and the Organisation of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco) Friday in Luanda, signed a memorandum of understanding, for a cooperation in the organisation and implementation of the International Year of the Planet Earth in Angola. Signing the accord for the Angolan Government was incumbent minister, Maria de Fátima Jardim, while the executive director of the International Year of Planet Earth, Eduardo de Mulder, represented Unesco

The document is part of the preparations for the establishment of the National Committee on Planet Earth, whose official launch is set for August 2009. The memorandum sets the structure of the National Committee Administration for the organisation of the international event of launch of the committee and drafting of concerned regulations. Under the agreement, the two parties are committed to developing projects and activities of scientific character, in cooperation with the "International Year of Planet Earth", a UN resolution intended for a contribution for the sustainable development of the societies, through the use of knowledge and information supplied for the geosciences. The document takes as its priorities actions in the areas of earth and health, climate, natural resources and energy, mega-cities and oceans.

The parties are also to carry out activities with the civil society, with a view to a global conscience within the population, in direct cooperation with the scientific community. Addressing the meeting, minister Fatima Jardim stated that the memorandum will enable Angola to benefit more and more from the knowledge on transfer of knowledge on the planet and the responsibilities assigned to the country as part of the

institution."We are a country with a rich potential in biodiversity and so, we want to participate in the fight for the preservation of the planet, contributing within the context of the nations" - she emphasised.The Unesco delegation that is visiting the country since Monday, was received in audience on Thursday, by the prime minister, Paulo Kassoma, to whom it informed on the importance of the Planet Earth Programme and the participation of Angola in such a world-wide initiative.It also met with organisations of the Angolan civil society dealing with environmental matters.The delegation that comprises the professors, Carlos Oiti Berbert, representative of the Planet Earth of Latin America, Felix Toteu, representative of the African committees of the organisation and Maurício Fernandes, of Planet Earth development committee, is leaving Angola on Saturday.The visit is part of the effort on the goals outlined by the UN General Assembly that declared 2008 and 2009 as International Years of the Planet Earth, as a means to calling the attention to the environmental problems that affect the world and identify partnerships for the great challenges of century XXI.

### **Mozambique: Country to Make Use of Carbon Credits:6 March 2009:AIM**

Maputo — The Mozambican government is planning to make use of carbon credits granted under the Clean Development Mechanism, established under the Kyoto Protocol, since the country has vast potential to produce clean energy.The Protocol sets quotas for the maximum amount of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions permitted for each country. Countries then set quotas for businesses. Each operator has an allowance of credits, where each unit gives the owner the right to emit one tonne of carbon dioxide. Operators that do not use their quotas can sell their unused allowances as carbon credits, while businesses likely to exceed their quotas can buy those credits.Energy Minister Salvador Namburete told reporters on Thursday that only one Mozambican institution has gained access to those credits. The cement company 'Cimentos de Mocambique' has managed to replace the use of coal by natural gas, which reduced the company's carbon emissions."We are not yet benefiting from Carbon Credits, at least in the area of energy. 'Cimentos de Mocambique' is the only Mozambican company that has managed to enter the Clean Development Mechanism and is to receive some credits. I do not know about the amounts involved, but the company will receive some money", he said.

He explained that it is not easy to register Mozambican projects for clean energy, let alone in the Clean Development Mechanism so as to benefit from Carbon Credits.It is in the interest of Mozambique to register its bio-fuel projects, which are still at an early stage of development, and hydroelectric projects such as the M'panda Nkuwa, to be built on the Zambezi.Namburete said that, to benefit from these credits, the country has been working with experts from the World Bank and the Nordic countries. "The technical process for registration is very complicated", said Namburete.Namburete admitted that the government does not yet know how much land will be needed for biofuel projects. "It all depends on the needs presented by the investors, because biofuels are to be produced by the private sector. But it is important to note that there must be cohabitation between the production of bio-fuels and of food', he said.So far, the Mozambican government has received requests for about seven million hectares of land for the production of raw

materials for bio-fuels. Most of these projects are on hold, because the government has decided to make a careful study of each project.

"We said no, and decided to stop and assess the situation and see how to grant the land', Namburete said. "In some cases we reached the conclusion that the applications were just for the investors to grab the land, not for production. We are currently reviewing the applications, and analysing each project".He added that this is also a precaution to prevent future land disputes. "In Mozambique we have developed a programme to produce and use bio-fuels fully aware of the challenges of this industry concerning correct use of land, with no conflicts with the local communities', he said.The Minister stressed "we are aware of the challenges concerning the need to ensure a balance between the production of bio-fuels and of food, preventing a systematic shortage of food and guaranteeing food security'.So far, the government has allocated 30,000 hectares to the Procana project, owned by the London-based company Bioenergy Africa, in the district of Massingir, in the southern province of Gaza, and another 18,000 hectares to the Mozambique Principle Energy project in Sussundenga district, in the central province of Manica.

The Massingir project is to invest 510 million US dollars to produce ethanol. Bioenergy Africa has promised to build a factory with the capacity to produce 120 million litres of ethanol a year. This undertaking will create about 7,000 jobs and generate annual revenue in excess of 40 million US dollars, starting in 2010.As for the Sussundenga project, the investment is 250 million US dollars, also to produce ethanol. It plans an annual harvest of about 2.5 million tonnes of sugar cane a year from which it will produce about 213 million litres of ethanol by 2013.The project is also planning to build a power station to generate 82.2 megawatts of electricity as from 2012, 20 per cent of which is to be used by the factory while the remainder will be sold to the national grid.

**Blueprint to Process E-Waste Developed: Naomi Antony:5 March 2009:SciDev.Net (London) .**

Concerns over mounting electronic waste in Africa have led to the development of a framework to help the continent deal with the problem.E-waste - unwanted electronic goods such as computers and mobile phones - needs to be disposed of or recycled carefully to avoid health problems and environmental contamination from component toxic materials such as lead and mercury.In some African countries there have been fears that the use of electronics is rising with no parallel increase in safe disposal methods.

A team of organisations - which began investigating e-waste in Africa in 2007 (see Hewlett Packard to aid Africa's e-waste battle) - reported last month that the scenario varies widely from country to country.Morocco, for example, produces 13,500 tonnes of e-waste per year from computers alone, whereas this figure is around 3,000 tonnes in Kenya, according to research by the group, which includes the Global Digital Solidarity Fund, the Swiss Institute for Material Science (Empa) and computer company Hewlett-Packard (HP).They said that these figures could double or triple as a result of strong growth in the ICT sector.The group also initiated a pilot scheme establishing a local, self-

sustainable e-waste recycling facility in Cape Town, South Africa. Started in 2008, the facility has so far processed around 60 tonnes of e-waste, generating an income of US\$14,000 and creating direct employment for 19 people."The Cape Town Pilot is a local decentralised first-step recycling solution that can be used as a model for other African countries," said Mathias Schluep, project manager for sustainable technology cooperation at Empa, at a press briefing (17 February).

"We now know how to approach a country [tackling e-waste] at the beginning to find out what solution we can come up with, how to get the right information."Kirsty McIntyre, HP's environmental compliance manager, said the project is intended to make sure that e-waste processing is done in an environmentally sound manner that protects the health and safety of workers.The group has now put together a series of recommendations for dealing with e-waste, though it emphasises that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to the global problem."What we're looking for are regional solutions," McIntyre told SciDev.Net. "It's very difficult to get across how long it takes to do this kind of work. There are pockets of academic work on e-waste, but nobody has ever pulled it all together."The second phase of the project seeks to engage government and corporate partners to extend e-waste management programmes to other African countries, eventually reaching the entire continent.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**East Africa: EAC's Energy Consumption is 70 Percent Biomass:James Mwakisyal:28 February 2009:East African Business Week (Kampala)**

Dar Es Salaam — Almost four out of five member states of the East African Community countries depend on traditional biomass for their energy, threatening deforestation and desertification.

Figures available at the East African Community (EAC) secretariat indicate that only Kenya uses less traditional biomass of firewood, charcoal and animal waste at 68 percent of its population as compared to Burundi (94%), Rwanda (93%), Uganda (93%) and Tanzania (90%).That means nearly 84% of the EAC region's 120 million population, who are mostly rural dwellers, use traditional biomass to meet their household and heating needs which constitutes 70 percent of EAC's energy mix.The statistics further show on average the poor in East Africa spend about one third of their monthly income on poor quality and unreliable energy.Although Tanzania has large reserves of natural gas, most people find it beyond their reach, but in recent years there has been a noted increase of people using gas for domestic purposes as evidenced by the increasing number of outlets selling gas cylinders in Dar es Salaam city.The EAC figures show that consumption of petroleum is highest in Kenya at 22% followed at a distance by the other EAC members Tanzania (7%), Uganda (6%), Burundi and Rwanda 5 percent.Kenya is equally ahead in the utilization of electricity at 9 percent of its population, while the others range as follows: Tanzania, 1.4%; Burundi and Rwanda, 1% each; and Uganda 0.8 percent.

The EAC Director of Productive and Social Sectors, Dr. Nyamajeje Weggoro last week said the EAC secretariat has embarked on developing strategies to mitigate the energy problem by promoting an energy mix system involving renewable energies, and preparing a renewable energy master plan. Also on plan is the completion of building of an oil pipeline from western Kenya to Kampala; the extension of a gas pipeline from Dar es Salaam to Tanga, Zanzibar and Mombasa; preparation of a fossil fuels master plan and harmonization of fossil fuel policies, procedures and regulations. Likewise is the implementation of the regional strategy for scaling-up access to modern energy services, and implementation of the EA power master plan, Weggoro said.

**TANZANIA: Youth Reach Kilimanjaro's Summit to Highlight Climate Change – UN:6 March 2009; UN NEWS SERVICE.**

A team of disadvantaged African youth has scaled Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania as part of a United Nations-backed campaign seeking to draw attention to the negative effects of climate change. The 10 youth - from Kenya, Tanzania and Ghana - reached the summit of Africa's highest peak yesterday as part of the fourth annual ascent organized by Kilimanjaro Initiative, a Nairobi-based non-governmental organization, in partnership with the UN. Upon reaching the peak under the banner of the "UNite to Combat Climate Change" campaign, they called Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who himself flew over the mountain last weekend and saw first-hand how there is less water in the streams and less snow on the top of Mount Kilimanjaro. When the climbers reach the bottom, they reported on their findings to Janos Pasztor, the Director of the Secretary-General's Climate Change Support Team.

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) has warned that rising temperatures, increased rainfall and extreme weather conditions will dramatically change where and how people live in cities. Changing climates does untold damage to economic and public infrastructure and stretches the ability of urban centres to accommodate displaced populations, leading to unemployment, deteriorating educational facilities, inadequate health care systems and a possible rise in crime in urban centres, according to the agency.

**Uganda: Polyethylene Ban to Be Extended:5 March 2009:The New Vision.**

Kampala — The National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) intends to extend a ban on polyethylene materials from 30 microns to 100 microns to increase the effectiveness of the ban in environmental management. NEMA's Executive Director Aryamanya Mugisha however calls for political commitment on the matter if Uganda is to register success on the ban. Mugisha tells the Natural resources committee of Parliament that although production of 'buveera' has gradually reduced by 99 percent, over the past one year, the initial ban on polyethylene paper of 30 microns has not been

effective. He adds that NEMA has intensified operations against persons involved in smuggling polyethylene material into the country.

#### 43. ECONOMY AND ENERGY

West Africa

#### **Nigeria: Explosion Rocks Shell Pipeline: Chika Amanze-Nwachuku: 4 March 2009: This Day.**

Lagos And Omon-Julius Onabu in Warri — Crude oil export has suffered a major set back following an explosion that rocked the 24-inch Trans-Escravos Pipeline (TEP) belonging to the Shell Petroleum Development and Production Company (SPDC). The damaged pipeline conveys crude oil to the flow station where it (oil) is separated from gas and water before the oil is sent to the export terminal. THISDAY learnt that the incident has forced the company to shut down its flow stations which receive feed crude, a development which has adversely affected crude export. However a company source said the blasts are suspected to be an act of sabotage, caused some punctures to the TEP. He confirmed that a number of facilities had been shut down to minimise damage to the environment.

It could not be ascertained at press time, whether there was any loss of life or whether some staff sustained injuries, but THISDAY learnt that a Joint Investigation Team has commenced investigation into the matter. It was learnt that the attackers, believed to be militants, used explosive materials to blow up parts of the SPDC's crude export channels in the off-shore pipeline. The special security Joint Task force (JTF) spokesman, Col Rabe Abubakar, when contacted yesterday, said the outfit was "unaware" of any new attack on SPDC facility, but THISDAY learnt that the oil giant had already visited the scene of the incident and taken measures to remedy the situation.

A Shell spokesman, Precious Okolobo, confirmed the incident last night, but declined further comments on ground that the investigation would reveal the cause of the blasts. He also did not disclose the volume of oil shut-in or whether the company would declare a "force majeure", which would officially allow it default on supplies to its international customers. "SPDC can confirm that there have been explosions on the 24-inch Trans Escravos Pipeline (TEP) in Delta State. The incident was first reported by surveillance personnel on Saturday February 28 and later confirmed during an assessment visit to the area. The authorities have been notified of the incident and joint investigation is being mobilised," he said. Escravos, which is located in Warri South L.G.A. of Delta State, plays host to two major trans national oil companies Shell and Chevron. Shell has three onshore flow stations in the area (Sagara, Otumara and Ogidigben flow stations), while Chevron has its flow stations offshore. Shell had last month declared force majeure on its Nigerian Bonny oil shipments citing the heightened insecurity in the Niger Delta region.

Okolobo said the action was prompted by the company's inability to meet contractual obligation owing to the militancy in the area. He explained that the force majeure was declared due to logistics challenges related to the security situation in the area. "It will



affect the remainder of February and perhaps March offtakes with some deferred to April," he said. A previous force majeure by the company, covering liquefied natural gas (LNG) shipments from Bonny is still in force. A previous explosion on the SPDC 24-inch Amukpe left six of its contract staff dead. The contract staff worked for a contractor employed by SPDC at the SPDC trunk line in Delta State which supplies crude oil to the Forcados Export Terminal. The company had shut down all its flow stations receiving feed crude as a result of the incident. The 18 contract staff and an SPDC supervisor were said to be working at a "leak repair work-site" when the explosion which resulted in an inferno occurred. The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) on Saturday threatened to sabotage the multi-billion dollar Trans-Saharan gas pipeline project, a scheme that has attracted the European Union (EU) and Russian energy majors. The group said the project, which is expected to deliver first gas in 2015 runs contrary to the wish of indigenous oil-producing communities in the Niger Delta region.

**Nigeria: N177 Billion Subsidy Unsettles Power Sector: Patrick Ugeh and Jerome Ushakang: 4 March 2009: This Day.**

Abuja/Lagos — The crisis rocking the power sector since the announcement of plans to release N177 billion for subsidies continued yesterday with the sudden departure of Alhaji Bello Suleiman as Executive Vice Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN). Electricity unions immediately alleged plans to corner the funds for political purposes towards the 2011 elections. Initial reports suggested that Suleiman had resigned, but a statement from the Ministry of Power said he was removed along with two executive directors, Mr. Isiaka Abdul Razak (Finance and Administration) and Mr. Simon Atakulu (Operations). Suleiman's removal, coming two weeks after the suspension of the chairman of the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), Dr. Ransome Owan, and six other commissioners, is being linked to the intrigues on who controls the N177 billion subsidies for the power sector under the Multi Year Tariff Order (MYTO) scheme.

The three-year transition arrangement is to encourage private investment in the sector until it is fully deregulated and profitable. But the Ministry of Power said Suleiman's removal was to pave the way for the attainment of the 6,000mw target for December 2009.

At a joint press conference held by the National Union of Electricity Employees (NUEE) and Senior Staff Association of Electricity and Allied Companies (SSAEAC), they alleged that a cabal was planning to divert the fund. The General Secretary of NUEE, Comrade Joe Ajaero, said it had become necessary to alert Nigerians of a seeming deceit hovering in the sector, adding that since the government announced its intention to release the money, there had been political manoeuvrings between the Power Ministry, NERC, the Rural Electrification Agency (REA), PHCN, the Power Sector Committee of the Senate, House of Representatives and the political elite. Ajaero alleged that following this development, the sector had been marred by intrigues, corruption and politics, adding that the development was suffocating the sector and had led to proposals on setting up Boards to be manned by politically motivated interest groups preparatory to 2011

elections. The NUREE scribe said what is going on in the sector had not allowed the Transition Management Team to concentrate and finish their assignment which was initially meant to end within three years duration. Also, it had not allowed for planning and execution of plans, he said. Suleiman, according to unconfirmed reports, was seen briefly at his desk obviously tidying up. Sources said he was unhappy with the intrigues over the management of the fund which he also wanted PHCN to handle. Suleiman was appointed by President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua in July last year. A former Managing Director of the defunct National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) from July 1999 to April 2000, he was Minister of Power and Steel during the transitional government of the then Head of State, General Abdulsalami Abubakar (August 1998-May 1999).

He was also a member of the Power Sector Reform Review Committee that set the agenda for the anticipated fundamental improvement in electricity generation and distribution. Suleiman was also the Chairman of the Electricity Master Plan Sub-Committee which produced the short, medium and long-term programmes for the present administration. Meanwhile, the President has approved the appointment of Alhaji Husein Labo as the new PHCN Chief Executive, Mr. Pius Apuye as Executive Director (Finance and Administration) and Mr. John Ayodele as Executive Director (Operations). This was contained in a statement by the Minister of Power, Dr. Lanre Babalola, yesterday in Abuja. He said the removal of the executive directors became necessary in order for the Federal Government to achieve the goal of providing better electricity supply to Nigerians through the attainment of 6,000mw and 10,000mw by December 2009 and 2010 respectively.

**Ghana: Ghana Would Not Over Liberalise to Its Economic Disadvantage: Chris Twum: 3 March 2009: The Chronicle.**

The Minister of Trade and Industry Ms. Hanna Tetteh has reiterated government's commitment to put in place enough measures to ensure that Ghana does not over liberalise trade policies to its economic disadvantage. This assurance comes at heels of the raging demands for trade liberalization and the controversial European Partnership Agreements (EPA) which analysts say could have huge impact on Ghana's domestic industries and the employment situation on the Ghanaian labour front. The Minister recognized the efforts of civil society groups for showing concern and engaging in research work to educate local stakeholders about the DOHA Round and EPA negotiations. Ms. Hanna Tetteh made these observations at the 50th anniversary of the General Agriculture Workers Union (GAWU) in Accra. "The government, through the Ministry of Trade and Industry intends to embark on policies and programmes strategically designed to address development needs of the people, and to ensure the growth and sustenance of local agriculture, industry and trade which are a sources of employment", she added. She emphasized that "The Ministry is fully aware of the strategic importance of GAWU in ensuring that there is a credible partner to engage with, so that the concerns of the broad masses in the agriculture sector and industries would take centre stage in the formulation and implementation of policies".

The Minister of Trade and Industry has hinted that government places agriculture as its prime focus, to efficiently utilize agro resources by encouraging increased agro processing activities towards achieving export growth. Ms. Tetteh said the link between agricultural production and industry which has seen some constraints would be strengthened. According to her, "This is relevant to feed industry with local agriculture produce in sufficient quantities and to provide local farmers with increased income and secure livelihoods". She assured of her Ministry's commitment in working closely with Ministry of Food and Agriculture in the agro sector, as well as GAWU to strengthening Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs), to provide opportunities for the sector's resources and to generate employment, especially from farming communities and smaller urban communities.

**Ghana: U.S. Has No Interest in Country's Oil, Says American Navy Officer: Zabaga Rufai Saminu: 5 March 2009: The Chronicle.**

Sekondi — The Public Affairs director of Africa Partnership Station (APS), an American agency, Lieutenant Douglas High, has stated emphatically that the United States of America does not have any interest in Ghana's oil. He said the only US interest is to seek security collaboration with the government of Ghana to combat maritime crime in the country. Lt. High, who is on board USS Nashville, an American ship that has docked in the country with over 500 naval officers and civilians said the US had long standing relationship with Ghana before her oil discovery recently, therefore, there was no truth in the allegation that the US government was making overtures to her counterpart in Ghana because of her oil. Lieutenant High stated this when he met the press in Sekondi recently. He is in the country to offer some three weeks training course to some of the Naval Officers in Ghana and others from central and West African states.

According to him, the US had plans to support some of the African countries including Ghana to control their maritime activities. He said it is estimated that 90% of the world's commerce passes through the sea, which called for concerted efforts to confront the growing maritime crime. He asked the government of Ghana to work in collaboration with the other countries in the world, including the USA to deal with the challenge. Lieutenant High told the press that crimes such as illegal fishing, piracy and drug trafficking were among the challenges confronting the global maritime industry. The Country Action Officer of Ghana's Navy, Lieutenant Bekuin Wurapa on his part noted that "Our being together help us to learn from each other on how to address these challenges". Lieutenant Commander James Agambire, a staff of the Africa Partnership Station (APS) and exercise planner of the Ghana Navy on his part stated that efforts were being made by the Ghana Navy to confront the illegal drug trade in Ghana. He said since drug trafficking was still ongoing; it needed adequate security to deal with the situation. "For us to be able to build our capacity, we need effective collaboration to find a modern way of fighting maritime crime," Lieutenant Agambire stressed.

He said it was also the aim of the Ghana Navy to collaborate with their US counterparts to build their technological capacity, to work hard to constantly be ahead of the criminals. "We need to be at the forefront of tackling the challenges of maritime crime, including

drug trafficking," he added. Capt. Cynthia M Thebaud, Commander of the ship, also told the press that the three weeks training being provided by the crew on board the ship through the Africa Partnership Station, was to further enhance the technology and build the capacity of their counterparts in Africa. She said the collaborative effort of the APS programme, which started in 2006, was to identify appropriate requirements and priority areas of the coastline and maritime industry of Africa and be able to find improved ways of supporting the continent.

She said it was to also monitor and respond to pressing challenges, hence the building of the capacities of the aforementioned countries to confront the challenges of the maritime industry. In Ghana for instance, three patrol boats were given to the Navy to beef up their activities. Earlier on the day, the ASP through its outreach programme visited the Effie-Nkwanta Regional Hospital at Sekondi, to monitor an on going rehabilitation project being embarked upon by the group in collaboration with the Navy in Ghana.

**Ghana: Report Warns of 'Resource Curse' Ahead of Oil Boom: Marina Litvinsky: 5 March 2009: Inter Press Service News Agency.**

Washington — The recent discovery of oil in Ghana could undermine its democratic development, warns the international aid agency Oxfam America and the Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC) in Ghana. The report, "Ghana's Big Test: Oil's Challenge to Democratic Development," issued Thursday, says that Ghana's weak institutions might not be ready to handle the burdens of an expected influx of cash from a burgeoning oil industry. On the verge of an oil boom that could bring millions into the country, the report says, Ghana must make significant changes to support transparent, accountable and efficient development of the industry and the billions in government revenue it will generate. The report makes extensive recommendations to the government, oil companies, donors, civil society and journalists to move quickly but deliberately in the face of the coming oil boom. The 2007 discovery of the major offshore 'Jubilee' oil field has generated enormous interest in the country's oil production potential. Analysts warn that Ghana's government, led by newly elected President John Atta Mills, should be careful to guard against the "resource curse" which has devastated other resource rich African countries.

"In too many countries, oil booms have bred corruption, underdevelopment, social conflict and environmental damage," said the report's author, Ian Gary, a senior policy advisor for extractive industries at Oxfam America. "Ghana's challenge as 'oil hot spot' will be to ensure the right institutions and transparent policies are in place before production even begins." Last year, Africa produced 12.5 percent of the world's oil through significant investment and exploration throughout the continent. But the continent's rise in the oil sector has yet to translate into tangible benefits for Africa's poor. Resource rich countries in Africa have actually experienced lower growth rates than countries with scarce resources. Ghana remains different from its neighbours. It is an "African success story," said Gary. Ghana is one of the most peaceful and relatively prosperous countries in West Africa. The democratic election of Mills in January, in the closest vote in Ghana's history, makes the West African nation one of the few African

countries to successfully transfer power twice from one legitimately elected leader to another.

However, Ghana still remains poor. According to the report, almost 80 percent of Ghanaians live on less than two dollars a day. The new National Democratic Congress (NDC) administration is facing a widening budget deficit, weakening currency and rising inflation. Finance Minister Kwabena Kuffuor presented the government's new budget to parliament Thursday. The budget forecasts growth to fall to 5.9 percent in 2009, from 6.2 last year. It aims to cut the fiscal deficit to 9.4 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) by the end of 2009, down from 14.9 percent at the end of 2008. The new government hopes that oil revenues will help accelerate the country's efforts to meet the anti-poverty U.N. Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

The start of oil production is scheduled to begin in late 2010 or 2011 and estimates are that Ghana will be producing approximately 120,000 barrels of oil per day, along with significant quantities of gas. The International Monetary Fund has predicted that government revenues from oil and gas could reach a cumulative 20 billion dollars - from just the Jubilee field - over a production period from 2012 through 2030. Though the last 20 years have seen a boom in mining investment in Ghana, this has led to small government revenues, increased conflict between companies and local communities, and the removal of families from their lands and increased environmental degradation. Many are worried that without proper regulations in place before the start of drilling the oil boom will spell the same fate. "Oil wealth threatens the growing democratic accountability that has been built in our country's history," said Steve Manteaw, media and campaign coordinator for ISODEC in Ghana. The government must "manage the oil sector in a way that benefits all Ghanaians." According to the report, the previous New Patriotic Party (NPP) government launched a "homegrown" effort to tackle the challenges of the oil era, establishing technical committees composed of government staff and expatriate Ghanaians to address issues from the fiscal regime to gas utilisation. The state oil company, the Ghana National Petroleum Corporation, has made some disclosures to the public, but key details remain secret, including the oil contracts as well as the development plan for the Jubilee field. The new government "does not have a clear national policy for the oil sector," Manteaw said. A second revision of the petroleum regulatory authority bill, first drafted by the NPP government, is now being discussed in parliament. The recommendations set out by the report include transparent revenue and payment practices; advising companies to volunteer to disclose their payments and contracts and participate in Ghana's Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative; open and competitive contract bidding; and active monitoring and participation by civil society.

The report also recommends that the government enact a moratorium on signing new licenses, so that they can organise an open bidding round and allow the country's legal and institutional framework to 'catch up' to the pace of oil development. While the oil discovery has attracted the attention of many eager foreign investors, the report cautions that Ghana must control the pace of the development of the petroleum sector so as to not let commercial developments outstrip the capacity of the government and society as a

whole to meet the myriad challenges."Pacing can lead to better negotiating deals (over time)," added Oxfam's Gary. While the oil boom will certainly infuse Ghana's economy with needed investments, it is important to remember that this oil boom "is not going to transform Ghana," said Clive Armstrong, lead economist in the oil, gas, mining and chemical department at the World Bank. "Government spending is predicted to increase by only about 10 percent."

Southern Africa

**South Africa: Solar Power Initiative Casts New Light On Sustainable Energy: Michael Appel: 4 March 2009: [BuaNews](#) (Tshwane)**

Midrand — A Johannesburg-based company is harnessing the power of the sun giving communities and families the ability to cook, boil and even fry food at no expense to the environment. Using carefully placed aluminum panels bolted together in a parabolic or half moon shape, Crosby Menzies, a solar cooker specialist, is through the "Sunfire 14" giving communities the ability to harness the heat of the sun to cook their food in a carbon emission free way. Speaking to BuaNews at the National Climate Change Conference on Tuesday, Mr Menzies highlighted that solar cookers are a direct climate mitigation strategy that give off no carbon emissions and can be rolled out in mass to poor communities reducing significantly, if not totally, the need to cut down trees for firewood. Mr Menzies first rolled out 80 solar cookers to rural communities in KwaZulu-Natal in 2007, and is currently in talks with the Limpopo and Mpumalanga local governments for the roll out of solar cookers to poor and poverty stricken communities. Another successful project was undertaken in Zambia in March 2008, where Mr Menzies was approached by the Zambian government to assist many rural and poverty stricken communities in harnessing solar power.

In the typical South African sun, the solar cooker has the ability to boil 1 litre of water in 8 minutes, and can be used in instances in which outbreaks of waterborne diseases force communities to boil the water before consumption. Mr Menzies highlighted that solar cookers could be used to boil water, among other things, particularly in Zimbabwe and the Limpopo where cholera outbreaks have been reported. The solar cooker unit costs R2 000, while a smaller unit costs R1 500, he said. Companies, he added, could sponsor or donate solar cookers to families and communities as part of corporate social responsibility programmes. He also appealed to government to come aboard in the roll out of solar cookers.

The solar cookers have a life span of between 7 to 10 years, as the aluminum panels are treated with an anti-corrosive and anti-rust agent, he said. Energy Officer at the Department of Minerals and Energy, Lufuno Makwevho also told BuaNews the department is currently rolling out the Clean Development Mechanism Awareness Campaign which encourages businesses to minimise their carbon emissions in the production phase of their business. "For example, there was a company that produced bricks, and instead of burning the bricks using coal, we got them to use natural gas." The department is also rolling out energy saving light bulbs, which reduces the country's

reliance on Eskom, as Eskom uses coal to generate electricity," Mr Makwevho said. Similarly, the City of Cape Town has, as part of its Integrated Metropolitan Environment Policy (IMEP), encouraged green building through the development of environmentally and socially sustainable building practices.

**Mozambique: Great Potential Claimed for Biofuel Expansion: 5 March 2009: AIM.**

Maputo — There is enormous potential for the expansion of biofuel production, and Africa is the continent that enjoys the best climatic conditions to grow the crops that can be turned into biofuels, declared Mozambican Energy Minister Salvador Namburete on Thursday. Speaking at the opening of a two day international conference on "Powering Africa: the Biofuels Options", organised by his ministry and the British company EnergyNet Ltd, Namburete pointed out that, of the 116.8 billion gigajoules of energy generated and consumed in the world in 2005, only 1.1 billion gigajoules came from biofuels, mostly in Brazil. "This is a clear demonstration that there is huge potential for the exploitation of these clean sources of energy", he said, "particularly at a time when the entire world is confronted with the phenomenon of global warming". For African countries such as Mozambique, he stressed, biofuels could be key to reducing the import bill for fossil fuels, and in the fight against poverty. Namburete favoured the development of biofuel production through public-private partnerships, where private companies would raise the funding, and manage the projects, while the government played a "facilitating role" in establishing "an enabling environment and regulatory framework". He stressed the importance of handling land allocation for biofuel production sensitively, avoiding any conflict between biofuels and food production, and preventing dependence on monocultures. He suggested that the most appropriate crops to use are sugar cane for bioethanol, and jatropha and copra for biodiesel. The advantage of the jatropha shrub, he argued, is that it can be grown on marginal land, and so does not compete with food crops.

Namburete cited examples of recent short and long haul flights by airlines using a mixture of jet fuel and biofuels. These had been successful, and no modification to the aircraft engines was required.

The paper circulated by Namburete to participants said that the government "has established a working group from all stakeholders to develop criteria for allocating land for food production and biofuels development. This is basically a mapping exercise aimed at defining the appropriate use of different types of land for food, feedstock for biofuels, reforestation, livestock and conservation zones, social and economic infrastructure development, special economic zones, residential areas, state reserves and other uses". Nuno de Oliveira, of the Mozambican state fuel company Petromoc, revealed that Petromoc's own biofuels project, known as Ecomoz, is now producing 80,000 litres of biofuels a day, using copra from the southern province of Inhambane as the raw material. It planned to expand production, and use 21,000 hectares in Manhica district, 80 kilometres north of Maputo, to produce jatropha and copra. Oliveira also pointed out that Mozambique has 36 million hectares of potentially arable land, of which only six per cent is currently being used. A representative of Bioenergy Africa, the London-based company

which is investing in a 30,000 hectare sugar plantation at Massingir, in Gaza province, to produce ethanol, praised the Mozambican government's policy of issuing temporary land use titles to investors. This was a test of the "seriousness and integrity of investors", since only after they had proved their capacity and initiated their project would they be granted definitive land rights.

Speaking to reporters, Namburete denied the frequent opposition claim that the government drive to persuade farmers to grow jatropha has failed. He pointed out that it takes four to five years of growth before attaining a yield of ten kilos of jatropha seeds per tree. Nonetheless, small amounts of jatropha have been purchased from farmers in several provinces. He admitted there could be cases of farmers in isolated areas who have been unable to sell jatropha - but repeated that in principle the government will ensure that all jatropha production is purchased. Namburete accepted that the international financial crisis might slow down investment in the Mozambican energy sector. All the projects on the drawing board - included new dams, power stations and refineries - would require investment of around 20 billion US dollars, and he certainly did not expect such sums to be forthcoming from one day to the next. But while investors in such projects as the new dam at Mphanda Nkuwa on the Zambezi, or the planned oil refinery at Nacala, might have to reschedule their spending, nobody had abandoned projects. "No investor has contacted us saying "we're going to pull out", he stressed.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

### **Somalia: Oil Exploration Triggers Deadly Clan Battle in Puntland:6 March 2009: [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe).**

A bloody clan battle in Somalia's self-governing State of Puntland last Monday was triggered by aspirations to find oil, Radio Garowe reports. At least five militiamen were killed and 15 others were wounded in the hours-long battle in Ufayn district, located 90km east of the port city of Bossaso in Bari region. Puntland security forces tightened checkpoints in and out of Bossaso, as the government dispatched Security Minister Abdullahi Said Samatar and Interior Minister Gen. Abdullahi Ahmed "Ilkajir" to Ufayn to help diffuse the situation. Traditional elders accompanied the government ministers and troops in efforts to make peace among the two feuding sub-clans, both of which belong to the Majerteen clan (Darod). The violence has subsided and emerging reports indicate that peace talks among clan militias are going well. The fighting was deeply rooted in a months-long disagreement over the ownership of a piece of parched land, inside sources said. The disagreement worsened when one sub-clan that does not traditionally inhabit the area mobilized militias into Ufayn, building a waterhole and a small mosque, the sources added.

The incoming sub-clan was ordered to leave the area by the Puntland government and other local clans to avoid bloodshed, but both feuding clans poured loyal militiamen into the area in a build-up to war. Local elders who spoke with Radio Garowe admitted that the two sub-clans have never fought each other before. The remote district of Ufayn entered Puntland media reports in 2008, after Canada-based Africa Oil Corp. contracted



an agency named IMC to conduct oil exploration activities in that area. Africa Oil has a controversial exploration contract in Puntland, after signing a joint-venture deal with Australian mining firm Range Resources, Ltd., in January 2007. Dr. Abdirahman Farole, Puntland's current ruler, became opposition leader in 2005 after rejecting former Puntland President Adde Muse's unilateral deal with Consort Private, Ltd., a small virtually unknown front company based in Maldives. The Consort Private deal, which led to Range Resources and Africa Oil, has been the source of international media scrutiny and led to deadly clashes in Sanaag region in April 2006 between Puntland security forces and Warsangeli clan militias. President Farole has said that the Puntland-Consort Private deal is "under review" to ensure the maximum benefit for the people of Puntland and of all Somalia.

**Ethiopia: IMF Sees Country's 12 Percent Economic Growth Slowing to Six Percent  
IMF Says Downturn to Take Toll on Country's Economy: Yonas Abiye: 6 March  
2009: DAILY MONITOR.**

Addis Ababa — Ethiopia's economic growth could slow to 6 percent in 2009 as the world slowdown is likely to hit its coffee export, tourism, and transportation the country's leading foreign exchange earners, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said on Wednesday. This is seen to largely contradict with the 12.8 percent economic growth maintained by the government. Last month, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi said he saw only a 0.6 percent slide from the 12.8 percent economic growth last year owing to the world economic downturn, and said that was not to be considered significant compared to the economic achievements the country is registering, "in the face of the global financial crisis" "It is projected that the global crisis will continue to prevail for the next two or three years, on our side there is a hope that our economy will continue to grow at the same pace," Meles told a press conference at his office.

But what did the IMF say on Wednesday? The IMF said the country is one of the vulnerable countries to the unfolding crisis and it is expected to register only about 6% economic growth. It said Ethiopia is in fact among the poorest the global financial crisis will weigh heavily on and it called for the international community to act "urgently" and "generously" to avoid devastating effects. Speaking during a round table with the media and stake holders IMF Country Representative Sukhwinder Singh admitted the country was one of the fastest growing non-oil producing countries in Africa. All the same, the country was no exception and will certainly be affected by the global downturn which is playing its ugly faces in all countries of the world—rich and poor, he said. He said the impact on Ethiopia will be as bad as a six percent slash from what it managed to register last year. The decline in export demand of coffee and its decreased price by 19%, the depreciation of effective foreign exchange rates by 30% last year, less tourism and revenue from airway transport are cited as the major factors behind the country's poor economic performance this year.

85% of exports are going to industrial and emerging market countries who are already suffering major import declines. He, however, indicated that the country could grasp positive advantage with the lower oil and fertilizer price at the global market. He noted

that in the middle of the year, USD 220 million Ethiopia incurred for importing oil has now gone down to USD 75 million. He highlighted that, due to the shock induced by global crisis, economic growth projection in pre-crisis and at present is greatly varies. The IMF forecasted the growth in SSA to be 5% a little bit earlier but it now expects only 3%, Sukhwinder said. Current account balance in Ethiopia as elsewhere in SSA is worsening and it is currently -5.4% (while it is -2.6% in SSA) with low reserve level but risks are mounting, he said. "We need 25 billion dollar concessional financing for Ethiopia and SSA as a whole who are most affected countries" he said. He further indicated that Ethiopia has the highest inflation rate in Africa outside Zimbabwe (26%) and much weaker in fiscal reservation. The average in SSA is 2%.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Dominique Strauss-Kahn on Tuesday heralded that after first striking the advanced economies and then emerging markets, a third wave of the global financial crisis has begun to hit the world's poorest and most vulnerable countries, threatening to undermine recent economic gains and to create a humanitarian crisis. He also called on the international community to act urgently and generously to avoid the potentially devastating effects of the global financial crisis on the most vulnerable countries.

Similarly, the report by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) said that the world's poorest countries including Mozambique, Ethiopia, Mali, Senegal, Rwanda and Bangladesh are unable to insulate their citizens from the crisis, with an estimated 43 out of 48 low-income countries incapable of providing a pro-poor government stimulus. According to UNESCO, reduced growth in 2009 will affect the 390 million people in sub-Saharan Africa living in extreme poverty and a loss of income around USD 18 billion (USD 46 per person). ILO last month on its part announced that Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania, the three East African countries that have reaped from the Western economic growth, are suffering from the reduction of prices in the West as supermarket chains take unilateral commodity price cuts.

**Kenya: Govt, Iran in Nuclear Energy Talks: Andrew Watila: 28 February 2009: East African Business Week (Kampala).**

Nairobi, Kenya — With energy needs outstripping supply, Kenya has been forced to shop for alternative sources of energy including nuclear energy to offset the deficit. This was revealed by Kenya's Premier Raila Odinga, a day before the Iranian delegation led by P President Mahmoud Ahmednajad jetted in the country last week. The Iranian delegation's visit was premised on the need to strengthen ties between Kenya and Iran on two fronts: trade and energy needs. However, the trip was likely to raise eyebrows since Iran has been at loggerheads with Western powers who fear its nuclear energy programme might be inching towards making a nuclear bomb. Kenya has of late been hobnobbing with Western powers, Asian tigers and Middle East countries. Odinga said Kenya has a lot to learn from Iran about nuclear technology adding that the technology may be the cheapest form of energy for Kenya once a nuclear reactor is put up. He reiterated the success of Vision 2030 was hinged on the provision of enough energy in the country. "How can we talk of industrializing by 2030 when we only have about 1,300MW of power while

countries like South Africa and Iran have over 40,000MW? Only nuclear energy can give us the much needed impetus to meet energy demands of Vision 2030," said Odinga who is also a chemical engineer.

Energy is a key demand in the industrialization of the country under Vision 2030 that seeks to turn Kenya in to an industrialized middle-income country. During the visit, Kenya signed 12 trade pacts with Iran on roads, water, oil and nuclear energy among others. A survey released last year showed Kenya's energy needs went up by 7.1 percent in 2007 compared to 18.9 percent in 2006. Though total power generation in the country grew by 7.3 percent, up from 5,894GWh in 2006 to 6,324GWh in 2007, due to improved power generation that grew by 18 percent, this is far below the required amount of about 10,000 MW currently to offset power outage blues in the country. Some industries have started generating power from industrial wastes including sugar waste, timber, tea and coffee husks. Kenya is also exploring coal as an alternative source of energy to supplement hydro power and geothermal energy. Other alternatives include green energy from geotropha trees. In 2006 and 2007, Kenya's import bill on petroleum products stood at KShs113 billion (US\$1, 431 million) and KShs121.8b (\$1,542 million) respectively due to robust economic activities in the country.

However, a Nairobi University nuclear science don Michael Mangala disagrees with Kenya going nuclear before proper plans are put in place saying the country has inadequate manpower and lacks a policy to handle such sensitive technology. "Nuclear energy is cheaper and less harmful to the environment if well handled it professionally but in Africa, particularly Kenya, we are disadvantaged since we don't have a national policy on nuclear energy and highly skilled manpower that is needed to handle such a highly sensitive sector including nuclear reactors," Mangala told East African Business Week at the Institute of Nuclear Science. Mangala called on the Government to show clear commitment to nuclear technology by formulating a policy and investing heavily in the sector. "We would like to have nuclear reactors that can produce nuclear energy but we have to heavily invest in it after formulating a policy that touches on waste management or disposal.

**East Africa: Eldoret-Kampala Pipeline Compensation for March: Paul Mwijagye:28 February 2009:East African Business Week (Kampala).**

Kampala — The construction of the much awaited Eldoret-Kampala oil pipeline is hoped to begin in April. Preparations are underway to compensate the people that will be affected by the project. In an interview with EABW, the energy ministry's commissioner for petroleum, Ben Twodo said the survey had been completed and submitted to the chief government valuer. He, however, noted that since the handing over of the survey not much progress has been realized.

"The chief government valuer has done some work though not all and so far there is nothing that we can say will stop the commencement of the project," Twodo said. On July 18, 2006 Tamoil East Africa won a 20-year concession to finance and extend the 320km oil pipeline from Eldoret to Kampala at a cost of \$72 million. The work has been

postponed several times, hampering stable fuel supply to Uganda, a situation that has led to escalating prices. A recent analysis of the economic indicators for the second half of 2008 reveals that in spite of the fall in international crude oil prices by over 70%, between early July 2008 and early August 2008, there has been no significant reduction in fuel prices in Uganda.

Average pump prices in Kampala for petrol and diesel remained as high as Shs2,650 and Shs2,200 respectively in February, 2009. In upcountry areas, the price is higher by about 15%-20%. This has resulted in increased food prices, high commodity prices and transport costs which in turn contributed to high inflation rates. Food crops inflation rose to 33.7% in August from 20.5% in July 2008 on account of high transport costs. The cost of transporting oil varies between \$38 and \$42 per cubic metre, an expense that is expected to decline significantly with completion of the project. Tamoil has a 51% stake in the project, while Uganda and Kenya governments are holding an equal share of the remaining 49%.

Central Africa

**Cameroon: Bauxite Exploitation - Hydromine to Tap Energy from Mbakaou Dam: Lukong Pius Nyuylime: 6 March 2009: Cameroon Tribune.**

*Hydromine, the American company to develop Cameroon's multi-billion bauxite/Aluminium project in Minim-Martap and Ngaoundal in Adamawa region, has 26 months to state whether or not it will be possible for it to tap energy from Mbakaou hydroelectric dam and exploit the Pont rail reservoir in the same region.*

The groundwork for the development of these resources implanted on the river Sanaga was laid in Yaoundé yesterday through the signing of a letter of intent between the government represented by the Minister of Energy and Water Resources, Jean Bernard Sindeu and the Chairman, Chief Executive Officer for Hydromine, Peter Briger. The project which appears like a project within a project, sets out to enable Hydromine carryout feasibility studies on the hydroelectric dam and the reservoir within 26 months from where it will extract energy to process bauxite into alumina. The letter of intent contains six major important elements for the execution of the project. These include: constructing a reservoir dam of 35 billion cubic-metres capacity from the existing reservoir at Pont rail; building a hydroelectric production installation capable of producing between 200 and 350 MW for the processing of bauxite into alumina and studying other production sites in future at the country's coastal zones within the same processing framework.

According to the explanatory statement of the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources, the letter of intent has a 26-month duration. "This period corresponds with the deadline for the extension of the mineral exploration permit on the Minim-Martap and Ngaoundal bauxite deposits", the statement said. One of the experts of the project in the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources stated inter alia that the aluminium refinery is expected to process at least 3.2 million tons of aluminium per year. The results of the studies will

become property of the State should they be considered fruitless by Hydromine, the statement said. Also present at the signing ceremony was the United States Ambassador to Cameroon, Janet Garvey. Hydromine is an American company specialized in natural resource development projects. In Cameroon, Hydromine has partnered with Hindalco and Dubal to form Cameroon Alumina (CAL), with the aim of developing bauxite resources in the Adamoua Region. Hydromine is engaged in natural resource and mineral exploration and exploitation projects, and in particular in energy generation projects through the implementation of durable resources and technologies in order to provide energy at least cost while respecting the environment.

#### 44. POLITICS

##### West Africa

#### **Guinea Bissau: President, Army Chief Assassinated: 2 March 2009: ALLAFRICA.**

Both Guinea Bissau's president and its army chief have been assassinated within hours of one another, apparently as a result of rivalry between them, news agencies reported Monday. President João Bernardo Vieira of Guinea Bissau was killed by soldiers, a military spokesman told Agence France-Presse. Spokesman Zamora Induta told AFP: "President Vieira was killed by the army as he tried to flee his house which was being attacked by a group of soldiers close to the chief of staff Tagme Na Waie, early this morning." Tagme, Guinea Bissau's military leader, had been killed in a bomb attack on army headquarters in Bissau on Sunday. Induta alleged to AFP that Vieira was "one of the main people responsible" for Tagme's killing. Later on Monday, the Associated Press reported Luis Sanca, a security adviser to Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Jr., as confirming Vieira's death. Guinea Bissau has long been unstable, its ruling elite at odds and riven by alleged assassination and coup plots.

Last November, elements of the military [launched an unsuccessful attack](#) on the president's residence soon after elections. The International Crisis Group [recently described the country's institutions](#) as "structurally feeble" and warned that there was a permanent threat of military intervention in politics.

#### **Guinea Bissau: Key Political Events: 2 March 2009: IRIN.**

Dakar — March 2009 General Tagme Na Wai is killed 1 March in a bomb attack on military headquarters in the capital Bissau. President João Bernardo Vieira is then killed by soldiers 2 March as he tries to flee his house. The military forces call for calm and a military commission is set up to investigate the killings.

**January 2009** General Tagme Na Wai, army chief of staff, accuses the presidential guard of shooting at his car in an assassination attempt.

**November 2008** The African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde (PAIGC) wins a majority in parliamentary elections.

**November 2008** President Vieira survives a gun attack on his home by mutinous soldiers, in what appears to be a coup attempt.

**August 2008** President Vieira dissolves parliament which means the government of Martinho Ndafo Kabi falls. Prime minister Carlos Correia is appointed interim head of government.

**2008 July-August** The justice minister and attorney general claim to have received death threats over the arrests of head of air traffic control, his deputy and three Venezuelans on suspicions of drug-trafficking.

**July 2008** The PAIGC leaves the political 'Pact of Stability' coalition government.

**April 2008** The mandate of the legislature ended on 21 April but President Vieira passes a temporary constitutional amendment to allow the continuation of Parliament until further elections take place later in the year. The President also grants amnesty to individuals in the military and civilians who committed crimes from 1980 to 2004.

**March 2008** Legislative elections are postponed.

**July 2007** A tribunal declares the resolution making former Guinea-Bissau president, Koumba Yala, the head of Social Renovation Party (PRS) "null and void."

**February 2008** The PAIGC withdraws backing from Prime Minister Martinho Ndafo Cabi, ostensibly to avoid acts of indiscipline threatening cohesion and unity in the party.

**March 2007** Parliamentarians form a majority coalition and the three major parties, the PAIGC, Party for Social Reform (PRS) and the United Social Democrat Party (PUSD) sign a pact of stability meant to create political stability. The pact gives them the right to force the departure of Prime Minister Aristides Gomes who was nominated by Vieira after the sacking of Carlos Junior, and to vote in a new prime minister, Marthinho Ndafo Cabi. Donors welcome the pact and start to re-engage in the country after a period of relative isolation.

**January 2007** Admiral Mohamed Lamine Sanha, chief of staff of the navy, is killed. Sanha, an ally of Ansumane Mané who led a military rebellion against President Vieira in the 1998 civil war, was implicated in several coups against the government.

**November 2006** Koumba Yala is elected head of the PRS.

**November 2005** President Vieira appoints Aristides Gomes, former PAIGC deputy chairman as Prime Minister.

**October 2005** President Vieira sacks PAIGC Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Junior, who was nominated by the assembly, citing "personal reasons". After announcing on the radio that the President ordered the assassination of old members of the military junta that

deposed him in 1999 Junior flees to the offices of the UN Peacebuilding Office until President Vieira can guarantee him security.

**2005** João Bernardo Vieira returns from exile in Portugal to participate in presidential elections, with financial backing from Guinea-Conakry and Senegal and support from the military. In the June elections Malam Bacai Sanha of the PAIGC presents himself opposite Koumba Yala and for the first time against Joao Vieira who participates as an independent candidate. Bacai receives the largest number of votes but not enough to avoid a second round. Yala, who came third in the first round, goes on to support Vieira and Vieira becomes President for the second time. International observers deem the elections fair and transparent.

The military, under chief of staff Tagme Na Wai, ensures President Vieira understands they are a powerful political force and that Vieira requires their support to retain his hold.

**October 2004** A group of soldiers led by Baoute Yanta Na Man attempt a failed coup. General Seabra, now chief of staff of the army, is killed by a group of military rebels who are protesting against salary arrears and the corruption of the military hierarchy, and General Tagme Na Wai, an ethnic Balante, is appointed in his place.

**March 2004** Legislative elections are held as planned and the PAIGC retakes the majority of the parliamentary seats. A new government is formed under the leadership of Carlos Gomes Junior as prime minister.

**September 2003** A military coup led by General Verissimo Correia Seabra ousts President Yala, a move that is welcomed by the population. A transition government is put on place to prepare for elections and in the interim, President Henrique Rosa is appointed President and Artur Sanha, once secretary-general of the PRS is nominated Prime Minister.

**2002** President Koumba Yala dissolves Parliament and calls for legislative elections but these do not take place and the country remains without a government for several months. Supreme Court judges are also sacked from their positions.

**2001** President Yala's rule is characterised by chronic political instability as he constantly sacks ministers and reshuffles his government. Between 2001 and 2003 four Prime Ministers are nominated and sacked. Political crisis sets in. The International Monetary Fund and World Bank suspend aid due to poor financial accounting by government.

**2000** General Anusmane Mane, a well-supported figure in the army, does not take up posts offered to him under President Yala's government, including adviser to the head-of-state preferring to stay independent. In November he is killed by Koumba Yala's men.

**January 2000** Presidential elections are held between Koumba Yala of the PRS and Malam Bacai Sanha of the PAIGC, a fierce opponent of Vieira. Yala wins with 72 percent of the votes and his victory is seen as progress for the Balante ethnic group as he

is the first Balante to lead the country. Yala goes on to appoint many Balante in positions of power. Under his rule many members of the armed forces are promoted to become generals.

**November 1999** The transitional government organises elections in which the PAIGC loses its control over the national assembly for the first time. The PRS party under Koumba Yala receives 38 seats and becomes the dominant party in the assembly.

**1999** A military junta takes control of Bissau, the capital, and President Vieira seeks asylum in Portugal. Malai Bacam Sanha of the PAIGC party becomes President in May 1999.

**1998** João Bernardo Vieira sacks army chief of staff, General Ansumane Mané, leading to an army mutiny. A military junta led by Mané starts a civil war.

**1994** The first free elections are held electing João Bernardo Vieira as President.

**1992** Koumba Yala founds the PRS.

**1980** Luis Cabral is ousted in military coup orchestrated by Joao Bernardo Vieira.

**1974** Portugal grants Guinea-Bissau independence with Luis Cabral, brother of Amilcar, as President.

**1973** PAIGC declares Guinea-Bissau independent of Portugal. Amilcar Cabral assassinated.

**1963-74** PAIGC launches war of independence.

**1956** Amilcar Cabral establishes the PAIGC.

**West Africa: Ecowas Will Restore Democracy in Guinea Bissau - Chambas - African Union Condemns Killings: Abdulfattah Olajide:3 March 2009:Daily Trust.**

Nigeria and other members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) will ensure the restoration of democracy in Guinea-Bissau despite yesterday's assassination of that country's president, Joao Bernardo Vieira, and the Chief of Defence Staff of Guinea-Bissau's Armed Forces, General Tagme Na Waie by renegade soldiers, the ECOWAS President, Dr. Muhammed Ibn Chambas said yesterday in Abuja. Speaking at the State House after meeting with President Umaru Musa Yar'adua in the company of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chief Ojo Maduekwe, Dr. Ibn Chambas said "President Yar'adua has emphasised the importance of constitutional succession to the presidency after the unfortunate events. He called on the Armed Forces and other Security agencies in Guinea-Bissau to desist from any actions likely to plunge the country into further lawlessness and political instability."



Dr. Ibn Chambas said President Yar'adua would, in his capacity as ECOWAS Chairman, despatch a foreign ministerial delegation comprising ministers from Nigeria , Burkina Faso , Cape Verde , the Gambia and Senegal to Guinea Bissau today.He said the ministerial delegation which would be accompanied by himself would engage all stakeholders in an effort to restore confidence among the political actors, civil society and security services and return the country to constitutional normalcy.The ECOWAS president said President Yar'adua urged "all peaceful loving people of Guinea-Bissau to exercise a high sense of responsibility and moderation in their actions and utterances at this critical and testing people in their national life."He said Yar'adua condemned the assassinations"in strongest terms as reprehensible acts that undermine democracy, peace and stability in Guinea-Bissau, saying the fragile political situation in that country has been further weakened by these events.Meanwhile,the African Union has also urged Guinea-Bissau's political leaders to rally behind the legitimate authorities in the country after its president and army chief of staff were killed.The African Union's top diplomat, Jean Ping, said in a statement yesterday that the killing of President Joao Bernado "Nino" Vieira on Monday and armed forces chief of staff army Gen. Batista Tagme Na Wai a day earlier were "cowardly and heinous attacks". "The (AU Commission) Chairperson has initiated contact with regional leaders on how best to address the current situation. Consultations are also underway to convene an emergency meeting of the Peace and Security Council, to review the situation and to take the appropriate steps," the statement said.Meanwhile, Guinea-Bissau's armed forces command said on Monday the situation in the country was under control and pledged to respect democratic institutions."The armed forces command reiterates its commitment and determination to obey democratically elected institutions," said a statement from the military command, whose head, General Batista Tagme Na Wai, was killed in an attack late on Sunday."A commission of military chiefs has been set up to manage the crisis," the statement said.

Southern Africa

**Mozambique: GUEBUZA CONDEMNS ASSASSINATION OF GUINEA-BISSAU PRESIDENT: Maputo, 3 Mar (AIM).**

Mozambican President Armando Guebuza said on Monday that it is "incomprehensible" that today there are still people who want to change the political order by using illegal and unconstitutional means.He was reacting to the assassination earlier in the day of the President of Guinea-Bissau, Joao Bernardo "Nino" Vieira, killed at his home by a group of soldiers, in apparent retaliation for the bomb blast that took the life of the Chief of Staff of the armed forces, Gen Tagme Na Waie.Guebuza told reporters that he found both murders repugnant, and completely unacceptable.He called for calm in Guinea-Bissau, and guaranteed that Mozambique, along with the other members of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP), is following developments there closely.Former President Joaquim Chissano, interviewed by the independent daily "O Pais", said that he had learnt with deep sorrow of the deaths of Tagme Na Waie and Nino Vieira.

"This is very sad for the Guinean people", he said. "We are in an epoch where conflicts should be solved through dialogue. Guinea-Bissau is a backward country that needs

international support so that it can get back onto its feet, and this support will only be possible with stability".Chissano knows Guinea-Bissau well. He was special envoy to the country of then UN General Secretary Kofi Annan in the run-up to the elections of 2005 which returned Vieira (who had been deposed in a 1998 coup) to power. He recalled that in that period he had worked with both Tagme Na Waie and Vieira to re-establish peace.Chissano said that Tagme Na Waie "played a fundamental role in the pacification of the country, and in Nino Vieira's return from exile, since he appealed to the armed forces to abstain from politics. It is sad that they have had such a tragic end".Nonetheless, Chissano did not believe that the murders mean that Guinea-Bissau can be written off as a failed state. "Work is needed, in this moment of instability, so that Guinea-Bissau becomes viable", he said. "But we should remember that the country has been stable for the past four and a half years. Now it's up to the people of Guinea-Bissau, to ECOWAS, and to the CPLP to work to restore stability. The prime responsibility lies with the Guinean people. You can't just throw a country away".

**Zimbabwe: Susan Tsvangirai Dies in Car Accident Near Chivhu: Tichaona Sibanda:6 March 2009:SW Radio Africa (London) .**

Susan Tsvangirai, the wife of Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai, bore the full impact when the vehicle she and her husband were travelling in was sideswapped by a haulage truck near Chivhu on Friday.Susan was seated behind the driver of their car when a haulage truck encroached onto their lane. Their driver swerved and the truck crushed the right hand side of the vehicle, behind the driver. Their landcruiser veered off the road and rolled three times.Reports we have received say Susan survived the initial impact and when she was pulled out of the vehicle she was talking, but clearly in great pain. But a close family friend told us she lost consciousness on the way to Harare's Avenues Clinic, where she was pronounced dead on arrival. Initial reports suggest she might have broken her back and suffered multiple leg fractures.The collision happened when the couple were travelling to Buhera, Tsvangirai's rural home area where he was due to address a rally on Saturday. The MDC's secretary-general, Tendai Biti, was one of the party's senior officials who visited the scene of the accident.

A policeman who attended the scene said that Tsvangirai sustained head injuries but was looking lucid and talking to rescuers who pulled them out of the truck. Tsvangirai was bleeding from his head wounds, while the driver and their aide suffered minor injuries.At the avenues clinic, Tsvangirai had X-rays that proved there was not much damage to his head, but he has suffered whiplash.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Somalia: New President to Rule Country Using Islamic Law: 28 February 2009:Garowe Online (Garowe).**

Somalia's new leader has said that he will rule the country using Islamic law, Radio Garowe reports.Sheikh Sharif Ahmed, the Horn of Africa country's new president, told a Saturday press conference at the presidential palace Villa Somalia in Mogadishu that a

recent attack against African Union peacekeepers (AMISOM) has brought much suffering to Somali civilians."It is not a must that every opposition group use bullets, but they [opposition] must come to the negotiating table," President Sheikh Sharif said.He stated that the Somali government has "accepted a ceasefire request" from the armed opposition, which was delivered by Mogadishu's clan elders, who served as mediators.

"My government did not bring AMISOM troops [to Mogadishu], but they were requested by the previous government. Everyone knows they did not come here by force, but they are here to help," the Somali leader said.He indicated that AMISOM commanders assured him they would not shell residential areas in response to insurgent attacks."I will rule the country [Somalia] using Islamic law," President Sheikh Sharif said bluntly, while rejecting "misinformation spread by people with private interests."

Nicolas Bwakira, the African Union's special envoy to Somalia, recently told the Voice of America that President Sheikh Sharif's government would be 'secular.' READ: AU Envoy Says Somalia's National Unity Government to be SecularWhile speaking about insurgent attacks, the Somali President said: "The man who spills the blood of his Muslim brother will not reach Heaven and a Muslim person's blood [killing] is prohibited."Sheikh Sharif called on the international community to deliver humanitarian aid to the Somali people, who have been "devastated by war and drought."He urged the Somali Diaspora and local businesspeople to "take responsibility" to help their fellow countrymen.It is the first time President Sheikh Sharif, formerly the moderate leader of the Islamic Courts movement, has publicly stated that he intends to rule Somalia under Islamic law.

#### 45. PEACEKEEPING, CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND SECURITY MATTERS

West Africa

##### **Senegal: Assassinations Breed Uncertainty in Neighbouring Casamance:5 March 2009:IRIN**

Dakar — The recent assassinations of Guinea-Bissau's president and army chief have cast a deep uncertainty over Senegal's restive Casamance region, where a decades-long separatist struggle has been heavily influenced by Bissau politics, analysts say.On 2 March President Joao Bernardo Vieira was shot dead, hours after a rocket attack killed Army Chief of Staff Tagme Na Wai. Guinea-Bissau officials have insisted the presidential assassination was not a coup, and on 3 March Guinea-Bissau swore in the parliament speaker Raimundo Pereira as interim leader and insisted it will maintain civilian rule.Guinea-Bissau in the 1990s served as a rear base and arms supplier for Casamance rebels - who launched a separatist movement in 1982 - but since 2000 the country's support of the Senegalese government has been a critical factor in the relative calm in Casamance, according to Martin Evans, lecturer in international development at University of Chester and an expert on Casamance.

"Calm in the Guinea-Bissau border area has been the biggest factor in allowing people to return to their home villages," Evans told IRIN. "There is not the constant supply of arms to and threat from MFDC [Movement of Democratic Forces in Casamance] guerrillas in Guinea-Bissau." Years of low-level fighting in Casamance has displaced tens of thousands of people. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre says given patterns of population movements in the region a definitive number is hard to come by, and that estimates of currently displaced range from 10,000 to 70,000. When he came to power in 2000 Guinea-Bissau then-President Koumba Yala was supportive of Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade's early attempts to resolve the Casamance conflict, saying he would not allow Guinea-Bissau to be a support base for the MFDC. This stance has held in Guinea-Bissau since. "As several observers have noted, relative calm in Casamance in recent years has been less about the Senegalese government's negotiating prowess and more about political dynamics in Guinea-Bissau," Evans told IRIN. The two countries are intimately linked, he said, noting that Guinea-Bissau's 1998-99 civil war was largely a proxy war for the Casamance conflict, with MFDC and Senegalese troops coming in to support opposing sides.

Oumar Diatta, Casamance-based writer and specialist on the region, said the death of Vieira and Na Wai "could lead to an overhaul in Casamance that would favour [MFDC hardliners]" who had been weakened by Guinea-Bissau's support for the Senegalese government. "The developments in Guinea-Bissau could raise tensions in Casamance," he said. "All will depend on what the Senegalese government does." Despite Guinea-Bissau's insistence that calm and civilian rule will be maintained, uncertainty abounds. "Na Wai and Vieira were partners in peace in Casamance," Senegalese political analyst Babacar Justin N'diaye told IRIN. "We do not know their successors' policy yet." In a volatile, drug-trafficker-infested region, Senegal is surrounded by countries where civilian governments have been upended. Read IRIN reports on Guinea and Mauritania coups.

"For some time Senegal has been sandwiched between military regimes," Ndiaye said. "Mauritania, and the two Guineas in the south... The only democratic air [Senegal] is able to breathe is via Mali and across the Atlantic. This is why Senegal feels it has to be a geopolitically strong player in Guinea-Bissau's unfolding situation." Interim leader Pereira has vowed to hold elections within 60 days in accordance with the constitution. University lecturer Evans said: "One hopes that whoever ends up in power in Guinea-Bissau will pursue the same sort of policy Yalla and Vieira had, of cooperation with the Senegalese government." He added: "Yet more instability in Guinea-Bissau can only make the cross-border cooperation - essential in supporting peace in Casamance - more difficult."

#### **Nigeria: Niger Delta - Searching for Peace Through Community Development: Etim Imisim: 4 March 2009: This Day.**

Lagos — Stakeholders from within and outside Nigeria recently gathered in Abuja to deliberate on how to engender peace in the troubled Niger Delta region; which would in turn impact positively on community development at the regional and national level. At a roundtable organised by the Ken Nnamani Centre for Leadership and Development, various issues arose for resolution.

**Thrust of Concern:** The main thrust of a recent gathering of conflict resolution experts on the Niger Delta was the recognition that, to have peace and development in the region, the urgent need was of harmonising the various positions and past efforts on how to engage in the region, and come up with the right mix of strategies that would, this time around, work. The roundtable in Abuja, organised by the Ken Nnamani Centre for Leadership and Development, worked on the belief that the crisis in the oil-producing area was larger than the region. It was national conflict with international dimensions and this meant that it should be approached as a national problem rather than look at it as affecting only the states in the Niger Delta. And it was to use the interaction as a central plank to leverage on the experience of other countries in terms of demilitarisation, conflict resolution and helping reorient the young people and in the process building their capacity and skills for sustainable livelihood.

**Foreign Expertise:** This recognition was reflected in the selection of local and foreign experts and resource persons to compare and contrast Nigerian and international best practices. Experts were drawn from the University of Massachusetts, Boston, as well as the Massachusetts Office of Dispute Resolution and Public Collaboration; the Public Conversation Project; the Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries and Coexistence International, all in the United States of America (USA). Prof. Daren Kew of the Graduate Programme in the Dispute Resolution of the University at Massachusetts, who led the team of ten US experts, was a renowned trainer in conflict resolution. He has been particularly successful in working with civil society groups on democratic institution building in Africa. He said that his team was in Nigeria to learn what challenges Nigerians were grappling with.

**Local Intervention:** Nigerian participants came from the Presidency; the Settlement House, a private dispute resolution centre, Abuja; (an exchange scholar of) the faculty of law of the University of Maiduguri; the Yakubu Gowon Centre, Abuja; Gender and Development Action; the Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution of the University of Ilorin and their counterparts from the University of Ibadan. Others came from the National Assembly, the Uyo-based Integrated Development Initiative; Financial and Advisory Investment Services of the World Bank Group in Abuja. There were participants from the oil and gas industry, including the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, and members of the Presidential Technical Committee of the Niger Delta. Represented were some key departments from Rivers and Bayelsa states, including the Rivers State Sustainable Development Agency, as well as the senior special adviser to the Vice President on the Niger Delta. The director of programme of the Ken Nnamani Centre, Dr. Sam Amadi, gave the welcome address and said the roundtable was an opportunity to share views on the ongoing crisis in the Niger Delta region, review the various interventions being pursued, the challenges being encountered, and how these are being addressed.

**Centre of Hope:** Former Senate President and founder of the Centre, Dr. Ken Nnamani, told THISDAY Development that the mission of the centre is to promote democracy, social justice and prosperity in Nigeria and Africa. The centre uses research, capacity building and value advocacy to bring about development and transformative and moral

leadership, Nnamani added. And this is done through emerging leaders and executive leadership programmes which seek to train community leaders and youths in the right set of values and attitudes for nation building.

**Sober Reflections:** With these institutional goals, and broad guideline for the workshop, in mind, participants went on to note that the escalation of conflict in the region was alarming. Militant groups daily carry out attacks against oil installations. Oil companies are observing more and more shut-ins. As a result, some are scaling down their operations while others are even contemplating closing down. The resources being lost that should go into financing human and physical development needs of the region and the country. It was not difficult for the group to arrive at how the country got to where it is today. Oil from the region accounts for about 90 per cent of the country's total export. And yet the Niger Delta has pretty little to show in terms of development. A situation analysis of the crisis showed that past interventions made little or no gain in resolving the crisis. This was largely because those interventions had not been synchronised. This means that political responsibility has neither been clearly defined or accepted. Participants however quickly came to the decision that the time had passed for trading blames over who was right or wrong in the crisis. It was also agreed that the creation of the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs was a good indication of government intention to deal with the problem. And it was further agreed that increasing financial allocation to the ministry and departments and agencies tackling the challenges of the region will go a long way in addressing those challenges.

It was however noted that focus was often more on increasing federal allocation to the Niger Delta region, and less on the re-engineering the governance structure in terms of fiscal projects, to complement that comes to the region from the centre. Because it has been the case that the Niger Delta people have not been able to hold their politicians accountable, it was recommended that re-engineering the governance structure should emphasise budgetary reform. In other words, any intervention on the region must include a legal framework that empowers citizens to ask questions about how public funds are being spent. This will enable people to find out how much is being spent and for what. They will know the cost of projects in their region and, should budgetary allocation be increased to the region, it will be certain to have impact on the lives of people.

Some form of public-private partnership was needed to be created. This would be multi-disciplinary and include all stakeholders in the area. This could be constituted into a committee which the various chief executives would use to implement their interventions. Such implementations should focus on specific deliverable and borrow as much as practical the experiences of other countries. The value orientation of youths should be a part of the process. The focus should be the socio-economic re-integration of the area.

This means that massive skill acquisition programmes should be launched and matched with micro-credit for the beneficiaries. Daren Dew, who was one of the trustees and advisory council member of the centre, focused on how the centre can conduct group negotiations. The idea of whether a mediator is needed in the Niger Delta crisis came

up. Men of international stature like Jimmy Carter and Kofi Annan who had credibility were considered to help to mediate, because distrust existed between the militants and the various communities and stakeholders in the Niger Delta and the Federal Government.

**Moving Forward:** It was the duty of Nigerian participants like Senator Etang Umoyo of the Integrated Development Initiative from Uyo, Akwa Ibom State to cross-examine some of the ideas the Americans proffered and argue that whatever interventions that are used must have the confidence of the communities. According to him, oftentimes people look at the Niger Delta crisis from the outside instead of from within, and this caused the application of what has worked elsewhere without looking carefully at how they can work in Nigeria. The roundtable considered getting the various groups to adopt a common platform and adopt a few, tangible objectives which they can bring to the table when there is a mediator. Arriving at some form of consensus could begin with collapsing some of the groups into units to agree on some of the key issues which should be taken to the table for mediation in the first instance. And then how to create sufficient incentives for the militants to look away from bunkering and other areas they enter into, including kidnapping, and consider positive activities, including especially entrepreneurial activities. Related to this was the issue of coordinated disarmament of the area, which was critical, and participants agreed should be top on the agenda of the various state executives in the Niger Delta.

**Notable Resolutions:** Participants agreed to have a creative and multi-stakeholder approach. Value orientation and capacity building especially for youths in the region was a key part of that approach. Get the young people together, build communities, use community-oriented approach to conflict resolution and not just the conventional conflict resolution, participants kept saying. It was also thought that the oil companies needed to develop more serious community and corporate social responsibility programmes and so drive the creation of livelihood centres where members of the community can learn how to sustain their environment, and develop viable alternatives to oil. Ms. Stella Akani of the Rivers State Sustainable Development Agency especially advocated the community-based approach. The centre said it would use ICT platforms, with broad bands to create new wealth as it is being done in America, get people to focus on alternatives to oil, and so reduce tension in the region. "The idea is that we don't want to start first with programmes," Amadi said. "We want to start with identifying what the problems are locally, before we can design programmes that can work. From this meeting and several others that we will organise we will have a sense of what kind of interventions - what kinds conflict resolution conflict avoidance mechanisms - we can propose". "It is essential to create information and knowledge about the crisis and develop consensus on what is to be done. And we want to concentrate on projects that can enhance the capacity of the people and their value orientation". To him, the provision of infrastructure will surely bring about development in the Niger Delta. But it also largely become a scheme that will empower a few contractors and prominent citizens of the area.

**Food for Thought:** For this reason, interventions should mostly be about human development, Amadi said. "It should be about empowering the people and from empowering the people we will create enough moral capital that will enable them to resist

the current criminal that some of the people of the Niger Delta are being associated with". "Our idea is that any intervention, whether it is for microcredit support, should be community-owned. When there is foreign and donor interventions, we observe that it is almost always targeted at the more vocal youth organisations. Little focus is given to poor women, especially poor rural women, whose voices are not being heard." "This time around, poor women, especially poor rural women, should be the centre of intervention."

Southern Africa

**South Africa: SANDF to Host Major Military Exercise in September: Wilson Johwa: 3 March 2009: Business Day.**

Johannesburg — THE South African National Defence Force (SANDF) will host southern Africa's biggest military exercise in September, involving 11 countries including Zimbabwe. The exercise with other armies from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) will coincide with the SANDF's first decade of involvement in peace-keeping missions. Called Exercise Golfinho (dolphin in Portuguese), the exercise relates to the establishment of the Africa Standby Force (ASF) and is designed to test SADC's capability in managing complex operations. It will seek to achieve compatibility and integration of procedures and equipment. The ASF is an African Union initiative requiring that each of the five continental regions must prepare one brigade for peace keeping operations. The aim is that the ASF will be ready for operations by June next year. The first phase of the ASF project was completed in 2005. Exercise Golfinho will also involve the police and civilians, including foreign affairs officials and members of national disaster management operations from the SADC region. It began this month with map exercises in Angola, command simulations in Mozambique and naval drills in Namibia. The final phase -- the September exercise involving SADC armies -- will be run from the army's combat training centre in Lohathla, Northern Cape. "This is a very large and complex exercise," said Admiral Philip Schoultz, the chief director of operations in the SANDF's Joint Operations division. Participating troops would bring their own hardware, including weaponry and communications equipment. Preparations for the operation come at a time when the SANDF is busy arranging its involvement in the April general election. The military is on standby to support the police, but it also expects to assist the Independent Electoral Commission with logistical support, particularly transportation, during the national poll. The SANDF is also involved in security preparations for the June Confederations Cup and the 2010 Soccer World Cup.

SA has close to 3000 soldiers on peacekeeping operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Sudan and the Central African Republic. Since 1994 SA has sought to transform its military -- one of Africa's best-equipped -- into a reputable force for peace. It is the 15th largest contributor of troops to United Nations missions. However, it faces challenges such as a shortage of transport planes. Concerns have also been raised that the SANDF is overstretched, because the deployment of troops requires that several other troop detachments must be available for rotation. Yet for every unit deployed, SA has only three others for relief -- less than half the cover maintained by some countries in Europe.



**Somalia: Massive Demonstrations Support Peace, New Govt: 5 March 2009: [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe).**

Two large demonstrations were held Thursday in Somalia's official capital Mogadishu in support of peace and the new government led by President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed, Radio Garowe reports. The bigger demonstration was held at Stadium Mogadishu, where thousands of people carrying placards were addressed by peace activists and Islamist officials. Mohamed Tahlil, a Somali peace activist who helped organize the peaceful demonstration, told the crowd that the Somali people must support the declaration issued by a group of the Somali Muslim scholars, who demanded a ceasefire, the withdrawal of African Union peacekeepers, and the application of Islamic law.

"We welcome the sheikhs' decision and we request that the country [Somalia] be ruled under Islamic law," Mr. Tahlil said to the crowd's cheers. Sheikh Mohamud Abu-Shaybah, a member of the Islamic Courts movement, told the demonstrators that Somalia has been set back by years of violent opposition. "We have been set back from the progress reached around the world by the endless fighting among us [Somalis], and I ask that we change war to peace and development," Abu Shaybay said. A second demonstration was organized by the Somali Islamic clerics' council, which was held on the same day at a main junction in central Mogadishu. One of the organizers, Sheikh Ahmed Abdi Di'isow, said the Somali people must support the new government of President Sheikh Sharif.

"The Somali people need peace to live in, work and education so they can become ordinary citizens like the rest of the world," Sheikh Di'isow said. It is the first demonstrations in support of peace and the government of President Sheikh Sharif since his election in late January. Mogadishu has been relatively quiet since Feb. 25, when two consecutive days of battles killed at least 50 people. Unlike previous attacks on Ethiopian troops, the attacks on President Sheikh Sharif's government forces attracted widespread condemnation from the Mogadishu community.

**Somalia: 500 African Union Peacekeepers Arrive in Mogadishu: 3 March 2009: [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe).**

A new batch of African Union peacekeepers arrived in Somalia's capital Tuesday, days after 11 Burundian peacekeepers in Mogadishu were killed in a suicide bomb attack, Radio Garowe reports. A military transport plane delivered 500 new soldiers from Burundi, which will reinforce a 3,500-strong AU peacekeeping mission in Somalia, known as AMISOM. "The soldiers were carrying small arms, and there was not much equipment on board the airplane," said a source at Mogadishu's Aden Adde International Airport, which is a major base for AMISOM peacekeepers. The delivery of fresh troops follows the deadliest attack against the AMISOM force in Mogadishu, where two suicide bombers killed 11 soldiers and wounded 15 others. Somali President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed recently said he will rule the country under Islamic law, while suggesting that the

AMISOM force will leave after Somalia is stable. A group of self-appointed Somali Muslim scholars recently issued a declaration calling for a ceasefire and the withdrawal of AMISOM peacekeepers within 120 days, beginning on March 1. Islamist rebels have vowed to continue the anti-government insurgency, despite the election of moderate Islamist Sheikh Sharif as Somali president. AMISOM soldiers, drawn from Uganda and Burundi, have come under increasing scrutiny following the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops in January.

**Sudan: Southerners Prefer Diplomatic Route:4 March 2009:IRIN.**

Juba — Southern Sudanese leaders will work with the North to seek a political and diplomatic resolution to the decision by the International Criminal Court (ICC) against President Omar el-Bashir, top officials said. "The country should remain calm and focus on peace in Darfur and other problems facing it," Pagan Amum, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) Secretary-General told reporters in the capital, Juba, on 3 March. On Juba streets, reaction was mixed. A demonstration starting from Juba University was organised by the northern ruling National Congress Party (NCP), but the government urged residents to avoid protests. Other local residents termed Bashir their hero. "Africa seems not aware and must arise if we want a way forward," Ahmed Ismail, a trader in Juba market, told IRIN. "We will welcome him and let him feel at home everywhere in Sudan."

Sources said some aid workers had left the country. Streets were empty on the eve of the announcement, but heightened security was visible. "This matter ... will not mean the end of our country, the Sudan or government," Southern Sudanese President Salva Kiir Mayardit said in a statement. "We must move beyond tomorrow [4 March]. This should not be viewed as a crisis but as an opportunity to consolidate peace, justice and stability in our country." "We must move beyond tomorrow... This should not be viewed as a crisis but as an opportunity to consolidate peace, justice and stability in our country

Warning that the collapse of peace in Sudan would hurt the country and the region, Kiir said the international community had its hands full with problems in the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region. Calling on Southerners not to harass foreigners, he added: "We must continue facilitating peacekeeping missions of the United Nations, the African Union and all humanitarian agencies. The SPLM will work with its partners in the NCP to politically and diplomatically handle the decision of the Court." On fears that the indictment could jeopardise peace, he said the partners to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement would continue to address the conflict in Darfur, and fully implement the agreement while pursuing national reconciliation and healing. "I advise SPLM members and other citizens to refrain from demonstrations that may heighten tensions, intimidate other citizens, residents or frustrate in any manner ongoing diplomatic and political efforts to defuse the crisis," he noted.

**Eritrea: President Isaias Holds Talks With Sudanese Government Delegation:2 March 2009:Shabait.com (Asmara).**

Asmara — President Isaias Afwerki today received and held talks at the State Palace with a Sudanese government delegation headed by Dr. Nafie Ali Nafie, Sudanese Presidential Assistant and Head of Political and Organizational Affairs of the ruling National Congress Party. President Isaias assured the delegation that as the move being taken by the International Criminal Court (ICC) against President Omar Hassan Al-Beshir not only targets the Sudanese leader and the Sudan itself but also the entire countries of the region, Eritrea would not accept it and would stand alongside the Sudanese people.

Dr. Nafie Ali Nafie on his part lauded the firm stance of President Isaias, as well as the people and Government of Eritrea in rejecting the ICC issue and the efforts they are exerting towards promoting a comprehensive peace and justice in the Sudan. In this respect, he described such a stance as "correct and courageous." Stating that the interference of the International Criminal Court would only aggravate the Sudanese issue in general and that of Darfur in particular rather than bring about solution, Dr. Nafie underlined that the ICC issue would undermine regional peace and prompt neo-colonialism in Africa. Moreover, the two sides reached understanding on continuing the already launched joint efforts aimed at promoting peace and stability in the Sudan. Meanwhile, the first official meeting of the Joint Eritrean-Sudanese Committee towards strengthening relations between the two countries has been conducted at the Denden Hall here in Asmara. In the meeting, an understanding was reached on the speedy launching of development and economic cooperation between Eritrea and Sudan, besides undertaking joint strategic programs. Discussion was also conducted on ways of extending the necessary support so as to provide impetus to the positive steps taken so far taking into consideration that enhanced bilateral ties benefits both countries and the region as a whole.

The high-level Sudanese delegation headed by Dr. Nafie Ali Nafie returned home in the afternoon hours today concluding a one-day working visit. It is to be recalled that President Isaias received and held talks on February 28 with SPLM delegation headed by Dr. Deng Alor, Sudanese Foreign Minister and Member of the Movement's Executive Council.

Central Africa

**Rwanda: Research Institute Launches Rwf 149 Million Documentation Centre: Eugene Kwibuka: 4 March 2009: The New Times.**

Kigali — The Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace (IRDP), a Rwandan think-tank that promotes unity through research, yesterday opened a documentation centre that will host its archives and other peace building initiatives. The building that was named 'Peace Centre' is equipped with a conference room, an audio-visual centre for the production of films, and a documentation room where IRDP works will be kept. The construction was sponsored by the Japanese government at a tune of Rwf 149 million and IRDP said the it will become a meeting place for peace initiatives. "Peace is just like air. Without it, there is no life," said the Japanese Ambassador to Rwanda, Shigeo Iwatani, at the opening of the centre. IRDP has been conducting research in Rwanda on issues

ranging from understanding democracy, the rule of law, Rwandan history, and the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi.

The findings and recommendations from the IRDP's research are normally handed over to the government and members of the civil society for consideration. "Our strength is that we bring together both leaders and the people in discussions and each side gets a chance to listen to the other about governance issues," said Professor Pierre Rwanyindo, the IRDP Director. The institute's activities have helped to inform some of government's decisions and the Minister of Local government, Protais Musoni, pledged more support to its work calling for the promotion of more initiatives from the civil society.

"The government appreciates the insights, advice and recommendations in the peace building process," he said at the launch of the centre. He admitted in an interview with journalists that some of the IRDP's research has helped government in some of its plans, such as designing laws on elections in the country and programmes against corruption and improvement of service delivery. The 'Peace Centre' which was built in Gisozi, Gasabo District, is also expected to host offices of the seven-year old IRDP. It is expected to become a meeting area for researchers, artists, academics and other people working in the promotion of peace, Rwanyindo said.

#### 46. MILITANCY ,REBELS,TERRORISM AND THE 'WAR ON TERROR' West Africa

##### **Nigeria: Police, Militants in Gun Duel: Jimitota Onoyume: 3 March 2009: Vanguard.**

PORT HARCOURT — The police in Port Harcourt yesterday exchanged fire with suspected militants around the park area of Mile One. A security source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said one of the militants sustained severe gun shot wound and at press time was assisting the police to track down other members of the group that reportedly fled. In a related development, husband of kidnapped Oghenekaro Koroye has appealed for the unconditional release of his wife who had been in the custody of the kidnappers since penultimate Tuesday. Dr. Koroye, who spoke in Port Harcourt, said at press time, the kidnappers were demanding five million naira ransom. The 31-year-old said there was no way he and the wife could raise that amount.

According to him, the kidnappers probably mistook them for members of the very rich class in the society because of the KIA car the wife drives. Appealing passionately for release of his wife, Koroye said they acquired the KIA car recently from an expatriate who was relocating from Port Harcourt, adding that the car was bought at a give-away price. He urged the militants to have pity on them, as there was no way they could raise the ransom requested of them. It would be recalled that Mrs. Koroye was taken hostage last week's Tuesday while driving into their compound in the state capital.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**East Africa: Fighting Kills 20 in the Regional Administration of Somalia in Ethiopia:6 March 2009:Shabelle Media Network (Mogadishu) .**

Dhagah — At least 20 soldiers have been killed and many others wounded after heavy fighting between Ethiopian soldiers and ONLF rebels started in Dhagah-buur region in the regional administration of Somalia in Ethiopia, official said on Friday.Hussein Nor, head of the information affairs of ONLF rebels who is Qatar told Shabelle radio that the fighting started 4th February in Dhagax-buur region and still continuing in the regional administration of Somalia in Ethiopia and claimed that they killed 20 Ethiopian soldiers in the fighting adding they captured the station of Ethiopian troops in the region.

Asked about the casualties of their side, he said that there were some casualties but not more and asserted that they will continue the fighting until they liberate the Ethiopian troops from the regional state of Somalia in Ethiopia.Reports from Dhagah-buur region say that the fighting is still continuing and the rival forces are using heavy weapons which could be heard all directions in the region.In over the past weeks there has been fighting between ONLF rebels and Ethiopian troops that killed number of soldiers from both rival forces in the regional administration of Somalia and Ethiopia.

**Eritrea: TPLF Regime Increasingly Instigating Conflict Among Various Ethnic Groups, Defecting Soldier Says:4 March 2009:Shabait.com (Asmara)**

Asmara — A defecting Ethiopian soldier who arrived here recently said that the TPLF regime is stepping up its divisive ploy aimed at instigating conflict among various ethnic groups, and thus prolonging its stay in power.The soldier, chief inspector of the south western Jimma federal police, Hussein Osman, stated that the regime is fomenting disagreement and differences among the ethnic groups under various guises so as to suppress any opposition of the Ethiopian people. It is particularly committing grave atrocities against members of the Afar ethnic group, he added.

The chief inspector further pointed out that a number of the TPLF regime's soldiers, including high-ranking officials are abandoning the regime opposing its divisive and racist policy. Indicating that the budget allocated for the Afar zone is being robbed by the regime's officials for their own personal interests, the defecting soldier explained that members of the ethnic group who raise questions regarding the issue are being subjected to inhumane atrocities.Hussein Osman who joined the Tigrean People's Liberation Front in 1978 and served with diligence up to the level of officer arrived in Eritrea opposing the TPLF regime's divisive policy and the atrocities it commits against the Ethiopian people.

**Ethiopia: Fighting Kills More People in Ethiopia: Ahmednor Mohamed Farah:7 March 2009:Shabelle Media Network (Mogadishu)**

Baladweyn — Heavy fighting between rebels and Ethiopian soldiers killed 25 people and injured 15 others Saturday in Mustahil town in eastern Ethiopia, Shabelle's Omar Kiyow reported from Baladweyn town near the border.Our reporter, citing residents said the fighting started after anti-Ethiopian Somali rebels attacked a convoy of Ethiopian troops

who were traveling from Wardher town to the border between Somalia and Ethiopia. Independent sources from the region say sporadic fighting is continuing in the region and a lot of people who fled from the fighting areas reached in central Somali towns.

No group has claimed the responsibility of the fighting yet. ONLF, which is fighting for the independence of ethnic Somalis in Ethiopia's oil-rich Ogaden region, claimed yesterday they killed about 24 Ethiopian troops. They say the local people have been marginalized by Addis Ababa. In June, New York-based Human Rights Watch accused the Ethiopian government of burning villages, executing civilians and raping women in an effort to quell the ONLF's insurgency. Ethiopia denied the allegations.

**Somalia: Kenya Accepts Seven Alleged Pirates From U.S. Navy for Trial: Jacquelyn S. Porth: 5 March 2009: [America.gov](http://America.gov) (Washington, DC).**

Kenya assumed custody March 5 of seven alleged Somali pirates, captured earlier by the U.S. Navy, with plans to prosecute the suspects swiftly in the Mombasa court system. The Navy turned the suspects and evidence over to Kenya under the terms of a memorandum of understanding signed with the United States in January. The United Kingdom has a similar accord with Kenya -- which has agreed to prosecute pirates in its courts -- as part of a stepped-up effort to hold pirates accountable for their actions and deter future attacks in the Gulf of Aden and off the Somali coastline.

Vice Admiral William Gortney told a March 5 congressional hearing that the bilateral agreement took effect that very day, when Kenya accepted the alleged pirates. The Navy captured the men February 11, when a Marshall Islands-flagged vessel called for help as pirates equipped with AK-47s and rocket-propelled grenades attempted to board. State Department official Stephen Mull told the House Armed Services Committee that the United States is grateful to Kenya for its role in bringing suspected pirates to justice. He also said U.S. officials hope to conclude bilateral agreements with other countries in the region to ensure that no single country bears the burden of prosecution. He named Tanzania as a possible candidate. Piracy is an international crime that is prosecuted through a number of agreements, including the 2000 United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime. Freedom of navigation and maritime safety are Obama administration priorities. Pirate attacks have disrupted U.S.-supported World Food Programme deliveries, put international civilian crews at risk and jeopardized commercial shipping interests. Mull articulated existing U.S. strategy to suppress pirate attacks as follows:

- Enhancing multilateral cooperation
- Leading efforts to enhance existing international legal authorities
- Collaborating closely with the international shipping industry
- Coordinating U.S. and coalition military responses

- Pursuing broader diplomatic and political approaches to the longer-term goal of reestablishing a more secure and stable Somalia

Testifying in his capacity as the acting under secretary of state for international security, Mull said the United States led an effort for passage of United Nations Security Council resolutions 1846 and 1851 in December 2008. The two resolutions expanded the authority of international forces to conduct counterpiracy operations off the coast of Somalia and onshore.

The United States also hosted the first meeting of the Contact Group on Piracy -- which comprises representatives from 34 countries and organizations -- in New York in January. Mull said U.S. officials met again with representatives of the group on March 5 in Copenhagen, Denmark, to discuss how best to use national laws to prosecute pirates. The group has established four working subgroups. They focus on the legal aspects of suppressing piracy, military coordination off Somalia, diplomatic outreach and best practices for outwitting pirates. The United States heads the best practices group. The group met in London at the end of February to hear a report from the International Chamber of Shipping on deterring piracy. Gortney said U.S. officials worked with the International Maritime Organization to produce a best practices pamphlet that advises flagged ships, among other things, to travel faster than 15 knots and not to travel at night. The contact group will meet next in Egypt on March 16-17 to consider recommendations from the working groups and requests from new nations wishing to participate.

#### MULTILATERAL NAVAL EFFORTS THWART ATTACKS

The U.S. Navy established Combined Task Force 151 to work with other naval forces in the area off the Somali coast. The task force includes navies from European Union members. Since piracy on the high seas is a universal crime, Gortney said, all navies are obligated to carry out anti-piracy operations. U.S. military forces have been working with counterparts from Canada, China, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, India, Italy, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Turkey and the United Kingdom -- sometimes operating as part of alliances such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Shortly, Gortney said, additional forces are expected to join from Sweden, Belgium, Poland, Japan, Jordan, Singapore, Bahrain and South Korea.

As a consequence of cooperative efforts, the number of pirate attacks has dropped from an average of seven per month in the last quarter of 2008 to only two a month in the first months of 2009. But witnesses and members of Congress who considered the implications of piracy off of Africa agreed that there will not be a long-term solution to regional piracy until conflict in Somalia ceases. To that end, the United States supports the U.N.-led Djibouti Peace Process, a mechanism by which the Somalis can make political and security decisions with help from international donors as they address the need for political reconciliation.

**Uganda: Army Captures Five LRA Rebels: Raymond Baguma and Barbara Among: 5 March 2009: The New Vision.**

Kampala — The joint force pursuing the LRA in the Garamba jungles yesterday captured five rebels, including a Ugandan woman who was wife to a rebel commander. Margaret Achola, 22, from Kalongo in Pader district and her 14-year-old daughter, Fatuma Angeyo, were captured at Ukwa, south of Ri-Kwangba. A Congolese woman, Muka Bitire, with her 14-year-old son, Uboyogo Akumbayo Munu and a boy, Momumangi Tede, 14, from the Central African Republic were also captured. Capt. Deo Akiiki, the operation spokesperson said another LRA fighter killed on Tuesday, had not been identified. He said the rebel, who had dreadlocks, could have been the commander of a rebel unit.

Akiiki said those rescued were part of Thomas Kwoyelo's group. Kwoyelo was shot in the stomach and captured on Tuesday. He was then flown to Kampala on Wednesday evening. Army spokesperson Maj. Felix Kulayigye yesterday said Kwoyelo was being attended to at a military hospital and his chances of survival were high. The army said the body of the UPDF soldier who was killed during the battle with Kwoyelo's group, would be flown to Uganda after informing his family.

Meanwhile, the Archbishop of the Episcopal Church of the Sudan, the Rev. Daniel Deng Bul Yak, on Monday handed over a petition, on behalf of his Church, the Church of Uganda and the Anglican Church in north eastern DR Congo, to the British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, at a meeting in London. He requested for diplomatic pressure to end the brutal attacks on unarmed civilians by the LRA. Deng said although the LRA attacks were the most pressing security issue in Southern Sudan, local violence was still going on and needed to be tackled within the framework of the Sudanese Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the north and the south. The petition was signed by Deng, Archbishop Henry Luke Orombi and Bishop George Ande of Aru in north-east DR Congo.

Central Africa

**Congo-Kinshasa: Upsurge in Attacks As Militia Group Returns to North Kivu, UN Agency Reports: 6 March 2009: UN NEWS SERVICE.**

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said it is extremely worried about the rapidly deteriorating security situation in the eastern Congolese province of North Kivu, where some 160,000 people have been uprooted from their homes since January and returning militia are attacking local civilians and aid workers. The Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) returned to the north and central areas of North Kivu, attacking civilians and targeting humanitarian relief convoys, after a joint military operation by the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Rwanda aimed at ridding them from area ended in mid-February.



UNHCR credited the FDLR - composed mainly of Hutus who arrived in the DRC in the wake of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda - with at least 17 attacks, including of killing, looting, kidnapping and raping of civilians, and the ambushing and burning of vehicles, since mid-February. Over the past two weeks, the FDLR has killed 34 people, kidnapped four and injured 22 others, according to a UNHCR team on the ground. In late February, the armed group ambushed several relief convoys belonging to humanitarian agencies that provide assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs). This new displacement adds to the strain on an already dramatic humanitarian situation in North Kivu, which has a total of some 850,000 IDPs, many of whom have been displaced multiple times. Attacks by the Ugandan rebel group, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), has also intensified in the Orientale province of north-eastern DRC since late February, following a relative lull earlier in the month. Dispersed elements of the LRA continue to attack the civilian population at random, according to a UNHCR team in Dungu, the regional centre of Haut Uélé, where there are frequent reports of rape and pillaging.

UNHCR estimated that the total number of Congolese civilians displaced by LRA raids in this remote part of the DRC has now surpassed 140,000 and the death toll 900, since people of Orientale province were exposed to the brutal and deadly LRA violence last September. In addition, some 16,000 Congolese refugees crossed into southern Sudan, fleeing the LRA's rampage and are presently sheltering in the area of Ezo, Yambio and Yei.

#### 47. NORTH AFRICA

##### **Tunisia: President Ben Ali Focuses on Implementation of Agricultural Strategy:2 March 2009:Tunisia Online News.**

Tunis — During his meeting with the Prime Minister, Mr Mohamed Ghannouchi on Monday, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali focused on the implementation of agricultural strategies, aimed at boosting the sector. In this respect, he issued instructions to increase the pace of the program destined to restructure state owned parcels of land of an overall surface of 311,000 hectares, which have led to the creation of 308 exploiting companies, 810 parcels of land destined to be exploited by agricultural specialists, as well as 5200 agricultural plots.

The Head of State recommended in this respect to increase the yield of these parcels of land, improve their management and strengthening the technical coaching of farmers.

President Ben Ali also signed a decree creating a national consumption institute whose aim is provide technical support to the organizations concerned with consumption, as well as the elaboration of research and studies, in addition to providing analysis, tests and training programs, as well as publications and communication. On the other hand, the Head of State decided to reduce by one point the interest rate applied in the house loan system, with a view of boosting investment in the sector. The measure will be applicable as of March 1, 2009. The Prime Minister then presented the Head of State with the agenda of the cabinet meeting due to be held later this week.

**Tunisia: 'Aerospace Meetings Tunisia' to Showcase Country's Aeronautical Capacities:4 March 2009:Tunisia Online News.**

Tunis — With the construction of an Airbus (EADS) plant near Tunis, well underway, Tunisia is slowly but surely becoming a hub for aeronautical companies. The plant which will be operational by mid 2010, will build the front segments of airbus planes. The project will necessitate investments worth 60 million Euros, and will involve a number of French sub-contracting companies which are expected to settle in the vicinity of the plant. With the aim of informing French and other foreign companies having an interest for the Tunisian aeronautical market capacities, a trade show dubbed "Aerospace Meetings Tunisia 2009", will be organized on September 28-30, 2009 in Tunis.

The high- level meeting which will be organized in collaboration with the Association of Tunisian aerospace industries (GITAS) which groups some 21 companies, the Tunisian Foreign Investments Promotion Agency (FIPA) and the Tunisian -French Chamber of Commerce (CTFCI), will aim at making better known Tunisia's aeronautic market capacities, as well as setting up a network of partnerships and eventual production ventures. Conferences and workshops will be held during the event, which will also feature meetings with companies already established in Tunisia.

**Sudan: Unamid Welcomes Additional Egyptian Peacekeepers:2 March 2009:press release:United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (El Fasher) .**

The remainder of the Egyptian infantry battalion, consisting of 93 peacekeepers, started arriving in El Fasher, North Darfur today. The second batch, also consisting of 93 peacekeepers, is scheduled to arrive tomorrow, bringing the battalion's total number to 850. The additional peacekeepers will join the rest of the battalion that arrived last November and was then deployed in Umm Kadada, North Darfur. The principal duties of the battalion include conducting confidence-building security patrols and escorts for humanitarian convoys. UN Security Council Resolution 1769 (2007) authorized the deployment of up to 19,555 military personnel, including 360 military observers and liaison officers, and up to 3,772 police personnel and 19 formed police units comprising up to 140 personnel each. The arrival of the 186 Egyptian peacekeepers will bring the Egyptian contribution to the Mission to 1,588 and the UNAMID military strength to 12,937.

Egypt is currently contributing to the mission with an infantry battalion, a signal company, an engineering company and a transport company. Another Egyptian infantry battalion is expected to join the Mission soon.

**Tunisia: 'Viva Palestina' Caravan Leaves Country:28 February 2009:Tunisia Online News.**

Tunis — The "Viva Palestina" British caravan dubbed "Lifeline from the UK to Gaza" left Ras Jedir, in Tunisia on Saturday heading for Libya in its journey to Gaza, to deliver some 1 million pounds worth of humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people. Before

leaving Tunisia, the 102 vehicle caravan was warmly acclaimed by Tunisians of all ages showing their solidarity with the Palestinian people."I keep very good impressions of Tunisia and I pay a vibrant tribute to the leadership and the people of this country for its support to the right of the Palestinian people to freedom and dignity", said the caravan organizer, adding that Tunisia had welcomed the Palestinian leadership during a long period of time.

"I was fascinated by the warm welcome and the hospitality of the Tunisian people. We also thank the Tunisian people for its aid to the Palestinian population", said a British volunteer who was accompanied by his mother. The volunteer also said he was grateful to the Tunisia authorities who facilitated the caravan's journey, noting that the caravan's "stay in Tunisia had been very enjoyable."During its crossing of the town of Ben Guerdane, the caravan was greeted by many Tunisians who waved Tunisian and Palestinian flags, chanting slogans of support to the Palestinian people.The caravan entered Tunisia on Wednesday. Its 8,000 km journey from the United Kingdom to Gaza, will take it respectively through Libya and Egypt.

#### **Tunisia: Maghreb Mouled Conference Opens in Kairouan:4 March 2009:Tunisia Online News.**

Tunis — The 36 th Maghreb Mouled Conference opened on Wednesday in Kairouan.The Conference which is placed under the high patronage of the President of the Republic coincides this year with the celebration of Kairouan as 2009 Islamic Culture Capital. The Mouled which celebrates the Prophet's birthday, will take place on March 9 th, this year.

In an opening address to the conference, the Minister of religious affairs, Mr Boubaker El Akhzouri stressed the role of Kairouan in the spread of Islam's message as well as the consecration of the Malekite doctrine which preaches the values of moderation, tolerance and encourages exegetic efforts (Ijtihad), while rejecting all kinds of extremism and dogmatism.He also highlighted Kairouan's role in spreading Islam's message, as well as its culture.The conference which is entitled " The role of Kairouan in the anchoring and the dissemination of the Malekite rite" will take place between March 4 and 6, 2009, and will witness the participation of several Tunisian, Algerian and Moroccan scholars and researchers.The Malekite doctrine of Islam, which was anchored in Tunisia thanks to the "El Moudawana", dictated by Ibn El Qacem and written by the Imam Sahnoun, owes much to this book which was studied by generations of theological scholars and which helped shape Tunisia's Muslim identity.

**Egypt:** Dana discovers 100 billion cubic feet of gas:[afrol News](#), 24 February: *By staff writer.*

Dana Gas has announced the discovery of 100 billion cubic feet of gas in one of its Nile Delta concessions in Egypt. The discovery which is expected to yield the company 16 million barrels of oil is the company's fifth find since last year.According to the company's emailed statement, the Azhar-1 well find comes barely a week after the Mideast's first and largest private sector gas company discovered roughly 20 billion cubic

feet of dry gas in another concession in the Delta region.

Executive Director of Dana Gas Upstream, Ahmed Al-Arbeed said in a statement yesterday that additional wells are planned for other zones that may increase the total reserves up to 150 billion cubic feet. "A preliminary estimate of the exploration reserves of Azhar-1 discovery is in excess of 100bn cubic feet of gas and additional wells are planned for other potential hydrocarbon bearing zones that might increase the total reserves up to 150 cubic feet of gas," he said in a statement. The well revealed 18 metres of net pay in a good quality sandstone reservoir of the Qawasim formation and 15.1 meter standard cubic feet per day of gas, and 444 barrels of condensate per day, according to the company's statement. Egypt's country director Hany Elsharkawi said the development plans for the discovery were being prepared by the company. "We expect to start production from Azhar-1 during mid 2009, which will take the Dana Gas El Wastani plant to full capacity" he said.

**Egypt: Egypt to raise \$11.7bn for agro-industrial zones: Sunday, March 08 – 2009:AME Info.**

Egypt is looking to raise \$11.7bn worth of investments for its agro-industrial zones projects as part of public/private initiatives. The country's Industrial Development Authority will be looking to attract the investments over the next decade until 2020 to set up 470 across the country.

**Egypt: Egypt finds 30 mummies: [afrol News](#), 9 February: *By staff writer.***

Egyptian archaeologists have discovered 30 mummies in the ancient burial complex of Saqqara outside Cairo from the tomb dating back to 4,300 year-old, Ministry of Culture said in a statement today. The burial site which is believed to have initially belonged to a priest from the time of the Pharaohs was found at the bottom of an 11-meter well and includes mummies from the fifth, sixth and 26th dynasties according to the statement.

Egypt's chief archeologist, Zahi Hawas, said the tomb dates from the era of the VIth dynasty of the Old Kingdom. "Thirty mummies and skeletons were discovered, including a wooden sarcophagus that has been sealed since the pharaonic era in the burial chamber at a depth of 11 metres," a statement said, further indicating that the original tomb belonged to a priest called Sangem, while others were later buried in different chambers at the same site. The tomb was made of mud bricks and sports intertwining decorations.

The statement said another sarcophagus, made of wood, had not been opened since pharaohic times, however Archaeologist Abdel Hakim Karar said ancient grave robbers might have reached the grave first. The archaeologists expect to open it later this week and expect to find lucky charm among the mummy wrappings.

**Libya: Parliamentarians delay Gaddafi's oil revenue plan: [afrol News](#), 4 March: *By staff writer.***

Libyan parliament has put on hold the implementation of Muammar Gaddafi's ambitious plan to distribute oil proceeds among the people, state media has reported. In September last year, President Gaddafi promised to distribute oil revenues to all citizens as part of a political reform and to root out endemic corruption in government the beginning of 2009, marking the anniversary of a coup that brought him to power on 1 September, 1969. Libya's official Jamahiriya News Agency said that 251 of the 468 of the country's Basic People's Congresses had approved the plan in principle, but voted to delay implementation until special measures are set in place.

The Libyan leader, who has strongly advocated for the country to hand out oil revenues to the people would have distributed about US\$32 billion this year alone to the ordinary citizens. The country's five million people has about a million of the poorest who could reportedly receive up to 30,000 dinars (\$22,990) a year each if the parliament would endorse the revenue plan.

The president's plan was initially planned to afford Libyans an opportunity to create their own investments and businesses with the money. Mr Gaddafi had accused state bank officials of having stolen millions in public funds and with further complaints by Libyans of corruption, mismanagement and nepotism on state assets. Much of what Col Gaddafi said endorsed the recent calls made by his son, Sayf al-Islam Gaddafi who announced his retirement from politics in August. Libya currently produces around 1.8 million barrels a day of crude oil.

**Morocco: Morocco convicts 18 terrorists: [afrol News](#), 27 February: *By staff writer.***

A Moroccan court has sentenced 18 people to jail terms ranging between three and 15 years for their alleged involvement in a series of bombings in May 2003 in the country's economic capital Casablanca, local reports have said. National news agency, MAP said Saad El Housseini, the chemist who put together the bombs, was jailed for 15 years, while seventeen others received sentences ranging from three and 15 years. He was

charged with raising and managing funds, and inciting on preparing terror acts.

A former resident of Spain, Mr El Housseini allegedly spent time in Afghanistan in 2002 where he reportedly received training in Afghanistan on the handling of light arms and the manufacturing of explosives and street lights. He was also allegedly involved in the 2004 Madrid bombings. In December 2007, he was interrogated by a Spanish judge in charge of investigating the bombings. The six near-simultaneous bombings in Casablanca in 2003 killed 45 people including 12 suicide bombers. Morocco jailed hundreds of suspected militants under the anti-terror laws passed in response to those attacks.

**Morocco: Allow Sahrawis self determination – UN envoy:** [afrol News](#), 23 February:  
*By staff writer.*

The United Nation's new envoy to the Western Sahara has maintained the Saharawi people's right to self-determination, a position that analysts fear could complicate negotiations with Morocco. Morocco which has annexed Western Sahara territory since 1976 has been a cause for concern and a feud on its neighbours and the country's main militant group, Polisario which claims to be fighting for its independence from Morocco.

The envoy Christopher Ross who is in Tindouf about 2,000 kilometers southwest of Algiers said his mission in north Africa is to revive negotiations between Polisario Front and Morocco for a solution allowing the Sahrawi people's right to self-determination. Talks between Morocco and the Polisario independence movement have stalled for nearly a year since Morocco backtracked on the UN plan for a referendum to determine Western Sahara's future. "I am in Tindouf to inquire about Polisario Front position and its view on the modalities to be implemented to progress in the UN-brokered negotiations, in a series of decisions, for a mutually acceptable solution which takes into account the Sahrawi people's right to self-determination," Mr Ross said. The Sahrawi leadership has in the past expressed disappointment with the UN which in 1991 reached a ceasefire agreement between Polisartio and Morocco and was to organise a referendum over independence of the Sahrawi citizens.

However, the UN never managed to organise such a referendum due to Morocco's wrecking of the process, and during the last few years, with the UN mediators having strayed from the original ceasefire agreement. Morocco wants to reopen talks with the condition that they focus only on its autonomy plan, not a referendum. The referendum plan included in the cease-fire deal that never took place because the two sides cannot agree on voting lists. Morocco wants to include the 100,000 settlers it brought to Western Sahara, while the Polisario wants to count only the original residents and the 160,000 Saharawi refugees now living in camps near Algeria.

**Algeria: Algeria announces presidential candidates for April polls:** [afrol News](#), 3 March :

The Algerian constitutional council has announced six presidential election contenders for the April 2009 election. The official campaigning will begin on 19 March and lasts until 7 April. The council president, Boualem Bessaih, said only six contenders of the 13 have met the constitutional requirements which requires candidates to get at least 600 signatures from elected officials and 75 000 from voters. President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, Ms Louisa Hanoune, the two Islamist politicians, Mohammed Said and Djahid Younsie and Nationalists Moussa Touati and Fawzi Rebaine have been approved by the Constitutional Council for the 9 April polls. However, opposition parties have reportedly claimed to boycott the coming elections, alleging that they are already rigged for Mr Bouteflika who will be seeking a third term in the elections but as an independent candidate.

The Algerian parliament last year approved and enacted the law that abolished term limits for presidents, giving the 71-year-old President Bouteflika a chance to tighten his grip on power. His leadership has overseen a return to relative peace, though there has been a series of suicide bombings over the last two years blamed on militants linked to al-Qaeda.

**Algeria: Government restricts opposition ahead of elections:** [afrol News](#), 5 March: *By staff writer.*

Algerian government has limited opposition activities of influencing election candidates to pull off the April presidential elections. The opposition parties had on Tuesday announced a boycott of the elections, alleging that they are already rigged for President Abdelaziz Bouteflika. Algerian Interior Minister Nour A-Din Yazid Zarhouni said any activity within the framework of the election campaign is permitted saying the opposition campaign could lead candidates to pull out of the election campaign.

The elections have come under spotlight and criticisms from both the opposition and local and international rights organisations because of a controversial amendment passed in November, which allows President Bouteflika to seek a third term in office. Mr Bouteflika's supporters say if the president remains in power, he would continue the reconstruction of the country, which was devastated in years of violence in the 1990s that killed more than 150,000 people.

Critics say the president is seeking to consolidate his position in power in the North African country and prevent new players from entering the political system. However, President Bouteflika said he would stand as an independent candidate in the upcoming general election to pursue his national reconciliation policy, as well as to fight terrorism while leaving the door open to those who would rescind their decision not to commit terrorism. The 71-year-old president, a veteran of Algerian politics was first elected in 1999. He has overseen a return to relative peace, though there has been a series of suicide bombings over last two years blamed on militants linked to al-Qaeda. Earlier this week, the Algerian constitutional council announced the six presidential election candidates including one woman contesting the highest post in the country.

**Algeria: Bouteflika to seek third term as independent candidate:**[afrol News](#), 13 February: *By staff writer.*

Algerian opposition has condemned President Abdelaziz Bouteflika endorsement as a presidential candidate for the 9 April elections despite having announced to contest as an independent candidate. The opposition parties have said President Bouteflika's run for the third term will compromise the country's young democracy. "This could derail the already shaky democracy and could worsen the country's fight against terrorism," an opposition official said.

Mr Bouteflika is expected to win the April election as his tough competitors have dropped off the campaign trail in November last year after the country amended the constitution to abolish presidential term limits. President Bouteflika said he would stand as an independent candidate in the upcoming general election to pursue his national reconciliation policy, as well as fight terrorism while leaving the door open to those who would rescind their decision not to commit terrorism. "That is why, God willing, I have decided to run in the presidential elections as an independent candidate," Mr Bouteflika said.

The President's supporters widely claim that he deserves the continued trust of the people for having put Algeria back on the path to stability after what most people described as an undeclared civil war that raged through most of the 1990s and led to a loss of lives and property. The 71-year-old president, a veteran of Algerian politics was first elected in 1999. He has overseen a return to relative peace, though there has been a series of suicide bombings over last two years blamed on militants linked to al-Qaeda.

He then won his 2004 re-election by a landslide. International observers hailed that vote as one of the Arab world's most open, despite persistent suspicions of foul play. Bouteflika said he would devote his third term to pursuing "the implementation of my program, notably national reconciliation," a reference to a program including amnesty for former militants that is aimed at healing the wounds of an Islamic insurgency that ravaged the country in the 1990s.

Algeria is a major producer of oil and gas and has launched an ambitious economic development programme using profits from sale of hydrocarbons.

**Algeria: Algeria to embark on health infrastructure development:**[afrol News](#), 12 February: *By staff writer.*

Algeria has announced €20 billion investment plan to revamp the old and decaying hospitals and to modernise its health infrastructure between 2009 and 2025. The official at the Ministry of Health, Slim Belkessam said management of health sector has decided to set aside €20 billion for the construction of new health facilities to reduce congestion in the public health centres and to modernise the existing hospitals.

The official said the health scheme will build new hospitals, new anti-cancer centres, and



maternity homes, close old hospitals and provide better coverage throughout the country. The programme, which is funded by the State, aims to double in 2025, the rate of beds per population which currently stands at 1.7 per 1,000. The plan also includes 88 new hospitals and 758 new sanitary projects. According to the official, Algeria wants to be prepared to cope with the increase in non communicable diseases such as cancer which 30,000 new cases are reported every year, hypertension or heart disease, which have become dominant and claiming many lives in the country. Non communicable diseases now represent 70 percent of causes of death against 20 percent twenty years ago according to national statistics. In 2005, Algeria launched a five-year programme of public investment of €3 billion for the construction of new health infrastructure.



# **BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD**

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## BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

Weekly Presentation: March 18 2009

### Sub-Saharan Africa +Focus on the Sudan (2)

Abbas S Lamptey

Period: From 8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2009

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#### THE HEADLINES

#### 48. FOCUS ON SUDAN

- Sudan released opposition leader (Hassan Al-Turabi) discusses detention: Tuesday, 10 March 2009: Source: [Los Angeles Times](#): Nasser Nasser / Associated Press:
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- a. Nigeria: Homosexuals Storm National Assembly: Tashikalmah Hallah:12 March 2009:Daily Trust.
- b. Ghana: Incarcerating People Without Warrant is Unacceptable: Charles Takyi-Boadu:9 March 2009:The Chronicle.
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- f. Cameroon: Special Fund Strives for Health Improvement: Nkeze Mbonwoh: 10 March 2009: [Cameroon Tribune](#).

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- b. Ghana: NCOM Faults EPA On Newmont Akyem Project: Daniel Nonor: 13 March 2009: [The Chronicle](#).
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**Sudan released opposition leader (Hassan Al-Turabi) discusses detention :Tuesday, 10 March 2009:Source: Los Angeles Times:Nasser Nasser / Associated Press:**

**Sudanese dissident Hassan Turabi, one of Africa's prominent Islamists, was arrested in January after calling on the president to turn himself in on war crimes charges. Turabi, now home, says the regime has lost legitimacy. Hassan Turabi talks to The Times about his two-month imprisonment.**

Reporting from Khartoum, Sudan. Hours after his release from a two-month stint in prison, Sudanese opposition leader Hassan Turabi looked fit and chipper Monday in the reception hall of his Khartoum home. If he was tired at all, it was from the stream of dignitaries, political leaders and family members who came to celebrate his surprise release. One of Africa's most influential and controversial Islamists, Turabi was arrested in January after he called for Sudanese President Omar Hassan Ahmed Bashir to turn himself over to the International Criminal Court to face prosecution over his government's counter-insurgency campaign in the Darfur region. **Turabi has been in and out of prison for the last 40 years thanks to his Zelig-like tendency to be at the center of most of the nation's post-independence coups.** He helped Bashir topple the elected government in 1989, was instrumental in imposing Islamic law and was dubbed the "Pope of Terrorism" for inviting Islamic extremists such as Osama bin Laden to live in Sudan during the 1990s. After a political break with Bashir in 1999, his views have become more moderate and he has called for democratic reforms. **He's also emerged as the government's most outspoken critic.** But if Bashir hoped that a couple of months in solitary confinement would quiet the 76-year-old Turabi, he'll be disappointed. During an interview Monday with The Times, Turabi reiterated his support for the ICC case, called the Sudanese leader an "autocrat" and said the crisis had left the government in disarray.

**How were you treated?** You've said in the past you don't always mind jail because it gives you a chance to read and reflect. I've been detained many times, but this time was the worst. They close you up in a room by yourself. They denied me radio. They denied me even something to read.

**Why were you released?** Why was I detained? Do you think they deliberate on these things and then come to a resolution? They don't. It's all temperamental. It's the whim of the president. They probably arrested me because I was one of the only voices for international justice, though they never allowed my statements to [be reported in the Sudanese media]. There is a state of confusion now. They react. They say terrible things

against the world. They have become a little bit irrational. They probably thought [my arrest] could consolidate public opinion, but nobody is behind them. People just come when they are told to come for assemblies and repeat the slogans. It reminds me of the time of [Sudanese President Jaafar Numeiri, who was toppled by popular uprisings in 1985]. The day he collapsed, his party completely disbanded.

**You think support for Bashir's ruling party is that shallow?** Surely. Has the ICC arrest warrant against Bashir made him stronger or weaker? Public opinion now has almost canceled the legitimacy of this whole regime. They are much weaker. This may unfortunately encourage regional resistance. **What do you mean?** I don't know what will happen in the south. [Former southern rebels in the Sudan People's Liberation Movement have formed a fragile unity government with Bashir's ruling party.] They are staying away right now. But if things get very bad, they may go completely for a state of independence. Now he's even lost support of the Egyptians, who wanted to organize a conference [about the ICC arrest warrant], but the government said they would not go. He's using no diplomacy at all.

**It doesn't sound as if jail has silenced you.** They must know by now that you don't silence someone by sending them to jail. Probably it makes them more outspoken. You were just about the only voice in Sudan to endorse the ICC case against Bashir. Do you still feel that way? Yes, of course. International relations are based on justice. People are saying, "They are against the country." It's not against the company, it's against the manager. This is against an individual. Don't tell me that if we lose him, we lose the whole country. We have a constitution. Don't you worry that they will send you back to jail for saying things like that? You can't predict what they will do because they don't think logically. They may do it. They may not. You once said that former friends make the bitterest enemies.

**Do you think that plays a role in your friction with Bashir?** We differ on principles. Democracy. Elections. He's a soldier. He's an autocrat who believes in highly concentrated power.

**Why has the opposition been so quiet about the ICC or supportive of Bashir?** They've shied away from it. They've been paid or bought, and they probably fear detention.

**Some in the West predict that the ICC case will prompt a coup or regime change. What do you think?** There are so many armies and armed forces. The southerners have their own. The Westerners. The U.N. and the international forces. It's not a country where there is just one army that might think about it. That makes it difficult.

**The government is expelling more than a dozen aid groups. Do you think we'll see more of that kind of action?** They don't know what they are doing. There is a sense of crisis. They are confused. It was probably an act of temper.

**Will the ICC case help or hurt the peace process in Darfur?**

It will make the rebels be sharper and more aggressive, and less likely to negotiate. They will feel as though the political legitimacy of the system is now in doubt.

**What will you do next?** People are worried now about the whole country. I don't mind talking to anyone; even if the president asks me, I'll advise him and say my words plainly. I'd advise him to behave better.

**Do you think those in the government would seek your advice?** Not officially. Probably in the next few days some will come in the night to see me. They keep it very private. **Edmund.sanders@latimes.com**

**Rwanda: In Bashir's ICC Troubles, Africa's Collective Dithering Continues: Kelvin Odoobo: 14 March 2009: The New Times.opinion.**

Kigali — If you put all African political leaders in one room, you are most likely not going to get a lasting solution to a problem, especially if the decision is a highly urgent one with dire implications. The Darfur debacle is but one of a long list of such crises. As the International Criminal Court (ICC) issues an arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir for alleged crimes against humanity, genocide, and war crimes the African Union instead sends a team to the United Nations to plead for more time. More time is the classic catch, while more people are dying every day from a slow and quite genocide, which the world is yet to decide whether it is to be called genocide, or not.

Remember Rwanda in 1994! Must more people die, while African leaders are still checking their own eyes for logs before they take a stand? It smirks of Zimbabwe. The grandmaster of post-independence pan-African big man syndrome, Robert Mugabe knows very well that no African leader will dare finger him for rigging an election with state inspired violence, because nobody is too clean. They left empty barking without bite for another victim of electoral fraud up North in Raila Odinga.

Thabo Mbeki, easily the most powerful president in sub-Saharan Africa then, succumbs to the same 'pandemic'. Please, let Tsvangirai in, please for the sake of Zimbabweans, while the neighbours look on in collective fear. The one bare Levy Mwanawasa going home too short of the goal of setting the record straight about the injustices his fellow Africans have to endure in Zimbabwe. No wonder all one Muammar al-Gaddafi grand plans to forge a United States of Africa, do not meet any open opposition, only unsatisfied grunts. Bashir might be a sitting president, but that is not a free license to arm the Janjaweed to cleanse out citizens of Darfur. If we let him because he might kill more people in anger, then we might as well go for him, because either way his Janjaweed will

kill. May be Mugabe and the like will take notice. If the American president can get away with the Iraq debacle, it does not mean we should let Bashir off the hook. Iraq belongs to them and Darfur to us.

And why should African countries threaten to withdraw the ratification of the ICC? Why is the ICC impartial when it is Milosevic, Bemba or Lubanga and not Bashir, because he is one of us? African leaders can only make sense of the African Union by making sober and fast decisions when African lives are under threat. Darfurians may be worse off because of the ICC arrest warrant, but in future, that single decision may prevent another Darfur debacle from the impunity of sorting out an opposition movement the way Bashir usually sorts out his. Perhaps, African leaders should take a leaf from President Kagame. Instead of crying fowl to the African Union and the UN to help sort out a Congo-Rwanda issue, bring the supposed foes and identify your common interest - security, and common differences - war mongers - map out a joint plan and while other leaders are blaming, theorizing and conspiring. He showed leadership in seeing Operation Umoja Wetu through.

Imagine if he had invited the African Union camaraderie into the issue. It would have been reduced into the latest verbal circus. No wonder, everybody went mum, when everything went according to plan. If Bashir is alleged to have committed crimes against humanity in Darfur, they should let him defend himself. If he is innocent and if the west wants to re-impose colonialism on Sudan as he claims, then let him prove them wrong the way Madam Rose Kabuye has embarrassed them. After all, they are just allegations, not admission of guilt.

**Sudan: Legitimacy of Global Court Questioned Over Warrant: Thalif Deen:9 March 2009; inter press service news agency.**

The ongoing political crisis in Sudan is expected to worsen in the face of a rash of threats and warnings following the indictment last week of President Omar Hassan al-Bashir by the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague. The beleaguered Sudanese president has threatened to expel diplomats from Khartoum and throw out more humanitarian organisations - in addition to the 13 that were run out of town last week - in retaliation for the indictment. At the same time, there is considerable speculation that some, or all, of the 30 African countries who are state parties (of a total of 108) to the Rome Statute that created the ICC, may decide to pull out, threatening the virtual collapse of the world's key criminal court. Michael Ratner, president of the New York-based Centre for Constitutional Rights, told IPS the creation of the ICC was a major step forward in accountability for human rights atrocities.

"Withdrawal is not great for the court's legitimacy, but it is the United States and other major powers that have done most to diminish its power," he pointed out. The U.S. failure to join (the ICC), and its undercutting of the court, has sent the message that this is a court that can act against weaker states. "It gives those states an excuse for questioning the court's legitimacy, especially when coupled with the court's failure to act against those from Western states," said Ratner, who is also an adjunct professor of law at Columbia

University where he lectures on human rights litigation. "Unless (Luis) Moreno-Ocampo (the Chief ICC Prosecutor) includes human rights violators from these states as seriously within his mandate, the court is in trouble," he said.

The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) ran a secret torture site in Poland, an ICC state. "But where is the court?" Ratner asked. Last week's arrest warrant on al-Bashir charged him with war crimes in the strife-torn region of Darfur, one of the world's volatile political hotspots. The conflict has resulted in 300,000 dead and 2.7 million displaced, according to U.N. estimates. Many international rights groups welcomed the announcement of the warrant against Bashir, who has been accused of orchestrating mass killings and ethnic cleansing of villages in the region through 'Janjaweed' militias. However, the much-heralded criminal court has so far put only one culprit on trial, Thomas Lubanga, a warlord from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and convicted none, six years after the ICC's creation. Of the 13 against whom warrants have been issued by the ICC, four are in custody, the rest are fugitives or presumed dead. All 13 are either from Uganda, DRC, the Central African Republic or Sudan.

The arrest warrant on al-Bashir was unprecedented because it was issued for the first time on a sitting head of state. According to published figures, an estimated 300,000 people have died in Darfur, either due to the ongoing conflict or disease and malnutrition. The deaths have occurred over the past five years. A group of rebels has been fighting government forces and their proxies, the Janjaweed Arab militia men, since 2003. Still, a legitimate question that is being asked by some Africans defies answer: why is the ICC focusing mostly on African leaders and African warlords? But supporters of the Court, including Nobel Laureate Desmond Tutu, say that active ICC investigations in Africa are not because of prosecutorial prejudice but because three of the countries involved (Central African Republic, DRC and Uganda) themselves requested ICC intervention.

Since Sudan is not a State party to the ICC, the Sudanese case was referred to the court by the 15-member U.N. Security Council, which has a legitimate right to do so, according to the Rome Statute. But despite this defence, an African diplomat told IPS: "Still, aren't there any perceived war criminals in the U.S. and Western Europe?" In Iraq, over one million people - mostly civilians - have been killed since the U.S. invasion about six years ago. In Afghanistan, thousands of civilians have been killed by U.S. and NATO military forces. The killings have been euphemistically described as "collateral damage." And more recently in Gaza, over 1,000 Palestinians, mostly civilians, were killed by the Israelis.

An indignant Sudanese Ambassador Abdalmahmood Abdalhaleem Mohamad described the international justice system as "Euro-American." It's the same justice system, he said, that callously witnessed the destruction of Iraq, Afghanistan and Gaza, but never did anything about it.

The United States, which like Sudan is also not a party to the ICC, negotiated immunity from war crimes prosecution for its soldiers - if and when they serve in U.N. peacekeeping missions. "America is an opportunist country," the Sudanese envoy said.

"They want to use the ICC without being a party to it." In effect, he said, U.S. soldiers can have immunity, but not the president of Sudan. At a U.N. press conference last week, he also challenged reporters to show him any photographs or television footage from Darfur that would equal the destruction of human lives and homes in Gaza, Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Show me a single footage," he demanded of journalists, none of whom responded. "It's a big lie. And lies have become a weapon of mass destruction in our situation," he added. He also pointed out that the United States once destroyed a pharmaceutical factory in Sudan based on false intelligence that it was a Sudanese chemicals weapons factory.

At the recent conference in Sharm al-Shaik, the United States and Western donors pledged about 5.0 billion dollars to reconstruct Gaza which was bombed by Israel during its 22-day conflict with Hamas. "Did anybody ask who was accountable for this damage and destruction?" Asked why Sudan was being singled out, the Sudanese envoy said Western nations were eyeing Sudan's newly-discovered oil riches in one of the largest countries in Africa. The Western nations have been marginalised, both in oil exploration and arms supplies, by China, which is one of Sudan's closest political, economic and military allies, according to an African diplomat.

"The UK and France harbour a desire to revive their colonial dreams in Sudan," the Sudanese envoy said. Sudan has said it rejects the warrant on its president and will refuse to cooperate with the ICC. The Sudanese government seems to have the political support of several powerful regional and international organisations: the African Union, the League of Arab States, the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Non-Aligned Movement, all of which collectively account for more than two-thirds of the U.N.'s 192 member states. As a result, it is very unlikely that any country, particularly Arab or African, will follow up the ICC warrant by arresting al-Bashir if he lands on their soil.

The Sudanese president is expected to defy the ICC warrant by attending an upcoming summit meeting in Qatar (which incidentally is not a state party to the ICC). When Richard Dicker of Human Rights Watch was asked about the double standards in the international justice system, he admitted there was no denying the fledgling system was "flawed" and the playing field was uneven - between Westerners and the rest of the world. "But to those who said such tribunals would never indict an American or European leader, (the ICC) decision nevertheless showed that not even the president of a country was above the law. The work was how to correct the imperfections in the system." Asked about ICC's double standards, Ratner of the Centre for Constitutional Rights told IPS: "The court and some human rights groups seem to think that the best strategy is to go after the easy targets that don't have a lot of political power." "As can be seen, this is a mistake. It is a short-sighted strategy that will delegitimise the court. It gives the weaker countries an excuse," he said.

**Sudan: Why Has the ICC Picked On Bashir As Their First Target? Norbert Mao: 9 March 2009: column: The New vision.**



Kampala — It is no secret that the International Criminal Court (ICC) has been investigating and is still investigating several cases of war crimes and crimes against humanity in the Great Lakes region of Africa. As the peace talks between the Uganda Government and the LRA progressed, the ICC found its role to be a major topic of discussion. Now the ICC has announced its most daring action—issuing a warrant of arrest against a sitting head of state. This is within the ICC's mandate because the Rome Statute, which sets up the ICC, does not recognise the domestic immunity from prosecution that constitutionally applies to a head of state like Omar Bashir.

As long as there is sufficient evidence that you have committed war crimes or crimes against humanity the fact that you are a head of state will not stop the ICC from indicting you and issuing a warrant for your arrest. The case against Bashir revolves around Darfur and the atrocities committed in the course of the war pitting the Darfur rebels against the Sudan Government and the militias allied to it. In this clash the people of Darfur have suffered and continue to suffer gravely. Attempts have been made at peace talks to end the war in Darfur but so far no conclusive deal has been reached.

The humanitarian crisis in Darfur has attracted a lot of international attention and many world leaders have blamed Khartoum for complicity in the atrocities and also for not doing enough to protect civilians let alone end the war through a political solution. Despite the peace deal concluded between Khartoum and the SPLA/M and Khartoum's attempts to dissociate itself from terrorist groups, many in the Western world still treat Khartoum as a pariah state. Not only has Khartoum been linked to the LRA but also to the Osama bin Laden outfit. For this reason, Khartoum's charm offensive mounted since September 11 has not paid huge dividends in the West. The reason for this is simple: the LRA and Darfur. Like most wars, the war in Darfur has many actors with blood on their hands. So why has the ICC chosen to pin down Bashir and make him their first target? The ICC has many intelligent people and I am sure they took into account all things that would happen in case they decided to issue a warrant of arrest for the Sudanese president. They must have considered the repercussion of this step. So why did they go ahead regardless?

Let us consider the case of northern Uganda for comparison. Like Darfur, northern Uganda has seen unspeakable atrocities at the hands of rebels and also government forces. It is for this reason that in Juba there was a proposal for a Truth and Reconciliation commission to deal with the crimes committed in the course of the war. Yet when the Uganda government referred the case against the LRA to the ICC, it focused more on crimes by the LRA than those by the government forces. This created a controversy and put the ICC in a tight corner. To extricate itself, the ICC hosted delegations from Uganda in order to deal with concerns and also to explain itself. At that time the ICC was accused of having a blind spot for the crimes of the Uganda army and was thus lacking the impartiality to satisfy all victims of war crimes. The ICC claimed that it was investigating all crimes but to date no action has been taken with regard to crimes by the Uganda government forces. While it is true that the scale of LRA atrocities were more dramatic and may threaten to crowd out the crimes of the Uganda army, there is something that the ICC has glossed over in the case of Uganda. That is the forced

displacement of hundreds of thousands of people in the war zones of northern Uganda. While it is true that some civilians fled their villages voluntarily to seek safety elsewhere, the majority of those who ended up in camps were forced there. Military commanders gave villagers limited time (in some cases no more than 48 hours) to leave their villages or else they would be treated like rebels! The motive for concentrating people in the camps was said to be the safety of the civilians and also to isolate the rebels and deny them sanctuary in the scattered villages.

As we talk now, it is an established fact that the squalid conditions in the camps led to more deaths of children and civilian adults than direct rebel violence! The question the ICC was asked was how it was to assign responsibility for the concentration camps that may not have been created with genocidal intent but ended up having genocidal effect. What was most disturbing was that the LRA still managed to attack some of these camps and kill civilians under the watch of the Uganda army. For generations, we shall still be dealing with the consequences of these so-called IDP camps and wondering whether it was a deliberate policy to subjugate a people or simply a well-intentioned policy gone wrong. That is why the ICC's arrest warrant against Bashir is causing a lot of debate in northern Uganda. Not only is this development likely to make the LRA cagier but also bring out their worst fears. During my journeys to the LRA hideout in Garamba they always asked whether the Uganda government would not be forced to give in to the ICC demands given that even the Nigerian strongman Olusegun Obasanjo was forced to hand over Charles Taylor. But the more important debate is about the possibility of the ICC revisiting their files on northern Uganda and responding to calls for action against Uganda government officials who may be responsible for the anguish of northern Uganda alongside the LRA. Kampala is not Khartoum and Museveni is not Bashir but if the ICC is still the ICC then we are in for very interesting times.

**Nigeria: Nigeria Supports AU's Position on Al-Bashir's Arrest Warrant: Aisha Umar:13 March 2009:Daily Trust.**

Sudan Minister of International Cooperation Eltigani Fedail said Nigeria confirmed its support for the position of African Union on the warrant of arrest on President Al-bashir of Sudan by the International Criminal Court (ICC). Briefing journalists after meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs Chief Ojo Madukwe in Abuja yesterday, Mr Fedail said Nigeria is committed to having peace in Sudan and that it support for the ICC warrant of arrest on President Al-bashir will not help to restore peace in the country. He said Sudan government under President Al-bashir has allocated \$1 billion on infrastructural development in Darfur, stressing that Al-bashir is the only president in Sudan that was able to sign peace agreement on conflict of over 20 years in Darfur.

He stated t "80 percent of the peace agreement has been implemented and the remaining 20 percent is on process but we cannot do more unless we have peace." He said the peace agreement includes power sharing, wealth sharing and security sharing, which was signed in Abuja, adding that after Abuja signing of the agreement they now have about 20 rebel groups without political vision and leader refusing to sign the agreement. He dismissed ICC accusation that President Al-bashir used hunger to eliminate groups in

Darfur, saying that the Sudan president provided food when there was gap in Darfur."Before we have one airport in Sudan but we now have two and one under construction, three universities now in Darfur, which we didn't have before, 500mega watt electricity signed to be provided for Darfur, and increase in water supply and hospitals"."We have more than 80 NGO's in Sudan and we appreciate the work some are doing but the problem with some they exceed there humanitarian mandate and extend to political issues, we have human rights monitors, United Nations Criminal Rights Monitors who do there work and should be allowed to do there work. Sudan is a country with sovereignty and we will not accept interference with our internal affairs," he said.

**Sudan: Museveni, Kiir Discuss Bashir Fate:Henry Mukasa:12 March 2009:The New Vision.**

Kampala — SUDAN President Omar el-Bashir's arrest should be deferred and tied to progress in the peace process in Darfur, President Yoweri Museveni has said.Museveni supported the African Union's call for "provisional immunity" for the sake of peace.The International Criminal Court has issued a warrant of arrest for Bashir for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur. Bashir denies the charges.

The UN estimates that 300,000 people died and 2.7 million displaced since rebels took up arms in 2003 demanding more resources and power from Khartoum.Standing side by-side with Kiir, Museveni said it would be reasonable to ask the United Nations Security Council to defer the indictment provided the delay was tied to the performance of the peace process.Museveni said at a time when Burundi was torn apart by war and some leaders were wanted for human rights violations, provisional immunity granted to them pushed the peace process forward.Museveni said he discussed the indictment with Bashir at the AU summit in Ethiopia.

He said the AU had sent a high powered delegation, led by former South Africa President Thabo Mbeki, to Khartoum and Darfur."I don't want to condemn Bashir nor do I want to condone his actions," Museveni said.But as the AU probes the crimes, he said, other options needed to be weighed because it was complicated to arrest someone who is running a country.Kiir said the best option was to suspend the indictment since the peace agreements concluded in Sudan could still be executed."That's the position of AU: to work for development," Kiir said. "The agreements are there to be implemented, indictment or no indictment."

Asked if he would arrest Bashir on behalf of the ICC if he travelled to the south, where he is the president, Kiir said: "I am not the police of the ICC."African and Arab countries, along with China and Russia, want the delay of the warrant fearing it will damage the Darfur peace efforts. But the US, the UK and France have rejected the call.After the warrant was issued, Sudan immediately expelled 13 aid agencies, accusing them of taking 99% of the budget for humanitarian work themselves, and giving the people of Darfur 1%.He threatened to kick out more foreign workers if they did not obey Sudan's laws. The UN said expelling charities puts more than one million lives at risk.

Commenting on his meeting with Kiir, Museveni said they discussed trade between Uganda, South Sudan and East Africa. He thanked Kiir for South Sudan's role in brokering the failed peace talks with LRA and its support to the on-going military offensive against the rebels in DRC. Kiir agreed with Museveni. "There are problems faced by business people which need to be addressed by both sides," he stated. On Kony, he said: "When Kony decided not to sign the agreed document on November 29, 2008, he opted for the military action."

**Sudan: Darfur - UN, Govt Assess Humanitarian Needs After Ouster of Aid Groups:11 March 2009:UN NEWS SERVICE.**

A joint United Nations and Sudanese Government mission to evaluate the need for food, water, health and emergency shelter in Darfur commenced today, as the humanitarian community attempts to recover from the expulsion of 13 major aid groups assisting some 4.7 million people. The expulsions started immediately after the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Darfur. As of 10 March, 183 international staff of the affected non-governmental organizations (NGOs) had already left the country, with others awaiting exit visas to depart, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). A UN spokesperson in New York said today that in addition to Darfur other areas of North Sudan would be deeply affected by the expulsions. For example, Abyei, Blue Nile State, and Southern Kordofan State were located on the front lines of the North-South civil war and some of the expelled NGOs had provided health, nutrition, water, sanitation, education, food security, and other assistance to hundreds of thousands of people there. In addition, concern for the safety of all humanitarian staff continues following repeated incidents of intimidation and harassment and reported efforts to confiscate NGO, UN, and donor-owned equipment.

The UN has requested the Government of Sudan to return all confiscated items, UN Spokesperson Marie Okabe said. Meanwhile, the African Union-UN mission in Darfur (UNAMID) reports that a peaceful demonstration made up mostly of youth and labour movement figures took place today in Nyala, South Darfur, condemning the ICC decision to indict President Al-Bashir. Despite being hit by another carjacking last night, UNAMID said its operations proceeded normally today, conducting 51 military and 96 police patrols around villages and displaced persons camps in the past 24 hours. At the same time, there has been some diplomatic activity on Darfur, Ms. Okabe said, reporting that representatives of the Government of Sudan and the rebel Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) recommitted themselves to a negotiated settlement to the conflict, at a meeting in Doha, Qatar, facilitated by UN-AU Joint Chief Mediator Djibril Bassolé. Mr. Bassolé intends to meet with the representatives of other rebel movements and regional countries in the coming days in an effort to broaden the participation in the Doha talks. He is scheduled to brief the Security Council on the Darfur political process on 26 March.

**Sudan: Obama Condemns Expulsion of Aid Agencies:John Allen:11 March 2009:allafrica.**

In his most important intervention on Africa policy since his inauguration, President Barack Obama of the United States has condemned Sudan's expulsion of international aid agencies from Darfur. Speaking [Tuesday night after an Oval Office meeting](#) with Ban Ki-Moon, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Obama characterized the Sudanese response to the International Criminal Court's indictment of President Omar al-Bashir on war crimes charges as one of having "kicked out some of the most important non-governmental organizations that provide direct humanitarian aid to millions of people who've been internally displaced..."

This had created "a potential crisis of even greater dimensions" than was previously the case in Sudan, Obama added. He said he had impressed upon Ban the importance of sending "a strong, unified, international message that it is not acceptable to put that many people's lives at risk; that we need to be able to get those humanitarian organizations back on the ground; and that the United States wants to work as actively as possible with the UN to try to resolve the immediate humanitarian crisis and to start putting us on a path for long-term peace and stability in the Sudan." Obama was speaking [after coming under criticism](#) for his administration's failure to make any significant pronouncements on Africa so far. In recent days, [members of Congress have called on him](#) to act quickly to appoint a high-profile special envoy to focus on the crisis in Sudan.

Last week Obama [extended the sanctions](#) imposed by his predecessor, George W. Bush, on Zimbabwean leaders whom the United States accuses of undermining democracy in the country. But he gave a higher profile to his remarks on Darfur by making them to White House correspondents after an Oval Office meeting.

### **Sudan: South Preparing for Possible Influx From Darfur:13 March 2009:IRIN.**

Juba — The expulsion or closure of 16 relief agencies in Darfur could trigger an exodus into Southern Sudan, aid officials warned. In preparation, the UN and the Southern Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (SSRRC) are preparing for potential inflows of Darfuris, said Lise Grande, the UN's Deputy Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Southern Sudan. "Here in the South, under the SSRRC, we are going to have a contingency planning exercise that will look at how we might try and mount support," Grande said.

"There are technical assessments going on between the [Khartoum government's] Humanitarian Aid Commission in the North and the UN agencies," Grande said on 13 March.

"They are creating assessments throughout the three Darfur states, looking at the gaps in assistance created by the departing NGOs." The expulsions are expected to leave an estimated 1.1 million people, especially in Darfur, without food, 1.5 million without healthcare and more than a million without drinking water. "One of the things that those assessments will look at is possible migration flows," Grande said. Of particular concern were potential movements from south Darfur into the neighbouring South Sudanese state of Northern Bahr el Ghazal. "This is something that we may expect," Grande added,

warning that South Sudan already faced a major humanitarian crisis of its own. Attacks by the Ugandan Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) have affected more than 100,000 people in South Sudan, half of whom were children, she said. These included families in Western and Central Equatoria fleeing reprisal attacks by the rebels following a joint military operation against the LRA that began last December. "Assessments ... confirm that more than 100,000 people are vulnerable as a result of the upsurge of LRA attacks," said Grande. These include over 36,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) who fled their homes in South Sudan, and more than 16,000 refugees from the DRC. "An additional 50,000 people in host communities ... are reported to be vulnerable and need humanitarian assistance," Grande told reporters in Juba, capital of Southern Sudan.

**Conditions deteriorating** Conditions were growing worse, the UN warned in an additional statement. "Assessments confirm that food security and nutrition have deteriorated dramatically over the past three months," it said. "The incidence of communicable diseases has increased." More than 350 cases of watery diarrhoea, 230 of dysentery, 1,650 of malaria and 25 of measles were reported, according to UN and Southern Sudanese data. LRA units have scattered widely since the joint campaign by Ugandan, DR Congolese and South Sudanese forces. "Attacks by small groups of LRA soldiers are expected to continue, destabilising the area for the foreseeable future and creating humanitarian needs which cannot be met through existing resources," the UN statement noted.

**Extra support needed** More support, including seeds and farming tools, was needed. "The numbers are getting too big, and conditions are sliding," Grande said, adding that a request for extra support had been submitted to the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). "With the rains coming shortly, the next stage of the humanitarian operation is likely to be very costly," she added. Protection of the vulnerable - especially children and former abductees - was a "major gap" in the emergency response. Up to 2,000 unaccompanied or separated children needed help. Meanwhile, Grande expressed concern over a recent outbreak of "violent tribal clashes" in the Pibor region of Jonglei state. "We have preliminary reports that may indicate ... as many as 100 people have been killed," she said.

#### **Chad: Aid Groups On Alert After NGO Ouster From Darfur:10 March 2009:IRIN.**

Dakar — Aid agencies in eastern Chad are bracing for a possible influx of men, women and children from Darfur after the Sudanese government expelled NGOs providing water, food and health care to millions of people. Sudan on 4 March ordered the expulsion of 13 aid groups from Darfur following the International Criminal Court's arrest warrant for Sudan President Omar el-Bashir. UN aid agencies and NGOs in eastern Chad are set to meet on 11 March to finalise planning numbers for a potential influx, David Cibonga of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Abéché, eastern Chad, told IRIN.

The scarcity of natural resources like water and wood in eastern Chad already puts a strain on aid agencies, who are assisting a quarter-million Sudanese refugees, some

160,000 displaced Chadians and local populations there." [A significant influx] would be a real challenge particularly given the limited natural resources," Pauline Ballaman, Oxfam Intermon's emergency manager in Chad, told IRIN. "Water is in short supply in eastern Chad, as is firewood as well as sites to relocate refugees away from the border." NGOs with operations in eastern Chad told IRIN they are reviewing contingency stocks and determining possible staff and funding needs. "If people in West Darfur camps are deprived of essential assistance we cannot rule out the possibility that people will move into eastern Chad," said Philippe Conraud of Action Contre la Faim, which was expelled from Darfur and operates in Chad. "But it is far too early to say [whether this will happen]."

Kurt Tjossem, International Rescue Committee's regional director for the Horn of Africa and East Africa, said the expulsion of relief organisations "decimated" the aid effort in Darfur. "As life-saving services in some camps diminish, people may start searching for assistance elsewhere. Initially families may move relatively short distances to other camps that still have services, but it's possible that refugees could travel farther and cross borders." IRC also works in eastern Chad camps, where it would scale up health care and water and sanitation services if need be, Tjossem said. As of 10 March there were no reports of displaced Sudanese crossing into Chad, aid officials said. But aid workers in Darfur told IRIN once supplies run out in camps people are likely to move. "There will be little reason for people to stay and they will move to where they can find a better situation," said one international aid worker who recently worked in camps in West Darfur. "If you had no food, no water, no health care, what would you do? Without even basic support there will be nothing to stay for," said the aid worker who requested anonymity. One displaced person in the Abu Shouk camp in West Darfur told IRIN: "We rely on the aid agencies for food, for water and for when we get sick. If they go, what will happen to us here?"

**Sudan: UN Mission Reports Calm As President Visits Strife-Torn Darfur Region: 8 March 2009: UN NEWS SERVICE.**

Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir, who was indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) earlier this week, visited the war-ravaged Darfur region today, accompanied by the top United Nations official for Sudan among other members of the diplomatic corps. During the visit to the capital of North Darfur, El Fasher, where the hybrid African Union-UN peacekeeping operation in the region (UNAMID) is based, the President addressed the local population at a rally. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Sudan Ashraf Qazi arrived in El Fasher with Mr. Bashir, who the ICC has issued an arrest warrant against for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in the western region of Sudan.

Since the ICC made its decision, several humanitarian agencies, aiding some 4.7 million people in Darfur, have been barred from working in the region by Khartoum. "The Government of Sudan's order suspending 16 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) will have devastating implications for the citizens of Darfur," said a joint statement issued by six UN agencies, including UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UN High

Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). "Aid operations in North Sudan, the largest humanitarian emergency in the world costing over \$2 billion annually, will be irrevocably damaged," read the statement. Meanwhile UNAMID reported that the security situation in Darfur remains relatively calm with the exception of an increase in banditry in El Geneina, West Darfur. The UNAMID force and police continue to conduct their normal activities throughout the region and over the past 24 hours the blue helmets conducted 25 confidence-building patrols, seven escort convoys, 11 night patrols covering 40 villages/IDP camps, and 87 police patrols in and around camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs). On 6 March, UNAMID Police Commissioner Micheal Fryer led a night patrol to Zam Zam IDP camp, where he met the Umda, a traditional leader. An estimated 300,000 people have died in Darfur, either through direct combat or because of disease, malnutrition or reduced life expectancy, over the past five years in Darfur, where rebels have been fighting Government forces and allied Arab militiamen, known as the Janjaweed, since 2003.

### **Sudan: We Will Fill the Aid Gaps, Government Insists:10 March 2009:IRIN.**

Khartoum — The UN and the government do not have the capacity to fill all the gaps left by NGOs asked to stop working in Sudan, a top humanitarian official warned. "We do not, as the UN system, the NGOs do not ... and the [Sudanese] government does not have the capacity to replace all the activities that have been going on, certainly not on any short- or medium-term basis," the UN's top humanitarian official John Holmes said. Thirteen international and three local NGOs were shut down after the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant for President Omar el-Bashir on war crimes charges on 4 March. Bashir has said Sudan would fill the gap with national agencies, but aid workers said many organisations put forward as replacements were closely allied to the government, raising issues of independence and accountability were they to act as partners for foreign aid.

"It is not a question of simply handing out food; it will not reach the most vulnerable [and] can be manipulated to target select groups or cut out those who are not favoured," one aid worker said. "There must be a system of accountability; if not, donors will soon dry up." The expulsions, according to the UN, will leave 1.1 million people, especially in the western region of Darfur, without food, 1.5 million without healthcare and more than a million without drinking water. Aid workers in Khartoum warned that the camps in Darfur would reach crisis point "within a few weeks, perhaps even a fortnight", unless aid work resumed. "First the water supplies will go, without the technicians to repair [them]; then there will be problems with food supplies, then healthcare," said one.

**Agency "thieves"** Many Sudanese support Bashir. On 7 March, he described the expelled aid agencies as "thieves" who take "99 percent of the budget for humanitarian work themselves, giving the people of Darfur 1 percent". On the streets of Khartoum, many believe the ICC warrant was an attack on national pride, while the crisis in Darfur is far from their minds. "Why do the West come and want to attack Sudan?" asked



Mohamed Omar, who runs a small shop in Khartoum. They dismiss arguments that aid agencies want to support Sudanese in Darfur. "They don't want to help us, they want to take Sudan over again," said teacher Ahmed Saddiq. "The NGOs are spies in the work of their governments and the ICC. We don't need them, we can do this ourselves."

Sudanese media too has focused on support for Bashir, criticising the arrest warrant as a "neo-colonial" plot. "It is simply a new draconian strategy aimed at staging the scene for regime change," stated one editorial. One of Sudan's largest relief agencies, Sudan Social Development Organization (SUDO) - which supported some 700,000 displaced people from its 10 field offices - was also closed. "Our work is and has always been purely humanitarian and is mostly needed at this time of our country," SUDO said in a statement. "We believe that the decision of the commissioner contradicts the Sudanese laws and violates the constitutional rights."

**Camps threatened** Analysts say the move appears to be a deliberate attempt to break up the camps, dozens of which are scattered across Darfur to house the 2.7 million who have lost their homes in six years of heavy fighting. Some of the larger camps - grim settlements with only basic services in baking heat - house up to 90,000 people. "They [the government] see them as the backers of the rebel movements," one aid worker added. "They cannot directly force people to leave, so they are doing the next best thing: making life intolerable so that people have to go." Many parts of the camps most strongly opposed to the government allowed entry only to international relief organisations, many now expelled.

"The expulsions will hit these areas the hardest and the quickest," said a former worker in the Kalma camp in South Darfur. Sudanese media has called for the closure of the camps. "We urge ... the concerned authorities to start seriously working out a plan to enable IDPs to return to their villages and dismantling the camps," the Sudan Vision newspaper said in an editorial on 10 March.

The majority of the 6,500 humanitarian staff in the expelled agencies are Sudanese nationals, many with years of experience in Darfur. "I want to work again, to carry on my job, but we fear the government sees us as traitors because we worked for those they say were spies," said one Sudanese employee of an international NGO.

### **Sudan: Other NGOs Ready to Move Into Darfur – Official: 12 March 2009: IRIN.**

Khartoum — Several relief organisations from Arab and Asian countries have applied to work in the western Sudanese Darfur region to replace agencies expelled or stopped from working there, a senior official said. "We have received many applications from Arab and Asian countries," Sudanese State Minister for Humanitarian Affairs, Ahmed Haroun, said. "They want to go to Darfur." The applicants include the Red Crescent Societies of Iran, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and United Arab Emirates. Several doctors and medical supplies were also being sent to Darfur. Discussing Sudan's plans to replace the organisations expelled after the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants

against President Omar el-Bashir on 4 March, Haroun said: "We have already begun the process."

**Government confident** Darfur is baking hot for much of the year, but the upcoming rainy season will put extra pressure on already vulnerable communities, aid workers say. According to the UN, Sudan does not have the ability to carry out the work of the expelled agencies. However, said Haroun: "The assessment is not true, there is no evidence to support it on the ground." Haroun is himself a war crimes suspect. A warrant was issued by the ICC in April 2007, detailing 51 charges of alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity for atrocities committed in Darfur in 2003 and 2004. "The UN is not in a position to order or advise Sudan. They should just deal with the new situation on the ground."

**Needs assessment** Sudanese government and UN officials were to travel on 11 March to Darfur for a week to assess the impact of the expulsion of aid agencies. The assessment would be crucial in establishing how the country intends to address the key needs of some 2.7 million people displaced in Darfur. It would also provide some measure of the scale of the crisis and cover all three Darfur states. "Three joint UN-government teams composed of experts from both sides will visit Darfur to conduct an assessment of critical short-term needs," Elisabeth Byrs, spokeswoman for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), said. The Sudanese order to 13 international and three local NGOs to stop work is expected to leave an estimated 1.1 million people, especially in Darfur, without food; 1.5 million without healthcare and more than a million without drinking water.

The 16 agencies, according to OCHA, employed nearly 40 percent of the aid workers in Darfur - 6,500 national and international workers. In total, 7,610 humanitarian staff are affected in northern Sudan, including Darfur. The UN World Food Programme (WFP) said it had lost 35 percent of its food distribution capacity through the expulsion of four of its implementing partners - Save the Children USA, Action Against Hunger, Solidarités and Care International. "WFP does not have the capacity to fill this gap," said spokeswoman Emilia Casella. "Unless the NGOs are allowed to resume their activities, people are going to go hungry."

**Attacks** In Darfur, a UN-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) patrol was attacked on 9 March by unknown armed men, who fired at their vehicle with small arms. Four peacekeepers were wounded, one seriously. A UNAMID vehicle was also carjacked by armed men in El-Fasher, while an observer on his way to El Daein, about 160km southeast of Nyala, South Darfur, was shot at by two men.

**South Africa: Allowing Him to Escape Will Send Wrong Message: 10 March 2009: editorial: Business Day.**

Johannesburg — IT IS difficult to believe that the African Union (AU)-appointed panel of eminent African persons led by former president Thabo Mbeki will be able to break any new ground in the troubled southern Sudan, now that the International Criminal

Court (ICC) has decided to go ahead and prosecute President Omar al-Bashir. Given Mbeki's record in dealing with some of these conflicts on the continent, such as Zimbabwe, it would be surprising if such efforts yielded anything in Darfur soon.

For several years now Bashir and his regime have been allowed to get away with the violence that has left millions of people dead, maimed, raped or displaced in the tragedy that has become Darfur. Bashir and his cronies have presided over one of the worst atrocities in modern history, and all this while the AU watched. The AU and those against the ICC's warrant for Bashir's arrest argue that this could scupper any efforts to reach a peace settlement between the Sudanese regime and rebels in Darfur. There are also concerns that the ICC's action could disturb the fragile power-sharing deal struck between the Sudanese regime and the rebels. These may be well-meaning concerns, but they should surely not outweigh the need to bring Bashir to justice. The argument that the warrant would encourage him into more violence should be enough reason to bring him to book immediately.

He has already given the world the finger by expelling several aid agencies from the country, on whose charity millions have come to depend. Bashir and his regime have been encouraged to commit the crimes of which they now stand accused because of the certain knowledge that they could do so with impunity. The ICC's case against Bashir seems solid. Allowing him to escape justice would send the wrong message to other perpetrators of gross human rights violations.

**Rwanda: Country to Honour Sudan's Wishes: Edwin Musoni: 10 March 2009: The New Times.**

Kigali — RDF Chief of Defence Staff, General James Kabarebe addresses troops on their arrival at Kigali International Airport from Darfur. (Photo File). Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir yesterday warned peacekeepers, diplomats and humanitarian workers to obey Sudanese laws or face expulsion. Bashir made the warning over the weekend following his indictment by the International Criminal Court (ICC) over war crimes and crimes against humanity. Rwanda through its Ministry of Defence, has responded that, in the event of this happening it is ready to comply. In an interview with, The New Times, army spokesman Maj. Jill Rutaremara emphasised that Rwandan troops are serving under the context of the African Union (AU) and the United Nations, and that the issue of peacekeeper deployment is dealt with at the level of all involved parties including the Sudanese government.

Currently, Rwanda has about 3000 peacekeepers in the war-torn Darfur region of Sudan; the peacekeepers are serving under the auspices of the joint UN-African Union hybrid mission in Darfur. Rutaremara said that Rwandan forces are in Sudan on the consent of the Bashir government. "Rwandan troops are in Sudan to contribute to the peace process on the consent of the Sudanese government," explained Rutaremara, adding that the forces cannot operate without the authorisation of the host government. "If the consent ends, the political authorities will then give the Rwanda Defence Force peacekeepers directives of what to do next," said Rutaremara.

Efforts to reach the Minister of Foreign Affairs Rosemary Museminali and Minister of Information Louise Mushikiwabo for a political comment were futile by press time. During a recent rally in the Darfur town of El Fasher, Bashir said; "I have a message to all the peacekeepers, diplomatic missions in Sudan and the non-governmental organisations. They have to respect the rule of the country. If anyone goes further than the rule of the country, we will kick them out directly." Also in response to the ICC indictments, Sudan expelled 13 of the largest aid groups operating in Darfur. Meanwhile, in a statement issued by UNAMID late Sunday evening, the peacekeepers said that the situation was relatively calm. The international court accuses Bashir of leading a counterinsurgency against Darfur rebels that involved rapes, killings and other atrocities against civilians. Up to 300,000 people have died and 2.7 million been driven from their homes in the conflict since 2003, according to the United Nations.

**Sudan: Darfur - UN-African Peacekeepers Shot As Concern Grows Over Humanitarian Aid: 10 March 2009: UN NEWS SERVICE.**

Four peacekeepers were shot and wounded in an attack yesterday on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), as concern grew over the safety of aid workers who have been ordered to leave the region following the indictment of the Sudanese president. In yesterday's incident, a UNAMID patrol returning to its base in El Geneina, West Darfur was attacked by unknown armed men who fired at the vehicle with small arms. The injured personnel, one of them seriously hurt, were evacuated by helicopter to the Mission's hospital in El Fasher, North Darfur, where their conditions were listed as stable and not life-threatening. Violence against UNAMID personnel and banditry have increased over the past six weeks in West Darfur, and the number of incidents until now in 2009 have exceeded those for the entirety of 2008, a UN spokesperson said today.

Yesterday alone, beside the attack on the patrol, a UNAMID vehicle was carjacked in El Fasher, and military observers en route to a team site in El Daein were shot at. "UNAMID strongly condemns these acts of violence against its peacekeepers who are in Darfur to help bring peace and stability to the region and for the benefit of the population," UN spokesperson Marie Okabe said in New York. Meanwhile, during the past 24 hours, UNAMID said it continued to patrol Darfur to protect civilians, conducting some 47 military patrols and 96 police patrols in and around villages and camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs). On the humanitarian front, Ms. Okabe said that the United Nations remains highly concerned over the safety of national and international staff in light of repeated reports of intimidation and seizure of property. Sudan decided to begin ejecting 13 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) Wednesday, immediately after the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant for President Omar Al-Bashir for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Darfur. "Despite assurances given by the Sudanese Government that harassment and seizure of assets would stop, such reports continued to be received daily," Ms. Okabe said, citing a report from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

Assets confiscated from the organizations include computers, vehicles and communications equipment, as well as essential data, she said. There have been no further revocations of permission to work, according to OCHA, which warned, however, that the rainy season was now coming up and the country would soon be split in two due to the rains, so it was urgent to pre-position food and other vital supplies in the areas they were needed as soon as possible. Because of the ejections of the NGOs, some 1.5 million people are now at risk in terms of health, OCHA warned, saying that an estimated 1.2 million people risked having no more access to potable water and hygiene programmes in the weeks to come. The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) said it is currently working 24 hours a day with its UN partners and its technical partners in the various ministries, but it could not make up for the missing NGOs.

The World Food Programme (WFP), meanwhile, says that four of the expelled non-governmental organizations were crucial partners who were providing 35 per cent of its food distribution capacity in Darfur, distributing food to 1.1 million people plus 5,500 malnourished children and mothers receiving supplementary feeding. To fill the gap left by the NGOs, the agency was planning a one-time distribution of enough food for two months through local food relief committees. The World Health Organization (WHO) warned more than 1.5 million persons would no longer have access to primary healthcare, and that immunizations would be disrupted, with the greatest threat being an outbreak of meningitis reported in the Kalma Camp that currently houses 89 000 people. The UN and the Sudanese Government have agreed meanwhile that three joint teams, composed of experts from both sides, would visit Darfur to conduct an assessment of critical short-term needs in four sectors: food, nutrition, water, and emergency shelter. An estimated 300,000 people have died and another 3 million have been displaced in Darfur, where rebels have been fighting Government forces and allied Arab militiamen, known as the Janjaweed, since 2003.

**Mbeki appoint to mediate ICC-Sudan squabble:** [afrol News](#), 6 March.

The former South Africa president Thabo Mbeki has been appointed to chair a committee to investigate human rights violations in Darfur. His appointment by the African Union follows the International Criminal Court ruling on Wednesday to indict Sudanese president Omar Al-Bashir for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur. South Africa's Foreign Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma said Mr Mbeki's role was to mediate between the ICC and Sudan. The AU which has pleaded with the ICC to delay the charges on President Al Bashir for a year, fearing his indictment could further destabilise the situation in Darfur, held a special session to find ways to halt the ICC warrant.

Ms Nkosazana-Dlamini said the ICC's decision to issue an arrest warrant for Bashir was regrettable, and that South Africa has accepted the AU's initial response to the ICC's decision. "South Africa has never countenanced any acts of impunity. However, South Africa supported the decision of the AU to defer the issuing of the warrant of arrest against President Bashir by a year to give the peace processes in the Sudan a chance," Ms Dlamini-Zuma told local media.

Mr Mbeki brokered the deal for Zimbabwe's political rivals to share power following last year's disputed elections. He was however accused by some of being too lenient on President Robert Mugabe. Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir yesterday rejected the arrest warrant issued by the ICC against him, saying the warrant was just a colonialists stunt to get Sudanese resources. The AU Sudanese ambassador, Mohieldin Ahmed Salim, has in the special session called on all the AU members to pull out of the International court in protest against the warrant, which he said was unjustly. He urged members to withdraw from the Rome Statute that established the world's first permanent war crimes court. The decision came as a shock to many Africa leaders fearing his indictment distabilise the fragile Darfur region, which government and rebel forces had advanced to resolve the crisis.

Meanwhile, the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appealed to Sudan to reconsider its decision of firing 13 international aid groups in Darfur aiding an estimated 4.7 million people. "The decision by the government of Sudan to expel 13 non-governmental organisations involved in aid operations in Darfur will, if implemented, cause irrevocable damage to humanitarian operations there," the UN statement said. The Darfur conflict started in 2003 when ethnic minority rebels took up arms against the Arab-dominated Khartoum government complaining of discrimination and neglect in the Darfur region. The six year conflict in Sudan has killed more than 300,000 people with more others displaced.

## 61. CHINA-AFRICA RELATIONS

### West Africa

#### **Nigeria: FG - Why We Proceeded With \$8.3 Billion Rail Contract: Onwuka Nzeshi: 13 March 2009: This Day.**

Abuja — The Federal Government yesterday said its hands were tied over the Lagos-Kano rail project whose contract was awarded to the China Civil Engineering Construction Company (CCECC) during the Olusegun Obasanjo administration. The \$8.3 billion project had been stalled for several months and the Federal Government was contemplating its termination and re-awarding it to another construction firm until it discovered that the project cannot be terminated because the contract agreement demands that Nigeria would have to pay a fine of \$1.4 billion if it decides to take that line of action.

Minister of Transportation, Alhaji Isah Biu Ibrahim disclosed this yesterday at the investigative public hearing on railways modernisation conducted by the House of Representatives Committee on Land Transport. According to the minister, the Chinese firm had in the contract, agreed to provide \$2.5 billion, out of which \$1.2 billion was supposed to be especially dedicated as soft loan to Nigeria. The company, Ibrahim said, later reneged on the agreement as it said it could only provide \$500 million, and advised the Nigerian government to source the balance from Chinese banks. Ibrahim attributed the deplorable state of the rail sub sector to the long years of neglect, corruption and mismanagement of resources, stressing that Nigerian Railway Corporation (NRC) which

was operating with about 200 locomotives in its hey days now operates with less than 15 locomotives most of which are over 50 years old.

Mr. Holzious Monvic, a consultant on the rail project revealed that the rail contracts were awarded by the last administration without the necessary feasibility study and initial engineering design preparatory for the bill of quantity as required for a contract of such magnitude. According to Monvic, the Obasanjo administration may have decided to circumvent the rules because of its apparent desperation to award the contract to the CCECC as compensation for the loan concession the Chinese government pledged in support of the project. "Our feeling was that the contract should have gone on a transparent tender process, and the normal process followed but he gave it to the Chinese company without any competitive bidding or tender. It was beyond our capacity because Mr. President just told us to go ahead as he was determined to give it to CCECC," the consultant said.

The House Committee on Land Transport also received memoranda from the management of Julius Berger Nigeria Plc but refused to take oral evidence from a representative of the company. Chairman, House Committee on Land Transport, Honourable Benard Udoh, told representatives of the German construction firm that the House expected the company to be represented at the highest level and therefore would not take any presentation until the Managing Director of Julius Berger Nigeria Plc appeared before the lawmakers. Udoh described the continued absence of top management of the firm at the public hearing as a slight on the House of Representatives. Julius Berger was summoned to the investigative public hearing to explain the abandonment of the Itakpe-Ajaokuta-Warri Rail project. The company is said to have left the project some kilometres to the Delta Steel Company, the terminus of the special purpose rail line.

**Nigeria: FG Tasks Chinese Government On Counterfeiting: Henry Umoru:9 March 2009: Vanguard.**

THE Federal Government has called on the Chinese Government to help Nigeria put a total stop to the counterfeiting of some branded Nigerian textile products allegedly being produced in China. The government has also urged the Chinese Government to grant Nigeria zero tariffs that is being offered the least developed economic nations in Africa. "We may not fall into that category but at the same time, judging by the amount of trade we are doing with you especially imports coming in from China, we will also like you to extend that zero tariff to Nigeria," the government said.

Speaking on Thursday in Abuja when the Chinese Ambassador to Nigeria, Xu Jianguo visited him in his office, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Chief Achike Udenwa said: "It has been discovered that the counterfeit products which are substandard compared to its Nigerian original, are printed mostly in China then brought back into the country and sold at a relatively cheaper price than the ones produced in the country." Udenwa who noted that the issue has been investigated and found to be further compounding the problem associated with the ailing textile industry in the country, said, "they take our

own textile brands and fake them, then bring them illegally into Nigeria. We will like you to investigate this and please if it is found to be correct, let's try and address it because it is killing our own local industries here."

According to him, what is actually required now by Nigeria is legal trade which will be guided by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) principles, just as he warned that the Chinese Government must ensure that their goods coming into Nigeria were of good quality. In his remarks, the Chinese Ambassador to Nigeria, Xu Jianguo who noted that the Chinese Government can never encourage the illegal act of counterfeiting Nigerian branded textiles, stressed that there was the need for both countries to cooperate if the act must stop. According to him, "We need to cooperate because the act does not only involve illegal businessmen from but also illegal businessmen from Nigeria. We should do our best and I sincerely believe that if we cooperate more closely, we can solve the problem."

The envoy who explained that the problem of trade between Nigeria and China was imbalance, said that the trade policy of his country is mutual which ensures a "win-win" situation, adding: "Our government encourages Chinese companies to directly invest in Nigeria for them to help Nigeria improve its manufacturing ability. By so doing, you can export and I believe that this is very important and it can solve the problem of imbalance."

### **Ghana: Chinese Sex Traders Fear for Their Lives: Ivy Benson:9 March 2009:the Chronicle.**

AS an Accra Circuit Court begins to collate concrete evidence on an alleged Chinese human trafficking and sex trade ring, which was busted in the capital, Accra, by police officers from the Criminal Investigations Department (CID), there was fear on the faces of some of the victims who appeared before the court as witnesses.

The claimed they feared being victimised or killed by the families of the accused mafia group back in China, where they were allegedly trafficked from. On Saturday, March 7, the court, presided over by Mrs. Elizabeth Ankomah, accepted factual evidence as part of the trial of three Chinese, James Xu Jin, 41, who is believed to be the ring leader, Sam Shan Ying, wife of the ring leader, and Chou Xiu Ying, brother to the ring leader facing charges of conspiracy and human trafficking. The Prosecutor, ASP Mary Agbozo, in the course of the trial, while leading one of the victims, who was visibly frightened and traumatized, in evidence, poured out a bag-full of sex-induced items collected from their residence at La, Agyemang, a suburb of Accra to the amazement of all present. As the sobbing witness surfed through the collection of the items including condoms, contraceptives, wooden carved male organs and other medications, she then pulled out some of the items she used, claiming that the 1st accused person, James Xu Jin, bought the items for them. She told the court that the victims sometimes bought the items themselves, as they used these items to prevent pregnancies, and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).



Advancing her evidence before the court, as she was assured by the court of absolute protection, the witness pleaded that she and her colleagues be sent back to China, as they could not continue with the inhuman treatment they were made to endure. Giving a chilling account of what she and the other victims had to endure at the hands of the accused persons, the 18-year-old victim, who hails from Harbien in China, indicated that she came into the country in December 2007, through the help of the 1st and 2nd accused persons, who promised her a job at a restaurant they would be establishing. According to witness, who indicated that as a result of poverty she had to take up a job to be able to sustain her family, found it appealing when James and his wife informed her, as well as her parents, of employing her to work in a restaurant they had established in Ghana. Witness noted that she had to drop out of school to enable her take up the job promised by the accused persons, adding that a passport and travel ticket was readily made available by the accused person, and in no time, the journey was made to Ghana for the promised job.

Witness, who noted that 2nd accused person was a neighbour in Harbien, as she had known her since infancy, told the court that she arrived in the country in the company of the accused persons and some other victims. On their arrival in the country, witness indicated that she and the other girls, who lived with 1st accused in his residence called the Peach Blossom Palace brothel, located at La-Agyemang, were sent around casinos, but were not told what to do, but just to gamble. Witness further noted that James introduced her to one man, and asked that "I have sex with him but I refused."

As she advanced, witness started crying, noted that her refusal to have sex with the man earned some beatings from James and his wife, adding that on another occasion a Lebanese man was introduced again. This man, according to the victim, forced her to have sex with him, and later paid the 1st accused some money, which was never given to her. Witness noted that she owed the accused person a lot of money, and had to pay all those debts before she could have any money from the sex trade. Witness also told the court there were two rooms available in the house for the sexual act with men who patronised their services, stressing that \$70 was paid for a night, and \$40 for an hour for the sex services rendered to clients, who are white-coloured. Witness also indicated that immediately they got to the country their passports and ticket were taken back by James, making it impossible for them to go back to China on their own. On their frequent presence at casinos, witness noted that James sent her and her colleagues there to loiter around, in order to catch the glimpse of any white man present, who then takes them to a hotel for sexual sessions, upon payment to the 1st accused person.

Witness told the court that she was forced into rendering the sexual service, since her failure to act accordingly, would lead to her paying some monies to the 1st accused person, which she could not bear. After spending some ten months in Ghana, witness noted that 2nd accused sent her to China, upon which 1st accused gave her \$3,000 and promised to establish the restaurant on her return to Ghana, since she could speak some English, and would not have to engage in the sex trade again. Witness said she arrived in the country the second time, hoping to work in the restaurant promised her by 1st accused person, but was told that since Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo could not win the

presidential election, the restaurant could not be established, so she had to return to the sex trade again. Witness told the court that since she was not comfortable with the activity, she always plead with her clients, who are mostly Lebanese, Indians and Chinese, to help her go back to China, adding that she services between one to three men a day.

In cross-examination from Mr. B. O. K. Johnson, counsel for the accused persons, witness noted that she had been able to get in-touch with her parents back in China, through a telephone call. Witness indicated that she made the money for the call through tips received after rendering sexual services to her clients, adding that she had made several attempts to report the 1st accused to the police, but if she did so, the accused person would pursue her. Another victim, aged 36 years, corroborated the evidence given by her colleague, noting that the accused persons had deceived them, since the work in a restaurant promised them was totally non-existent. Earlier on the ace investigative journalist, Anas Aremeyaw Anas of the New Crusading Guide Newspaper, whose ingenuity led to the exposure to of the alleged sex trade, appeared before the court and gave an account of his investigative skills that brought the sex trade activity into the spotlight.

According to the journalist, his actions were motivated by his interest in saving humanity. In a cross-examination from counsel for the accused persons, witness indicated that his friendship with the house girl at the residence of the accused persons was not amorous, as he went as an undercover journalist to get his information to prove his case. According to the witness, he entered all the rooms in the house, where he was disguised as a bar attendant, but denied suggestions from counsel that the house girl smuggled him in. "I was smuggled into the room by a source," witness emphasised, noting that he found condoms in all the rooms in the house, and picked one used condom from the 1st room. As witness was made to identify from which room he took the used condom in a photograph presented, the ace investigative journalist noted, "I cannot see from which angle you took the picture."

The photograph being sought by counsel to be tendered in evidence was then strongly objected to by the prosecution, who noted that the photograph was not identified by the witness. Prosecution further noted that there was no indication as to when the picture was taken, however, the court accepted it into evidence for "what it is worth." Witness denied a suggestion made by counsel for the accused persons, that the used condom, he claimed to have taken from one of the rooms in the house, was indeed his condom. Witness told the court that the house girl identified her boyfriend to him, and never indicated 3rd accused, the brother of the 1st accused person.

Witness intimated to the court that the house help's boyfriend was his friend, with whom he had constant communication, as he was informed by the house help that the 3rd accused person had been making advances to her, which she had always rejected. He told the court that 3rd accused person brought him and his team two girls, who had the intention of having sex and taking money for the service, however, his source did not have sex with the girls, but made payments alright. Witness noted that this activity went

on for some time, as he monitored the actions and behaviours of the victims, further noticing that the girls never had sex with black people, no matter how rich that person was."In the second instance, a similar case took place where the 3rd accused brought a girl to a place where I was a bar attendant, and handed the girl to my source," witness intimated noting that after a long conversation the 3rd accused took \$150 for "short time," handed over the lady and left afterwards.

Witness pointed out that he operated in the house, as well as a bar, to get all the information he needed, noting that his monitoring at the La Palm Casino, also indicated that the girls plied their sex trade activities at casinos. According to the witness, he had monitored the girls, being sent out to casinos, and seen men also coming out from their residence, adding that his source had also been having conversations with the victims, in respect of their activities in the country. The witness, in the course of giving evidence before the court, produce video footages of sexual sessions of the victims and their clients, collection of payments by 3rd accused of services rendered by the girls, audio speeches and discussions. Witness, who conducted his investigation over the last seven months, launched into action after receiving credible information that prostitution was taking place in the house.

He noted that he befriended the house help and won his trust, after which he successfully had what he set out to get. Sitting was adjourned to today. The accused person, who allegedly conspired and trafficked 10 Chinese girls to engage in the sex trade in the country pleaded not guilty to the charge, and they had since been in police custody. Meanwhile, the Police are hunting for three of the victims, whose whereabouts are unknown.

**Gambia: DoSH Bans China Milk Importation: 12 March 2009: [The Daily Observer \(Banjul\)](#).**

In the wake of the melamine contaminated milk crisis in China last year, the Department of State for Health & Social Welfare has banned the importation of milk and milk related products coming from China until further notice. A press release from the Department of State for Health & Social Welfare (DoSH) indicated that ban was followed by a two-week joint inspection exercise of food outlets in Banjul and the Greater Banjul Area by relevant stakeholders in the implementation of the Food Act 2005, with a view to removing such products from the food distribution system. The release further indicated that the health authorities at the seaport in collaboration with the relevant departments recently rejected a container of milk which was imported from China through Senegal. "The container is detained and is currently awaiting re-shipment to Senegal or a third country in the sub-region," DoSH stated.

The state department further assured the general public that stringent measures are being taken nationwide, to ensure that foods intended for consumption in the country are of the nature, quality and standard conducive to people's welfare. Importers, distributors and retailers of milk and milk related products from China, according to DoSH, are warned to desist from the importation of such products into the country. "Any person who fails to

comply with this directive, commits an offence and is liable to conviction in accordance with Section 36(3) of the Food Act 2005," the release cited. The Department of State for Health and Social Welfare advised consumers to be more vigilant and to look out for such products coming from China. "Information about the presence of such products anywhere in the country should be reported to the nearest health, customs and veterinary authorities," it added. DoSH further urged the Regional Health Management Teams in the country in collaboration with the Customs, the police, veterinary and sanitary and phytosanitary officers, to be more vigilant in order to prevent the re-exportation of the rejected Chinese milk products through the porous borders into the country.

Southern Africa

**Angola: Head of State, Chinese Bank Discuss U.S. \$1 Billion Grant: 13 March 2009: AngolaPress.**

Luanda — Angolan head of State, José Eduardo dos Santos, Thursday in Luanda, discussed with the China Development Bank board chairman, Chen Yuan, the possibility of an additional Usd 1 billion loan mainly to boost agriculture. This was announced to the press by the Chinese bank official at the end of an audience granted to him by the head of State, José Eduardo dos Santos. According to Chen Yuan who arrived Thursday in Luanda, the meeting served to deepen cooperation in the sectors of agriculture, finance and infrastructures. "We are ready to grant a credit line estimated at more than one billion dollars, but we think that the amount is insufficient and might be increased to meet the concrete needs of Angola in the domains of agriculture, production of cereals and agricultural products processing," he stressed.

He also said that Angola and China will start negotiations and funding for concrete projects in the country might be released this year. The Chinese official said his country trusts the Angolan Government, adding there are good cooperation perspectives. To Chen Yuan, the world financial crisis must be used for a strengthening of cooperation among developing countries like Angola and China. The audience was attended by the chairman of the National Private Investment Agency (ANIP) Restructuring Commission, Aguinaldo Jaime, and the Angolan ambassador to China, João Bernardo.

**Zambia: 'Do Not Demonise Chinese Investors': 10 March 2009: Times of Zambia.**

ZAMBIANS should appreciate Chinese investors as they have resolved to continue operating mines and maintaining their workforce amid threats of retrenchment by others in the sector, Mines and Minerals Development Minister, Maxwell Mwale, has said. Mr Mwale said in an interview in Lusaka yesterday that people should stop demonising the Chinese investors because they were doing a lot to help maintain stability in the country. He said despite the prevailing global economic conditions which had adversely affected the local industries, the Chinese investors were resolved to continue operating without resorting to the reduction of the workforce.

"People should stop demonising the Chinese investors. They should observe that at all mines which are being run by the Chinese, there are no reductions of employees as opposed to others," he said. Mr Mwale said while big economies like the United States of America were running to China for bailout of their operations, some Zambians were busy "insulting" Chinese investors. He said the Chinese investors had, for instance, re-capitalised and continued running the Chambishi Copper Mine in Kalulushi, which had been on care and maintenance for 14 years.

He said Zambia needed to attract investors like those from China who already had the money because it would be almost impossible for a company to borrow huge amounts such as US\$600 million. Mr Mwale said while others like Mopani Copper Mines (MCM) wanted to place some of the mines under the care-and-maintenance system, the Chinese had continued operating. He said the Government would not allow further offloading of miners from employment as it had a duty to ensure socio-economic stability in the country. Mr Mwale said the move by MCM to place some of its mining units in Kitwe and Mufulira under the care-and-maintenance arrangement would result in the loss of up to 20,000 jobs considering even the people employed by contractors.

He reiterated his challenge to the MCM and any other investors who would not want to continue operating some of the mining plants to voluntarily surrender them to the Government. He said the precedent to voluntarily surrender the mines when an investor felt like not continuing had already been set when Anglo-American Corporation (AAC) did so with the Konkola Copper Mines about seven years ago. On the Luanshya Copper Mines (LCM), Mr Mwale said there were a lot of investors who were interested in running the mine as soon as the current negotiations between the Government and LCM management were over. He said the Government would, however, ensure that it selected the most suitable investors to run the mines to avoid a repeat of what was currently happening.

He said the people of Luanshya had suffered enough. "As you know, this is not the first time that the people of Luanshya are going through this situation," he said. And LCM management has dismissed reports that the mine in Luanshya has been stripped of its assets and is flooded. LCM chief executive officer, Derek Webbstock, said in a Press statement that management of LCM was saddened by reports of asset stripping and flooding of the mine. Mr Webbstock assured the nation that the mine would not be flooded or be stripped of its assets.

"LCM is a cherished national asset and in spite of the pressures and challenges being presented daily by the effects of the global recession, we will maintain the integrity of the assets until such a time that we have successfully concluded the best way forward for the mine," the statement reads. Mr Webbstock said it was the intention of management to ensure that the care-and-maintenance process protected the assets of LCM and allowed for efficient resumption of operations at an appropriate time. The statement further says management had retained 227 security staff, 123 hospital staff, 36 Luanshya Trust School staff, 10 staff at Luanshya Craft School and 67 were directly at the main mine operations.

**Uganda: Works PS Queried Over Untaxed Payment to Chinese Contractor: Mary Karugaba And Milton Olupot:11 March 2009:The New vision.**

Kampala — THE works ministry paid the Chinese contractors who redeveloped State House Entebbe without deducting withholding tax of over sh11b, the Auditor General has said. In a report to Parliament, John Muwanga said the ministry in 2004 signed an agreement with Metallurgical Construction Company to develop State House at sh38.5b. The payment, Muwanga said, contravened the tax laws, for which a penalty should be incurred by the ministry. However, the permanent secretary, Charles Muganzi, explained that the deductions were not made because of conflicting instructions to the ministry by the former finance minister, Gerald Ssendawula and the Uganda Revenue Authority (URA).

He was appearing before the Public Accounts committee to respond to queries on the matter on Tuesday. Muganzi said URA directed that the company was obliged to pay the tax. "The audit has been successfully completed. This, therefore, is to request you to release the payments to the company to enable them continue their operations and meet their tax obligation," said the letter signed by the Christine Katwe, the acting Assistant commissioner filed delivery domestic taxes. Ssendawula, Muganzi said, advised that the contractor should be exempted.

"This is to request you to grant a waiver of withholding tax to the company in accordance with section 119 of the Income Tax Act," Ssendawula wrote. Muganzi said: "I did not see the minister's letter at first. The officials who saw it, based the payment on it. When I saw it later, I noticed it was clumsy...I realised that there was something wrong." "I immediately wrote to URA, but they never replied my communication until the minister had left." Muganzi clarified that the entire project was financed by Uganda. He was reacting to an observation that Ssendawula had written to URA stating that the project was co-financed with China.

The committee chairman, Nandala Mafabi, said Ssendawula's letter did not mean that the waiver was granted. MPs Frank Tumwebaze and Alex Byarugaba said the PS was to blame because he authorised payment basing on a letter he had not seen. Mafabi said the committee would invite Ssendawula and URA boss Allen Kigina to explain.

**Uganda: Stanbic Boosts China-Uganda Trade:8 March 2009:The New Vision.**

Kampala — STANBIC Bank has partnered with the Chinese businessperson in Uganda to boost trade between Uganda and China. The partnership resulted into the formation of the China Enterprises Chamber of Commerce in Uganda (CECCU), aimed at promoting trade and economic ties between the two countries. CECCU, which was launched last week, brings together over 30 Chinese firms operating in Uganda.

Phillip Odera, the Stanbic Bank managing director, called on the businesspeople in the two countries to use the association to create strategic alliances and synergies to boost trade. "This partnership marks the beginning of a great future between the two countries and for us as an institution committed to creating life-changing opportunities wherever we operate," he said. The Chinese ambassador, Sun Heping, said China as one of the biggest economic powers, was keen on building stronger business ties with Africa. He hailed Stanbic for their role in bringing together the Chinese business community in Uganda, adding that they should use the chance to grow their businesses. "Stanbic already has a strategic partnership with the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC), the largest bank by capitalization in the world. This puts us in a unique position to offer a number of products that make trading between Uganda and China easier, thereby saving time and money," he said.

Statistics from the Uganda Investment Authority (UIA) indicate that the trade volume between Uganda and China increased from \$156 million in 2006 to \$222 million in 2007 and was growing at an average 42.3%. In 2008, Ugandan exports to China amounted to \$20 million while Uganda imported goods from China worth \$202 million. Uganda's export commodities include, among other things, cotton, leather, coffee, fish, and minerals. Major imports from China include textiles and garments, footwear, porcelain, enamel, and mechanical and electrical goods. Sun Heping said that China, now one of the most formidable economic powers, was keen on building stronger business ties with the African continent and hailed Stanbic for their role in bringing together the Chinese business community in Uganda.

## 62. PAN AFRICA

West Africa

### **Nigeria: Democracy and the Challenges of the African Woman Advancement (ii): Dr Kabir Mato:6 March 2009:column:Daily Trust.**

Arguably, women are found to be trust worthier than men in African societies. That is why they are normally given the treasurer position in the political parties. In spite of their trustworthiness, some men would not like to vote for female candidates. That apart, most women do not want their fellow women to rule over them. Fear of accusation of sexual impropriety, incidence of sexual harassment and lack of confidence constrain women from active politics. Social, cultural and religious factors also strongly condition the degree of women's involvement in politics. In some societies, a conservative socio-cultural environment still represents a key factor discouraging women from taking political positions and occupying leadership positions. Africa being full of multi-ethnic and multi-cultural groups, each of the ethnic groups relate somewhat differently to their women. The status of women vis-à-vis men is one of systemic subordination, determined by the forces of patriarchy cutting across classes, regions and the rural/urban divide.

Every African woman grows up knowing very well that it is the responsibility of the woman to prepare meals, keep the house clean, and take care of the child. Indeed, whatever her level of education and the position she occupies in the society, she does not

expect the husband to share the household chores with her. It should be pointed out that, marital and family responsibilities of women and at times negative attitudes of spouses constitute major obstacles to women's effective participation in politics. The above problems often contribute to infringe on the ability of many women in Africa to acquire the knowledge, skills and confidence necessary for leadership positions. The situation is made even more difficult by the fact that the girl-child is usually prepared for a second place position right from the home where the focus of her training is on how to be a good wife, a good mother and a good home maker.

Consequently, she is hardly equipped with public leadership tools, especially in the areas of education and social exposure. The situation therefore calls for concerted efforts by countries, communities, women groups, individual women, as well as favourable government policies that enable women to explore their full potentials so as to be able to play leadership roles, and thereby contribute their bit to their countries' socio-economic development and nation building.

In recognition of the social, cultural and economic factors inhibiting effective participation of women in politics and decision making, there is the need to address the imbalance and marginalization. Most countries in Africa are doing that seriously, but the momentum is very slow. The process can be accelerated through Increased Women Representation. Average female representation in parliament is less than 8% in Africa, and many of the women are nominated, not elected. In Ghana women are less than 10% of the 200 member-parliament, 18 in number. Only in two countries, the Seychelles and South Africa are women more than 25% of elected members in parliament or in ministerial positions, thus approaching the 30% minimum threshold in decision making for women recommended in UNDP's 1995 Human Development Report.

Despite the various obstacles to women's political participation and representation in Africa, they have to demonstrate a great courage in moving into politics or decision making at all levels. Today, more and more African women are taking active part in national and local politics and in national policy making. The United Nations declared 1975 as International Women's Year. It enjoined member states to establish national institutions which would, among other things, initiate programmes to promote emancipation of women and monitor progress made in this direction. These national institutions would ensure that there is a permanent channel of communication between women and the government, so that most pressing issues affecting women can be routinely dealt with without recourse to protest demonstrations.

Few African countries have taken steps in this direction. In Kenya, Sierra Leone and Swaziland, for example, the national machinery is located in the Department of Social Welfare. In Zimbabwe, Nigeria and Ghana, there are full-fledge ministries for women and children headed by cabinet ministers. The fact that there is a cabinet minister responsible for women's issue in these countries means that there is somebody at the highest decision making level who can bring such issues to the attention of government. Education is a powerful instrument of public action and can act as a catalyst for change at all levels for women. For many girls and women, school or literacy classes



may be an occasion that will expose them to a wider world, receiving social recognition and gaining self-esteem. Education is an empowerment that can promote significant social change. Education and training in all forms contributes to a transformation of power relations by giving women access to information, knowledge and skills (World Bank, 1996). To point the way forward, female education should be accorded top priority. This is because education enhances human quality, which in turn advances national development. Since women constitute half of the population, they should be equally developed through both formal and non-formal means to bring about their fullest potential, so that they can play active role in public decision making and politics at all levels. Existing studies also confirm that education of women has beneficial effects on family, especially in rearing their children, family health and nutrition.

In Nigeria, the report of the Electoral Reform Committee headed by Justice Muhammad Lawal Uwais has made far reaching recommendations regarding gender appreciation and some form of balancing in the political landscape of the country such that if they are accepted by government, a great deal of the gap in participation between male and female in governance would be substantially addressed. Some of these recommendations that are considered vital and breath taking include among others reforms in INEC which include the appointment of a woman as either Chairman or vice Chairman of all the new commissions as well as specification of the minimum number to be appointed as members of each of these bodies. Equally important is the recommendation that at least 30% of seats on the basis of proportional representation in the National Assembly, State Assemblies and Local Councils must be female.

If these recommendations are accepted by government, they will go a long way in reducing the tension created by the cut throat competition which the winner takes all politics has brought to the nation. The role of women in politics is important. But this will only happen if the women of Africa rise to the challenge by insisting that it happens. This struggle should not however, be conducted in opposition to men, but as part of the social development of the whole people. African women should take the lead. They have to fight for their place in the political system. Women should seek for a place in the political system and the social and economic dimension of power shall be added unto it. After all, it is said that the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world. Concluded

**Nigeria: World Population to Hit Seven Billion By 2012: Ndubuisi Francis With Agency Report: 12 March 2009: This Day.**

Lagos — World population is expected to reach seven billion by 2012, from the current 6.8 billion, with the additional population increase coming mostly from developing countries, including Nigeria, the United Nations (UN) said yesterday. The UN said world population growth would continue in the most populous countries. Nine countries in the world will account for half of the projected growth during the period from 2010 to

**2050. These include India, Pakistan, Nigeria, United States of America, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, China and Bangladesh.** By 2050, world population is projected to reach over nine billion people based on an annual average gain of 78 million people. Most governments depend on UN studies in world population to map socio-economic policy. Most of the 2.2 billion additional people by 2012 will be in developing countries, where people of working age and those aged 60 and over are expected to increase.

Developing countries now make up 5.6 billion people of the world population of 6.8 billion. The current population in developing countries is still young, with children under 15 accounting for 29 per cent of the population and those aged 15 to 24 accounting for 19 per cent of total population. There are now 1.7 billion children and 1.1 billion young people in those countries. "In fact, the number of children and young people in the less developed regions are at an all-time high, posing a major challenge for their countries, which are faced with the necessity of providing education or employment to large numbers of children and youths, even as the current economic and financial crisis unfolds," the UN said.

### **Burkina Faso: 'Africa Must Learn From Nigeria's 'Microwave' Movies': 8 March 2009: Vanguard (Nigeria).**

IN the time it takes for a lovingly crafted art house movie to emerge as winner of the top prize at Burkina Faso's pan-African FESPACO cinema festival, Nigeria's prolific producers will already have churned out another 50 films. They might be tales of cannibalism, sorcery and jealous girlfriends who shrink their errant boyfriends into bottles, but Nigeria's \$450 million home video industry is the third biggest in the world, after America's Hollywood and India's Bollywood.

By contrast, FESPACO's filmmakers - considered the best on the continent - rely on dwindling donations, and scabble for private financing and poor distribution deals amid a spate of cinema closures. "Cinema is certainly dying," said Zimbabwean director Michael Raeburn, whose Johannesburg-set film "Triomf" is competing for Africa's equivalent of an Oscar. "South Africa is all about DVD and TV, no one makes any money from cinema." Nigeria shot its first film, "Palaver" (Trouble), in 1904, and its home movie industry has been creating it ever since. "It's not often talked of with respect," said Nigerian-born Chike Nwoffiah, whose first feature film "Sabar," set in California, is competing in the Diaspora category at FESPACO. "It's 'microwave' filming: push the button, wait three seconds and the film is done," he said. "Some of the directors can go from script to print in two weeks. The speed with which they make these films implies something is being sacrificed."

Even so, demand is rising. Last year "Nollywood" produced more than 2,000 films, up from 662, five years ago. Most films are produced in local languages - Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo among them - while English accounts for more than 40 percent. "However bad the quality, Nollywood shows there's definitely a demand for African storytelling," said South African director Zola Maseko, whose film "Drum" won the prized Etalon d'Or de

Yennenga in 2005. "It shows you have a whole community of people who have a deep need to see and hear themselves - Africa hasn't had that chance." Quality will come: Nollywood also has growing audience among Africans living abroad, keen for a taste of home, whether watched in south London hairdressers or rented from Texas video stores. "The Diaspora is just getting to know these films through horrible pirated copies and there is a real opening here. It's how Bollywood got started," said Vijay Mahajan, a marketing professor based in the United States who thinks Nollywood should chase after a greater slice of the 100 million Africans who live outside the continent.

**Burkina Faso: Moroccan, South African Movies Sway Fespaco: John Musinguzi:7 March 2009:East African Business Week (Kampala).**

Moroccan and South African films have dominated the 21st Panafrican Film and Television Festival ((FESPACO).At the two-yearly event that has been rocking Ouagadougou, the capital city of Burkina Faso for a week, three Moroccan films were chosen to line up for Africa's version of the Oscars - the Golden Stallion of Yennenga. Results were not ready when we went for press.Of the 19 movies competing for the award, only South Africa also had three entries.

The opening ceremony of FESPACO which has been dubbed 'Africa's Oscars' took place in Stade du 4 Aout with all sorts of fun, including the giant puppet that almost swallowed BBC journalist Audrey Brown (Pictured).The festival, always hosted in Ouagadougou is the biggest regular cultural event on the African continent and it mostly focuses on the African film and African filmmakers.The most prestigious award given out at the festival, the "Étalon de Yennenga" (Stallion of Yennenga), is named after the mythical founder of the ancient Mossi Empire. The "Étalon de Yennenga" is awarded to the African film that "best shows Africa's realities". The Second Prize is known as Les Saignantes.

Other special awards include the Oumarou Ganda Prize, given for the best first film; and the Paul Robeson Prize for the best film by a director of the African Diaspora.Cameroonian film-maker Jean-Pierre Bekolo Obama who in 2007 won the Second Prize (Les Saignantes) this time used the festival to launch his book "Africa for the Future" and to celebrate his namesake's presidential win in USA.

**Nigeria: AfDB to Increase Lending to U.S. \$11 Billion: Constance Ikokwu:13 March 2009:This Day.**

Washington, DC — As discussions continue on ways to tackle the impact of the global financial crisis in Africa, the African Development Bank (AFDB) has decided to increase its annual lending to \$11 billion to help countries in dire need.President of the AFDB, Mr. Donald Kaberuka, made the Bank's position known at the two-day conference organised by the government of Tanzania and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Dar es Salaam.Kaberuka told the conference participants titled: 'Changes: Creating Successful Partnerships for Africa's Growth' that the bank had also unveiled an Emergency Liquidity Facility of \$1.5 billion, a Trade Finance Initiative of \$1 billion, and

a Framework for Accelerated Resource Transfer of African Development Fund (ADF) Resources to help member states.

"The bank currently has enough risk capital to deliver on its normal lending programme consistent with its medium term strategy," said Kaberuka. "We currently estimate that this lending program will consume about 90 percent of its risk capital by 2012. However, the new demand created by the crisis to which the bank is responding implies that the bank's risk capital will need to be boosted by the end of 2011," he added. Kaberuka observed that it is important that development institutions have enough resources to support member countries in a critical period such as this. The conference addressed key policy questions, with the common goal of forging renewed African partnerships for growth in Africa in the 21st century. Key questions that were addressed include:

What do Africa's successes tell us about the main bottlenecks and risks to sustained growth and poverty reduction? How best can countries tap into the potential of the private sector and the financial sector to advance these goals? How can countries reduce the risks posed by exogenous shocks and a turbulent global economy and avoid the "resource curse"? How does the model for financing development need to adapt? What should be the direction of Africa's already evolving partnerships, including with the IMF? The conference was hosted by the IMF Managing Director, Dominique Strauss-Kahn, and opened by the Tanzanian President, Jakaya Kikwete. Delegates to the conference included former United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan.

Southern Africa

**Namibia: African Union Authority - a Shame, a Joke: Bernadus C. Swartbooii, Elijah T. Ngurare and Henn: 13 March 2009: New Era. Opinion.**

A united Africa, free from outside interferences and manipulations, has always remained a constant theme - a great dream cherished from the earliest days of pan-Africanism. It has always been argued by scholars and seasoned African personalities that the failure of the post-colonial state is the root cause of marginalisation and upsurge in violence, often pioneered by mercenaries and their proxies in Sub-Saharan Africa.

For ordinary Africans inhabiting the landmass of Africa and in the Diaspora, they continue to hope and wish and pray for a day when Africans will be united economically, politically, socially, religiously and above all culturally. The political leaders, so elected, were supposed to actualise this hope, this dream and this prayer. Regrettably, this in a large measure cannot be so and is not so, because an African leader wishes to out-dress the colonial master and to out-mimic the accent of the Queen of England with the exception of Nigeria. These proponents argue that the failure to manage individual African states is cause for the dramatic rise in poverty that now threatens the survival of many sub-Saharan Africans and set back the unity movement. In recent weeks, Africa has witnessed several setbacks, which the African Union Authority has failed to act on and in some instances contradicted itself. The President of Guinea-Bissau Joao Bernardo Vieira

was assassinated by his own soldiers in his palace on March 02, 2009, in retaliation to a military chief Waie's bomb blast killing.

We have also witnessed the recommendations by the International Criminal Court (ICC) to arrest President Omar Hassan Al-Bashier of Sudan for crimes against humanity and war crimes, as committed in Darfur and in southern Sudan generally. We have also learnt that another in the African Diaspora, Mr Barack Obama, the President of the United States of America arguably from the most powerful military leaders of the World has snubbed the United Nations Conference on Racism to be convened sometime this year in Geneva.

Barack Obama snubbed the review conference on racism in Geneva and proclaimed that his country will not attend. It is ironic that this is the same man who recognizes so openly the Jews Holocaust but refused to admit that there is a need for reparations on African slavery and hastens to address the Jews council after his swearing in but snubbed a platform that will address amongst others, Black slavery reparations. As a matter of fact, Barack Obama still has to address the Black Congressional Caucus, National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP) or Black African Diplomats in Washington. It is ironic how deaf or simply ignorant some African Presidents in both African Union Authority or UN General Assembly are on their refusal to start to approach ICC or UN Security Council and declare George Walker Bush to be tried and sentenced for the genocide and war crimes that he has aided, abetted and implemented in Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine.

The same goes for the darling of Botswana and Morgan Tsvangirai, Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, and the murderous Israeli regime and Benjamin Netanyahu. Just recently Barack Obama accepted that they will never win the war in Afghanistan but decided to send extra 17 000 troops to continue with the murderous campaigns against the innocent civilians and children. Again, no African mentioned Haiti and how it was plundered by France and the Americans and demands for an international inquiry into these crimes and ransacking of that country's treasury. Again African Union Authority is mute in the name of being scared of the international community and the donor funding that they received.

In this instance, one is tempted to suggest that the contemporary African Union Authority is an irrelevant body which is now only meant to host African Presidents to drink tea and eat cookies, a mimic from their western counterparts. Organisations like OPEC and some drug cartels in Latin America are far more powerful and influential than the current African Union Authority. Frankly speaking, the African Union Authority is a joke. At the last AU Heads Of State meeting, they merely changed its name to AU Authority! Well, at least it was able to jointly call for the lifting of the European sanctions against Zimbabwe, beyond that, nothing.

So much taxpayer's money was wasted on an issue that could have been addressed through an e-mail! And no real reasons are given for this change! Among the changes needed are that the AU should comprise Sub-Saharan Africa and the Diaspora, as the sixth constituency and exclude those that are members of the Arab League. But this can

change if the AU can invest in the infrastructure development of Africa and in particular the rural areas of our continent.

There is indeed little doubt about the political importance of the AU. There is no argument that if properly constituted and with entrenched values, this body can and must play a meaningful democracy and developmental role in Africa. But what this body has become today is a rather major international shame and retrogression from the gains the continent made over the past decade or so, not only in economic stabilization, but in democracy as an acceptable governance and institutional strategy.

We are solid in our support and recognition for the need for a strong, well-functioning and respectable African body, which can speak with authority and decisiveness about African social, political, cultural and economic issues. The AU represents one of the fundamental aspirations of our forbearers, who saw it appropriate that the strength of any nation is found in her ability to be organized systematically and purposefully.

The work by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the frontrunner to the African Union (AU), now African Union Authority (AUA), left undeniable footprints in Africa's liberation history. On the basis of these magnificent footprints, the AU was constituted to carry the mantle forward to advocate and advance democracy and development, which have eluded the continent for quite some time now. However, as youth of Africa, we stand disappointed and ashamed at the AU. In this instance the AU has failed to be a sensible continental body, empty of any real political and forward-looking substance. The genuine promotion of rural development and strengthening of the efforts of the nation-states has not featured at all in the agenda of this body. In fact, we are not even aware of any genuine and declared developmental and political agenda of the AU, which has borne at least some success.

In short, the AU has no function or purpose to serve in its current form and needs to be reformed and connected to the aspirations and daily struggles and challenges of the African people. The creation of the revamped AU some years ago, through its Constitutive Act, saw many jubilant voices chanting that Africa has now taken greater charge of her future. Issues of peace and stability, unity, democracy and development were considered as subjects that would be at the frontburner of the body. An attempt to address the economic exclusion and marginalization of the continent saw New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) created as the so-called economic arm of the AU.

It needed roughly US\$64 billion per annum to achieve the development of infrastructure, expansion of agriculture and so on. From the onset, even NEPAD, primarily spearheaded by Former President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, was seen as a neo-liberal sell-out of the African rural poor. The club of rich nations, G8, made lavish promises to finance the NEPAD Programme of action. Very little has come of that. Perhaps the cancellation of debt could be seen as some positive aspect of the AU diplomacy, but even on that score, a lot of international and grassroots civil society work eventually forced the rich to give in. On the democracy promotion agenda, G8 and other fellow rich nations inserted as a

condition for financial support for NEPAD a Peer Review Mechanism (PRM), which had to be complied with by African states on a voluntary basis. Many states, including Namibia, did not sign up to the PRM, due to considered influence and dictation by the rich on standards of democracy, which they even fail to meet.

Added to these woes was the open ended membership of the AU to all African states, even those who outrightly are undemocratic, reducing the AU then already, to just another body for Presidential chat and luncheons! Some countries that are key members of the Arab League are also key members of the AU. They have not been given to choose where their loyalty lies. And of course, we have seen that their loyalty is not with Africa. And today some are leading this body, ridiculing our Constitutional order and dismissing the democratic dispensations we have opted for as Africans. Because the Arab world does not have a single democracy proper, they want us to join the club of dictators! What made this body even further removed from the people of Africa was that it did not attempt to engage and garner the views of the citizenry, even at nation-states level. Consultation with traditional leaders was never done, for example.

But today some are calling themselves funny and insultingly unauthorised names such as "King above Traditional Kings of Africa!" How ludicrous! The only reason why people in countries like Namibia know about the AU is because we sing the AU Anthem, out of the wise decision of the Founding Father, Dr Sam Nujoma. Otherwise, we have very little connection and contact with the AU, except perhaps officials of government.

The leader of the Libyan Jamahiriya revolution, Muammar Qadhafi, for those with a short memory are reminded that in the year 2000, sub-Saharan Black Africans were deported out of Libya, back to their various west African origins. Ghana's President then Mr Jerry Rawlings was forced to go to Libya to secure the release of thousands of Ghanaians that were subjected to horrific working conditions, extreme racism, and when certain death tensions rose. The AU, as it currently is, is a highly inefficient and administratively malfunctioning body, and constant harassment of diplomats in Ethiopia is reported. Employees often go to town for whole days, locking offices and stalling work. For many, sub-regional institutions such as SADC are exceedingly better respected and organized, with far better impact at policy and planning levels of nation-states as well. There is focus and ability to solve problems facing the people.

Zimbabwe, the floods in Mozambique, DR Congo conflict and others are such examples of SADC successes. AU could not even solve the challenges of genocide committed by Sudan's Al-Bashir's regime against innocent African children and women in Darfur, implemented through the ruthless Janjaweed, sponsored by Khartoum. When eventually peace keepers arrived, they were and still are poorly equipped and are impotent to protect themselves. Now Al-Bashir is threatening to revoke licences of NGOs providing aid to more than 1 million people in camps and again the AU Authority is quiet as usual.

These Black people will again face starvation yet countries in SADC are mute but will cry at the top of their voices when it is time to critique Comrade R.G. Mugabe. Is SADC a colony of Britain and America, if so did it come through foreign aid?

Earlier on, we alluded to rural development, which is an area where the African Union Authority has not demonstrated any interest at all, despite the fact that many Africans reside in rural Africa. In this regard, the policies of the African Union Authority, if they exist, are far behind those of the member states, especially SADC. Under such conditions, African Union Authority cannot take the lead on any developmental issue. It cannot even mobilize African businesses at all. It is too weak and too insignificant to do anything meaningful.

It is no secret that the ideals of Pan-Africanism and Pan-Arabism are parallel. The borderline issue is a real dilemma to African peace and stability. Issues around Arab slavery of Africans cannot be swept under the carpet and needs to be discussed and included in our school curriculum. Lots of Black African history lay washed under the Aswan Dam. These are critical issues to African survival and in our efforts to cement a friendly long lasting co-existence with Africa North. This is an interesting challenge to Namibia. Others have their Arab League, where they run to for race solidarity and assistance like in the case of Omar Hassan Bashier, but sub-Saharan Africa does not unite. There is only a lipstick unity between sub-Saharan Africa and the Diaspora. This is an area that we shall focus on specifically in our next article, on strengthening the links of unity between the African and its Diaspora.

**South Africa: Proving Ground for International Criminal Court? Miriam Mannak: 20 August 2009: analysis: Inter Press service News Agency.**

Cape Town — **The International Criminal Court (ICC) is using Africa as a guinea pig**, and is too selective when it comes to arresting, indicting and prosecuting perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity. This was one of the opinions raised during a recent seminar in Cape Town organised by the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR). The CCR is a South Africa-based organization that aims to promote peace, justice and conflict resolution in Africa through training, policy development, research, and capacity building. "It seems that the court is using Africa as a test case, to determine in what way international law can obtain more legitimacy on the ground in Africa," said Charles Villa-Vicencio. "The ICC focuses on economically weak and politically vulnerable countries, and on nations that are not able or willing to try perpetrators of crimes against humanity. Many African countries fulfill these criteria."

Vlila-Vicencio, former executive director of the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation which aims to promote reconciliation, transitional justice, and democracy across the continent, said it is necessary to think critically not just about the purpose of ICC as an institution of justice, but also about the implications of the way it operates. "We need to ask ourselves whether retribution is a sufficient deterrent to those who violate human rights. Is intervention by the ICC enough to stop crimes against humanity and war crimes in Africa and elsewhere in the world?"

The ICC was established in 1998 by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The tribunal, which is based in the Dutch capital, The Hague, opened in July 2002 after the ratification of the document by 60 countries. The ICC currently has 106



members, including 30 African countries. Presently the ICC is dealing with various African cases presented to the court by Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Central African Republic - all signatories to the Rome Statute. Additionally, the Security Council of the United Nations has referred the situation in Darfur, though Sudan is not a member state. Vincent Nmehielle, former Principal Defender of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, added that the ICC has a political agenda. "The court should hold all tyrants accountable, but this is not happening. So far, most of the indictees are African. The powerful -- the United States instance -- will never be put on trial," he says, referring to the fact that the U.S. government does not recognise the court. "Russia will probably not be tried for what is happening in Georgia. And the same counts for China." Villa-Vicencio asserted that the indictment of tyrants is not necessarily the best course of action. The international community must think about the possible consequences of arresting perpetrators of crimes against humanity, he said.

"Should we prosecute Mugabe, despite (the possibility) this could increase the chance of further deterioration of the situation in Zimbabwe, or should we give him the chance to walk off if this would contribute a more stable peace situation?" he said. "I am not too much against the former if this will bring peace and stability to Zimbabwe." Claudia Perdomo - acting spokesperson of the ICC - told IPS that the court is not using Africa as a guinea pig. "The ICC is not an experiment. The court is permanent, and is here to stay and does not treat any part of the world as a test case." "The fact is that Africa played an incredible role in the establishment of the court," Perdomo added. "The situations the ICC is investigating at the moment were put forward by the party states themselves, except for Darfur which was referred to the ICC by the UN's security council. It is therefore untrue that the court is only targeting Africa as the Office of the Prosecutor has publicly announced that his office is monitoring situations in other parts of the world, in Colombia for instance and Afghanistan." According to Perdomo it is a misconception that individuals from countries that do not recognise the ICC, such as the United States, cannot be indicted. "If someone from a non-party state commits crimes against humanity within the territory of a party state, this person might be tried. It is possible."

### **South Africa: Global Growth to Fall Below Zero, IMF Warns: Mariam Isa: 11 March 2009: Business Day.**

Johannesburg — AFRICA might lack the clout to get the financial support it needed to withstand the global downturn, and the threat of political risk on the continent was rising, Finance Minister Trevor Manuel warned yesterday. He said at an International Monetary Fund (IMF) conference that attempts to address the global crisis might prove futile as there was a failure to acknowledge it stemmed from a "fatally flawed" model of capitalism. If we don't deal with that flawed model of capitalism, we will extend its life. The key issue is to ensure that the actions taken don't just mark time," he told delegates at the conference in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

IMF MD Dominique Strauss-Kahn said it was clear the global economy would contract, falling below zero this year, which might curb Africa's growth below an expected pace of 3%. Sustained donor support was vital, as more than 50-million people, many in Africa,

could be thrown back into "absolute poverty", he said. Strauss-Kahn was confident donors would pledge enough support to enable the institution to double its resources to \$500bn by the time the G-20 group of countries meets in London next month. IMF officials say this will enable the fund to provide \$11bn in low-cost loans to the poorest countries, which are mainly in Africa, over the next five years. These countries are now facing the full brunt of the global crisis as waning demand hits their exports while investment and aid inflows dry up.

The IMF says 22 countries, mainly African, will need at least \$25bn to cope with the fallout.

"Although the crisis is slow in reaching Africa's shores, we know it's coming and its impact will be severe," Strauss-Kahn said. "This is not only about protecting economic growth and household incomes, it is also about containing the threat of civil unrest, perhaps even war." Manuel told Business Day in an interview that he hoped to be proved wrong, but he was sceptical that developed countries would cough up the cash that Africa needed to maintain political and economic stability. "If you can't kick ass, no one takes you seriously," he said. During a panel discussion, Manuel said it would be hard for African governments to explain why the world's developed countries were spending freely on huge economic stimulus packages while African countries could not. "The issue of political risk is a very real one. We are in countries where people can't understand the benefits of tough decisions to reform," he said.

Manuel hoped that the G-20 meeting would take a "more co-ordinated" and "less protectionist" approach to the global crisis. Strauss-Kahn said that some private financial institutions in developed countries had received more financial support than the entire African continent. "At a time when developed countries are finding hundreds of billions for private companies, I cannot accept that we cannot find hundreds of millions for developing countries." The institution would reform its lending terms and conditions to make it easier for poor countries to access credit, he said. It would also push hard for more representation for low-income countries at the G-20 meeting.

**South Africa: Trade Talks Challenge Govts to Practical Action: Nkululeko Khumalo: 12 March 2009: guest column: allAfrica.**

*The controversial negotiations over trade agreements between the European Union and regional blocs in Africa are challenging governments to rethink the best way of promoting economic integration across the continent. The impact of the agreements will depend on whether governments put their efforts into consolidating existing regional communities, or allow grand plans for integration to become surrogates for action, writes Nkululeko Khumalo of the South African Institute for International Affairs.*

Africa has never been short of ambitious economic and political integration schemes or grand plans. However, with very few exceptions these plans have remained unrealized. A number of questions have been posed and a plethora of theories propounded to explain this unsatisfactory state of affairs. A number of new initiatives have been tried, yet the

status quo largely prevails. The South African Institute of International Affairs and the European Centre for Development Policy Management recently organised a high-level conference that tackled a number of pertinent issues relating to the impact on regional integration in east and southern Africa of negotiations on Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) between the European Union and regional groupings of countries in the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific areas of the world. It became clear from the conference discussions that in Africa the problem is no longer just the failure to deepen integration but rather how to solve fragmentation, which ironically arises from countries having overlapping memberships in many regional integration bodies with similar plans.

Multiple and overlapping memberships in regional economic communities (RECs) have created a complex web of competing commitments which together with different trade rules result in high costs for intra-Africa trade and undermine trade facilitation efforts that should be at the core of the integration agenda. This problem has been exacerbated by EPA negotiations with the EU. Though EPAs are meant, inter alia, to promote regional integration, their immediate impact has been the further fragmentation of existing regional economic bodies across Africa – except for the East African Community where the inverse seems to be true. There are many genuine grievances about the negative impacts of EPAs on efforts to deepen integration in Africa. The negatives are well known and have received a lot of “airtime” in many forums in Africa and abroad. However, as many credible analysts have noted, what is perhaps more important in charting the way out of the current quagmire is the fact that EPAs have, to a significant extent, forced a serious discussion about the efficacy of the current integration path, characterized as it is by multiple and overlapping memberships. The talks about these agreements also provide an opportunity for African countries to reflect on what kind of integration they really want. For instance, in negotiations on a number of key issues, African countries wanting to trade with one another are still finding it difficult not to discriminate against one another’s suppliers – yet they are now supposed to liberalise and open up their markets to EU suppliers.

In the Southern African Development Community (SADC), it is taking such a long time to negotiate intra-regional services trade liberalisation that it is unlikely that any real movement will happen any time soon. Even if a draft protocol on services now under discussion is ratified in the near future, it will most likely take years to implement and there is nothing that ensures uniform implementation across the region. Perhaps the EPAs will provide the much needed impetus for such regional processes. In response to the current fragmentation, which the EPAs have taken to absurd levels, the African Union (AU) has embarked on a drive to rationalise and harmonise Africa’s regional economic communities and their policies and activities. It is not yet clear what difference the AU efforts are making but what is evident is that the appetite for more RECs is gone and the way forward is seen to be largely in the consolidation of some viable existing ones. One of the most encouraging things to emerge from the recent conference is the detectable shift in preference from the linear economic integration model – in which states move from free trade agreements (FTAs) to customs unions, common market and so forth – towards simple FTAs dealing with the nuts and bolts of easing trade across regional borders.

In line with this thinking, doubt has been expressed about the necessity of having both a SADC and a Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) customs union. The latest initiative aimed at resolving the challenges arising from overlapping memberships is the so-called Tripartite Alliance involving COMESA, SADC and the East African Community. Though the alliance recently received major political support from heads of states and government, and has many important trade facilitation objectives, it still purportedly aims to establish a customs union in the long term. Many African scholars and policy makers believe its original idea of having only a free trade agreement was the most viable way forward, albeit difficult to achieve in practice. This is because simply declaring a customs union may give its authors a sense of achievement but the union might turn out to be largely hollow in substance. Finally, it is clear that the EPAs have led to an important rethink of the regional integration approach being pursued in Africa. Whether their impact will be positive or negative will largely depend on African countries' responses to them – that is, whether governments learn from the mess they have created, and which EPAs have compounded, and concentrate their efforts on consolidating existing regional communities instead of allowing grand plans to become surrogates for action. *Nkululeko Khumalo is senior researcher on trade policy at the South African Institute of International Affairs.*

**Zambia: Africare and Water For All Join Forces to Foster Healthier Schools and Communities: 11 March 2009: press release: [Africare](#) (Washington, DC).**

Two international nonprofit organizations have partnered to use the natural energy of the sun and children at play to generate safe, clean water for rural communities in Africa. Africare and Water For All today announced a \$1.6 million initiative that will bring clean drinking water and hygiene education to 300 schools and communities in Zambia, Uganda and Malawi. As summed up by Jeannine B. Scott, Africare senior vice president, "We are very pleased about this collaboration given the significant impact providing water in schools has on education in Africa. Children are freed up to actually attend school as the arduous burden of fetching water is lifted. And with merry-go-rounds that double as water pumps, they can have fun, too!" Water For All's "Fun Pump" provides both access to water and an opportunity for children to play. As children spin on the merry-go-round, clean water pumps into a storage tank and a simple tap makes it easy to draw water.

In addition to donating merry-go-round pumps, Water For All will donate Sun Pumps, which use the power of the sun to pump water from underground. Water For All also will cover the costs of water and site testing and installation. "Our Sun Pumps and Fun Pumps are sustainable, green solutions to the problem of unsafe drinking water in many parts of Africa," said Jill Rademacher, president of Water For All. Africare will identify sites in need of a reliable water source and will provide local expertise and training to assist Water For All in selecting which pumps to donate. Africare also will provide education and training in hygiene, sanitation, gardening and income-generating activities linked to water and will conduct follow up visits to monitor and evaluate the use of the pumps and the effectiveness of the education. Both organizations will work directly with schools and communities to determine the best approach to providing clean water technologies

and health education."Our integrated approach will extend the benefits of clean water and hygiene education, and will foster healthier schools and communities," said Brian Harrigan, executive director, Africare Canada.

After successfully working together in Zambia over the past year, Africare and Water For All are now replicating their cooperative model for even greater impact by expanding to Malawi and Uganda and extending the partnership in Zambia."Today's announcement is the next step in a relationship built on mutual concern for providing efficient and sustainable solutions to underserved communities in Africa" said Rademacher. "The partnership between Water For All and Africare is an example of two nonprofit organizations playing to each other's strengths to achieve greater social impact."Worldwide, millions of women and children spend several hours a day collecting water from distant, often polluted, sources. Access to safe water reduces water-borne diseases and eases the burden on women and girls in rural communities. It is estimated that in Africa alone, more than 340 million people lack access to clean drinking water.

*Africare is a leading non-profit organization specializing in African development aid. It is the oldest and largest African-American led organization in that field. Since its founding in 1970, Africare has delivered more than \$760 million in assistance and support — over 2,500 projects and millions of beneficiaries —to 36 countries Africa-wide. Africare has its international headquarters in Washington, DC, with field offices currently in some 23 African countries. For additional information, please visit [www.africare.org](http://www.africare.org). Water For All, a nonprofit organization based in Johannesburg, has provided access to clean water to hundreds of schools and communities throughout Africa since 2004. As part of Water For All's customized approach, the organization works with local communities and in-country advisors to assess each school or community's water needs and determine which water technology is most appropriate. Water For All uses a range of water technologies such as merry-go-round pumps, wind powered pumps, solar pumps, hand pumps and purification systems. For additional information, visit [www.waterforall.org](http://www.waterforall.org)*

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Pan African alliance on E-commerce to be launched: [afrol News](#): 13 March: *By staff writer:***

The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) is to launch the Pan African Alliance on E-Commerce to intensify cooperation and initiate common projects of interest in African countries, as part of a two-day workshop on Trade Facilitation and Aid for Trade which ends in Addis Ababa today.The Alliance hopes to establish and encourage the use of "Single Window" across the continent, which is an electronic platform where traders undertake transactions on line, reducing the need for paperwork. Senegal, Tunisia and Mauritius are said to already have such platforms, dramatically reducing the time it takes to clear customs in those countries.

Trade and transport officials from more than 20 countries from across Africa are taking part in the workshop, which was organised by ECA's African Trade Policy Centre (ATPC). Representatives from Ministries of trade and transport, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), customs authorities, port authorities, chambers of commerce, transit agents, transport operators, international organisations, and the donor community will examine effective strategies for aid for trade in order to sustain the gains of trade facilitation in Africa.

The Aid for Trade Initiative was launched with the purpose of helping developing countries, the least developed in particular, to build their supply-side capacity and infrastructure needed to take advantage of trade liberalisation and enhance their participation in the world trading system in order to meet their economic development needs. The objective of the two-day workshop, which ends today were also to exchange views on national trade facilitation programmes and projects; identify ongoing donor support and funding gaps in regional and national trade facilitation programmes and projects as well as priority areas for consideration under the Aid for Trade Initiative (AFT). The workshop is also to articulate elements for national and regional AFT strategies and identify ongoing donor support, implementation gaps and priorities of supply-side constraints to global trade including economic infrastructure and productive capacities. The workshop, is also to articulate an African common position on aid for trade strategies.

**Kenya: Continent Eyes Central Bank, Single Currency: Edris Kisambira: 7 March 2009: East African Business Week (Kampala).**

Nairobi — The African Union (AU) is in plans to establish a continental Central Bank, a senior official has revealed. The central bank will be headquartered in Abuja, Nigeria. AU Commissioner for Economic Affairs, Dr. Maxwell Mkwezalamba told the first congress of African economists last week that a joint technical committee in conjunction with the Association of African Central Bank Governors was working on how to create the bank. The economists were in Nairobi for a four-day conference towards creation of a single African currency.

"Discussions are ongoing with the Nigerian authorities to sign a memorandum of understanding for the hosting of a technical steering committee to undertake implementation studies on the Bank," he disclosed. The formation of this bank is in line with Article 19 of AU Constitutive Act on the creation of three financial institutions including a Central Bank, African Investment Bank and African Monetary Fund. He said a monetary institute which would work out the policies that these countries would adopt should be in place in the next two to three years.

Details of how much influence the Bank would have on the member states as well as what relationship it would have with the national central banks would be worked out, he

added. Dr. Mkwelalamba said the setting up of the Bank would set the stage for creation of a single African currency. This however would only be possible if there was free movement of people, goods and services. He observed that when this is achieved, it would enable African countries to address some of the challenges they face in a coordinated way and also accelerate the integration process. "For integration to yield benefits, greater volumes of trade among the members must take place. Hence, Africa must enhance efforts towards breaking down existing barriers and one of the key elements of such a move would be the elimination of multiple currencies," he maintained. While opening the congress, Planning Minister Wycliffe Oparanya acknowledged the process was ambitious and would take some time to achieve as it hinges on the sovereignty of partner states. He was however optimistic that although the creation of the Africa Investment Bank and Monetary Fund could be easier, these processes called for a practical approach to accelerate their establishment.

While pointing to the current financial crunch, he added that these institutions would aim to protect Africa from the impact of such crises and allow the continent to anticipate similar catastrophes. "The formation of a regional monetary fund could act as a useful first step to enhancing cooperation in currency stabilisation. This would then serve as a complementary vehicle to the process of monetary integration," he proposed. Despite the challenges that lay ahead, Oparanya emphasised that African countries need to persist in their endeavour to ensure that they succeed in the introduction of a common currency. "A common currency in itself symbolises the success of African integration. It is envisaged that a single currency would help reduce the cost of doing business on the continent and also promote cross border trade and investments," he argued.

He added that issues such as to whether Africa should follow the European or American integration models or whether it should explore new approaches based on 'African realities' would have to be addressed. He challenged economists and other African researchers to be at the fore front in providing strategies and advice to Africa's decision makers at national, regional and continental levels.

**Ethiopia: Resources Behind Growing Links: Stephen De Tarczyński: 12 March 2009: Inter Press service News Agency.**

Melbourne — With hundreds of Australian mining companies now involved in the extraction of natural resources in Africa, the Rudd government is also aiming to play a bigger role in the continent's affairs. In a speech delivered to the executive council of the African Union (AU) in Ethiopia earlier this year, foreign minister Stephen Smith was forthright in proclaiming Australia's intentions. "I have come to Addis Ababa...to convey to you personally the Australian government's deep commitment and strong resolve to enhance Australia's relationships with the nation-states and the continent of Africa," Smith told executive council ministers on Jan. 29. He added that hitherto, "Australia has not given Africa the priority it requires and deserves."

David Lucas, based at the Australian National University and president of the African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific (ASAAP), says that Australia has

indeed neglected Africa in the past."Under the previous [conservative] government, I don't think they were that enthusiastic about Africa," Lucas told IPS.The new importance placed on developing a closer relationship with Africa, however, appears to stem directly from the growth in Australian investment in sub-Saharan Africa's resources sector over the last decade.The value of the current and prospective investment by the more than 300 Australian mining, oil and gas companies operating there - including BHP Billiton, the world's largest miner, which is active in Angola, Guinea, Mozambique and South Africa - is estimated to be worth some 20 billion US dollars.Overall, Australia's recent trade growth with Africa - it has increased by more than ten percent per year on average since 2003 - is second only to the nation's increased trade ties with Asia over the same period.

And in order to augment this growing relationship, Australia is looking to boost its defence relations with the continent.There are currently more than 30 Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel in Sudan - eight peacekeepers are with the United Nations and African Union Mission (UNAMID) in Darfur and roughly 25 ADF members are working as military observers and logistical support staff with the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) - and the government is keen to build on that."The Australian government feels that it is time to strengthen our engagement with Africa and the African Union in the fields of peace and security," said defence minister Joel Fitzgibbon on a visit to Africa in February.

Both Fitzgibbon and ADF chief Angus Houston had discussions with their African counterparts regarding new arrangements, which include the establishment of a resident Australian defence attaché to Africa as well as training courses available here for a number of AU-nominated officers.Fitzgibbon also said that later in 2009, "Australia will co-host a peacekeeping symposium in Africa with the African Union and the United Nations to allow for the exchange of experience and expertise."Furthermore, Australia is to increase its aid to Africa, despite maintaining a heavy slant towards the Asia-Pacific region.In 2006, Australia's bilateral Official Development Assistance (ODA) - aid provided to developing countries - to the continent was just four percent of the total available.But according to the government, what it refers as "development assistance" to Africa has increased by 23 percent since the Kevin Rudd-led Australian Labor Party was elected in November 2007.

A recent review of Australia's aid programme by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) noted that Australia's total ODA for 2008-2009 is Australian dollars 3.7 billion (2.4 billion US dollars) or around 0.32 percent of gross national income. And with Australia planning to increase the percentage allocated to aid over the coming years, Africa is set to benefit proportionately."Africa will continue to benefit from our commitment to scale-up Australia's aid program to 0.5 percent of Australia's gross domestic product by 2015-2016," said Smith in January.However, Lucas warns that any talk of increased aid must be tempered by the economic crisis which has engulfed the world."Because the government is committed to a target which is related to our gross national product, if our gross national product falls then the amount of money we'll be committing to Africa will also fall," says the ASAAP president.Regardless, it is not only defence and aid - the purported benefits of "development assistance" are panned



by Zambian economist Dambisa Moyo in her recently-released book, 'Dead Aid' - through which Australia is seeking to develop closer ties with Africa. The government also wants to foster the growth of people-to-people ties, especially with increasing numbers of Africans migrating to Australia.

"The strong people-to-people links which already exist will help drive our relationship forward," Smith told AU leaders at the Addis Ababa meeting. Of the almost 150,000 people arriving to settle permanently here between July 2007 and June 2008, 10,600 were from sub-Saharan Africa - a further 8,300 people arrived from North Africa and the Middle East, for which the department of immigration's figures do not make a distinction - representing 7.1 percent of all permanent settlers.

While these figures include Africans settling in Australia under the country's humanitarian programme - more than 30,000 visas were issued to Africans under this stream between 2003 and 2007, and in the year to June 2008, nationals of Sudan, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi and Sierra Leone were numerically among the top ten recipients of humanitarian visas. There are also close to 9,000 African students studying here. Tredwell Lukondeh, the president of Australia's Federation of African Communities Council - the peak national organisation for Africans in Australia - says that the increasing interpersonal ties between Africans and Australians make it imperative that the political relations are also close. But he describes Australia's recent approach to Africa as "lukewarm," exemplified by its relative lack of diplomatic representation across the continent. "For instance, I personally come from Zambia where we had an Australian [diplomatic] mission for many years, but which ceased to operate ten or fifteen years ago. And there hasn't been one since, despite the fact that the area includes many countries whose nationals travel to Australia," Lukondeh told IPS.

### **Uganda: Continent Wants Urgent Funds From G20 for Credit Crisis: Sylvia Juuko: 12 March 2009: The New Vision.**

Dar es Salaam — AFRICAN finance ministers and central bank governors want an urgent response from the developed countries over finances to cushion their economies from the global economic recession. "Now, more than ever, we must ensure that Africa's financing needs are addressed. As the global crisis takes its toll, concessional support will be important for helping countries to bolster their social safety nets and preserve fiscal space for vital development projects," a joint declaration at the end of a conference in Dar-es-salaam on Wednesday said.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) convened this meeting to take stock of Africa's progress and also discuss a course of action to mitigate the impact of the crisis. The African leaders want the IMF to double concessional resources and make it possible for African countries to access its financing urgently. "Africa will require more flexible support. African members welcome the forthcoming review of the IMF's financing facilities for low-income countries, which need to be responsive and flexible to meet diverse needs," the declaration said. The African countries pledged to stick to implementation of sound economic policies and establishment of strong institutions.

They suggested that the IMF strengthen its support for regional integration, which will enlarge markets and reduce vulnerability to shocks in African countries. The pleas come amid an IMF gloomy outlook for African economies that are currently weighed down by the declining price and demand for products, dwindling revenues and falling remittances. "I don't believe there is a risk of recession for African economies. But our January forecast was that Africa's growth will slow down to an average of 3%. However, looking at per-capita growth, some countries are not likely to achieve any growth," said Dominique Strauss Kahn, the IMF chief. He pledged to plead for African countries during next month's G-20 summit in London, noting that developed countries need to meet their aid pledges. Strauss Kahn noted that the situation in Africa may not only be about unemployment but also about life and death.

Central Africa

**Cameroon: Local Governance - African Approach Discussed in Yaounde: Emmanuel Kendemeh: 13 March 2009: Cameroon Tribune.**

*A two-day meeting organised by the African Union Commission is taking place in Yaounde. Some selected regional stakeholders in local governance in Africa have been meeting at the Yaounde Conference Centre since yesterday, 12 March to formulate the African approach to local governance. The local governance stakeholders will end the workshop organised by the African Union Commission in collaboration the Cameroon government today, 13 March 2009.*

Cameroon's Minister Delegate at the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation, Emmanuel Edou presided over the opening ceremony of the workshop in the presence of the Minister Delegate at the Ministry of External Relations in charge of Relations with the Islamic World, Adoum Gargoum. In his opening remarks, Emmanuel Edou appreciated the focus of the workshop which was in line with the ongoing decentralisation efforts in the country geared towards effective local governance. He called on the workshop participants to formulate the African approach to local governance. By doing so, he said, they have to take into consideration the local realities and the need to preserve security and stability of African States. The Minister's appeal was in line with an explanatory note of the African Union Commission on local governance that the, "ongoing decentralisation processes reveal some political will to ensure increased participation of the population in the running of their affairs, but the methods of their implementation differ with countries and their contents can even be divergent at times". Mr Edou said the results of the workshop will valorise local governance in Africa and would be a giant step towards formulating a convergence approach. The Director of Political Affairs at the African Union Commission, Emile Ognimba said the Commission was engaged in ensuring efficient local governance in the continent. This will be through developing government comprehension, creating synergies and proposing ideas on the engagements and necessary interventions of the African Union Commission on local governance. The workshop, being the first to be organised by the Commission, will contribute in giving intellectual and conceptual framework for the implementation of local governance. y the end of the workshop, the

participants would discuss the local governance challenge in Africa, vision for local governance in Africa and proposed African Charter in local governance.

**Cameroon: Governance - Stakeholders Work on African Common Vision: Emmanuel Kendemeh:10 March 2009:Cameroon Tribune.**

The African Union Commission wants to ensure coordinated and harmonised governance actions in the continent. Key governance stakeholders in Africa have been meeting in Yaounde since yesterday, 09 March 2009 to build a collective understanding of the architecture of governance activities and interventions with the ambition of coming up with a common African vision on governance. The governance multi-stakeholders workshop to end on 11 March, is taking place under the theme, "The architecture of activities and interventions on African governance challenges".The African Union Commission, by organising the workshop, intends to build a collective understanding of the range of governance interventions and activities established across the African continent by multilateral, bilateral and Non-governmental Organisations; develop a common understanding on how complementary ways can be established and how the range of initiatives could be leveraged to enhance the impact of governance interventions and activities across member States; and to begin articulating a perspective on the role of the African Union Commission on governance relative to stakeholders active within the African continent. The workshop would provide the basis for drafting a comprehensive report on the architecture of activities and intervention on African governance challenges and the role of the African Union Commission to be presented at a wider African Regional Forum on Governance to be held later in 2009.

The Minister Delegate at Cameroon's Ministry of External Relations in charge of Relations with the Islamic World, Adoum Gargoum who chaired the opening ceremony, stressed the need for key governance stakeholders in Africa to work in a synergy. He said Cameroon was in line with the former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan's statement that governance was the best way out of poverty and a cornerstone of development.Ambassador Emile Ognimba, Director of Political Affairs, African Union Commission who spoke on behalf of the Commission, recalled that the workshop was taking place at the time the world was gripped by the international financial crisis. He said the workshop was timely as the best way out of the crisis is good governance. The senior African Union Commission official said the continent had no particular problem with regard to governance but said the Yaounde workshop was to ensure a coordinated and harmonised governance action.After the opening ceremony, key governance stakeholders worked in sessions. In the session entitled "Governance mapping", they had an overview of the governance mapping approach and framework of understanding. During the second session, there were presentations and inputs from African multilateral organisations. They included, New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), African Development Bank and the Regional Economic Communities.

### 63. HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER AND SOCIAL ISSUES

West Africa

**Nigeria: Homosexuals Storm National Assembly: Tashikalmah Hallah:12 March 2009:Daily Trust.**

Openly gay people yesterday stormed the National Assembly in Abuja seeking for legislation that will guarantee the protection of what they termed their right to determine their sexual orientation.

At a public hearing organised by the House of Representatives Joint Committee on Human Rights, Women Affairs and Justice, the homosexuals also decried moves by legislators to pass a bill that seeks to prohibit and criminalise same sex marriage. The public hearing was for an "Act to prohibit marriage between persons of same gender, solemnisation of same and for other matters related therewith." Speaking for Queer Alliance, a group in the forefront of agitation for the abolition of all forms of discrimination against homosexuality in Nigeria, a youth, Mr. Rashidi Williams said that homosexuality "which is a private decision does not in anyway impinge on the rights of others."

"We are law abiding citizens and have not fallen into any problems with the laws. None of us would want to be discriminated against because of our sexuality that we have no control nor have we chosen. It is already a trial to survive the hardship of our nation let alone the discrimination we face as sexual minorities," he added. Williams pleaded with lawmakers to look at homosexuals as God's creations that shouldn't be discriminated against, just as he urged the committee to discard the bill. "We believe that we are created by God and do not wish to be discriminated against, we seek your help and appeal to you all to lay this bill aside. We ask that the House of Representatives and our lawmakers work with us to understand the concept of sexuality and sexual orientation through our experiences and not create laws that punish us needlessly."

Human Rights Watch in collaboration with Global Rights, all with headquarters in the USA also opposed the criminalisation of same sex marriage in Nigeria. In a joint presentation, the duo likened the bill to one proposed by former Minister of Justice Mr. Bayo Ojo, which according to them would have punished with imprisonment not only "the registration of gay clubs, societies and organisations, sustenance, procession or meetings" but any "public show of same sex amorous relationship directly or indirectly in public and private."

They argued that the present bill "appears to have a more limited purpose, but in fact perpetuates the same potential for serious human rights abuses." They said the bill won't serve any immediate purpose since Nigerians are not clamouring for it. According to them, "marriage between persons of the same gender is not now legal in Nigeria, and there is no possibility of its recognition without specific state affirmation...Imposing criminal penalties on this particular form of marital relationship is redundant. It can only be construed as an effort to further stigmatise relationships between persons of same gender-and to provide additional grounds for official harassment, arrests and persecutions

of anyone even suspected of such a relationship," they added. Groups like Sexual Minorities Against Aids in Nigeria (SMAAN), BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights, Amnesty International and Changing Attitude Nigeria all spoke against passage of the bill.

However, an overwhelming number of people at the public hearing, especially religious bodies, supported the enactment of the bill. The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in its presentation said it "strongly supports this bill and wants the members of the National Assembly to ensure that it is passed. Every country has its laws; there is nothing like a universal law and you see weird ways of life affecting our people negatively. Christians and Muslims are strongly against homosexuality."

On its part, the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) said "same sex marriage is out to foist on the world a false sense of the family which will bring disastrous consequences to mankind." It added that "same sex marriage apart from being ungodly, it is unscriptural, unnatural, unprofitable, unhealthy, un-cultural, un-African and un-Nigerian. It is a perversion, a deviation and an aberration that is capable of engendering moral and social holocaust in this country. Outlawing it is to ensure the continued existence of this nation." Fellowship of Christian Patriots (FCP) for its part said "God in his infinite wisdom, made sex enjoyable in order to encourage indulgence in it, for the purpose of procreation and not merely for hedonistic pleasure." It added that bill was just like anti-suicide legislations: "Nobody accuses society of infringing the human rights of citizens when it outlaws suicide, which it does to protect the society from self-destroying itself." Meanwhile, a forum of civil societies and human right groups, the Coalition for the Defense of Sexual Right in Nigeria, has opposed any legislation by the National Assembly to prohibit and sanction people involved in same sex marriage. Coordinator of the forum, Dorothy Aken'Ova, told journalists yesterday in Abuja that the bill before the House of Representatives, Same Gender Marriage (Prohibition) Bill 2008, is a distraction and an infringement on rights of individuals.

### **Ghana: Incarcerating People Without Warrant is Unacceptable: Charles Takyi-Boadu: 9 March 2009: The Chronicle.**

A Human Rights crusader, Raphael Godlove Ahenu Jr., has expressed shock over revelations that remand prisoners have been kept in prison for a long time without any charges being preferred against them. According to him, the situation was unacceptable, if the report published by Centre for Human Rights and Civil Liberties (CHURCIL) in the dailies recently, and what Tsatsu Tsikata, who was recently released from Nsawam Prisons, said at a human rights forum organized by the Free Tsatsu Campaign, which revealed that about 1,200 inmates were being held in prisons without warrant, are true. Mr. Ahenu continued that the issue must be a source of grave concern to all, particularly human rights activists in the country, and appealed to them to help address the situation. Speaking to newsmen in Sunyani recently, Mr. Ahenu called on the Attorney General and the Ministry of Justice to, as a matter of urgency, facilitate the trial of such prisoners, and release those who have no case to answer. Mr. Ahenu is the Chief

Executive Officer (CEO) of African Media Aid (AFRIMA), a media development non-governmental organisation (NGO) aimed at promoting a human rights culture in society.

The organisation also works towards the empowerment of women, children and civil society, as well as the law enforcement agencies, through education, awareness creation and legal interventions. He again expressed worry over the unhealthy state and overcrowding in the country's prisons, saying, "If pragmatic measures are not put in place to arrest the increase in human rights abuse in the country, the situation could get out of hand."

Mr. Ahenu, therefore, challenged President John Evans Atta Mills' administration to make human right issues its main concern, to help drastically reduce human rights abuse cases, especially among women and children. He also urged the new government to ensure that overcrowding in the country's prisons becomes a thing of the past, by expanding prison facilities, as well as improve the health conditions of the prisoners. He suggested to the government to put in place measures to ensure that more prisoners, particularly the youth, receive employable skills while serving their prison terms. According to him, AFRIMA would this year embark on a human rights campaign programme, dubbed "know Your Rights" and "Abolish Death Penalty", aimed at educating the general public on their rights, as well as mobilising people to campaign against the death penalty. He appealed to the general public and other human rights institutions, especially the media, to join, as well as support the campaign when it starts in April this year.

### **Nigeria: 1,027 Petition UN, EU Over Ribadu:10 March 2009:This Day.**

Lagos — One thousand and twenty-seven Nigerians have petitioned the United Nations and the European Union expressing concerns over "continuing harassment, intimidation and victimisation of the former Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, Mallam Nuhu Ribadu. Ribadu, who is currently facing trial before the Code of Conduct Tribunal over alleged failure to declare his asset while in office had dragged the tribunal and the Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Mr. Michael Aondoakaa (SAN) to court over his trial.

In the suit filed before the Federal High Court in Abuja, Mr Ribadu is asking the court to stop his trial before the Tribunal which had been scheduled to start on Monday.

The online petition, which was copied President Umaru Yar'Adua and the African Union, is accessible at <http://www.PetitionOnline.com/he4e6789/petition.html>. The website is operated by the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project, (SERAP). According to the petition, "Unsurprisingly, Mr. Ribadu has been dismissed from the police. He is likely to be jailed soon. The government of President Umaru Yar'Adua is not yielding. The police authorities dismissed Mr. Ribadu, despite the fact that his case against them is still pending before the court. This can't go on." The petitioners also called on the UN and the EU to "put pressure on the government of Nigeria to stop further harassment, intimidation and victimisation of Mr Ribadu." One of the signatories to the petition said,

"I am dismayed and sad at the way Mallam Nuhu Ribadu is being treated by the establishment; this treatment will surely affect the coming out of credible leaders to serve in the future. I weep for Nigeria. Mr Ribadu deserves a better treatment than this after putting his life on the line for this country. We plead with the international community to publicly condemn this injustice."

Another signatory said, "I simply cannot believe that this is happening to our revered Mr. Nuhu Ribadu. It is a crying shame that this is really happening to a man that staked his all to see that Nigeria is a better society. I appeal to President Yar'adua to use his good offices to see to the protection and reinstatement of Nuhu Ribadu, if we are ever to work with selfless zeal for our country. If this does not come to pass, then I would want to say that we would be

Southern Africa

### **Zimbabwe: New Minister Freed From Jail: 12 March 2009: [allafrica](#).**

Zimbabwe's new deputy agriculture minister, Roy Bennett, was released from prison on bail on Thursday, nearly a month after the formation of the country's new unity government. Bennett's release was [ordered by a Supreme Court judge on Wednesday](#), after a long court battle in which prosecutors and police repeatedly blocked the implementation of orders by magistrates and judges to grant him bail. At one stage in the drawn-out court battle, [police arrested a magistrate](#) who ordered that he be freed. Bennett, the national treasurer of Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai's Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), was [// arrested and accused of insurgency, banditry, sabotage and terrorism](#) when he returned from exile in South Africa on February 13 to take up his new ministerial post.

Announcing his release in the eastern city of Mutare, the MDC said thousands of supporters, who had spent all morning singing and dancing outside the prison, had welcomed Bennett when he emerged. The charges against him had been "trumped up," the MDC statement said. There is a history of stormy relations between Bennett and leaders of President Robert Mugabe's Zanu-PF party. In 2004 he served eight months in prison after starting a brawl with two cabinet ministers in Parliament. In a reference to the government's seizure of Bennett's farm in Zimbabwe's eastern highlands, Justice Minister Patrick Chinamasa had called Bennett's forefathers "thieves and murderers."

### **South Africa: Act II of Xenophobia Waiting in the Wings: 12 March 2009: [IRIN](#).**

Johannesburg — A repeat of the xenophobic violence that swept through South Africa - killing at least 62 people and displacing 100,000 others - will return if the government continues to ignore its origins, says a report by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). "Although initially condemned by actors across the political spectrum, the violence has rapidly faded from public debate. This is a mistake," warned the IOM report, [Towards Tolerance, Law, and Dignity: Addressing Violence against Foreign](#)

**Nationals in South Africa**, researched by the Forced Migration Studies Programme at Johannesburg's University of the Witwatersrand.

"What happened in May 2008 ... reflects deep tensions and dysfunctions in contemporary South African society and politics. If not addressed, the fractures and incentives that led to the 2008 killings could have grave consequences in the months and years ahead." The scenes of hate that played out against foreign nationals in 2008 were "extraordinary" in their "intensity and scale", but not in their manner, as xenophobic violence has become a constant bed-fellow of post-apartheid South Africa, the report said. The xenophobia indelibly stained South Africa's reputation as a country respecting the dignity of foreign nationals and was an acute embarrassment to the African National Congress (ANC) government, which relied on the hospitality of African states during its opposition against apartheid - often at great sacrifice in terms of lives and economic damage to the host country - to wage its armed struggle. The most common prejudices among South Africans towards foreign nationals, the report said, was that foreigners "steal" women and jobs, access social benefits fraudulently, spread disease, and do not participate in community actions, such as non-delivery protests.

**The new apartheid** The number of foreign nationals in South Africa, the economic power-house of the continent, has been estimated at about 5 million, primarily from neighbouring states, such as Mozambique, Lesotho and Zimbabwe, but also from as far afield as Somalia, Nigeria and Morocco. South Africa's population is estimated at about 48 million.

The report noted that "non-nationals are the functional equivalent of black South Africans two decades ago [during apartheid]. The primary difference is that the citizenry is now South Africa's black majority and the 'aliens' are - with notable and disturbing exceptions - people from beyond the country's political boundaries." Xenophobia, economic inequality, and a culture of violence are endemic to South Africa. The African Union, in a cautionary note in the African Peer Review Mechanism's report on South Africa, said: "Xenophobia against other Africans is currently on the rise and must be nipped in the bud." The government rejected this assessment. "Xenophobia, economic inequality, and a culture of violence are endemic to South Africa," the IOM report commented. "However, it is the micro-politics of township life that turn these divides into resources and translates them into violence."

Xenophobia flourished because of the "institutionalized" dehumanization of foreign nationals, who were afforded no protection or rights; the absence of political leadership and social delivery in poor communities that encourages "the emergence of parallel and self-serving leadership structures"; the paucity of conflict-resolution mechanisms; and the "culture of impunity with regard to public violence in general and xenophobic violence in particular." The report cited the 2002 remarks by Billy Masetlha, a former Director-General of the Department of Home Affairs: "Approximately 90 percent of foreign persons who are in RSA [Republic of South Africa] with fraudulent documents, i.e., either citizenship or migration documents, are involved in other crimes as well." It is quicker to charge these criminals for their false documentation and then to deport them,



than to pursue the long route in respect of the other crimes that are committed." The government has acknowledged that corruption among home affairs officials is rife.

A survey in 2006 found "pervasive xenophobic attitudes among police officers", with 87 percent of police believing that most undocumented migrants in Johannesburg were "involved in crime, and over 78 percent believed that foreigners caused a lot of crime, regardless of immigration status."The study found that the "reluctance" of the police and local leaders to intervene in defence of the victims of xenophobia was because, in some cases, "They supported the community's hostile attitudes towards foreign nationals; in others, they feared losing legitimacy and political positions if they were seen as defending unpopular groups."

**A culture of violence** "Although it is inappropriate to speak of any culture in homogeneous or universalized terms, there can be little doubt that violence has gained a level of social acceptability rarely seen elsewhere in the world," the IOM commented.Somalis should remain in their country; they shouldn't come here to multiply and increase our population, and in future, we shall suffer. The more they come to South Africa to do business, the more the locals will continue killing them.Such an assertion, the report said, cannot be made without recognition of the country's recent history, an issue recognized by a Mozambican in South Africa, interviewed during the research."This thing is something we inherited from the Boers [Afrikaners] because when we came to South Africa we arrived into their hands," said the Mozambican, in Atteridgeville, a large township east of Pretoria.

"They encouraged the hatred of outsiders, and people would point out to them that at such a place there is a Shangani person [an ethnic group divided between South Africa and Mozambique] and they would come and deport you. So even the children grew up in that culture of discrimination where they could distinguish that this person is from this area and they are of a certain tribe."The transference of these attitudes has been felt keenly by refugees in South Africa from the failed state of Somalia, who bore the main brunt of xenophobic attacks before May 2008.In just over a month in August 2006, between 20 and 30 Somalis were killed in xenophobic attacks in Cape Town; in the Motherwell township of Port Elizabeth, in Eastern Cape Province in 2007, more than 100 Somali businesses were looted by a mob, in scenes the report described as "ethnic cleansing".An interviewee in Motherwell told researchers: "The approach of the Somalis to come and just settle in our midst is a wrong one. Somalis should remain in their country; they shouldn't come here to multiply and increase our population, and in future, we shall suffer. The more they come to South Africa to do business, the more the locals will continue killing them."

**Zambia: 'Understand Gender Laws, Community Leaders Urged:13 March 2009:Times of Zambia.**

WOMEN and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA) has called on community leaders in the country to understand the laws that protect women and children to strengthen the fight against gender-based violence and subsequently AIDS. WLSA project assistant, Joseph Tambatamba, said at the end of a two-day workshop that his organisation held for community leaders in Ndola that community leaders should acquaint themselves with the laws that protect women and children against gender-based violence to correctly fight the vice. Mr Tambatamba said while his organisation was ready to partner with community leaders like traditional counsellors, residents development committee officials and headmen, it was equally important that those community leaders were abreast with information pertaining to various laws.

"Most of the community leaders are already in the fight against gender-based violence which helps to reduce the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, but it is also very important to understand the laws because that further strengthens their influence in this fight," he said. Mr Tambatamba said WLSA was organising the workshops in Ndola, Chipata, Kitwe and Lusaka to educate community leaders on different laws that govern succession, indecent assault, defilement, rape and abduction. He said successfully addressing those legal provisions regarding those offences would assist in the drastic reduction of HIV and AIDS.

And the workshop facilitator, Justice for Widows and Orphans project manager, Felix Kunda, said understanding the law improved the negotiation powers of traditional leaders. Mr Kunda said addressing issues of gender-based violence required that the traditional leaders were knowledgeable for them to convince victims and their families to report the different cases to the police. He said most families were reluctant to bring up any charges against the perpetrators because they felt the law did not protect them.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Somalia: Al -Shabab Flogs Teenagers in Mogadishu: 9 March 2009: [Shabelle Media Network](#) (Mogadishu).**

Mogadishu — Four Somali boys accused of raping a young girl of 18 years have been flogged in Mogadishu on Monday by al-Shabab Islamists. The flogging took place in Maslah Compound in the north of the city where a lot of people went to watch the boys being flogged. Sheik Abdi Haqa, a judge of al-Shabab said every boy was sentenced to hit 100 lashes because of the raping. They did not deserve to execute because they did not become married before according to the sharia. The boys were accused of raping the girl in Mogadishu and were sentenced to extradite from Banadir region to other regions.

Sheik Ali Mohamed Hussein one of al-Shabab leaders said the whipping was part of the implementing of Sharia in the country. One of the teenagers said he was happy with the verdict.

**Somalia: 7,574 People Killed in 2008 - Elman Human Rights: 10 March 2009: [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe).**

A Somali human rights agency issued a report Monday in the country's capital Mogadishu to commemorate the death of a human rights activist, Radio Garowe reports. Mogadishu-based Elman Human Rights group was named after Mr. Mohamud Ali Ahmed, popularly known as Elman, who was killed by militiamen on March 9, 1996, while walking with a young child along a city street.

Monday's well-organized ceremony was held at Mogadishu's Amira Hotel, where Somali peace activists and government officials offered speeches to honor the country's peace and human rights movement. Abdullahi Mohamud Mohamed, chairman of the INXA human rights group, commended Mr. Elman as a hero who organized armed youth and educated them during difficult times. Somali lawmaker Bottaan Isse Alim, one of Mogadishu's notorious ex-warlords, offered a brief prayer and praised Elman as a champion of peace. "Any person who does the right is always remembered and Elman was one of the people remembered for his good actions," said Fartun Abdisalam, Elman's widow. Mr. Ali Fadha, Elman Human Rights chairman

Mr. Ali "Fadha" Sheikh Yasin, the Elman Human Rights agency's current chairman, thanked everyone for attending the ceremony and read aloud a list of human rights violations from 2008, including killings, rapes and kidnappings. According to the Elman Human Rights 2008 report, 7,674 people were killed mostly civilians in Mogadishu, while 16,914 others were forcefully displaced from their homes. There were 106 cases of rape reported and 1,164 cases of torture, although the report did not specify the culprits behind such crimes. Further, there were a total of 41 kidnappings of aid workers, including 16 foreigners. Currently, there are 12 aid workers being held hostage in Somalia, the report concluded. Mr. Ali Fadha called on the Somali national unity government and the Islamist rebels to stop the war and to enter peace negotiations. Elman Human Rights group is frequently sourced by the media for its annual reports on human rights abuses in Somalia, especially in Mogadishu.

**Kenya: Michuki Wants Ali Contract Renewed: Isaac Ongiri: 10 March 2009: Nairobi Star (Nairobi).**

Nairobi — Former Internal Security minister John Michuki and his successor George Saitoti are embroiled in a tussle that is delaying the appointment of a new Police Commissioner. Michuki wants Maj-General Ali Hussein to have his three year contract extended yet again. Hussein's second three-year contract expired on February 28. On the other hand, Saitoti and his Permanent Secretary Francis Kimemia reportedly want a new police boss appointed.

Multiple government sources yesterday told Nairobi Star that Michuki has the support of a powerful State House personality. "A very powerful personality within State House, whose decision is hard to overrule, has made it difficult for the authorities to decide. Six people have been short listed for the President to pick one," said a top government official privy to the selection process. The Office of the President has for the last three weeks been reviewing possible candidates to replace the military man who was first appointed to serve in a civilian police force in early 2003. Ali, or whoever replaces him, is

expected to immediately start implementing the reorganisation of the force's top management as well as the recommendations of various government commissions.

Among those shortlisted for the job are Deputy Director of CID Francis Okonya; Rift Valley police boss Japheth Eshimalla; and his Coast counterpart King'ori Mwangi who are all ranked as deputy commissioners of police. The others on the short list are the Deputy Director of Planning at Vigilance house, Japheth Koome who currently ranks as a senior assistant commissioner of police; CID training school commandant Maurice Amata who is a senior assistant commissioner; and GSU commandant Matthew Etere.

Ali was a brigadier in the army when he was appointed Police Commissioner on April 2004 after the Kibaki administration's first police chief Edwin Nyaseda took early retirement. On his appointment, Ali promised drastic changes within the force and launched the first airborne police patrol which helped eradicate robberies and muggings within the city of Nairobi. After several months, the night patrols by the police chopper were halted. Ali dealt ruthlessly with bank robberies which had become a common occurrence before his appointment and which declined substantially thereafter.

However public perception for the Police has fallen after incidents of extra-judicial killings, corruption, harassment and intimidation. Local and international human rights activists have in recent weeks issued reports detailing incidents where the police killed civilians during post election violence as well as the mysterious disappearance of scores of suspected Mungiki sect members. Police headquarters at Vigilance House has remained silent over the possible extension of Ali's contract. Two MPs described the government's failure to replace him as an "illegality". Imenti Central MP Gitobu Imanyara and his Kamukunji counterpart Simeon Mbugua urged President Kibaki to make a decision on the matter.

"As far as we are concerned, Ali's contract expired last month, What is he still doing at Vigilance House? This is an extension of impunity," Mbugua said. He said the issues of the police's credibility raised by human rights organizations and the UN made it "important for Ali to give the force a break". "Whether it is Michuki supporting his retention or whoever, I want to state categorically, that Kenyans are hungry for a new name, capable of restoring discipline within the police system," said Mbugua. Gitobu dismissed assertions that the Commissioner was currently serving without contract as "nonsense".

"Constitutionally, he was retired from the military to take up a contract with the police according to both the Police and the Military Acts. How can he be serving without contract?", Gitobu said. Gitobu warned the state against poaching from other security forces for the Commissioner saying it demoralized police officers. The two MPs called on Kibaki to immediately recall parliament to set up a parliamentary select committee to probe the death of the two human rights activists, Kamau Kang'ara and George Olu. Gitobu and Mbugua claimed some members of the police have been threatening MPs and called for drastic changes in the leadership of the force.

**Uganda: Getting Rid of the Ghosts for Returnees in Acholi:13 March 2009:IRIN.**

Gulu — Human skeletons are being buried and villages cleansed in northern Uganda's Acholi sub-region to ease the resettlement of returnees previously displaced by fighting between the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and government forces."Reburial and cleansing of villages is one of the activities being undertaken to ensure a smooth resettlement of IDPs [internally displaced persons]," said Sophie Agwoko, programme officer for Ker Kwaro Acholi, the cultural institution in charge.

Thirteen skeletons have been buried over the past three months and cleansing ceremonies performed in 17 villages in Gulu and Amuru districts, where several people were killed by either the LRA or the Ugandan army during the war.Acholi was the epicentre of the LRA conflict that left thousands of civilians dead and displaced about 1.5 million.Another 60 human skeletons are scheduled to be buried and 48 villages cleansed in 12 sub-counties.Burying skeletons involves slaughtering a goat or chicken near the grave while cleansing villages requires slaughtering a sheep and traditional dances for the dead.

Agwoko said a sheep was slaughtered in Lukutu village in Koch Goma, where 12 civilians were burnt in a hut in 1987, and another in Kalang, where 10 civilians were shot dead during a funeral in 1990."Civilians were massacred in villages across the region; people fear resettling in their villages in such areas saying they are being attacked by ghosts and evil spirits," she told IRIN on 10 March.Whenever they came across human skeletons in their villages, returnees in some sub-counties of Gulu and Amuru were reluctant to resettle. Some shunned areas where they believed massacres had occurred.In Oroko village, 30km south of Gulu town - where rebels killed several civilians and herded others into huts before burning them - returnee families told IRIN that unburied skeletons made it hard for them to go home.Nesarino Obol, a returnee, said he found two human skeletons in his compound. "I froze when I came across the skeletons; I will only go back when they are buried," he said.

Another returnee, Marino Ojok, said he would only go home if the village was cleansed and the skeletons buried."To the community, it is an indication that the war is coming to an end, it builds hope and confidence for people returning to their villages," Agwoko said. "It reduces fear and helps in the management of mental illness and psychological trauma."Rwot Othinga Atuka Othoyai, a cultural chief, told IRIN at the Acholi paramount chief's palace in Gulu that cleansing the villages under Acholi cultural auspices was important to protect people from bad omens."Locals trying to go back home still live in fear," Othinga said. "The programme helps restore confidence and a sustainable return of IDPs."

**Uganda: Former Rebel Re-Settles Child Soldiers: F. Womakuyu: 9 March 2009: The New Vision.**

Kampala — GRACE Arach has seen tough times - abducted by rebels, raped, coerced into marriage, forced to kill, until she said: "Enough is enough." The 23-year-old escaped

from the captivity of the Lord's Resistance Army, a rebel group that has abducted, massacred and maimed people in northern Uganda for 20 years. Sitting pensively with her palm on her cheek, Arach speaks as if she was still in throes of abduction. But as she recovers from the horror of war, Arach has one thing on her mind: to help former abducted children settle in the communities. Through Children / Youth Peace Builders (CAP), a local advocacy community organisation, Arach is teaching her community how to treat the former child abductees, help them reintegrate into society and learn their responsibility towards the community.

CAP-Gulu was formed in 2000 and is affiliated to CAP International which deals with horrors arising from the effects of war in conflict regions like Colombia, Angola and Thailand. In only nine years, Arach and her team have undertaken counselling, social interaction and peace building programmes in Gulu. With a team of 90 youth, she has trained former child soldiers in vocational skills to generate income and also learn how to live in society positively. "We encourage them to go back to school. Some went but later dropped out due to lack of school fees," Arach said. They also teach former child-mothers who intend to get married on how to pick the right partner. They have also helped counsel and rehabilitate children who have suffered trauma.

According to Human Rights Watch, more than 20,000 children have been abducted by the LRA since 1986. However, some who manage to escape from captivity have no home to return to while others are neglected. "The community rejects them saying they killed people, stole and looted their property," Arach explains. Arach, a native of Pawel village, Amuru district was only 12 and in P7, when she was abducted by the LRA. On March 23, 1996 when she was coming from Pabbo to visit her grandmother in Pawel, Fr Santo, a priest in Pabbo, was going in the same direction and her mother requested him for a lift. "We were approaching Pawel when people dressed in army uniform stopped us. We were six people, five men and I. The rebels pulled me out of the car and removed my shoes. They put a land mine in the vehicle and burnt it. We moved through the bush the whole day and reached a trading centre called Ajulu where they looted shops and released several prisoners in Lugore prison in Patiko sub-county," she says.

Arach says after moving several kilometres, her feet were swollen. The rebels released the priest and the rest of the men but took her with them: "I was given 50kg of sugar to carry. We moved from Ajulu, via Pabbo and finally reached Atiak." The rebels said they wanted her registered. I thought they were going to write my name, but instead gave me 30 strokes of the cane and told me to do the same to other new recruits. "I was tired and could not move any farther. I fell down and it is at this point that the UPDF soldiers attacked us and all the rebels ran in different directions. I hid under a cassava tree. After a while, the UPDF went away.

"Otti Lagony, the second in command of LRA came back, tied me with a rope so that I could not escape. I was made to carry beans, posho saucepans and sugar." We went to Otti's place in Pabbo village in Amuru district. I wanted to run away but he put me at gun point and raped me." She adds that she stayed in Otti's place for a month and was returned to Lagony as his seventh wife. She was trained as a soldier and sent for duty. Under

Lagony, their areas of operation were Apach, Goma and Pabbo."Shortly after that, the UPDF attacked our camp. They sprayed the camp with bullets and as I ran, they shot me through the right breast and I fell down but I quickly got up and ran. We won the battle, but the UPDF helicopter gunships surrounded us.

"As I was healing, the rebels went and abducted the Aboke girls. The Sister followed them and the rebels released about 105 and kept 30 beautiful ones."In February 1997, we heard news over BBC that Lagony and a group of 3,000 rebels had surrendered to the government, yet it was not true. Kony and the Sudanese government were upset. They gave Lagony only five days to leave Uganda. We battled for two days with UPDF until we crossed into Sudan." "We helped the government of Sudan to fight the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). They used to sprinkle us with oil and water to cleanse us of 'demons'. Kony used to believe in the Bible and spirits. There was a spirit for operations and discipline. But these spirits used to come in form of Kony himself. He would become possessed and speak in different tongues.

"It prepared us for operations. It made us courageous and disciplined."In 1999, cholera attacked our camp and I got infected. They threw us out of the camp saying we shall spread to others. Many people died because there was no medication. I stayed out of the camp for three days without food," Arach says. Meanwhile, Kony and Lagony had developed a poor relationship. Kony suspected Lagony wanted to kill him and take over."Lagony was arrested and killed. A certain man called John Tata took over as the overall commander, but had little military experience. Many of the fighters became demoralised and escaped. That is the time I also planned to escape."I was given to a man called Odongo as the 10th wife. I spent two days with him and was sent to Uganda for operations. The Sudan government had grown impatient with Kony and stopped giving us food and ammunition. This is because Kony had killed Lagony, whom they trusted.

A week after Odongo had left, Arach talked to two child mothers about the plan to escape but they were scared. Luckily, Kony had left the camp for a meeting in Sudan and there was little military presence."I pulled the two mothers and we escaped. We moved for two days and ended up in the hands of Arab soldiers who then handed us to UNICEF. We were flown to Khartoum and later to Uganda in 2001. I was received by World Vision."After a week I was admitted to a school in Gulu. I sat for mid-term exams and scored Aggregate 30. "I realised my potential and saw the importance of rejoining school. I had not registered for exams, so I never did PLE. In 2002, I was taken to Aboke Girls by a lady who paid my fees. I was admitted to S.1, but cautioned that I would not sit for S.4 if I did not have a PLE certificate. I registered for PLE in a nearby school where I could study Form One and also do PLE," says Arach. She scored Aggregate 21 in PLE. In 2004, she sat O' Level and passed in Division 2. "I was given History, Economics, Divinity and Geography at A' Level." Arach later scored 8 points and was admitted to Gulu University, where she is doing a diploma in development studies.

At the same time, she volunteers in CAP-Gulu. The team has undertaken peace building efforts to show to the community the effects of war. "We use drama and radio talkshows to show the people that war is bad. We stage scenes like how abductions go on in the

bush. It helps them to know that the children were forced into war and need community acceptance.

Through the sexual violence study, CAP found out how the children in the community are abused. "We aimed at finding out the real cause of the rampant sexual violence on children and how to find a solution," she says. Arach has also attended international conferences on former child abductees. "In 2003, in the US, I met former child soldiers from Colombia, Sierra Leone and many other countries. We discussed how to prevent children from being involved in war and good enough, the UN resolution 1612 was passed to protect children." Last year, Arach went to Sierra Leone to learn how they have managed to restore peace after decades of war. Despite this success, Arach says she is facing some challenges. "I want to go for further studies, but I do not have school fees. I got admission to study a degree at Mukono University, but because I had no fees, I opted for a diploma in Gulu University." For the moment, she is happy to be helping her community. "My people are voiceless and I am working hard to improve their lives," she says.

**Madagascar: Concern About Malagasy Journalists Caught Up in Political Turmoil: 13 March 2009: [Reporters sans Frontières](#) (Paris).**

Reporters Without Borders today expressed its renewed concern after five newspapers stopped publishing and several journalists were threatened and physically assaulted during the political upheaval of the past few weeks. The media has become the prisoner of a hostile climate for press freedom since the start of the power struggle between the president, Marc Ravalomanana, and the ousted mayor of Antananarivo, Andry Rajoelina, the worldwide press freedom organisation said.

"Independent journalists conscientiously doing their job of informing their fellow citizens on the current political situation are neither demonstrators nor active participants in this crisis. In this very tense political climate, it is essential they are protected," said Secretary General Jean-François Julliard. Christian Rivo Rakotonirina, former editor of the daily Tribune de Madagascar and now editor of an online newspaper, was beaten up and left in a coma at a meeting in Mahamasina d'Antananarivo stadium held by the president's supporters. They had accused him of phoning Andry Rajoelina and seized his Blackberry mobile phone before attacking him. He was taken to the Joseph Ravoahangy Andrianavalona university hospital. "My husband is in the neurology department. He is conscious and out of danger but still poorly", his wife told Reporters Without Borders. "The latest scan showed he has frontal bruising". On the same day, Tiaray Rakoto, journalist on Inona Ny Vaovao? (What news?), a daily owned by the President, was chased, searched and robbed of his money by pro-Andry Rajoelina militants. The journalist managed to hide his equipment before his assailants got to him. Since these two incidents, Tribune de Madagascar and Inona Ny Vaovao? have decided to cease publishing "until further notice".

Elsewhere, the dailies Midi Madagascar et Gazetiko and the weekly Midi Flash also stopped appearing after arson threats were made against the Midi Madagascar press



group, which is owned by a deputy in the ruling party Mamy Rakotoarivelo, whose house was ransacked on 11 March. Also in the capital on 7 March, Sitraka Rafanomezantsoa, journalist on the daily Malaza, was assaulted by the "casseurs de manif" (demo busters) a term used locally to describe the president's supporters. The journalist told Reporters Without Borders on the phone that "heavies" had beaten him with clubs and iron bars leaving him with bruising to the head and a badly cut eyelid. Similar incidents have happened outside the capital too. At an opposition demonstration held in Tamatave, on the east coast on 19 February, security forces tried to snatch a camera from a journalist with the first name Harilala, working for TV Plus. Police briefly arrested and then released him. A few days earlier in Fianarantsoa in southeastern Madagascar, police threatened Nicolas Rabemananjara, director of TV Plus, ordering him to stop filming an opposition demonstration.

Reporters Without Borders Secretary General also appealed to journalists and media who support the president or his chief opponent not to get involved in partisan propaganda or defamation but to demonstrate the greatest professionalism in providing fully checked and objective news". *Reporters Without Borders defends imprisoned journalists and press freedom throughout the world. It has nine national sections (Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland). It has representatives in Bangkok, London, New York, Tokyo and Washington. And it has more than 120 correspondents worldwide.*

Central Africa

**Rwanda: Gacaca Courts to Close in June: Edwin Musoni: 12 March 2009: The New Times.**

Kigali — The National Gacaca Courts Service (SNJG) has announced that the courts are to close by June this year as most of the cases have been disposed off. Gacaca courts are semi traditional courts introduced by the country to deal with the over a million backlog of cases of persons suspected of committing the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. In an interview with The New Times, the SNJG Director of training, mobilisation and Sensitisation, Denis Bikeshu said that the service has completed over 1.5 million cases and only a few remain untried. The latest Gacaca report dated September 30, 2008, indicates that 1,127,706 Genocide cases had passed through Gacaca courts and among those only 4,679 remained untried.

"These statistics have since changed since the compilation of this report, as of now, over 1.5 million cases have been completed," said Bikeshu. The additional number of cases is attributed to a decision by government to transfer some the suspects formally under Category One-which had initially been reserved for conventional courts to Gacaca.

Bikeshu said that as per their schedule, all trials before Gacaca courts including those on appeal and revision will be concluded by the end of June. He added that after the closure, main offices will remain working on data compilation and making a final report and the service will close down in December this year. The 2008 report had put Genocide

ideology as one of the main stumbling blocks to the Gacaca process but according to Bikisha, these cases have significantly gone down. Gacaca courts which have been praised by many legal experts were adopted with the purpose of administering justice while promoting national unity and reconciliation.

**Rwanda: Former MP Receives 19 Years for Genocide: Stevenson Mugisha: 14 March 2009: The New Times.**

Rusizi — A Gacaca court yesterday sentenced Elysee Bisengimana, a former Member of Parliament to 19 years in prison for his role in the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. Bisengimana, 43, was sentenced by a panel of Gacaca judges in Gihundwe Sector, Rusizi District after finding him guilty of complicity in the murder of several Tutsis at Groupe Scolaire Gihundwe. The victims, who died at the hands of the former lawmaker according to the judges, included Deogratias Hakizimana, Daniel Ndushabandi Alias Ndago, all former employees of the school. He was also convicted of torturing and harassing Jean Claude Tabaro and Sosthene Harerimana and having mobilized and worked with Interahamwe militias in the killing of several Tutsis in the former Cyangugu prefecture.

"Due to the overwhelming evidence from the witnesses, we find you guilty of crimes leveled against you and you will serve 19 years in prison pursuant to the rules and regulations that govern Gacaca proceedings" ruled court president Kalibana Marara. The sentence was handed down following a ten-hour deliberation amongst the judges. Bisengimana's co-accused, Gabriel Murwanashyaka, a former teacher at Groupe Scolaire Gihundwe, was handed a 30-year imprisonment. Bisengimana who was an MP from 1999 to 2008 was arrested mid February this year and has been detained at Cyangugu Central Prison in Kamembe, after the Gacaca court noticed that he planned to flee the country.

Since his arrest, the former lawmaker who was at one time the Prefect of Cyangugu Prefecture, had been escorted everyday from the prison to appear before the court that convened at the school where the massive killings took place. Like Bisengimana, Murwanashyaka is accused of having participated in the killing of many Tutsis in Cyangugu. Other co-accused of Bisengimana who were also sentenced included: Emmanuel Mugabo who was sentenced to 8 years, Razaro Ndamijimana (30 years), Martin Seromba (5 years) and Razaro Mpakaniye (19 years). Others are Jean Pierre Nsanzurwimo (19 years), Elphaze Gahera (30 years) and Gabriel Kapitura who was imprisoned for 19 years. Immediately after the court session, Bisengimana and his co-accused were returned to Cyangugu Central Prison in Kamembe sector in a pick-up amidst tight security.

**Rwanda: Canadian Lawyer Fined \$5,000 U.S. for Failure to Comply With Court Orders: 12 March 2009: [Hirondelle News Agency](#) (Lausanne).**

Arusha — Trial Chamber III of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) sanctions, Canadian lawyer, Allison Turner a fine of 5,000 US dollars for failure to

comply with the orders of the Chamber and for her misconduct during court proceedings. Turner is a lead Defence Counsel for Rwandan lawyer, Leonidas Nshogoza on trial for contempt of court at UN tribunal since February 9, 2009. According to the decision issued on March 11, the Counsel, failed to comply with Chamber's order to reduce the number of witnesses she wished to represent her client from 22 to 10, despite the earlier warnings that she could face possible sanctions if not implemented. "The Chamber considers that the Defence failure to file the reduced list of witnesses amounts to flagrant disregard of its orders, obstructs the proceedings, and is contrary to the interests of justice," insisted the decision, a copy of which was made available to Hironnelle News Agency.

Also during proceedings on Monday and Wednesday this week, the Chamber had repeatedly warned Counsel Turner for the unacceptable manner she was addressing the court but would not obey. On this particularly issue the decision clarified that " during the course of proceedings, the Chamber has found it necessary to caution Defence Counsel that her tone and language in addressing the Bench was not acceptable, and that she should proceed in a manner that is not insulting." Accordingly the three-man Chamber under the leadership of its President Khalida Khan of Pakistan firstly directed the Registrar to retrieve the 5,000 US dollars penalty from Counsel Turner. The Registrar was further instructed to seek the approval from the ICTR President to communicate Defence Counsel Turner's misconduct to the professional body that regulates the conduct of counsel in her State of admission.

Following such recent development the defence case of Nshogoza schedule to commence Monday this week could not take of two times in three days, forcing the Chamber to adjourn the trial sine die. The prosecution completed its case on February 19, 2009 after presenting five witnesses. This is the first time for the ICTR to imposes a fine to a counsel who fails to comply with its orders and misconduct during court proceedings since its establishment. Nshogoza has been accused of having tried to subvert court of justice in the trial of a former Rwandan Minister for Education and Culture, Jean de Dieu Kamuhanda who is now serving life imprisonment after he was convicted for genocide in 2004. The defendant is alleged to have tried to bribe prosecution witnesses to retract their statements in favor of Kamuhanda whose trial by then employed the accused as its investigator. At ICTR, a person convicted of contempt of court faces a maximum sentence of five years or a fine of US \$ 10,000 or both. The first victim of this offence was a protected prosecution witness dubbed "GAA" who was sentenced to nine months imprisonment in December 2007 after being found guilty of contempt of court by the UN Tribunal.

**Rwanda: Gacaca Judge Sentenced to 30 Years in Prison:9 March 2009:Hironnelle News Agency (Lausanne).**

Aboubakar Karemera, President of Gacaca Court of Kigali, accused of complicity in genocide and crimes against humanity, was last Saturday sentenced to 30 years imprisonment. The defendant was tried by the gacaca court of Kanombe, neighbouring district of Kigali. According to the verdict, the president of the gacaca court of the Munanira cell of the Nyakabanda sector in the Rwandan capital, Karemera was found

guilty and sentenced for "illegal possession of a firearm and having held a road block, in the same cell during the genocide." He was also found guilty of complicity in the murder of a Tutsi woman near the said road block. On March 1, witnesses had reported that a pregnant Tutsi woman, unknown in the Munanira cell, was savagely killed and cut into pieces, before being exposed at the road block, during the genocide.

Karemera was tried alongside four other defendants, including the singer Sudi Mavenge Ngabiganje, who was sentenced to 15 years in prison, and Marie Nyiramitero, who was acquitted. The gacacas (pronounced gatchatchas) courts are charged with trying the majority of the alleged authors of the 1994 genocide, which resulted, according to the UN, in nearly 800 000 people killed, primarily Tutsis and moderate Hutus. They are presided, not by professional magistrates, but by "just people" elected from among the community. However, some of "these just people" themselves have been accused of having taken part in the genocide and yet others were arrested for corruption.

**Rwanda: Catholic Priest Gets 25 Years Jail for His Role in 1994 Genocide: 27 February 2009: [Hirondelle News Agency \(Lausanne\)](#).**

Ausha — The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda has sentenced former Rwandan Catholic Priest, Emmanuel Rukundo, to 25 years imprisonment for 1994 genocide and crimes against humanity.

Presiding Judge, Joseph Asoka De'silva from Sri Lanka said that the Chamber has found to committed acts of genocide, a crime of the most serious gravity which affects the very foundation of society and shocks the conscience of humanity.

"Crimes against humanity are also very serious offences because they are heinous in nature and shock the collective conscience of mankind," stated Judge De'silva. The judge said the Catholic Priest was a well known within the community and was an influential figure in the Rwandan military and instead of using his position to help build co-existence between communities, "Rukundo abused his moral authority." The Chamber also noted was a very educated person and was ordained at the age 32 in 1991. Two years later, he was appointed as Military Chaplain of Rwandan Armed Forces.

Judge De'silva observed that Rukundo attempted to rape a Tutsi girl in Gitarama, central Rwanda, during the height of the 1994 killings at the St. Leon Minor Seminary. However, instead of sheltering her, he told the Tutsi girl, that she and her entire family were to be killed for assisting the Inyenzi (cockroaches). The Tutsi girl, dubbed witness CHH, had testified before the court. "Nevertheless, witness CHH assisted him to carry some items to his room, in the hope that he would help to hide her. Once in the room, Rukundo locked the door, placed his pistol on the table next to the bed and began to caress her. He forced her onto the bed, opened the zipper on his trousers and lay on top of her. Due to the witness CCH's continued resistance, Rukundo gave up trying to have intercourse, but rubbed himself against her until he ejaculated."

The Chamber also found Rukundo guilty of genocide for the killing of Madame Rudahunga and causing seriously bodily harm to two of her children and two other Tutsi civilians in Gitarama. However, Judge De' silva said that the accused will get a credit of seven years for the time already spent in detention. Rukundo is second Catholic Priest to appear before the UN Tribunal, after Athanase Seromba, who was sentenced to life in prison. Prosecutor of ICTR, Hassan Jallow, said that the verdict was very good, especially the findings on the sexual assault. "We will wait to read the full judgement and make a decision whether to appeal or not against the sentencing".

On 20 February 2008, Cameroonian trial attorney William Egbe had requested life in prison while Rukundo's lawyer, Aicha Conde from the Bar of Paris, had asked for an outright acquittal. The clergyman was arrested in Switzerland July 2001 and was transferred to the ICTR detention centre two months later. His trial began on 15 November 2006. Last Thursday, the prosecutor had requested life in prison for Hormisdas Nsengimana, third Catholic Church official tried by the ICTR. Another Catholic Priest accused by the Tribunal, Wenceslas Munyeshyaka, will be tried in France, in accordance with a decision of the ICTR to decline jurisdiction. The two other clergyman indicted by UN Tribunal are: Anglican Bishop Samuel Musabyimana, who died in detention in 2003 before the opening of his trial, and Adventist Pastor Elisaphan Ntakirutimana, who died of a long illness at the beginning of 2007 only a few weeks after having served his 10-year prison sentence.

### **Rwanda: Overcoming FGM, Its Causes And Manifestations: Aroon Mulaki:11 March 2009: The New Times.**

Kigali — Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), as a practice has been in existence for centuries and has deep cultural roots. The expression "Female Genital Mutilation" received greater attention in the 1970s to give it a clear distinction from male circumcision due to its gravity. Female genital mutilation includes a range of practices involving the complete or partial removal or alteration of the external genitalia for non-medical reasons. It was adopted by the UN in 1991 under recommendations from the World Health Organisation (WHO). Between 100 and 140 million women and girls around the world have undergone some form of FGM. Statistics from UNDP, UNICEF, WHO give varying estimates of the number of girls who undergo this painful practice and give a range of between 2 to 3 million.

Africa bears the largest burden of this practice with over 26 countries engaged in this practice according to Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH) 2005. The magnitude of the practice is not uniform; Somalia is recorded to have the highest concentration with 98% of the population participating while Zambia has the lowest at 5%. Though heavily practiced in Africa, there is evidence of its practice in the Middle East, Asia, New Zealand and Australia. Most girls undergo this practice when they are between seven and 10 Years old.

The main reasons given for the support of this practice include necessary rites of passage into womanhood, prevention of promiscuity and preservation of virginity. Other reasons

include enhancement of male sexuality and widening of the birth canal to facilitate childbirth. Regardless of the reason, this practice is deeply entrenched in culture and in some cases religion (among Muslims and Catholics) according to PATH.

The cultural benefits associated with the practice include rendering a girl marriageable, gaining respect among peers, motherly pride and spiritual purity. Some of the immediate physical problems associated with this practice include shock and trauma; wound infections, damage to adjoining organs and excessive bleeding. Long term complications include infertility, difficulty in giving birth leading to death and trauma of both mother and child, increased risk of HIV infection, lower sexual desire among women, painful sex for both men and women to mention but a few. From a sustainable development view point the practice impacts on the achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The third and fifth goal in particular, relating to promotion of gender equality, empowerment of women and improvement of maternal mortality are negatively impacted by this practice as children who undergo FGM are forced into early marriages, pulled from school, and are expected to bear children shortly afterwards. In spite of how harmful this practice is, it is unfortunately resistant to change. Various reasons have been given for this resistance, and studies are still underway to verify them. Why the practice persists is however not as important as what should be done to eradicate it.

**Lessons for Education for sustainability (EFS)** How do we ensure that the community learning curves for harmful practices such as FGM, widow inheritance, child marriages remain sustained? How do we ensure that life skills necessary for safeguarding future generations against harmful cultural practices are sustained? How do we help communities make connections between FGM, economics, societal equity and environmental protection for future generations? These are some of the questions I had as I began working on this assignment. In my view these are the main take home lessons for EFS practitioners.

Celebration of culture legitimizes community. When targeting harmful practices, it is important to first understand what the practice symbolizes and ensure that only the harmful practice is targeted for change while promoting the symbolism. Support education basic education of girls and women is critical. This should include instruction from local customs and oral literature that helps keep the young girls in school and reinforce their status as valuable members of the community. Support health education for ALL to raise visibility of the harmful effects of FGM and how this impacts on maternal and child health thus helping the community to make these connections. In other words help the community make the connections between FGM and development. Economic empowerment- empower women to be able to generate and contribute to family income through micro credit schemes as well as help the circumcisers look for other avenues to generate income.

**Enforcement of law** Invest in the education of legislators to also make connections between FGM, the economy and the environment This will eventually culminate to strong state support. Community Action- let the community take the driver's seat in identifying perpetrators of the practice as well as participate in the rehabilitation of girls

who have gone through the practice to restore esteem. Alternatives- The communities should take lead in identifying alternative rites that maintain symbolism of what is considered as a harmful cultural practice while celebrating culture.

### **Congo-Kinshasa: Waiting for Militias to Leave the Kivus: 12 March 2009: IRIN.**

Bukavu — Civilians affected by recent violence in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) South Kivu Province are facing continuing insecurity, sources said. In most areas hosting IDPs [internally displaced persons] ... we observe a strong presence of armed actors," Stefan Lehmeier, International Rescue Committee (IRC) South Kivu emergency response programme manager, said. "These armed groups have a very poor human rights record, and usually a high concentration of armed men is directly related to a high frequency of rights violations, including roadblocks, extortion, looting and sexual violence."

Most IDPs in South Kivu were initially those who fled fighting in North Kivu's Masisi and Walikale territories, but others are victims of more recent military operations. "The villagers were afraid they would be caught in the crossfire when fighting started," Lehmeier added. "Those who [fled] had to leave everything behind, grab their children and spend long days in the forest." By late February, approximately 27,000 newly displaced people had reached Bunyakiri-Hombo, 5,750 in Kalehe-Nyabibwe while unconfirmed numbers were in Nyamasasa, Minova and Numbi areas, according to the IRC. "The region had been stabilising, but now people feel the situation is not good any more," David Nthengwe, the UN Refugee Agency's (UNHCR) external relations officer for eastern DRC, told IRIN.

**New displacement** The recent operations involved the DRC and Rwandan army, as they jointly tried to oust Rwandan Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda (FDLR) rebels in neighbouring North Kivu. "[People] in South Kivu are traumatised by the Rwandan [rebels], North Kivu is more Rwandaphone," Sylvie van den Wildenberg, UN Mission in the DRC (MONUC) information officer in Goma, the North Kivu capital, said. Laurent Nkunda's Congrès national pour la défense du peuple militia occupied areas of North Kivu before he was arrested by the Rwandan army in January. His militia had occupied Bukavu, South Kivu capital, in 2004. "Here, the feeling is that Nkunda's arrest means an end to problems," Bukavu resident Walumpumpu Gerald said.

In total, an estimated one million people are displaced in North Kivu - of whom about 250,000 fled their homes between August and December 2008. In South Kivu, several armed groups have remained active, including various Mai-Mai factions, the Forces Republicaines Federalistes militia [the Banyamulenge - Congolese Tutsi] and the FDLR, who are operating in seven of the eight territories. More recently, fleeing FDLR militia have moved to Bunyakiri, Mwenga and Shabunda. "The FDLR movement scared local residents, leading to displacement and lack of food as people left their farms," Prospère Birhakaeka, South Kivu's Minister for Health and Humanitarian Affairs, told IRIN. "The FDLR are passing [South Kivu] on their way [home]," he said. "We are sensitising [the rebels] not to hang around as the delay causes them to engage in bad things."

**Militia views** Some FDLR ex-combatants claimed the movement was no longer interested in fighting. "They are asking for dialogue with Rwanda," ex-combatant Gaspard Ntashavu said. Ntashavu, who was in the Rwandan army during the 1994 genocide, was among dozens of ex-combatants awaiting repatriation to Rwanda at the Bukavu UNHCR transit site. "I joined the FDLR because I had many children and no means of supporting them," he told IRIN. "But we always planned to return home although the FDLR leaders would not let us ... even now, there are those who do not want to return - those who participated in the genocide. They are going deeper into the forest." FDLR attacks were, however, recently reported in Bunyakiri, according to Jacqueline Chenard, MONUC information officer in South Kivu. Furthermore, "the FARDC [DRC Army] do not get their full pay most of the time, so they attack people and establish checkpoints to extract money", Chenard said, adding that MONUC was using radio broadcasts to sensitise the soldiers.

**Better terms** To ensure peace in the region, the fighters needed better terms, according to Apollinaire Malumalu, the national coordinator of the Amani programme, which seeks to consolidate peace in the Kivus. "If they are deployed but are not paid for a year, then there are bound to be problems," he said. The rest of the country is saying the Kivus are dragging [them] down. There is a need to return to the disengagement plan and the rule of the state. "According to Malumalu, peace had eluded the Kivus largely because various active militia had an interest in its mineral resources. "If the Rwandans leave, North and South Kivu will be okay," Birhakaeka said.

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West Africa

#### **Nigeria: Nigeria Immigration Service Updates E-Passport: emi Akinsuyi And Chinyere Okoye:10 March 2009:This Day.**

Lagos — Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) has carried out e-passport intervention programmes in Poland, Greece, Ukraine, Austria, Malawi, Botswana, Ethiopia, Cameroon, Togo, Namibia, as well as Zambia. This is in addition to the roll out of the e-passport at Nigeria's Missions in London, New York, Johannesburg, New Delhi and Madrid, and is set to intervene in Ireland and Australia soon.

Comptroller-General of Immigration (CGI), Mr Chukwurah Udeh, stated this while addressing management of the Service at a meeting held at its headquarters on review and performance of the NIS in 2008, and discuss the work plan for 2009. In a statement signed by its Public Relations Officer, Ekpedeme King, Acquisition/enrolment of the passport applicants is done with the use of e-Passport Mobile Direct Data Capture Machines at Nigeria's Embassies and High Commissions in those countries. This is because the e-passport cannot be issued by proxy, as all applicants must be physically present for the capture of their biometric data, Udeh said. He said the intervention programme would continue until completion of the overseas deployment of standard e-passport machines. The NIS must provide Nigerians in the diaspora, the necessary travel documents to enable them reside legally in the countries they are, while going about their legitimate



businesses. Udeh also said the Federal Government and Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs had given full support to the programme.

Southern Africa

**South Africa: City 'Camp' Raises Fear of Disease: Wilson Johwa and Ernest Mabuza: 12 March 2009: BusinessDay.**

Johannesburg — REFUGEES "camping" in Johannesburg were putting strain on infrastructure and services, and there were fears of an outbreak of disease. That was the sentiment at a meeting held at the office of Gauteng local government MEC Qedani Mahlangu yesterday to look at how a number of government departments could manage the influx of refugees housed at the Central Methodist Church in the city centre, Gauteng local government department spokesman Themba Sepotokele said.

The city is grappling with a surge in Zimbabwean refugees, fuelled by the closure of a shelter in Musina. Last week, authorities in Pretoria razed the last camp housing about 300 foreigners displaced in last year's wave of xenophobic attacks. The meeting was attended by representatives from the Department of Home Affairs, the South African Local Government Association and Mahlangu's department.

The meeting was held to look at the role of each party in solving the situation at the church and the surrounding area, where thousands of refugees sleep at night. Sepotokele said the parties would announce a solution before the end of the week, but said the meeting had agreed that no camps would be built for refugees. Meanwhile, a study has ruled out rising food prices, poor border controls or a "third force" as reasons for the outbreak of xenophobic violence.

Commissioned by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the much-anticipated report was released yesterday. It follows five months of fieldwork at seven sites in Gauteng and the Western Cape. The study says most of last year's attacks on foreigners were because of "micro-politics" in townships and informal settlements. It blames individuals and groups who sought to claim or consolidate their political and economic interests. "We found that community leadership is up for grabs in these communities. Leaders hire, rent and sell shacks; they charge protection fees," researcher Jean Pierre Misago said. IOM's southern Africa representative, Han-Petter Boe, cautioned against a culture of impunity, urging that the justice system had to be seen to work against perpetrators of violence.

The report's release coincided with the unveiling of a new campaign that seeks to address discrimination, including xenophobia, racism and tribalism. Known as "ONE Movement", its patron is Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu. A lack of clear guidelines has been blamed for what appears to be confusion in dealing with refugees and asylum seekers. The Department of Home Affairs has said it is now geared towards managing rather than controlling migration. However, its deputy director-general at the immigration branch, Jackson McKay, said the review would not necessarily result in new policies.

"Doing anything in that area requires massive amounts of money." Joyce Tlou, of the South African Human Rights Commission, said the ONE Movement campaign should really have been a government initiative. "The primary responsibilities for protection should rest with the government," she said.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Ethiopia: Displaced People From Reach in Central Somalia:10 March 2009:Shabelle Media Network (Mogadishu).**

Abudwaq — Displaced Somalis from eastern Ethiopia have reached Tuesday in Galgadud region in central Somalia, Shabelle's Abdkarin Bulhan reported. The displaced people from eastern Ethiopia who have fled from renewed clashes between ONLF rebels and Ethiopian soldiers arrived in Balagis Camp in Galgadud, where more displaced civilians reside in. Residents in the area said the situation of the camp is very poor and the people need urgent aid. The civilians said they fled from the new fighting which ONLF rebels claimed. The rebels said they seized Mustahil town, but Ethiopia denied. There are no aid agencies in the region except local NGOs.

**Uganda: WFP Phases Out Food Aid to IDPs: Joyce Namutebi:12 March 2009:the New Vision.**

Kampala — THE World Food Programme (WFP) has stopped food aid to about 214,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in northern Uganda. "Since January, the programme phased out food aid for about 66,000 IDPs in Pader district, more than 58,000 others in Amuru district, about 60,000 in Kitgum and another 27,000 in Gulu district," the country director, Stanlake Samkange, said.

He said the move was taken after consultation with humanitarian partners and district leaders. Samkange said according to assessments conducted in 2008, security had improved in the area and IDPs had access to farming land. "Malnutrition has decreased and is now below 10%," he said. Samkange added that WFP would continue to monitor the food situation to avoid a relapse. "At the same time, we will support IDPs with recovery initiatives like cash and vouchers, to help them rebuild their livelihood," he said. Since 2008, WFP has been supporting about 940,000 IDPs in areas affected by the LRA war.

Central Africa

**Rwanda: Appeal to Fighters to Return Home is Working, UN Says: 10 March 2009:UN NEWS SERVICE.**

The appeal to Rwandan rebels in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to return home is having a positive impact on peace and security in the strife-torn area, the United Nations' top envoy there said today. Alan Doss, Special Representative of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, cites the additional 335 Rwandan nationals who agreed

to be returned to Rwanda since the start of this month. There has also been a slow but steady flow of combatants leaving the ranks of the ethnic Hutu militia known as the Democratic Liberation Forces of Rwanda (FDLR), which has been the target of a joint military operation conducted by Rwanda and the DRC, Mr. Doss added.

"These surrenders, which are being recorded every day, are proof that our message of disarmament and return in dignity is continuing to be heard. We encourage other FDLR troops to follow the same path," he said. The ex-combatants surrender to joint patrols of the UN Mission in the DRC (MONUC) and the DRC Armed Forces (FARDC), while civilians are repatriated by the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). The voluntary disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, reintegration and rehabilitation (DDRRR) programme for the ex-militia is managed by MONUC. The FDLR and other Rwandan militias have been a key factor in the resurgence of violence last August in North Kivu province, where some 250,000 civilians have been uprooted by fighting.

65. HEALTH (HIV/AIDS, TB, MALARIA etc)  
West Africa

#### **Senegal: New Meningitis Vaccine Nears Debut: 12 March 2009: IRIN.**

Dakar — A new vaccine that promises to eradicate meningitis in Africa will be rolled out in a mass campaign in West Africa this year, according to the UN World Health Organization (WHO). Twenty-five million doses of the meningococcal A, or MenA, vaccine are currently in production in India and the drug is expected to be introduced in Burkina Faso late 2009. "This is the beginning of the end of the disease," said Mark LaForce, the director of the Meningitis Vaccine Project (MVP), an initiative of WHO and the non-profit PATH that has been developing the vaccine since 2003. The vaccine currently used in the region spanning from Senegal to Ethiopia - called the 'meningitis belt' for its vulnerability to deadly outbreaks - offers at most two years of protection, according to MVP. While the disease is more deadly in the meningitis belt than anywhere else in the world, there have been no prevention vaccines for the strain found in Africa - until now, according to clinical trials with MenA.

Recent studies with patients age one to 29 in India, Mali, and The Gambia have shown that the new vaccine will provide long-term protection. Lead researcher LaForce has said the drug "will allow the elimination of the meningococcal [meningitis] epidemics that have afflicted the continent [Africa] for more than 100 years." Months away from the vaccine's US\$29-million donor-financed debut in three countries - Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger - LaForce told IRIN the deadly bacteria that attack the spinal cord and brain lining cannot be wiped out overnight. "Look at polio and how long it took to eradicate that. We are looking at 10 years at least [for eradication]," he said. More than 45 years after the polio vaccine was licensed, there were still more than 1,600 infections worldwide in 2008, according to WHO - down from 350,000 cases 20 years ago. LaForce told IRIN the MenA vaccination campaign's goal is to reach "herd immunity", in which if at least 70 percent of the population is immunised, then the entire population is protected. When asked if people who might refuse vaccinations could thwart herd

immunity, LaForce said the response has been "tremendous" in clinical trials to the vaccine and that "70 percent [immunisation] coverage will not be hard to reach."

LaForce has said that "a single case of meningitis can drive a family into a spiral of poverty from which they may never recover." Even with antibiotic treatment, at least 10 percent of people stricken with meningitis die and 20 percent are left with permanent disability including mental retardation, deafness or amputation, according to WHO. WHO aims to immunise 250 million people in the meningitis belt by 2015. The Global Alliance for Vaccine and Immunization (GAVI) has agreed to create an emergency stockpile of the MenA vaccine starting in 2011 with an initial investment of \$55 million.

WHO has pledged to "fast-track" approval of the vaccine as soon as it is licensed in India, according to the director of WHO's Initiative for Vaccine Research, Marie-Paule Kieny. Kieny told IRIN the vaccine is scheduled to become a routine childhood immunisation by 2012. Potential obstacles to mass immunisation are new meningitis strains and inadequate funds to continue beyond the three roll-out countries, according to Kieny. MenA is expected to cost governments 40 cents per dose; current meningitis vaccines cost up to \$1.58, according to WHO. LaForce said the challenge in developing MenA has been in part financial. "These are the poorest areas in the world. Large pharmaceuticals were not interested in producing a specific product for Africa." Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has funded MVP's creation, research and development since 2001.

**Nigeria: Kano Earmarks N20 Billion to Assist HIV Patients: Halima Musa: 12 March 2009: Daily Trust.**

Kano State government has earmarked N20 billion in this year's budget for the support of HIV/AIDS patients in the state, Governor Ibrahim Shekarau has disclosed. Shekarau who made the disclosure at the launch of the state's women coalition against HIV/AIDS and distribution of skills acquisition equipment to women living with HIV/AIDS said several measures were taken to curtail the spread of the scourge in the state and to assist in alleviating problems being faced by the victims.

"As part of this effort we have completed a 100 bed hospital for HIV patients, completed a hospital for women and children living with HIV as well as opened up centres for HIV testing and counseling among others," he said. The governor who was represented by Commissioner for Commerce, Industry and Tourism, Alhaji Ahmad Ibrahim Yakasai charged members of the society to shun stigmatization of victims, saying they were also human beings like any other person. Earlier in her speech, the wife of the state governor, Hajia Amina Ibrahim Shekarau while distributing the skills acquisition equipment said the gesture was aimed at empowering women living with HIV/AIDS.

Amina said women and children living with HIV were the most vulnerable among the victims. "Women and children are the most vulnerable members whose chances of getting medication are low, we decide to empower them so that they can be self-reliant," she said. She commended the victims for working in groups, saying this would enable them

help one another and think of ways of further enhancing their lives. Items distributed include sewing machines, knitting machines grinding engines and macaroni making machines.

Southern Africa

**Zimbabwe: Cholera Rising Among Country's Neighbours:10 March 2009:IRIN.**

Johannesburg — Zimbabwe remains the worst affected country in a regional cholera outbreak, but in nine southern African countries surveyed, case numbers and fatalities are rising, according to a UN report released on 6 March. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said as of 4 March, 124,404 cholera cases and 4,320 deaths from the waterborne disease had been reported in Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe since August 2008.

Apart from Zimbabwe's 3,948 deaths, Malawi reported 95 deaths, Zambia 68 deaths, Mozambique 77 deaths, Angola 60 deaths and South Africa 59 fatalities from cholera, at a regional case fatality rate average of 3.5 percent. Zimbabwe's cumulative cholera caseload was 86,867 cases, followed by South Africa's 11,979 cases, Mozambique's 9,405 cases - although this does not include data from 2008 - Zambia's 5,763 cases, Angola's 5,368 cases and Malawi's 4,171 cases.

**South Africa: Meningitis Death in Cape Town:12 March 2009:Cape Argus.**

A Cape Town woman has died of what is believed to be a highly contagious form of meningitis. It is the most recent fatality in Cape Town linked to meningitis. Parents in Gauteng are calling for vaccinations after the disease claimed four lives there within three weeks. Four more cases of meningitis have been confirmed in Gauteng in the past two days.

Fortunate Mbegi, 29, of Mowbray died on Monday after she was admitted to Groote Schuur on Sunday. A doctor's clinical assessment of the patient was that she had meningococcal meningitis septicemia. Mbegi, originally of KwaZulu-Natal, had apparently fallen ill on Saturday with severe headaches. "I can confirm that a patient was admitted to Groote Schuur Hospital and later died from what is clinically suspected to be meningitis. We are awaiting the results from the laboratory to determine what type of meningitis," said the provincial Department of Health spokesman Mark van der Heever.

In Gauteng this contagious disease has caused alarm, with many parents calling for access to vaccinations which are only available in the private sector. Those who died were all children from southern Johannesburg, aged between nine and 15. However, van der Heever said there was no outbreak. "In South Africa and the Western Cape cases occur year round with definite seasonal increases in late winter and early spring. There is no outbreak in the country or in the Western Cape," he said. Professor Mark Cotton, of the children's infectious diseases clinical research unit at Tygerberg Hospital, said

meningococcal meningitis caused by the meningococcus germ was a cause for concern as it caused "outbreaks". This strain normally manifested itself with a severe headache, stiff neck and spots that first appear as red and turn dark on the body. On small children symptoms included getting sick quickly, vomiting, and difficulty in feeding and fever.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Kenya: Ethiopia-Kenya - Cholera Deaths in Border Town: 12 March 2009: IRIN.**

Moyale — At least 14 people have died in the past seven days of cholera in the town of Moyale, along the Kenyan-Ethiopian border, health officials have said. "Three people have died in Kenya and 11 deaths [have been] confirmed in Ethiopia," Abdullahi Jaldesa, the Moyale district clinical officer, told IRIN. The three dead in Kenya include two children. Another 13 patients have been admitted to the Moyale District Hospital. The Ministry of Health, with technical support from the country office of the World Health Organization (WHO), confirmed the outbreak on 5 March.

"A total of 65 cases and three deaths have been reported," WHO said in an update on 8 March. "The neighbouring country [Ethiopia] is also experiencing an outbreak of acute watery diarrhoea in the same locality, and has reported 109 cases and 16 deaths. However they have not confirmed it as cholera." Some 50 cases have been diagnosed in Moyale, Kenya, and 110 over the border. The death toll is expected to rise as some of the affected are in remote areas far from health facilities. According to Liban Mohamed, Kenya Red Cross Society regional coordinator, the district hospital is facing a shortage of drugs. The cases were first reported in Ethiopia before spreading to the village of Dabelle in Moyale, Kenya, Mohamed said. The spread has been attributed to poor sanitation and water shortages, which have led to the consumption of contaminated water.

Population movement along the common border has also fuelled the spread of the disease, which has yet to be brought under control. A shortage of personnel and prevailing drought are frustrating control efforts, he said. We are facing hunger, water shortages and now cholera. The situation is very bad. Some restaurants along the Kenyan side of the border have been closed and food imports from Ethiopia banned. Local leader Golicha Godana said there was a need for mobile health services to reach affected populations in remote parts of the region. "We are facing hunger, water shortages and now cholera. The situation is very bad," he said. Cholera is an acute intestinal infection caused by the bacterium *Vibrio cholerae*. Left untreated it can lead to severe dehydration and death.

Central Africa

**Cameroon: Special Fund Strives for Health Improvement: Nkeze Mbonwoh: 10 March 2009: Cameroon Tribune.**

*Buea (Fako)- Five new local pharmacies will benefit from the medicine supply system this year. The South West Regional Governor, Louis Eyeya Zanga, has announced plans*

*to seize, impound and destroy illegal drugs, seal unauthorized clinics and so-called schools operating within his jurisdiction, As he explained, the act would be in compliance with instructions from the Ministry of Public Health. Governor Eyeya Zanga was addressing health experts and Committee representatives from the six administrative divisions of the South West Region attending the 15th General Assembly of the South West Regional Special Fund for Health (SWRSFH). The SWRSFH is an outreach health programme whose objectives include: to procure, store and strengthen actions to prevent diseases for some 1.484.487 inhabitants of the area.*

The Governor and participants commended the Fund for recovering most of its debts in 2008 and expressed deep appreciation of the efficiency and commitment with which the Fund promotes health living in the Region. The General Assembly adopted the sum of CFA 876.985.371 as the Fund's budget for 2009, balance in income and expenditure. It started as an "Essential Medicines Programme" in September 1989, evolved to the Special Fund for Health in 1992 and was officially inaugurated by the then Minister of Public Health on 9 June 1994. The Fund was conceived thanks to the GTZ (German Technical Cooperation) whose support in the Fund's budget still flows today to the level of 6.54 percent in subsidies and grants.

The impact of the Fund has, over the years, been felt on the economic, social and even cultural levels Affordable medication, community participation in health issues and a change of hazardous cultural practices perilous to health stood out as crystal benefits accruing from the Fund to even the scum of the earth (lowest class). In 2008, the Special Fund reached out to all the 18 health districts of the Region. Under the careful hands of the Fund, fresh medicine and laboratory reagents are regularly supplied to 31 hospitals both private and public, 13 CMAs, 230 Health Centres, 105 Community pharmacies and five training schools in the Region.

## 66. ENVIRONMENT

West Africa

**West Africa: Experts Meet On Global Warming: Abdul Karim Koroma:10 March 2009:Concord Times (Freetown).**

Abuja — Regional climate experts who met in Banjul, The Gambian have suggested that efforts to address climate change in West Africa should reflect a global perspective taking cognizance of the various aspects of agricultural production in the region. At the end of a workshop to adopt an action plan to combat the effects of the change, the experts said climate change management should be sustainable and neither compromise the region's poverty reduction strategy nor its programme for food self-sufficiency.

While acknowledging that the impact of global change in West Africa will be greatly reduced if the population, economies and government in the region constantly and effectively adapt to climate changes, they stressed the need for the regional action programme to take into account issues of soil degradation and their rehabilitation in the regional action as these constitute major hazards to the sahelian countries of the

region. The experts said that in order to effectively prepare the region for adaptation, there was the need to include the cost of in the action programme and called for synergy of the three Rio Conventions on desertification, climate change and biodiversity. They further called for the reformulation of the draft document on climate change to include priority issues which will enhance the effectiveness of the process of adaptation.

In a speech to the opening of the workshop, the ECOWAS Commissioner for Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources, Mr. Ousseini Salifou, warned of the potentially devastating consequences of climate change on West Africa which could manifest in increases air temperature, sea levels leading to salt intrusion, changes in rainfall amounts and distribution, floods, coastal erosion and the increased occurrence of drought, inundation, storms, violent winds and excessive heat. The Commissioner who was represented by the Dr Johnson Boanuh, ECOWAS Director of Environment stressed the need for optimism as appropriate measures were already been taken by the International Community to combat the causes of environmental degradation as well as minimize its effects on threatened regions. He also commended them for ratifying the Convention on Climate Change and for adopting the National Adaptation Action Plans (NAAP) to Climate Change.

He commended Member States for establishing structures for the implementation of these actions and then urged those who have not ratified the Kyoto Protocol to do so urgently. Participant at the workshop comprised of representatives from the environment, water resources, agricultural and the energy sectors of Member States, technical and development partners like the World Meteorological Organization, Global Mechanism, World Health Organization, World Bank, Food and Agricultural Organization, Japan, African Development Bank, UEMOA, Cooperation Française, the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Lead Africa etc. The Banjul workshop is a key step in the preparatory process for Copenhagen meeting coming up in December, 2009.

**Ghana: NCOM Faults EPA On Newmont Akyem Project: Daniel Nonor: 13 March 2009: The Chronicle.**

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) which gives clearance to Newmont to mine in the Akyem forest reserve has received yet another backlash from the National Coalition on Mining (NCOM), who are calling for the withdrawal of the permits. The coalition said they were disappointed with the way the EPA uses environmental assessment to subvert and undermine community concerns and public interest, particularly in the recent cases involving Newmont Ghana Limited and Adamus Resources.

Millicent Gyan-Badu, who spoke on behalf of the coalition in Accra yesterday, recalled that in June last year, the EPA published notice about public hearing on the proposed Akyem Gold Project at New Abirim by Golden Ridge Resources Limited and Newmont Ghana Gold Limited, to which the Coalition raised grave concerns about the socio-economic and ecological consequences of the project, and the EPA pledged to respond



but they never did..She said they were, therefore, very much disappointed to learn that the agency without responding to their concerns went ahead to grant Newmont an environmental permit to mine in the reserve.She said another instance was a recent public hearing organized by the Agency at Teleku-Bokazo in the Elembele District, Western Region, on a proposed gold mining project belonging to Adamus Resources Limited to which the community raised concerns, leading to the suspension of the hearing and the company tasked to return to the catchments communities for further consultation, but lamented that while the company was in the field, the Agency went ahead to grant an environmental permit.

The coalition further contends that most of the communities lack the capacity to understand the content of the EIA documents, adding that not only are the documents voluminous and technical but they are also often delivered very late, if at all, to the communities. "The situation is compounded by the apparent lack of feedback to the public."They are thus demanding a parallel capacity building for local communities in order to enhance their understanding of the EIA process and relevant content of the scoping reports and environmental impact statement reports adding that the Agency has the power and the option to impose a tax deductible levy on the mining companies to fulfill that demand.The coalition has also argued among others that surface mining in the reserves will have adverse consequences on the social, economic and development of the people.They have thus called for the withdrawal of the permits which it said will be consistent with the recent position of the Minister of Lands and Natural Resources that his outfit will not allow mining activities in to be carried out in forest in restricted forest reserves.

**Nigeria: Govt Proposes 2011 As New Deadline for Gas Flaring: Onwuka Nzeshi:11 March 2009:This Day.**

Abuja — The Federal Government yesterday proposed 2011 as the new terminal date for oil exploration and production companies operating in the country to stop gas flares and said it was committed to ensuring that the flares were out before the end of the first tenure of the present administration.But it was a proposal that met with stiff opposition by all the multinational oil firms who ironically operate in the oil fields in partnership with the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC).The disagreement came on the heels of revelations that as much as two billion standard cubic feet of gas is flared across the Nigeria 's vast oil fields and that the country loses an estimated \$4million daily as a result of this continued waste of what would have been a major source of revenue.Minister of State for Petroleum, Chief Odein Ajumogobia, disclosed that going by the plans of the Federal Government, 2010 should be the beginning of the drastic reduction of gas flares and oil companies should begin to cut down considerably on the quantum of gas flared while allowing a transitory period of another one year for the country to achieve zero flares in its oil fields.Ajumogobia, who spoke at the Joint Public Hearing of the House of Representatives Committees on Gas Resources and Justice said that under the new strategic plan, zero gas flare was feasible by 2011.

The public hearing was convened to give stakeholders an opportunity to exchange ideas on the bid by the House to amend the Associated Gas Re-injection Act No. 99 of 1979 Cap 25 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria. Ajumogobia said that since the earlier deadline of 2008 could not be met due to excuses on the part of the oil firms, the Federal Government was putting in place the enabling environment for the nation to get it right this time. According to him, while the government has set in motion policies that would encourage gas utilisation on the domestic scene, it has also embarked on projects directed at encouraging gas exports. Nigeria, the minister said, has already begun to export its gas through the West African Gas Pipeline and was also committed to the more ambitious Trans Saharan Gas Pipeline which is expected to move Nigeria's gas through Algeria to Europe.

Six oil firms namely Shell, Chevron, Agip, Exxon Mobil, Total and Addax were present at the public hearing and in separate presentations they reeled out projects, programmes and proposals from their respective firms geared towards ending gas flares in their operations. They were however unanimous in their opposition to the 2010-2011 transitory period proposed by the Federal Government and preferred 2013. They also gave the common excuse that funding was the major challenge faced by the oil firms in executing projects that will encourage gas utilisation and extinguish the gas flaring. Chairman, House Committee on Gas Resources, Honourable Igochukwu Aguma, expressed dismay with the position of the oil firms and accused them of ganging up to hold the country to ransom. He said that all the firms should be prepared to henceforth work under a strict regulatory framework where laws are enforced and legislative oversight functions strengthened to produce positive results.

Southern Africa

### **South Africa: Country Wants Carbon Capture Operation in Place By 2020: Siseko Njobeni: 13 March 2009:**

Johannesburg — SA WANTS to have a fully operational carbon capture and storage demonstration plant by 2020, according to the South African National Energy Research Institute (Saneri), the government body responsible for energy research and development. Carbon capture and storage -- the separation of carbon dioxide from other gases to inject it into geological formations -- is one of the ways of limiting carbon dioxide emissions. SA is a leading emitter of carbon dioxide, accounting for 40% of carbon dioxide emissions in Africa. SA emits about 400-million tons of the gas a year, representing 1% of global emissions, according to the Department of Minerals and Energy.

Speaking at a conference in Johannesburg yesterday, Tony Surridge, senior manager responsible for fossil fuels at Saneri, said such a centre would develop human and technical capacity in carbon capture and storage, a new field in SA. He said the objective of the centre was to have an operational demonstration plant by 2020. Saneri is developing SA's carbon dioxide geological storage atlas, which Surridge said would be completed next year.

He said the use of fossil fuels, the largest source of carbon dioxide, was still set to increase, with power supplier Eskom building new coal-fired power stations. The average lifetime of a coal-fired power station is at least 40 years. Petrochemicals group Sasol plans to build an inland coal-to-liquid plant in Limpopo. SurrIDGE said carbon capture and storage could be used as a "transition measure until the shift to renewables and nuclear". He said costs of the exercise varied, with the capture phase being more costly, although research was being conducted into ways of lowering the cost. Estimates range from between \$50 and \$70 to capture a ton of carbon dioxide, he said. SurrIDGE said about 249-million tons or 61% of the carbon dioxide emissions in SA could be captured and stored. Most of these emissions came from the generation of electricity, industrial processes and manufacturing. The 39% of emissions which cannot be captured and stored came from waste, agriculture, transport and heat production.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Kenya: Petroleum Conference Opens in Mombasa: Gashegu Muramira:11 March 2009:The New Times(Rwanda).**

Mombasa — Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki has cautioned that stern environmental measures should be put in place as East Africa braces itself for full oil exploration and exploitation. The remarks were contained in a speech read for him by the Kenyan Vice President Kalonzo Musyoka, yesterday at the opening of the 4th East African Petroleum conference taking place in Mombasa, Kenya. "I would like to urge prospecting companies to ensure strict adherence to environmental and social impact requirements. These should be in tandem with best international practice in upstream petroleum industry," Kibaki's speech read. He added that it is crucial to maintain a balance between profit maximization and environmental preservation, because environmental sustainability is a prerequisite in the social-economic transformation and development agenda.

The meeting brought together stakeholders in oil exploration from all the five partner states forming the East African Community. The Kenyan President also called for sound management of revenues generated from exploitation of hydro-carbons, adding that it is very important in the discussions of enhancing exploration and exploitation of oil and gas for social economic development in the region. East Africa has in the recent past not only displayed potential in areas of harnessing geothermal energy, but has also discovered oil and gas. All the partner states and renowned drilling companies in the world had by yesterday erected exhibition stands showcasing potential in the petroleum sector.

The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Infrastructure, Marie Claire Mukasine, explained to participants, who included potential investors, the opportunities Rwanda has in the gas exploitation business. Flanked by the Interim Director General of the Unit for the Promotion and exploitation of Lake Kivu gas, Charles Nyirahuku, Mukasine, took participants through the Lake Kivu Methane Gas Project. "Participants at the conference are very eager to know how all this is working out. We are getting many visitors coming to our stand because we are actually the only people with the computer technology showing whatever is going at the exploitation site in Lake Kivu," Mukasine said. The

three-day conference is taking place at a time when current global financial meltdown and marked reduction in oil prices have grossly impacted on the exploration financing base of many oil companies worldwide. It's organized by the East African Community (EAC) secretariat in collaboration with Kenya's Ministries of EAC and Energy and has attracted over 600 delegates from the region and all over the world.

**Ethiopia: Environmental Policy Implementation Still in Difficulty – EPA: Fikremariam Tesfaye:13 March 2009:Daily Monitor.**

Addis Abeba — The Addis Ababa Environmental Protection Authority (AAEPA) on Wednesday said even though Ethiopia has approved good policies and legislative on paper, the implementation of measures for the protection of the environment is in great difficulty. "The whole effort of protecting the environment using policy and legislative measures would become effective only by directing the socio-economic development activities and aspirations in conformity with the laws governing the natural system and there by transforming the society to a better life," said Tekle Woldegerima, AAEPA Deputy General Manager at the environmental audit training organized for industry owners and professionals working in industries at the Ghion Hotel here. The four days training was held under the theme "Environmental Audit Tool for Sustainable Industrial Development" organized by AAEPA in collaboration with UN- Habitat.

According to Tekle, industrialization and urbanization in Ethiopia specifically in Addis lay with complex problems and characterized by unplanned and unmanaged industrialization, very high population, high density of housing and unplanned settlement, crowded market, low infrastructure, etc. He said these factors create great difficulty to implement the policies and legislations. Currently, the Authority has implemented the reformation process and it plans to implement its working structure up to Kebele level, according to Tekle. The Authority has the mission to improve and enhance the health and quality of life of all Ethiopians and to promote sustainable social and economic development through the sound management and use of natural, human-made and cultural resources and the environment as a whole so as to meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The objective of the Authority is to formulate policies, strategies, laws and standards, which foster social and economic development in a manner that enhances the welfare of humans and the safety of the environment sustainable, and to spearhead in ensuring the effectiveness of the process of their implementation.

Central Africa

**Cameroon: Experts Want Environmental Legislation Revised: Fred Vubem:10 March 2009:Cameroon Tribune.**

This was during a meeting of the multi-stake holders support group for legislative environmental representation organized by NESDA CA last March 4. In order to harmonise their effort and be more effective in their advocacy for environmentally friendly legislation, key actors and stakeholders in the environmental sector have agreed

to merge their various networks into one major network which will be represented at the national assembly. This was the major decision arrived at during a meeting of the multi-stakeholders support group for legislative environmental representation last Thursday March 4, at the Franco hotel in Yaounde. Participants also agreed to prepare questions which will be forwarded to parliamentarians during the current session. The question will centre on issues concerning climate change, desertification and deforestation. The lovers of nature equally agreed to set up a parliamentary working group that will represent indigenous people in various forums.

The meeting was organized by the Network for Environment and Sustainable Development in Central Africa, NESDA CA to review the terms of reference for the group, discuss issues to be proposed to MPs during the current session as well as establish the 2009 Action plan. The meeting comes to complement the activities of MP networks towards the effective implementation of forest policies that respond to the needs and concerns of forest-dependent communities. There were two major presentations during the meeting including a presentation from Prof Yves Mandjem from IRIC on "the forestry reforms in Cameroon; fifteen years after". The second was presented by Prof Tiencheu A. on "climate change and the fight against desertification. The Role of legislators". Eight-year-old NESDA, is the outcome of a partnership between some regional and national NGOs in order to harmonise and strengthen approaches and actions in the conservation and protection of natural resources on the African continent.

## 67. ECONOMY AND ENERGY

### West Africa

#### **Nigeria: FG, States, LG Share N225 Billion From Excess Crude Account: Abdulfattah Olajide: 11 March 2009: Daily Trust.**

The National Economic Council (NEC) yesterday approved the sharing of N225 billion (\$1.5 billion) from the excess crude account by the three tiers of government. Announcing the approval in Abuja yesterday, the Minister of Finance, Dr. Mansur Muhtar, said the money was meant for the shortfall recorded in the federal allocation. He said some states were unable to meet their obligations of paying workers' salaries due to the shortfall in their revenue owing to the global economic meltdown.

Said he: "As you know many states have been experiencing difficulties, during last month's allocation, the amount that the states received monthly has fallen drastically, and there are continued challenges as oil price remain at low levels and we have production short fall. Some states and local governments have been unable to pay salaries as a result of this shortfall and some teachers have been on strike and because of the threat to security, there were consideration given to utilise part of the excess crude money to provide bridge financing. As you know the account has been set up for that purpose.

"The states have talked about the efforts they are making to increase internally generating revenue, which include borrowing from capital markets as well as to look at medium and long term plans for adjusting their spending to basically respond to dwindling revenues. It

was conceded that short term support is needed and in that case based on the MOU that has been agreed to earlier in relation to the sharing of excess crude account, which makes provision that in exceptional in circumstances, the sharing formula agreed to could be modified, a decision was taken that with immediate effect, an amount of \$1.5 billion would be shared amongst the tiers of government. In addition to that, the shortfall as you know the payment made in the last two months, there was no bridging of the funds but now that the budget has been , the \$45 benchmark will be used now to make appropriate adjustments to the amount that have been paid to states. This will mean that they will get additional money to bridge the shortfall of the amount the receive in January and February," he added.

**Ghana: Tullow Oil Reports Find, Wins \$2 Billion Loan: Daniel Nonor: 10 March 2009: The Chronicle.**

UK-based oil explorer Tullow Oil said it had made a significant new discovery offshore Ghana and secured \$2 billion in loans to develop its African finds, sending the company's shares up over 9 percent. Tullow and Ghana partners Anadarko Petroleum and Kosmos Energy said in statements on Monday that their Tweneboa-1 well had yielded the latest in a string of discoveries in the West African country. "Tullow's success in Ghana continues apace with the Tweneboa discovery," Richard Griffith, oil analyst at Evolution Securities said in a research note. "Initial results suggest that the P10 reserves could be .. twice the pre-drill estimate."

Tullow said in a statement that it had secured its financing package for which it would pay an interest rate of up to 3.75 percent over US\$ LIBOR on its debt facility. Before the credit crisis, the company paid around 1 percent above LIBOR, executives said at the time. Investors had been waiting eagerly for confirmation the debt had been secured. Many small and medium-sized oil producers have had difficulties securing debt to fund field developments and some have been forced to put assets up for sale to meet cash needs. Also on Monday, UK-listed Sterling Energy said it was in talks with lenders about a waiver on debt repayments while it continues in talks about the sale of U.S. assets. Tullow shares traded up 6.5 percent at 783 pence at 0903 GMT, compared to a 1.1 percent drop in the DJ Stoxx European oil and gas sector index.

**Ghana: ISODEC Digests 2009 Budget: Daniel Nonor: 13 March 2009: The Chronicle.**

The 2009 budget has elements of a pro-poor budget, but it is not yet a social democratic budget. The budget would need to re-establish the balance between the economic and social sectors, in both its political orientation and taxations or allocations. The Executive Director of the Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC), Mr. Bishop Akolgo made this known at a press conference on the 2009 policy and budget statement by the Centre for Budget Advocacy of the ISODEC in Accra, yesterday.

He noted that the economic policy of the 2009 budget sought to pursue three key targets, namely economic growth, stability and equity. Growth, though important, is not enough to ensure poverty reduction, especially where the distribution of assets, like land and credit

and others are unevenly unequal. Both the source of growth and how it is distributed are critical for quality of life of the poor, marginalized and vulnerability in society. Mr. Akolgo alluded that in the short run these three are contradictory but in the long run they are complementary. Some of the social agenda policies pursued by the current government is based on the manifesto of National Democratic Congress (NDC) as well as the crises of food, fuel and finance, and high expectations of Ghanaians. The above could have been transparently articulated in an annual Fiscal Strategy Paper outlining the fiscal assumptions, targets and spending priorities for the fiscal year to guide the government's expenditure policy.

This would have enabled us to interrogate the social democratic agenda; especially how trade-offs and choices were made on our behalf in the budget. The Executive Director, recalled that in the past citizens input into the budget process, were taken into the annual budgets. Unfortunately, this process was truncated this year, during the preparation of the 2009 budget. Mr. Akolgo therefore called on the government to formalize the public input into the budget process. He stressed that it should go even beyond request for input from the public to the situation where the public is involved in Ministry, Department and Agencies' (MDAs) policy reviews and budget hearings and debates in parliament on the budget. Additionally, the budget should be presented in a non-technical language and in a format that is reader-friendly and conveys all information to allow citizens to understand and use it as a guide to life decisions. Over the years, however, there is limited analysis of the budget as well as very technical language and, therefore, needs to be a citizens' budget, targeting all Ghanaians. Touching on macro-economics and gender, ISODEC indicated that gender inequality in access, ownership and control of resources limit their ability to respond adequately and positively to market opportunities thus leading to the inefficient allocation of these resources.

**Nigeria: Northern Speakers' Forum Tasks FG On Oil Exploration: Danjuma Michael: 13 March 2009: This Day.**

Katsina — Northern House of Assembly Speakers rose from a forum in Katsina State, with a call on the Federal Government to revisit the issue of oil exploration in northern parts of the country, and commence it this year as earlier planned. The three-day 17th conference of the Forum said despite Federal Government's positive commitment to resuming oil exploration in the North, necessary action was yet to be taken in either the Chad Basin or some of the states identified with potentials of oil deposits. In a communiqué, the conference noted the current global financial crisis as it affects the North and the country in general, and urged northern state governments to look inwards by diversifying their economy, with focus on agriculture and tourism, to boost revenue generation.

It expressed concern over recent religious and sectarian crises that had been reoccurring in parts of the North, with a call on individuals and groups not to be allowed to be used by unpatriotic elements. On the outbreak of Cerebro Spinal Meningitis (CSM) in some parts of the country, the forum called on affected states to intensify efforts on its control and enlighten people on how to wipe out the menace. In reference to energy supply, the

conference commended efforts made by some states, especially Kwara, in improving their energy supply and appealed to other states to do same.

**Nigeria: Relief Materials - Women Give Chevron 21-Day Ultimatum: Emma Arubi:13 March 2009:Vanguard.**

Warri — WOMEN from oil impacted Aja-Omaetan community in Warri North Council Area of Delta State on Thursday gave Chevron Nigeria Limited (CNL) a 21-day ultimatum within which to send relief materials to the community and provide job opportunities for youths following an oil spill from CNL Dibi 18 Bulk Line or they would disrupt the operations of the company. The crude oil spill occurred last Wednesday at Dibi 18 Bulk Line between Junction 25 and 27 causing severe damage to aquatic and vegetative life in the community's waters and creeks. In a letter addressed to the governor of the state, Dr. Emmanuel Uduaghan, by Madam Philitia Ebrohimi, Mrs. Queen Wilkie and Mrs. Helen Ajogungbe, leader, PRO and secretary, respectively, they noted that the Dibi 18 Bulk Line between Junction 25 and 27, is a spot very close to the Aja-Omaetan community estuary. Though the exact cause of the spill has not been determined, the quantity of spill is still a source of disagreement between the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA) and the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR), while Chevron maintained that only 6.58 barrel of crude was spilled with the community disagreeing with Chevron's claim.

According to the protest letter to the governor, Chevron, NOSDRA and DPR conducted a Joint Investigation Visit (JIV) to the site last Friday without inviting the direct representatives of Aja-Omaetan community, the most impacted but other lesser impacted communities were invited, adding that Chevron has always been marginalising and depriving them of all their due rights and privileges as host community. In a protest letter addressed to the General Manager, Policy, Government and Public Affairs, CNL, dated March 7, 2009, Mr. Femi Odumabo, the community stated that "pending when the issue of compensation due to the affected communities would be determined, we, as a matter of urgency demand that job-slot due to our community from the on-going mop-up exercise be given to us just as relief materials to cushion the effect of destruction to our economic life be sent to us."

**Nigeria: Govt Earmarks \$60 Billion for Gas Devt: Onwuka Nzeshi:12 March 2009:this Day.**

Abuja — The Federal Government has earmarked an estimated \$60 billion to develop the gas sector of the economy over the next five years. The investment is designed to expand infrastructure in the sector to boost domestic gas utilisation and export of its liquefied natural gas. Out of this amount, \$20 billion will be deployed to the Brass Liquefied Natural Gas project; about \$20 billion had been set aside for the domestic gas utilisation plan while about \$10 billion will be deployed to strategic projects between now and the flare out date. Chairman, House of Representatives Committee on Gas Resources, Honourable Igochukwu Aguma, disclosed this yesterday at the opening of the Joint Public Hearing by the Committees on Petroleum Resources (Upstream) and Gas Resources.



The public hearing was in furtherance of the demand by the government and other stakeholders to compel the operators of these multi-billion dollar projects to take the issue of involving Nigerians in the execution of the projects. Aguma said that given the share volume of these investments Nigeria cannot allow the multinationals who had dominated the sector for long to exclude Nigerian, adding that the hearing was to allow inputs to the amendment of the Nigerian Content Development Bill which seeks to develop local content through active participation by indigenous oil companies in these projects. According to Aguma, given the realities of the global meltdown and its impact on the national economy, Nigeria must take active part in the exploitation of its abundant gas resources and will no longer allow the situation where the country takes the backstage. "The essence of the bill is to advance Nigerian local content development. It is an issue that demands the attention of all stakeholders in the oil and Gas industry and the present administration is committed to ensuring a vibrant oil and gas sector", he said.

**Nigeria: Trans-Sahara Gas Project Will End Shortages in Europe -Yar'Adua: Juliana Taiwo:10 March 2009:This Day.**

Abuja — President Umaru Yar'Adua said yesterday that Nigeria would be able to solve gas supply shortages experienced by the European Union by the time the trans-saharan gas pipeline project being undertaken by Nigeria and Algeria, is completed. Gas shortage was at the center of a recent dispute between European Union member states and its major supplier of gas, Russia. Speaking while receiving President of Finland, Mrs Tarja Halonen, who was in Nigeria for bi-lateral talks between the two nations, Yar'Adua also sought investors from EU to help Nigeria tackle its power and energy challenges even as he maintained that the establishment of the Niger Delta Ministry was occasioned by the need to confront development challenges of the region.

"In fact we are together with Algeria promoting a trans-Saharan gas pipe line project that will run from the Niger Delta region of Nigeria through the Sahara to Algeria across the Mediterranean to Europe. We are working together on the design and as soon as we conclude the design, we will market this project and this will provide great opportunity for Finland and indeed Europe to have access to gas apart from the gas from Russia . I think the opportunities in the energy sector are enormous". "We are reforming the oil and gas sector, the gas sector in Nigeria is not yet developed, Nigeria is more of a gas nation than an oil nation. At least we have about 186 trillion cubic feet of reserves in terms of gas and this presents great opportunity for investments," he said. On power and energy, he noted that, "One of the greatest challenges Nigeria has today is in power and energy sector and this presents a great opportunity for Finland and indeed other investors from the European Union to take the opportunity that abound." Asked on how the creation of Niger Delta Ministry will address the unjust distribution of wealth and how will it solve the crisis in that region, Yar'Adua explained, "when you talk of something being unjust it means it is not being done according to law. The distribution of wealth in Nigeria and the income is being done according to law which is contained in the Nigerian constitution. So the issue that the distribution is being done according to law does not make it unjust so I want to make you understand and remove this notion from your thinking about the distribution.

"Yes, there are problems of development, of all the regions of Nigeria , it is the most difficult region to develop because of the terrain so that is why this administration established the ministry to tackle the problems of the Niger Delta region. Just like we have the Ministry of the Federal Capital Territory, because the federal capital of the nation has to be developed, so we establish a ministry for it at a time it was established as a federal capital."Now the last federal capital we had before it was moved was Lagos, when Lagos was capital there was a Federal Ministry of Lagos Affairs at the federal level, and that is why this administration established a ministry for the Niger Delta region so that more resources outside the normal distribution and budget can be pumped for the development of the region and the ministry and government can now focus on the development of the region."So this is the reason why we set up the ministry and I am sure this strategy is bound to work just like it has worked in developing the former federal capital and the current federal capital. Now, it will take sometimes, Niger Delta is the most difficult region to develop in terms of infrastructure but with the establishment of the ministry I have no doubt in my mind that it will work", he said. President Halonen, who was accompanied by her husband, Dr. Pentti Arajärvi, said her delegation and that of Nigeria had discussed issues bothering on bilateral relations between Nigeria and Finland describing it as a very good one."But we want to develop them further. Finland will receive the Vice President of Nigeria in spring and we have also discussed not just the possibility of business relations but also international security in crisis management and all this is what we have expertise in. The subject that is of interest to both of us is that of environmental issues, we want to know what exists in both countries and how we could use the know how to meet the needs in order to solve them," he said.

Southern Africa

**Zimbabwe: Govt Urgently Needs U.S \$1 Billion: Dumisani Muleya:14 March 2009:Zimbabwe Independent.**

Harare — THE inclusive government, looking for US\$2 billion from the region and at least US\$5 billion for economic recovery, desperately needs US\$1 billion over and above its fiscal budgetary requirements to meet an array of emergency financial obligations. Failure to secure the US\$1 billion could cripple the operations of the new government that has raised public expectations on economic recovery and delivery of services, making its first 100 days a barren stretch. Sadc finance ministers and African Development Bank officials met recently in Cape Town to work out a US\$2 billion rescue package, but that is unlikely to come immediately. Sadc leaders need to meet first to approve the package.

A confidential internal government memo circulated to selected ministries says US\$1 billion is needed now to meet emergency obligations which include critical payments for fuel, electricity, water, grain, seed, fertiliser, lines of credit, diplomatic missions, parastatals, currency printing equipment, the Registrar-General's office, presidential scholarships, security ministries, loans and debts. The memo says as of last month, Zimbabwe owed Equatorial Guinea US\$222 million for fuel, Noczim US\$26,5 million, Noczim-pipeline US\$4 million, lines of credit US\$195,4 million, GMB US\$106,05

million, corporate loans US\$240,74 million, diplomatic missions US\$30 million, fertilisers US\$35,6 million, army/intelligence/police US\$20 million, Air Zimbabwe US\$10 million, Zinwa US\$5 million, China US\$5 million, the Registrar-General US\$5 million, presidential scholarships US\$4 million, Zesa US\$40 million, seed US\$12 million and currency printing US\$100 million.

"This amounts to US\$1,061,29 billion. Government needs to swiftly raise this money to keep running," the memo says. "Failure to pay some of these obligations urgently would further weaken the country's credit rating in regional and international markets."The memo says government is facing a serious financial crisis and would need to move with speed to raise funds to save the situation. The crisis is aggravated by a total stock of external debt of over US\$5 billion."The Ministry of Finance must swiftly put together a framework for sustainable external debt management," the memo says. "Government has been frustrated by the attitude of multilateral financial institutions and the donor community."

The need for emergency funding has created headaches for the new government which has no reliable source of revenue. Western nations have said no financial aid would be coming soon. The situation is further worsened by the global economic crisis gripping developed countries.Only Australia, which does not belong to the G8, has promised US\$10 million in aid over and above the humanitarian assistance to deal with water, sanitation and health services. However, US\$10 million is a drop in the ocean given the needs.With the International Monetary Fund, whose assessment team is currently in the country, indicating that no balance of payments support would be provided any time soon, Zimbabwe's bid to raise US\$1 billion right away could be a nightmare.

To make the situation worse, government can no longer print money to meet its local obligations as the new Finance minister Tendai Biti is opposed to quasi-fiscal activities. The government used to meet its urgent financial obligations through printing money.Now government will refrain from borrowing from the central bank either via direct overdrafts or through primary issuance of debt instruments to the Reserve Bank by the Treasury."Swift measures need to be taken to capacitate Zimra to raise fiscal revenues," the memo says. "Without this, we estimate that the expected target of achieving revenues that are 30% of GDP could turn out to be as low as 15-20% of GDP at best, which eventually would cripple operations of the government and the economy as a whole."

### **South Africa: Coal Supply Faces Major Challenge: Charlotte Mathews: 12 March 2009: BusinessDay.**

Johannesburg — AN INVESTMENT of between R90bn and R110bn will be needed in SA over the next 10 to 12 years to build about 40 new coal mines to meet projected domestic, power station and export needs, says Eskom chief geologist and coal specialist Johan Dempers.But Wood Mackenzie senior coal analyst Xavier Prevost said the number of new mines would probably be greater than 40, although the volumes would be the same, because more small coal mines were coming on stream.

Nine new mining projects were launched in 2007 and 11 last year, he said, although some had now been frozen. Dempers told the Coal, Carbon and Energy Indaba hosted by the Fossil Fuel Foundation yesterday that Eskom's strategic planning exercise conducted last year showed Eskom would need substantially more coal by 2018 to fuel re-commissioned and new power stations. Assuming 4% growth in SA's electricity demand, Eskom would have to increase its coal consumption from 129-million tons last year to 200-million tons by 2018, while there was also projected growth in export capacity and the requirements of Sasol's coal to liquid Mafutha plant. Taking into account both mine closures and new projects, there would be little excess coal production margin within 10 years, Dempers said.

Eskom's strategic plan required data on SA's coal reserves. Dempers is chairing the steering committee responsible for updating the coal reserves of SA and neighbouring countries. The last estimate, in 1987, showed SA had 121,2-billion tons of coal reserves, of which 55,3-billion were recoverable. Dempers said data would be compiled from the mining companies, the Department of Minerals and Energy, and from geological surveys of neighbouring countries. Confidentiality regarding data would be important, he said. The study would take about 22 months and he called for the support and participation of the mining sector because the information was important for planning. Prevost said there had been changes in SA's coal sales and structure in the past few years. As a result of the recession, coal-mining projects that were too small to stand alone were being merged into bigger, viable projects. As BHP Billiton had closed or sold coal mines, it had been overtaken by Anglo Coal as SA's biggest coal miner. Last year, Exxaro and smaller black empowerment companies together accounted for more than 30% of SA's coal production. Exports were still the biggest source of revenue for the coal industry and new markets were developing, Prevost said. In 2006, Europe accounted for 88% of SA's coal exports but in 2007 that dropped to about 63% as exports to Asia, and especially India, increased. The price of free-on-board coal exported through the Richards Bay Coal Terminal peaked at about \$170/ton last year and has since fallen to \$60/ton. Prevost doubted whether the price would return to historic levels of \$20/ton as the cost of coal mining had also increased. The biggest problem for SA's exports was lack of rail infrastructure to ports, Prevost said.

**South Africa: Coal-Fired Electricity Will Be With Us for Years: 12 March 2009: column: BusinessDay.**

Johannesburg — A COUPLE of the fondly held myths about environmental damage from the growing number of coal-fired power stations being built around the globe were shot down at yesterday's Coal, Carbon and Energy Indaba. According to John Topper of the International Energy Agency's Clean Coal Centre, over 40% of the world's power comes from coal and that will increase slightly over the next 20 years. So using coal cleanly and sustainably has become a major preoccupation.

Despite what politicians were saying, carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology was a long way from ready, he said. CCS technology is designed to capture the harmful carbon dioxide emissions from power stations and then dispose of it, to ameliorate the

greenhouse gas effect. CCS pilot plants are only just coming on stream. In the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries, the first demonstration plants were only likely to be operating within five or six years and be deployed on a commercial scale by 2020. In SA, demonstration plants were only likely to be launched by 2020-25, he said.

Topper also blasted the misconception that China was ignoring environmental considerations in its huge power station build programme. He said China was no further behind anyone else in CCS technology and, in spite of what it was saying in public, it was worried about widening deserts as a result of climate change, and wanted to establish its own intellectual property in CCS.

AN ASSET manager said recently that financial services group Metropolitan Holdings had generated a 164% total return for them on the JSE over the five years to February 1, while Anglo American's return was 27% over the period. This trend may continue, judging from Metropolitan's results for the year to December 31. Sure, the basic composition of the results resembled those of its peers in that lower investment returns severely affected the bottom line. But core headline earnings came in flat at R1,01bn, while the group capital adequacy is strong at 3,1 times. The value of new business written grew 10% to R371m during the year.

Metropolitan's Sens announcement glittered with phrases that shareholders like to hear, and contrasted with the doom and gloom in many results announcements these days. Phrases included: "especially pleasing"; "tremendous growth in membership"; "better position than anticipated"; "noteworthy feat under current conditions"; "resilience"; and, most importantly, "remains confident about Metropolitan's medium term earnings prospects". Metropolitan's share price rose nearly 5% to R10 yesterday. THE Treasury finally released details this week of the tax incentive plan aimed at attracting industrial investment. And about time too.

Incentives under the Strategic Investment Programme (SIP) expired in 2005, leaving a three-year void just at the time the government began talking seriously about upscaling manufacturing to create jobs and spur growth. The Department of Trade and Industry launched its flagship strategy to drive industrial development in the third quarter of 2007 and the tax incentives were mooted in the budget in February last year. So it has taken more than a year for the Treasury to deliver its side of the bargain -- a likely indication of its mistrust of the industrial development plan. On the positive side, the Treasury is thinking bigger, eyeing mega projects, while planning to reward investments that use electricity sparingly, create jobs and develop skills. It is a welcome departure from the SIP, which tried to lure energy-hungry foreign investors to SA with the promise of cheap power it turned out we didn't have. In times of economic turmoil we need to attract investors who are going to help the economy out of a hole, not ones who abuse our goodwill, create no employment and then ship the profits overseas. ***The Bottom Line is Edited By Edward West.***

**Mozambique: Bio-Fuels May Provide 15 Percent of Fuel Consumption: 11 March 2009: AIM.**

Maputo — Bio-fuels, particularly ethanol and bio-diesel, may contribute 15 per cent of Mozambique's national fuel consumption within the next five years, according to Energy Minister Salvador Namburete. Namburete said the government was considering putting a mixture of biofuels and fossil fuels onto the market. But before these mixtures are given the green light, the government must work out regulations and indicate the percentage of ethanol or bio-diesel to be mixed with petrol and diesel.

"There must be legal instruments to determine the levels of the mixtures, and these must state if we must start at the level of five or 10 per cent, bearing in mind that we want to attain 15 per cent by 2014", he said.

Besides the issue of regulating the mixtures, it was also necessary to give the fuel importing and distributing companies time to prepare themselves for the new reality, Namburete added. Mozambique is committed to developing bio-fuels in order to reduce the country's dependence on imports of fossil fuels. The company ECOMOZ (Renewable Alternative Energies Ltd), which is a joint initiative between Mozambique's state-owned fuel company, Petromoc, and several other partners, has produced about one million litres of bio-diesel, using coconut oil as the raw material, since 2007. Other initiatives for the production of bio-fuels, such as Procana, in the southern province of Gaza, are in the early stages of producing sugar cane for conversion into ethanol.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Somalia: Kismayo Islamists Shut Down Money-Wiring Firms: 10 March 2009: Garowe Online (Garowe).**

Islamist rulers in Somalia's southern port of Kismayo have shut down money-wiring firms, attracting anger from the local population, Radio Garowe reports. The offices of seven money-wiring companies were shut down Tuesday in Kismayo, which has been governed by Al Shabaab guerrillas since Aug. 2008. "The Islamists asked us for additional money to be used to improve the city's image, but we informed them that we cannot pay," said a senior source at a money-wiring firm in Kismayo. Al Shabaab administrators ordered the money transfer companies, known locally as hawala, to pay the additional fee or shut down their offices, the source added. Kismayo locals have responded angrily to the hawala closures, with one resident telling Radio Garowe that tens of thousands of people are dependent on money sent by relatives from abroad. It is the first time hawala offices have been closed in Kismayo, Somalia's third-largest city equipped with a strategic port.

**East Africa: Region's Ambitious Labor Migration Project: incent Obiro Orute Obunga: 7 March 2009: opinion: THE Arusha Times.**

Arusha — Worldwide, it is well received that labor migration can contribute to growth and prosperity in both host and source countries as migrant workers provide valuable source of skilled, semi- skilled and unskilled labor - thereby assisting in maintaining economic competitiveness. For instance, at regional level, labor mobility has the potential to yield substantial benefits. The evolution of economic integration and experience in Europe and in emerging regional economic integration process in the Americas, the Caribbean and Southern Africa demonstrates that flexible or free movement of labor within the areas of economic integration is essential to ensuring progress towards integration as well as accelerating the rate of economic development. For instance, in East Africa .i.e. Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi, migrant workers are increasing in virtually every economic activity, and hence commanding the attention of policy makers.

The Labor Migration for Integration and Development Project in East Africa which was established in early 2000s was developed to explore migration and development linkages in East Africa, especially in a regional context. The project reflects major a shift in emphasis of the international debate on labor migration in East Africa from its narrow focus on asylum seekers (economic refugees) to a more broad- based view of linkages among migration, globalization, and development, and sharing of economic benefits by both receiving and sending countries. The project addresses priorities identified in recent regional meetings and the ILO Africa Labor Migration Policy Initiative. The Inter Agency International Migration Policy Conference for East Africa which was held in Nairobi, Kenya in early 2000s gave particular attention to labor migration as a key to promoting economic development in the emerging Customs Union in East Africa. The ILO and the East African Community (EAC) signed a memorandum of understanding in 2001 in which both organizations agreed to collaborate in areas that fall within the confines of ILO, EAC and labor and development sector.

One of the key areas of collaboration that was identified was facilitating labor mobility or free movement of labor within the East African region. Collaboration between the two organizations on labor migration or mobility is amplified by Article 104 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community (EAC), which stipulates, under sub Article 1, that the partner states agree to adopt measures to achieve the free movement of persons, labor, capital, and services and to ensure the enjoyment of the rights of establishment of residence of their citizens within the Community.

The Labor Migration for Integration and Development Project in East Africa is backstopped by the ILO sub- regional office, for Eastern Africa and is based in Dar es Salaam with technical support from the International Migration Programme (MIGRANT), ILO Geneva, Switzerland. The Project is run by a specialist from the International Migration Programme. International Labor Organization (ILO), Geneva, Switzerland is the overall Technical Coordinator. It has a national Coordinator supported by two Programme Officers, one at the sub- regional Office in Dar es Salaam, another at the Project Office in Arusha and a Secretary. Since labor migration is an integral component of the overall development process, the East African Governments identified the need to establish, modernize and improve their laws, policies, practices, and

administrative structures for ensuring orderly migration of labor within the region. The project specifically will help East African countries to consider an appropriate policy framework for dealing with access to the labor markets by nationals with due regard to key factors such as the supply of labor, the availability of employment and imperatives of regional economic co-operation and development.

The ILO/EU- EAC Labor Migration Project is geared towards elaborating and promoting the adoption of new policy frameworks, strategies, systems and mechanisms for regulating labor migration as an instrument for economic development within the East African region. The Project is an attempt to go beyond measures of control, to ensuring respect for human rights, and enhancing co-operation between origin and destination countries through bilateral treaties and or regional agreements. By the end of this ambitious project, it is envisaged that the East African countries will be able to define, elaborate and put in place plans (mechanisms) to implement effective administration and regulation of labor migration that promotes social and economic development in the context of EAC. *Vincent Obiro Orute Obunga is executive director, Volunteer Network Africa a volunteer organization committed to social and economic change across the globe*

Central Africa

**East Africa: Kagame Outlines Reasons to Invest in Rwanda, Africa:11 March 2009: The New Times.**

London — President Paul Kagame has said that the major reasons investors should establish their investments in Rwanda is its security, political stability and a sound macroeconomic climate in the country. He said this yesterday during an interactive discussion panel that was organised as part of the ongoing London Corporation Forum on Investing in East Africa that is underway in the English capital, London.

The high level forum, which brings together political leaders of the East Africa region and senior members of the British business community, aims at demonstrating to investors the positive changes taking place in the region. The changes revolve around political and legal framework in East African countries, and how these changes are turning East Africa into an attractive investment destination.

During the discussion that was attended by various regional leaders, President Kagame said that another aspect that can attract investors in the country include the broadened market offered by the existence of the East African Community. The regional bloc that brings together five countries is currently home to over 120 million people. While commenting on the widely contested media driven misconceptions on investing in Africa, Kagame said that Africans themselves need to first do the rightful. He said that by doing this, those who misrepresent either Rwanda or Africa will be denied any chance. At the panel that was also attended by Ugandan President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni among other regional leaders, Kagame stressed that investment in appropriate technologies was a prerequisite "that will enable us to tell our stories." Other regional leaders who attended



included Vice-Presidents of Tanzania and Burundi as well as the Secretary General of the East African Community (EAC) Juma Mwapachu.

Kagame, who is also the current chairperson of the EAC, pointed out the negative impact of the western media on Africa as another challenge derailing the pool of investment on the continent. The central theme of the forum focuses on the misconceptions and perceptions investors have about East Africa. It will highlight the region's achievements to get investors to think differently about the region. The two-day event is a follow up of the 2007 Rwanda and Tanzania investment symposium that was also held in London.

**East Africa: Bujumbura EAC Common Market Talks End: Eddie Mukaaya: 12 March 2009: The New Times.**

Kigali — The East African Community (EAC) Common Market negotiations that ended yesterday, in Bujumbura, Burundi progressed well, the country negotiator has revealed. The delegates held talks that drew discussions on free movement of goods, services, capital and people by 2010. Prudence Sebahizi, Rwanda's Chief Negotiator, said yesterday on phone from Bujumbura that there has not been any disagreement in the talks as all members exercised commitment.

"We have covered a number of issues adopted for this meeting," he said. Some of these under deliberation include harmonisation of agricultural and industrialisation policies. Sebahizi also disclosed that the talks handled safeguard measures against any effects that may arise from the Common Market. Other measures discussed included those that cater for imbalances that may arise from large regional market. The meeting also made interpretations of terminologies in the EAC protocol. The High Level Task Force (HLTF) eighth round talks that began Monday last week also ended yesterday. "There are a lot of issues on liberalisation of services that are not tackled, having made commitments during the last meeting in Kisumu for consultants to make adjustments," he said. The next and last talks will be convened in Kampala on the 30th of March. This meeting will draft the final report detailing all previous proceedings, which will be presented to regional Permanent Secretaries before presentation to the Ministerial Council.

**Rwanda: U.S. Company Lands U.S.\$325 Million Gas-to-Power Deal: Bosco Hitimana: 7 March 2009: East African Business Week (Kampala).**

Kigali — CountourGlobal, an American firm, has signed a 25-year, US\$325 million gas-to-power deal with Rwanda. The deal is to generate 100 Megawatts of electricity from methane gas in Lake Kivu, Western Rwanda.

The gas concession and power purchase agreements signed in Kigali on March 2 after 17 months of negotiations, allow the firm to start extraction and processing of the gas into electricity and to channel it into the national power grid. The government, through its power and water distribution company, Eletrogaz, will be selling the power to the end user, and paying back ContourGlobal. The deal was signed by Finance and Economic

Planning Minister, James Musoni and Minister of State for Energy and Water, Albert Butare and ContourGlobal's President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Joseph Brandt, in Kigali.

The Kivuwatt Project in Kibuye, Western Rwanda, comes on heels of a government initiated project on the same lake that is now channeling 1.8MW of power into the national grid."Sufficient power supply will be the underlying requirement for meeting the government's objective to massively increase access to electricity to its population and its industries," said Butare.

The project will relieve Rwandans of hefty power bills resulting from dependence on costly diesel and heavy fuel oils to generate power.It will bring down government's expenditure on power to as little as US12 cents down from between 35cents and 40 cents per megawatt per hour from diesel and heavy fuel oils.This will also cut the end user price from US24 cents to US17 cents per 1MW/hour, according to the state minister.

"Lake Kivu's gas will provide a clean source of power generation for a region suffering from extreme shortages of reliable and affordable electricity. Utilization of the lake's gas resource will also serve to reduce the risk of an uncontrolled release of the lake's gas," ContourGlobal's President, Joseph Brandt said in a release.

ContourGlobal is a New York based energy investment firm that develops and operates electric and combined heat and power businesses around the world for both governments and private companies.The firm will develop, construct and operate a platform based gas extraction system that will extract methane gas from a depth of 350 metres.The gas will be processed and transported by pipeline to ContourGlobal's power plant being developed in Kibuye, western Rwanda.The power plant is the first independent power project developed in Rwanda and will more than double the amount of electricity currently generated inside the country.ContourGlobal will start by implementing the first phase of the project, expected to generate 25MW next year. The second phase expected to be ready by 2012, will bring in additional 75 MW of power

Currently 6% of Rwandan population has access to electricity, with the new project, and other initiatives; the government hopes 16% to access electricity by 2012.The government's wish is to serve the electricity needs of its people and sell surplus power to neighbours Burundi, Uganda and DR Congo with whom Rwanda shares Lake Kivu.ContourGlobal will use a portion of the investment to create a port facility in Kibuye that will be built not only to support its works but also be used for receiving and shipping goods across the lake.Part of the \$325 investments will be used to transport equipments from abroad to Kivuwatt project in Kibuye.Methane gas was discovered in the deep waters of Lake Kivu, on the border between the Rwanda and the Congo in 1936. The lake, which is located at an altitude of 1462m, is 485m deep and has a surface area of 2400 square kilometers.Studies have uncovered approximately 250-300 cubic kilometres of dissolved carbon dioxide and 55-60 cubic kilometres of methane gas accumulated and trapped at significant depth in the lake, and these quantities are increasing on a daily basis.The scientific community has predicted that, without a reduction of methane and

carbon dioxide, there is a real risk of an explosive release of large quantities of these gases within the next 100-200 years, thus killing people around the lake.

## 68. POLITICS

### West Africa

#### **Guinea Bissau: The Thai Link in Killings: Paul Ibe:8 March 2009:This Day.**

Lagos — Fresh facts are now emerging on the killing of the Guinea-Bissau Army Chief, Brig. Gen. Batiste Tagme na Waie, which later triggered the assassination of President Joao Bernardo "Nino" Vieira. Waie was killed last Sunday when a bomb planted by unknown persons exploded in his office. A reprisal attack less than 24 hours later by elements within the army led to the tragic killing of Vieira. In compliance with the constitution, the former Speaker of the parliament (the Assembleia Nacional Popular), Raimundo Pereira, was last Tuesday sworn-in as Interim President. But the bomb that terminated the life of Waie has been linked to the Southeast Asian country of Thailand. The Prime Minister of Guinea-Bissau, Carlos Gomes, Junior, and Minister of Defence, Marciano Silva Barbeiro, made the revelation at separate meetings with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Ministerial delegation to the former Portuguese colony.

President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua had on Tuesday despatched a delegation comprising the foreign ministers of Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, The Gambia, and Senegal, accompanied by the President of ECOWAS Commission, to Guinea-Bissau where they engaged all Guinean stakeholders in an effort to restore confidence among the political actors, civil society and security services, and return the country to constitutional normalcy. "It is very important to find out who made and bought this bomb (that killed the Army Chief) in Thailand," Gomes had told the delegation led by Nigeria's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chief Ojo Maduekwe.

The Defence Minister and his service chiefs were in no doubt as to where the bomb came from: Thailand. In fact, the Minister of Defence showed what seemed to be a component of the bomb to the ECOWAS delegation. "The debris from the blast was so much that it took us about one hour to get the corpse of Waie out of the rubble that was his own office wing of the army building," Barbeiro said. Although, Guinea-Bissau has been hailed for its smooth transition to an interim government, the situation in this land of Amilcar Cabra remains tenuous. "Ours is still a very fragile country and the international community knows that. I am not safe myself because there is no guarantee that there are no hidden bombs in my office," Gomes said, adding, "Gambia, Senegal, Guinea Conakry," and, indeed, the sub-region, "will not be safe if bombs are here."

Analysts say that Guinea-Bissau has become the soft underbelly of the sub-region. An admixture of factors has made Guinea-Bissau an attractive transit point for hard drugs bound for Europe and other parts of the world: pervasive poverty, unemployment, and \$3 billion budget deficit compounded by \$30 million in salary arrears. There is a near absence of infrastructure to sustain any form of economic development. There is hardly

any public power, with generators having to run round the clock, no potable water, and the few roads that have asphalt overlay have had them washed away over time. Ironically, the road bearing the name of the legendary Amilcar Cabra, the man who gave his all to wage a liberation struggle against the Portuguese, has never seen coal tar: it is an earth road. The nation's economy is minute and driven largely by cashew, fish, and peanut exports. What this means is that even a small influx of drug money can have a major impact. That is exactly what has happened.

Drug money is now the driver of the Guinea-Bissau economy. Last month, the United States State Department warned that the "degeneration of Guinea-Bissau into a narco-state is a real possibility." The United Nations estimates that the cocaine transiting through Guinea-Bissau is worth more than a billion dollars a year, which is several times higher than the paltry national budget. It is, perhaps, no coincidence that the bomb is being linked to Thailand. The Southeast Asian country has become a major hub for the production and shipment of hard drugs, especially cocaine. The question on the minds of many after last week's killings of Waie and Vieira is, could it be fifth columnists (drug barons) are at work to create further divisions between the military and civilian authorities while they continue with their illicit trade unabated or it is a battle for the control of the spoils of the trade?

This is not the first time that Guinea-Bissau's Army Chief will be assassinated. In 2004, not long after elections had been successfully conducted, the then Armed Forces Chief of Staff was eliminated in similar Gestapo style. Indeed, the killings of Vieira and Waie have been linked to a battle over the control of the illicit trade in drugs. The top military brass have been accused of taking bribes to allow drug planes to land and to turn a blind eye to drug activity.

Meanwhile, the Judicial Police, responsible for investigating the narcotics trade, are unarmed, equipped with mere typewriters, and the targets of anonymous death threats. THISDAY observed parked at the Aeroporto International Osvaldo Vieira Airport, Bissau, a seized plane said to be linked to the trade in narcotics. Such seizures, it is gathered, are something of a rarity. "What we have in our hands is a time bomb akin to the conflagration in Mexico. ECOWAS has to do something about this situation, else we will all be consumed in the impending inferno," Foreign Minister of The Gambia, Dr. Omar Touray, told THISDAY shortly after the ECOWAS delegation had visited the bombed-out office wing of the Army Chief on Wednesday.

Gomes was, perhaps, echoing the position of Touray when he said that the tragic killing of the President and Army Chief were "an attempt against ECOWAS, African Union, and all organisations and structures in the sub-region." He also told the delegation that the country did not have the wherewithal to wage a successful war against the drug traffickers. The fear is that drug warlords operating out of Guinea-Bissau will accelerate the failure of the state. With a foothold in the former Portuguese colony, these mercenaries could unleash a war of attrition in other countries and pose serious security risk to the sub-region. It was in recognition of this that ECOWAS planned to work with the Guinean authorities and development partners to get to the bottom of the

killings."You are not alone; we will stand by you all the way and provide experts that will work with you to find the culprits in this dastardly act," President of the ECOWAS Commission, Dr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas, assured the Guinea-Bissau leadership. But it remains to be seen how this could be achieved, given the complicity of the military and other high-ranking state officials in the narcotic trade.

Nonetheless, one of the issues that the extra-ordinary summit of Foreign Ministers of ECOWAS and the International Contact Group will be focusing on when it convenes in the next one or two weeks in Bissau, is defence and security reform, which is related to the fight against drug trafficking. Training and retraining of soldiers, especially of the top echelon of the military, is key to sustaining peace and security in the country and the sub-region, Air Vice Marshall Bala Golgak Danbaba, Chief of Policy and Plans at the Defence Headquarters and member of the Nigerian delegation to the solidarity visit, said. The interim government of Pereira has limited powers and only 60 days to conduct fresh election. In a normal situation, this will present some challenge, but in a broken country like Guinea-Bissau, it would be a near-miracle if the feat is achieved.

ECOWAS and the International Contact Group on Guinea-Bissau, comprising the European Union, Africa Union, United Nations, CPLP (group of Portuguese speaking nations), and other stakeholders have pledged assistance to the country. But Cuban Ambassador to Guinea-Bissau, Pedro Dona Santana, said the pledge to offer assistance is an old refrain. "There have been efforts to bring aid and development to Guinea-Bissau. Most of these projects and programmes did not produce results, as the financial pledges were not redeemed," he said. But the Dean of Ambassadors in Guinea-Bissau warned that not keeping to pledges to help the country through its trying times is an invitation to anarchy. "The priority here is the 60 days for the election. If we don't give support for this effort, it will be an invitation to further crisis," he said. Going by the constitution, the interim presidency of Pereira has just 53 days, as at tomorrow, to conduct the election.

Southern Africa

**South Africa: Registered Citizens Abroad to Vote in April Elections: Bathandwa Mbola: 12 March 2009: [BuaNews](#) (Tshwane).**

Johannesburg — The Constitutional Court has ruled that South African citizens abroad who are registered to vote will be allowed to vote in the 22 April general elections. "We have ruled that South Africans citizens who are living abroad will be allowed vote. However, those who are not registered to vote will not be allowed to vote," said Constitutional Court Justice Sandile Ngcobo. The court also said those South Africans who are registered and who are interested in voting

The ruling comes after the Freedom Front Plus, on behalf of a Pretoria teacher working overseas, made an application to the Pretoria High Court to allow South Africans abroad to be able to make their mark. The Pretoria High Court found certain provisions of the Electoral Act unconstitutional and therefore invalid. The judgement was then sent to the Constitutional Court for confirmation or otherwise. However, Chief Electoral Officer

Pansy Tlakula has assured South Africans that the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) would be able implement the court ruling.

Speaking in an interview with eNews Channel, Ms Tlakula said: "I can assure South Africans we can pull that off. As the IEC we always anticipate the outcome [of such court cases] and plan for the worst, we have made contingency plans." Ms Tlakula said that they would now look at the number of people who are interested in voting. According to today's ruling, registered South Africans abroad interested in voting will have to inform the IEC within 15 days. She said that so far there were 5000 South Africans abroad who had informed them of their intention to vote overseas. She said this number would probably double. Ms Tlakula said that it would have been more complicated if they had to register new voters and if they had to send provincial ballot papers to the various embassies abroad. According to the ruling today, voters abroad will only be able to cast a national ballot.

The court ordered the Department of Home Affairs and the IEC to extend the right to special votes to all categories of registered voters absent from South Africa. The IEC was ordered to accordingly amend the election regulations of 2004. The department had presented arguments in the court in support of the submission that the right to vote of certain South African citizens abroad has not been unjustifiably limited. The Electoral Act, 73 of 1998 was amended in 2003. Section 33(1)(e) was introduced to allow South African citizens temporarily abroad and therefore unable to vote at a voting station in the voting district in which they are registered, to vote by means of a special vote. It was this provision that the applicants were seeking to declare unconstitutional. According to the department, the present system provided for a voters roll system that requires voters to be registered in the district in which they are to vote. It argued that the legislative provisions which the applicants seek to have declared unconstitutional formed part of the fundamental pillars of the district-based voters-roll electoral system.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Somalia: Top UN Envoy Praises New Government, Urges Full Support: 13 March 2009: UN NEWS SERVICE.**

The United Nations' top envoy for Somalia today lauded progress made in the past month by the new Government of the Horn of Africa country, which has been torn by factional strife since the overthrow of Siad Barre in 1991. In a statement issued in Nairobi, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's Special Representative Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah encouraged the Government of National Unity to continue working towards peace and stability and urged Somalis and the international community to support it. The formation of the Government last month, and its return to the violence-plagued capital, Mogadishu, followed on the 2008 UN-facilitated Djibouti Agreement between the Transitional Federal Government and the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia, in which the two agreed to end their conflict.

In today's statement, Mr. Ould-Abdallah said he was pleased by the number of "patriotic Parliamentarians" who have returned to Mogadishu to start their work, and called for concrete diplomatic and material assistance for both branches of the administration. "President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, the Speaker and the Prime Minister have demonstrated responsible leadership in all fields and the unity Government is now functioning from the capital," Mr. Ould-Abdallah said.

He added that the Council of Ministers has met a number of times and passed important measures, including one on the place of Sharia, or Islamic law, in the country. "All these developments will not only help the move towards normality inside the country, but will also help secure Somalia's image and reputation abroad. There is now absolutely no excuse for any Somali to continue plotting to destroy more Somali lives," he said. Planning is underway for the next meeting of the High Level Committee that is tasked to look at such issues as political cooperation, justice and reconciliation, Mr. Ould-Abdallah said, adding that there would also be a meeting of the Joint Security Committee shortly. With the vast majority of Somalis working together for the first time in many years, he said, the international community must do its part to fully support the new Government. "This help is not needed at some point in the future, but right now," he stressed. He noted that President Ahmed has received offers of support from Africa, the Middle East, Europe, the United States and elsewhere and Somalia will be discussed at the Security Council on 20 March and at the upcoming League of Arab States Summit in Qatar.

In his latest report on Somalia, Secretary-General Ban also praised recent progress, but cautioned that much work lies ahead, with the instability caused by hostilities, abductions and fear continuing to hinder delivery of vital humanitarian aid. A January UN analysis found that more than three million people in Somalia, a third or more of the total population, will remain dependent on assistance this year. Mr. Ban noted that among the aims of the UN's comprehensive strategy for Somalia is to help the African Union Mission there (AMISOM) give Somali security institutions the capacity to create a level of security to enable the Djibouti peace process to continue. The UN Security Council has yet to decide whether to deploy a multidimensional UN peacekeeping operation that would take over from AMISOM.

**Somalia: ICU Calls for Government to Implement Sharia Law:13 March 2009:Shabelle Media Network (Mogadishu).**

Mogadishu — Sheik Abdirahin Issa Adow, a spokesman of the Islamic Courts Union for the operations has called for the transitional government on Friday to implement to rule the country with Sharia law. The spokesman said that the government is required to implement the Sharia law though it had accepted to rule the country with Sharia law. "We are suggesting for the transitional government to assure and implement the promise as it has already said for ruling the country and the people of Somalia with Sharia law and to prepare the courts, the judges and the clerics," Sheik Abdirahin said.

On the other hand the spokesman of ICU Sheik Abdirahin Issa Adow said that it was unfortunate those who opposed the decision of the government for the implementation of Sharia law adding that those people are seen that that they are against the Sharia law."We know that the president has already mentioned that the government wants to rule the country with Sharia law and we know that he has been the leader of the Islamic Courts Union so we welcome that matter and the people who refused are seen that they are going to other aims," the spokesman added.The statement of the ICU spokesman for the operations Sheik Abdirahin Isse Adow comes as the transitional government of Somalia approved earlier to rule the country with Sharia law though the Islamic Insurgent Organizations of al-Shabab and Hisbul Islam (Islamic party) pointed out the statement was something to deceive the Somali people.

**Somalia: Cabinet Endorses Islamic Law: 11 March 2009: [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe).**

Somalia's new Cabinet has endorsed Islamic law in a move widely seen as pleasing the country's powerful Islamist movement, Radio Garowe reports.Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmake chaired Tuesday's meeting in the capital Mogadishu, where Cabinet ministers endorsed the introduction of Islamic law after an hours-long debate.Somali Information Minister Farhan Ali Mohamud said the discussions touched on many subjects regarding Islamic law."There will changes made to the current constitution and if the parliament ratifies, then Somalia will be ruled under Islamic law," the Information Minister stated.

He called on Islamist factions to support the Somali government's peace overtures and help end the Horn of Africa country's 18-year conflict.A group of Somali Muslim scholars recently issued a declaration calling for a ceasefire, the withdrawal of African Union peacekeepers and the implementation of Islamic law.Somali President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed, the former head of the Islamic Courts movement, is currently traveling in Burundi. He has called on Islamist groups to join the peace process, since the key demand of implementing Islamic law is already underway.Two heavily-armed Islamist factions - Al Shabaab and Party of Islam - have refused to recognize Sheikh Sharif's government and condemned it as a puppet of Western interests.

**Madagascar's armed forces gear up for war: [afrol News](#), 13 March.**

Madagascar's security forces are taking strategic positions in the country's capital as walls of mistrust widen between the government of President Marc Ravalomanana and the army. Mutinying army units, which seem to have gained majority backing of all the country's security and armed forces, claimed today to have moved in tanks into strategic position in the city to ambush any moves by the president to call in 'mercenaries' into the city to protect him.An army spokesperson told the media that the tanks had been deployed in secret places and would not be visible in the streets.



The stand-off in Madagascar, initially dismissed as a loud bubbling by the young opposition leader, Andry Rajoelina, has picked up momentum with most sectors of the country now openly in support of the anti-government calls. President Ravalomanana has been accused by the opposition as a dictator and pushing selfish political agenda while the majority of the population struggles in abject poverty. International and local efforts to set up peace talks have been frustrated by the pulling out of the opposition, claiming non-commitment from the government, and now the army and other security forces openly rejecting government orders to deal with the anti-government protests. President Ravalomanana, who yesterday voiced a desperate appeal to the armed forces to stay neutral in the political turn-tables, is said to have now called on his supporters for protection if the army makes advances to his residence.

Some more than 100 people have been killed since the beginning of the year when anti-government protests resumed in the Indian Ocean Island. The political stand-off was sparked by the last year December action by government to clamp down on the private radio and Television station, owned by the sacked Mayor of Antananarivo and opposition leader, Mr Rajoelina. The international community has warned against any coup moves in Madagascar, but all efforts to broker a peace settlement seem to have evaded as political observers now see a situation that could lead to a civil war.

#### 69. PEACEKEEPING, CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND SECURITY MATTERS West Africa

##### **Nigeria: Truth Commission Blames Rivers Crises On Odili, Obasanjo Govts: Jimitota Onoyume: 11 March 2009: Vanguard.**

Port Harcourt — THE Rivers State Truth and Reconciliation Commission headed by retired Supreme Court Justice Kayode Eso, set up by the Rivers State Government to find a lasting peace in the area yesterday blamed the crisis in the state on both the state and the Federal Governments, particularly the administration of former President Olusegun Obasanjo.

Justice Eso who presented a 517-page report and transcript of evidence to the governor before a gathering of stakeholders in the state said the Commission had evidence that politicians made use of insurgents while the government also treated the insurgents with kid gloves. Justice Eso assured that the recommendations, if implemented, would lead to the desired peace in the state. Reading what could pass as a synopsis of the findings and recommendations of the Commission, he blamed much of the crisis that engulfed the state, which resulted in the death of several thousands of people and total destruction of communities like Okurama in Okrika, on failed governance, chieftaincy tussles, cultism, politics of acrimony and insurgency. According to him, they were all interwoven. It was sad to note, he said, that most of the chiefs in the state were not aware of the Chieftaincy

Law, Cap 25 of the Laws of Rivers State that regulates chieftaincies in the state, so they carried on as though they were laws unto themselves. "The law empowers the governor to suspend or withdraw recognition from a chief if it is necessary in the interest of the state."

Continuing, he said the state and federal governments were also largely responsible in building up image of insurgents, just as he wondered why the government of former President Olusegun Obasanjo chose to treat insurgents like Ateke Tom and Asari Dokubo with kid gloves at a time insurgency was being hunted."Ateke Tom was in and out of Aso Rock during the presidency of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo and this was a period when insurgency was being hunted. Such hobnobbing, of course, made Ateke Tom to become larger than life and Asari Dokubo a national hero. We have evidence of the use by politicians of the insurgents."On cultism, he said the then government of the state did not take any serious step to wipe it out, but rather came up with what the Commission termed ineffective law prohibiting people from joining them. "That airy, fairy piece of legislation was never effective, it is sufficient evidence and proof positive that such inconsequential and ineffective legislation was never meant to be obeyed. In the memoranda before us, we listed 16 cults apart from the government's list of 100."

Eso called on the state government to immediately come up with laws proscribing these cult groups. According to him, a similar step was taken in former Cross River State, old Mid-West and the East, and it worked. He said the insensitivity of governments to the fears and feelings of people of the region also contributed to the sad security situation. According to him, on the issue of the economy, people from the region regarded as unfair the distribution of wealth, when they compare the Niger Delta with other places."Rightly or wrongly, they saw a virgin land in Abuja transformed into wealth they believed came from the Delta, whereas people in the Delta lived in squalor."On politics, he said some people carried on in the area as though politics was business and took all steps, whether negative or positive, to protect their interest in this 'business'

**How we came by conclusion** He said they arrived at the conclusion after a careful, critical and objective appraisal of the over 215 memoranda filed before the commission. "We went through all of them most carefully. We picked out the representative memoranda therefrom and set to work. Towards the end of our public sitting, there was an avalanche of memoranda poured upon us, signifying to us the confidence which the citizenry of the state has come to repose in us."He said though the Commission was not able to take evidence on all the issues before it, it was satisfied that there was nothing substantial in the ones they could not take evidence on that would rubbish findings and recommendations of the Commission.Eso, who said the summarised report he read did not contain much of the findings and recommendations in its 517-page document it presented to the state government, said the Commission was able to reconcile fifteen communities that were hitherto at daggers drawn, physically killing and maiming themselves and also devastating their properties. In addition to this, he said the Commission reconciled twenty-two other matters.

**Effort to reconcile Amaechi with former Governors failed** He said effort of the Commission to reconcile Governor Rotimi Amaechi with the two former civilian

governors of the state, Dr Peter Odili and Sir Celestine Omehia, were futile as some of them came up with two many excuses for their inability to show up for reconciliation. He said one strangely enough said he "would first like to know the contents of our report and study the white paper thereupon before he could present himself for reconciliation. These are, of course, not only jejune, but also impossible conditions. Not even His Excellency, the governor has seen the cover of this report until it is now being presented."

**Chides Odili** Sadly enough, according to Eso, Dr Peter Odili believed the Commission was set up to rubbish him with himself (Eso) and other members of the Commission as the tools. The retired jurist, who looked visibly angry at this point, took time to dwell on the integrity of members of the Commission and altruistic goal of the body. Contrary to allegations by Odili that the Commission was set up to smear his image, justice Eso said the idea of the Commission was a product of a stakeholders' forum in the state. He said this was made known on the floor of the Commission by the duo of the Secretary to the State Government, Magnus Abe and a former governor of the state, Chief Rufus Ada George, when they appeared before it at separate times. He said shockingly, neither Magnus Abe nor Ada George was cross-examined on this claim by any of the counsel at the Commission, so the evidence of those on the subject of the emergence of the truth and reconciliation Commission went in unchallenged. "Magnus Abe had told the commission that the decision to set up this commission was not that of the governor, but that of the stakeholders in the state. Another witness, a former governor, was Chief Rufus Ada George. He was actually one of the stakeholders referred to by Magnus Abe. Unsolicited, Rufus Ada George corroborated the evidence of Magnus Abe.

The important thing is, neither Magnus Abe nor Chief Rufus Ada George was cross-examined by any of the counsel, including the Senior Advocate representing Sir Odili on this point, and so the evidence of those two, on the subject of the emergence of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, went un-challenged. "Eso said despite what he termed 'ridiculous', the attempt by Dr Odili to smear the integrity of members of the commission, the former governor was still given an opportunity to prove his case and other allegations against him. But unfortunately, according to him, the former governor came up with thirty "I can't remember" on several allegations against him. "What evidence did Odili give that we would test? Sir Peter Odili, in giving evidence, suddenly developed a so-called amnesia. He could not remember the most crucial events. That performance was on camera (NTA) and it was watched all over the world. The transcript is also available unedited in the verbatim reports. Dr Odili could not or he elected to refuse to remember many things. In this report, we have set out a good number of "I am not aware", "I cannot remember", "I do not know", coming from a governor who was given the honour by the electorate and who, in pursuance thereof, ruled this most important state for eight years and under whose charge Okuru Ama was destroyed.

**We were told two weeks to Dikibo's killing – Amaechi** Governor Amaechi, while thanking the Commission for the job, described the day as one of the saddest in his life. He assured that his government would implement the recommendations of the commission despite his emotions. "Today is one of the saddest days of my life. Many of

you would think I would have been happy with the report. But all of you know my relationship with Dr Peter Odili."

He said though he was part of the government, but he was really never happy with some of the things that went wrong in the state then. "I was the closest person to Dr Peter Odili. Anybody close to us then knew I wept, I complained when I made public comments on Okrika situation. Then I was accused of having gubernatorial ambition"I spoke with passion, but today I cannot even speak because I speak with tears. I was among the five people driving bullet proof cars then in the state. But what of others? Two weeks to when A.K. Dikibo was killed, we were told. They said I was among those to be killed too. I met Dr Peter Odili in 1988 and he has always been there for me no matter what they say.I can't stand blood. I am conscious of the fact that you can't create life. Ateke's life is not better than those he killed. Despite my emotions and sentiments, we shall implement the recommendations of the commission, no matter the challenges. It will not be one report to be dumped."

**Commission, waste of public funds – Odili** In a swift reaction, former Governor Peter Odili yesterday described the Commission as one set up primarily to tarnish his image and reputation, saying the recommendations did not take him by surprise.Odili noted that the entire exercise was a waste of public funds, set up not to find out the true position of things or to truly reconcile anybody in the state.In a statement signed by his Media Advisor, Mr. Emma Okah in Abuja, Odili said: "Clearly, no truth and reconciliation was intended by those who conceived the idea of the commission, and given the trend so far, I dare say that no reconciliation can be achieved."It is obvious today that while there is no effective reconciliation of many Rivers people, the only truth revealed by Justice Eso's Commission report is that malice and vendetta was the essence of the commission."I consider the commission's report an outright failure and embarrassment to decency."

**We'll take legal action in due course –Sekibo** Also reacting, former Minister of Transport, Dr Abiye Sekibo said "it is pertinent to reiterate that despite knowing the deceit and guile which informed and underpinned its formation, I and some other Rivers patriots appeared before the TRC in part to; "to expose and ridicule the "trap" set by a component which had envisaged our non-appearance and was prepared to exploit same to present us as not being interested in peace and reconciliation."The second component of their strategy was to exploit our anticipated appearance in Port Harcourt to foment violent crisis at the venue which would then be attributed to us. This was avoided by our decision to ask that the commission move to Abuja for our appearance."We equally appeared to demonstrate our respect for and commitment to the rule of law and institutional principles of democratic governance.

"In our case in Rivers State, this is happening because we have been forced into a peculiar dilemma where our State is being governed by an individual for whom Rivers people did not have the opportunity of exercising their constitutional right to express an electoral opinion. Indeed expecting any reasonable action from such leadership is tantamount to expecting good fruit from bad seed."Because of our fundamental belief in

the institutions of constitutional democracy in Nigeria, we shall take appropriate action according to law, to respond to that charade of a report in due course."

**Côte d'Ivoire: Identification of Voters Rises to 5.4 Million, UN Says:12 March 2009:UN NEWS SERVICE.**

Calling it "significant progress" toward the much-delayed elections in Côte d'Ivoire, the United Nations mission there today announced that the number of voters identified so far in the West African nation has surpassed 5.4 million. The Mission "urges all parties involved in the identification and registration process to redouble their efforts to maintain the momentum," Hamadoun Touré, spokesperson for the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), told reporters in Abidjan. Mr. Touré encouraged further efforts to deploy the number of teams necessary to identify more people around the country, which has been divided since 2002 between the Government-held south and a northern area dominated by the rebel Forces Nouvelles.

The number of open registration sites has passed the 10,000 mark, but there remained nearly 870 centres that had not yet opened, representing 8 per cent of the centres initially planned, he said. For its part, he said, UNOCI would continue its logistical assistance for the identification and registration, with support for the last localities not yet covered by technical identification teams. In January, the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Côte d'Ivoire and head of UNOCI, Y. J. Choi, told the UN Security Council that the Ivorian parties agreed that the holding of elections, last scheduled for 30 November 2008, would now await the completion of the identification process and the disarmament of ex-combatants. In a resolution adopted after Mr. Choi's briefing, the Council urged all political actors in Côte d'Ivoire to agree as soon as possible on a "realistic" time frame for the polls, as it extended UNOCI's mandate for another six months.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Somalia: Diplomat Says Horn of Africa Crises Require African Solutions: Jim Fisher-Thompson: 13 March 2009: [America.gov](http://America.gov) (Washington, DC).**

Washington, DC — While foreign policy specialists believe it is important that solutions to economic and political challenges in the Horn of Africa -- Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti and Somalia -- be African "owned," international entities will continue to have an impact on the region. Acting Assistant Secretary for Africa Phillip Carter recently told a panel on conflict in Somalia that the United States and international partners remain committed to moving a peace process forward "with the goal of creating political and economic stability in Somalia and fostering basic security."

But, "above all," that "peace process must be Somali-owned and -led," Carter told the participants in the March 10 discussion, jointly sponsored by the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the U.S. Institute for Peace. Somalia, without a unified government since the early 1990s, increasingly has come under the sway of warlord militias and terrorist groups whose fighting precipitated a humanitarian crisis and turned

the capital of Mogadishu into a war zone over the last 16 years. Carter said the United States is actively supporting the deployment of an African Union peacekeeping force in Somalia as well as providing \$5 million for the creation of a more permanent joint security force. The United States and a number of European and African nations are part of an international contact group facilitating peace talks in Djibouti between Somali groups whose chaotic fighting has enabled pirates operating off the coast to prey on international shipping with relative impunity.

Carter, who recently returned from a Somalia crisis meeting in Brussels, Belgium, added, "One thing we discovered in our contact group discussion was a wide range of interests among a bunch of different donors and countries to support" peace efforts in Somalia. At a March 12 hearing before a House of Representatives subcommittee, former U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia David Shinn said, "It is essential to continue to work with the countries in the region and the traditional donor countries, including the members of the European Union, Norway, Canada, Australia and Japan." At the same time he agreed with Carter that Africans need to chart their own destinies. "The United States cannot and should not be expected to solve the problems of the Horn on its own," he told lawmakers.

**INTERNATIONAL INTEREST IN THE REGION** Shinn, now an adjunct professor of political science at George Washington University, mentioned a number of countries that now are interested in the Horn region, including "Egypt and some of the Arab Gulf states, which have a direct interest in developments in the Horn." In Sudan, China has become "the principal non-African influence, and has a growing presence in Ethiopia and Eritrea," he said. "China will not always agree with Western donors on the best approach to the region, but it has cooperated in Sudan and Somalia and should increasingly be brought into discussions concerning the Horn." Shinn said Russia should be part of the consultative process "if for no other reason than to try to minimize the potential negative impact of its arms sales and because it has expressed a growing interest in investing in countries like Ethiopia." The former diplomat said India is "a major player" in the Horn, especially in Ethiopia, which is its principal African recipient of economic assistance. Recently, Turkey has also made an effort to increase its relations in the Horn, especially with Sudan, Ethiopia and Djibouti, Shinn said. South America also has interests in the region, Shinn told the House panel. "Although Brazil's main African focus is West Africa and the [Portuguese-speaking] countries, it is expanding ties with Sudan and Ethiopia." Shinn stressed that all the countries mentioned should be part of efforts to solve problems in the region. In addition, the United Nations and agencies like the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, African Union, Intergovernmental Authority on Development, African Development Bank, Arab Development Bank and Arab League (Sudan, Somalia and Djibouti are members) also "have the ability to influence developments in the Horn."

Central Africa

**The Congo-Kinshasa: Army Consolidating Presence in East – Monuc: James Karuhanga: 11 March 2009: The New Times.**

Goma — Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (FARDC) have strengthened their presence in the war-ravaged eastern Congo, following the pullout of the Rwandan army last month. This was confirmed by Sylvie Van Den Wildenberg, the Public Information Officer of the United Nations Mission in the DRC (MONUC) in the eastern provincial town of Goma. In an email to The New Times, Wildenberg revealed that MONUC was also working closely with the Congolese army as they plan to launch the next offensive against FDLR/Interahamwe in DRC's South Kivu Province. "MONUC keeps being deployed in many of those sensitive areas which were targeted by the joint operations and where the military strongholds of FDLR were destroyed," she pointed out.

FDLR is a French acronym for the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda, an outfit largely composed of perpetrators of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, which has also been accused of committing atrocities in DRC for the last 15 years. "FARDC keeps consolidating its presence in those zones. All efforts are being made to prevent FDLR from reinstalling in their former strongholds," Wildenberg said. She also confirmed Rwandan Army Spokesman Maj. Jill Rutaremara's earlier revelation that DRC was shifting attention to South Kivu Province where the rebels are reportedly fleeing. "Besides, FARDC, MONUC are tightly coordinating for the next military pressure phase on remaining FDLR - South Kivu," she underlined, noting that MONUC's Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Reinstallation and Reintegration (DDRRR) programme's efforts were being sustained despite a recent drop in MONUC's figures of repatriated FDLR elements.

**Figures drop** According to MONUC, a total of 348 FDLR "combatants and dependants" were repatriated in the last three phases ranging from February 15 to March 6. This, according to officials, is a considerable drop from the 424 and 456 FDLR listed in the previous two phases, throughout the peak of Operation Umoja Wetu - between January 31 and February 14. "There is a clear drop in the figures but this is a trend that we were expecting after the end of the joint operations," Van Den Wildenberg acknowledged, noting that the "remaining FDLR and dependents are waiting to see what is going to happen next." She, however, stressed that MONUC currently has close to a hundred combatants and dependents in its camps waiting to be processed and had not been taken into account in their latest (Friday) statistics. The UN official observes that only FDLR "hardliners and their followers" and some combatants and dependents who are kept hostage remain, since the former "don't want to face justice." "Their chiefs are tightly watching them and preventing them from leaving," she said explaining why it is more difficult for some candidates for DDRRR.

**Central African Republic: Inclusive Talks Could Lead to Peace Consolidation – UN: 10 March 2009: UN NEWS SERVICE.**

Recent long-awaited multi-party talks in the Central African Republic (CAR) have provided a window of opportunity to make strides towards consolidating peace in the land-locked nation, a top United Nations envoy told the Security Council today. François Lonsény Fall, the Secretary-General's Special Representative, said that last December's successful talks held in the capital, Bangui, were a result of two years of "tremendous

effort" by various actors, both national - including representatives of the Government, opposition and civil society - and international. Three committees have been established in the areas of politics and governance; security and armed groups; and socio-economic questions, he said in his last briefing to the Council in his current position.

The first committee has "had to deal with the most contentious issues," such as the legitimacy of the current regime and the country's governance, Mr. Fall said. At the end of the 12-day dialogue, he told the Council, several agreements had been reached, including the establishment of a broad-based government, a commitment to hold elections in 2009 and 2010, and the setting up of an independent electoral commission. The security committee, for its part, has dealt with the issues of implementing security sector reform, restructuring the national armed forces and combating the proliferation of small arms, the envoy said, while the socio-economic committee is focusing on putting into place a poverty reduction strategy, reforming public finances and reforming the management of national resources. Mr. Fall briefed the Council on the deterioration of the security situation in northern CAR, where rebel groups and a spill-over of violence from the Darfur war in neighbouring Sudan have driven hundreds of thousands of people from their homes. He said there has been intense fighting and "some very daring attacks" against government institutions and military installations in some areas. But in spite of the setbacks, he stressed that the December inclusive dialogue has provided an occasion to bring stability to the country, which has been beset by widespread fighting and armed banditry in recent years, with some 200,000 Central Africans have been either internally displaced by the fighting or forced to live as refugees in neighbouring Chad and Cameroon.

The Representative said that CAR leaders have "underlined the need to obtain support from the international community at the same time as they try to implement the foundations of the dialogue." Last June, the Government struck an agreement with the rebel groups known as the Union of Democratic Forces for Unity (UFDR) and the Popular Army for the Restoration of Democracy (APRD) after talks in Libreville, Gabon, facilitated by that country's President El Hadj Omar Bongo Ondimba. Also in June 2008, the CAR became the fourth country to be placed on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, which aims to help States emerging from conflict to avoid the slide back into war or chaos. A report issued by the Commission's mission that visited the country last autumn stressed that without concrete and substantive progress in inclusive political dialogue, efforts to achieve improvement in security, rule of law and development remained stalled in a country that is beset by unrest, widespread displacement and entrenched poverty. "There is also a general awareness that progress has to be simultaneous on all three fronts," said the publication, released in January.

## 70. MILITANCY ,REBELS,TERRORISM AND THE 'WAR ON TERROR' West Africa

**Nigeria: 3000 Militants Surrender in Rivers: Ahamefula Ogbu: 12 March 2009: This Day.**



Port Harcourt — Over 3000 militants have reported at the Okehi Social Development Institute established by the Rivers State government for the reformation, retraining and re-integration into normal society as a way of ending their criminal activities in the state. Governor Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi, while commending the repentant militants for wanting to drop their "criminal habits", however warned them that any of them who had taken life must account for it. The statement of the governor sounded like a no-general amnesty warning, as only those who have not killed before would be left to undergo reform without consequences. "I want to tell you before the youths who are seated here, anyone who has taken life will account for the life he has taken. Those who have not taken live will be rehabilitated," he said.

He pledged to provide more funding to enable the expansion of the facility which has accommodation space for 300 people. It will soon be improved with its capacity doubled while certain educational facilities hitherto planned for outside the institute would now be provided there. Amaechi, who charged parents to help arrest moral decadence, blamed them for abdicating their responsibilities of disciplining their children and said because of the hard economic times, they hardly are able to control their children who turn from their responsibilities to catering for them. According to him, the Nigerian economy was better than those of some countries who still profess and manifest honest character than Nigerians. He called for social reformation especially with the value system of the society for the desired changes to take place. He said he was not initially convinced that the scheme would work but that seeing the level of response, he would provide more funds for better facilities, adding that whereas he used to refer to militants as criminals, he would now call those who have reported to the institute as "our children" since the failure of parental guidance may have led to the problem they found themselves in. "I am happy that you have responded to be reformed and retrained but I will be happier if you submit your guns. In fact, the more guns you surrender, the more resources I will provide for you. There are a lot of training programmes we have and those of you who indicate interest in them will be sent for training, sometimes outside this country," he said. He expressed regrets that people from outside the state were the beneficiaries of the construction work they have been doing in the state which meant that indigenes were either not interested in working or lacked the skills to benefit. He promised to kick-start training programme to impart the skills to them. The governor said he was aware of the problem of falling back into criminality and has mapped out a programme to fit them back into the society where some would become employers of labour while others would be self-reliant or be employed. A micro-credit scheme has been planned for them so that they can get the money to put into their endeavours after which they will pay back as it is not "free money" which he said he did not believe in. He counselled them to be useful to themselves and value their lives, pointing out that Ateke Tom resettled his family in Abuja where they are safe while he sends other people's children to go and die in the name of militancy.

In his address, Chairman of the Social Rehabilitation Committee (SRC), Chief Albert Horsfall, said the approach adopted by the committee was going to solve the problem of militancy whereby the supply of able-bodied men to militant camps would stop. He said so far, over 3000 militants had registered with them for rehabilitation, but hinted that they

were going to screen them and only those who are real militants would be taken in, retrained and rehabilitated."We reiterate that so far, the SRC has registered approximately two thousand youths and the number may be higher now, up to three thousand. The SRC strategic programme will ensure that we take the restive youths in batches of three to six hundred (as facilities are expanded and upgraded) at a time, put them through intensive re-orientation and skills training; give them employment, resettlement and re-integrate them back to the community and within months rather than years, the militancy and youth restiveness crisis will be fully and permanently resolved," Horsfall said. THISDAY had it on good authority that about 60 repentant militants who came from Okrika, the home base of Tom, to the camp for reformation returned angry as the facility could not take all of them which, the source said, underscores the response ratio.

**Nigeria: Group Accuses Jang of Terrorism: Achor Abimaje:10 March 2009:Leadership (Abuja).**

Jos — Governor Jonah Jang's administration has come under heavy attack, as being the architect of sponsoring terrorism against the Gamai people of Quan-Pan Local Government Area of the state. This accusation came as a result of the recent ethnic crisis which almost resulted to the turning back of the corpse of a traditional ruler, the Longjan of Namu, from burial on his 'ancestral land" by the Pan tribe who are considered "strangers" in the area. To this end, the Gamai people are calling for the resignation of the Chairman of Quan-Pan local government area, Mr Theophilus D. Shan and the Commissioner for Justice, Barrister Edward Pwajok for the alleged roles they played in the shameful act. According to the Gamai, who addressed a crowd at a press conference in Jos, unless the government is brought to book, those youths who forcefully turned back the corpse of the late ruler, while on its way to its resting place in Namu, will have no option than to confirm the connivance of the state in the entire matter.

Barr Theodore Maiyaki, who read the text on behalf of the Gamai nation, warned that different marriages between the Quan and Pan people is facing a threat of divorce because of irreconcilable differences that have defiled all reasonable solutions. As a way of resolving these differences, he said it was only fair for the government to "correct the imbalance of political structuring" of the council. The Gamai, he disclosed, has lost confidence in some top ranking government officials in the judiciary who are biased in the conflict between the two tribes. They also accused Pan people in higher positions in government who are using their positions to deny the people of Gamai of their legitimate rights as was contained in the findings of the Constance Momoh Commission of Inquiry which confirmed Gamai as the real owners of Namu.

Southern Africa

**South Africa: France, SA Partner to Fight Against Transnational Crime: Professor Ndawonde: 9 March 2009:Business (Tshwane).**

Pretoria — The South African Department of Safety and Security has signed an agreement with the French Embassy to strengthen the country's capacity in the fight

against transnational organised crime and terrorism. The Priority Solidarity Funds Agreement will further reinforce the South African Police Service's (SAPS) capacity to respond to terrorist threats and to address international criminal networks.

Speaking at the signing of the agreement in Pretoria on Monday, Minister of Safety and Security Nathi Mthethwa, said the agreement, also known as the Enhlangano Project will effectively strengthen South Africa's aptitude to fight transnational crimes.

"I'm pleased that our governments share a common determination to defeat crime, as well as to reinforce our capacity to respond to terrorist threats as we work to realise the goal of a better life for all," the minister said. Minister Mthethwa vowed that this cooperation was informed by both countries' shared understanding that the world community cannot afford to function in isolation in what has essentially become a connected global village. "The very nature of this global community makes it all the more easier for criminals to exploit lack of integration and cooperation in global initiatives," he explained. He added that sharing of experiences, information, skills and knowledge was critical in the effort to defeat crime, adding that the French Support Programme has greatly enhanced their capacity in the field of Public Safety and Police Training. The training of SAPS members in specialised fields, procurement of specialised technical equipment, as well as the sharing of expertise in the field of tracking have all strengthened the fight against crime.

French Ambassador to South Africa, Denis Pietton said the three-year cooperation agreement will encompass a substantial financial commitment of more than R15 million to the SAPS. He added that this agreement will focus, among other things, on the reinforcement of South African borders and at the enhancement of specialised detective and investigative departments as well as continued development of forensics. "France is honored to share its expertise with the SAPS in order to which will, among other things, support its preparation for the 2010 FIFA World Cup, and thereafter." Through this cooperation France hopes to enhance its valued relationship with SAPS," Mr Pietton said. This agreement forms part of French-South African police cooperation formalized in 1998, with a view to support public safety and train South African police officers. The two countries undertook to co-operate in the prevention, detection, suppression and investigation of crime including corruption and organised crime, illicit trafficking of firearms, ammunition, explosive and poisonous substances as well as human trafficking.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Somalia: Party of Islam Rebels Vow More Attacks On African Union Peacekeepers: 9 March 2009: [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe).**

The chairman of a recently-formed rebel alliance in Somalia has condemned the country's new government as an instrument of the West, Radio Garowe reports. Dr. Omar Iman, chairman of the Party of Islam rebel faction, told a Sunday press conference in the capital Mogadishu that they will continue attacks against the African Union peacekeeping mission (AMISOM). "There is no government we recognize in Somalia, but the

government created in Djibouti is an instrument of American interests," said Sheikh Iman, who is a highly educated Islamist politician.

Party of Islam rebels were behind two days of battles in late February that killed upwards of 50 people and attracted condemnation from Mogadishu's community. The Party of Islam was created in January and consists of four Islamist rebel factions, including the Eritrea-based Islamic Courts faction led by Islamist hardliner Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys, who is on the U.S. list of terrorists. "The AMISOM soldiers are trained by the U.S. military and are instructed to fight against Islamists in Somalia," Dr. Iman alleged. He was last reported to have condemned the attacks on AMISOM targets, but is not clear why he has issued new threats against the National Unity Government led by Somali President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed, former executive chief of the Islamic Courts movement.

President Sheikh Sharif recently said he will institute Islamic law as Somalia's national law, pending ratification by the 550-member parliament composed of secular and Islamist lawmakers. The Somali leader is currently on a trip to East African capitals, including Uganda and Burundi, where he is expected to push for the withdrawal of AMISOM peacekeepers. Al Shabaab Islamist hardliners have also refused to recognize President Sheikh Sharif's government and were responsible for a suicide bombing that killed 11 AMISOM peacekeepers in Mogadishu last month.

**Somalia: AU Peacekeepers Attacked, 1 Insurgent Killed:13 March 2009: [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe).**

At least one insurgent was killed Thursday in Somalia's capital Mogadishu after African Union peacekeepers repulsed an attack, Radio Garowe reports. Eight people, mostly civilians, were wounded in the attack on Burundian soldiers, who are part of a 4,000-strong AU peacekeeping force deployed in Mogadishu, known as AMISOM. A Burundian military officer confirmed the attack, saying that the AMISOM peacekeepers defended themselves. "There were no casualties on our side," said Col. Ciza Justace, an AMISOM officer.

An unidentified fighter who spoke for Al Shabaab insurgents admitted on a Mogadishu radio station that they suffered casualties, including one death and a number of wounded fighters. Witnesses in Mogadishu's Medina district said mortar shells landed in the area, followed by a heavy artillery response from the AMISOM peacekeepers. The AMISOM force, which deployed in Mogadishu in March 2007, recently received a mandate extension to continue serving until June, when the United Nations is expected to take over the peacekeeping mission. The deployment of UN peacekeepers in Somalia has faced stiff resistance from many corners of the world, as no country has stepped up to take a leading role in such a force. UN peacekeepers failed to restore order in Somalia in the 1990s, when Somali warlords foiled a U.S.-led UN peacekeeping mission.

**Somalia: 12 Dead Bodies 'Discovered' in Baidoa, Ethiopia Accused:14 March 2009: [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe).**

Islamists who control several regions in south-central Somalia have accused Ethiopian troops of committing massacre after discovering the remains of 12 dead persons, Radio Garowe reports. Muktar Robow "Abu Mansur," the spokesman for Al Shabaab fighters, invited local reporters to the ex-Hasey factory in the southwestern town of Baidoa, formerly the seat of Somalia's federal parliament. Pointing at the bones, Abu Mansur said: "These people were killed by the enemy troops [Ethiopia] who were here [Baidoa] for two years and these people were killed for their faith."

An independent journalist who saw the dead body remains described all the victims as males, who were buried while wearing "Islamic clothing," including the 'imama' popularly worn by devout Muslim men. "This is history for the Somali people and the crimes committed here will be blamed on the government of Abdullahi Yusuf, Ethiopia and the United States," Abu Mansur said, while referring to Somalia's former president who resigned in Dec. 2008.

Abu Mansur vowed that Al Shabaab will continue the war until African Union peacekeepers serving in Mogadishu leave the country. Sheikh Hassan Mohamed "Abu Ayman," the Al Shabaab administrator in Baidoa, said the world must know that Ethiopian troops "committed massacres during their occupation of Somalia." Hundreds of Baidoa locals watched as the body remains were removed one after another for proper burial at the cemetery. Thousands of Ethiopian troops were deployed in south-central Somalia in 2007 and 2008, with heavy concentrations of troops in Mogadishu and Baidoa. Al Shabaab guerrillas spearheaded a bloody two-year insurgency to uproot the Ethiopian troops, who were widely despised across Somalia and perceived as occupiers. A 4,000-strong AU peacekeeping force in Mogadishu has come under growing scrutiny following the withdrawal of Ethiopian forces in early January.

### **Madagascar: Opposition Launches New Bid to Seize Power: 14 March 2009: allAfrica.**

Antananarivo's sacked mayor, Andry Rajoelina, emerged from hiding on Saturday to step up pressure to force the ouster of Madagascar's President Marc Ravalomanana. Reporting live from Madagascar's capital early on Saturday afternoon, a correspondent for BBC World News, the international television news channel, told an anchor that Rajoelina appeared at an opposition rally to demand that Ravalomanana step down from power within four hours.

If the president failed to meet the deadline, a march on the presidency was expected in an effort to topple him. In another report, Reuters news agency quoted the opposition's aspirant prime minister, Monja Roindefo, as saying ahead of the rally that the opposition had already claimed power. "We declare that the transition authority assumes henceforth the powers conferred on the president of the republic," Reuters quoted him as telling journalists.

## 71. NORTH AFRICA

**Ghana: Algeria Ambassador Donates Books to Anaji JHS: Alfred Adams and Zambaga Rufai Saminu: 12 March 2009: The Chronicle.**

The Algerian Ambassador to Ghana, Mr. Lakhel Benkelai, has donated assorted educational materials to the Anaji M/A Junior High School at a short ceremony. Making the presentation, the Ambassador said, "this is our modest presentation to Ghanaian children, and it symbolises the quality of our bilateral relationship in the cultural field." "This donation is to help you achieve your goals, especially in the area of education, which is the bedrock of your future."

He observed that in order to strengthen the relationship, the Algerian Government in 1990, established a school in Tamale to assist needy Ghanaian children in their educational endeavours. The Regional Director of Education, Mrs. Rebecca Effiba Dadzie, expressed her appreciation for the support the Ambassador had extended to the school. Present at the ceremony were Nana Adjei Mbea, Chief of Anaji and the Assembly Member, Mr. Ben Fodah, among others.

**Tunisia: President Ben Ali's Address At the Launch of Celebrations of 'Kairouan - Capital of Islamic Culture for 2009': 8 March 2009: Tunisia Online News.**

Tunis — The official launch of the celebrations of "Kairouan : Capital of Islamic Culture for 2009", was given today in the former Aghlabid capital. The launch of festivities also coincides with the celebration of the Mouloud (celebration of the Prophet's Birthday) in Tunisia and in the Muslim world. In an address read in his name by the Prime Minister, Mr Mohamed Ghannouchi, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali inaugurated the event, stressing the importance of Kairouan as the fourth holiest city of Islam and the founder of the greatest school of Maliki Jurisprudence; a school he said that "spread the values of moderation, tolerance and the golden mean" and in which religious, educational and medical schools emerged, as well as intellectual debates as testified by the institution of "Beit El Hikma" (House of Wisdom) in 878 AD by the Aghlabide Emir Ibrahim Ibn Ahmed who "brought with him some of the most precious books, as well as the most prominent astronomers, scholars and translators."

President Ben Ali also said that the celebration of Kairouan as Islamic Cultural Capital "bears testimony to our commitment to link the past to the present and make sure that Tunisia's religious and cultural personality remains strong, resistant, vivacious and ever-renewed in accordance with Article One of the Tunisian Constitution which provides that "Tunisia is a free, independent and sovereign State; its religion is Islam, its language Arabic and its system is Republican."

He also stressed that based on its time honoured religious tolerance and openness, Tunisia has taken a set of practical measures to promote Ijtihad -based thinking, such as: the setting up of the "Islamic Studies Centre of Kairouan", the upgrading of the Zitouna Faculty of Shari'a into the "Zitouna University", the establishment of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and the setting up of an Academic Chair for the dialogue between civilizations and cultures. "We have given instructions for the launch of the "Zitouna

Radio for the Holy Koran" and established the "International Prize of the President of the Republic for Islamic Studies", added President Ben Ali.

He also announced that "in line with our decision concerning the continuous recitation all year round of the Holy Koran in the Zitouna Mosque in Tunis, we give instructions today so that the recitation of the Holy Koran takes place also in the Oqba Ibn Nafaa Mosque all day long and all year round, so that Kairouan remains as its founder wished, "a Symbol of glory to Islam to the end of time".President Ben Ali concluded his address by expressing his faith in the "attachment of the Tunisian people to their Arab-Muslim identity, their awareness of their present, interaction with their time, and confidence in the future."

**Tunisia: Country Continues to Attract Arab Investors:10 March 2009:Tunisia Online News.**

Tunis — Despite the global economic crisis, Tunisia continues to attract foreign investors.Arab investors who are behind some of the country's mega projects have pledged to honor their commitments, said Mr Foued Daghfous , first Advisor to the President of the Republic and the head of the high commission for great projects, during a meeting organized by the national chamber of women entrepreneurs in Tunis, on Tuesday.Among the mega-projects currently underway in Tunisia, Mr Daghfous mentioned the "Gateway to the Mediterranean", "Tunis Sports City" and the "Tunis Financial Harbor".

He also mentioned projects which were the object of signed memoranda which include Ariana's "Bled El Ward", "Tunis Telecom City" and other tourist and housing mega projects such as those of Mahdia, Tozeur, Haouria and in Northern Tunisia.Foreign investors' revenues in Tunisia are totally exonerated from taxes and social security charges, he said.The meeting which was held on the theme: "Tunisia gateway of Arab investment", stressed the importance of strengthening Arab cooperation as well as boosting the Arab Maghreb Union.During the meeting a study by the international consulting firm "Ernst and Young ", was also evoked by the firm's director for Tunisia, Mr Noureddine Hajji.The study shows that the economic crisis can represent an opportunity for emerging nations, as shown by the firm's conclusions that one third of the 500 hundred major enterprises in the world will stem from emerging countries, but not only from Brazil, China, Korea or Mexico.

**Western Sahara: Morocco is Making Life Miserable for Us, Says Saharawi Envoy:Ike Abonyi And Chinwe Ochu:8 March 2009:interview:This Day.**

Lagos — **How would you access the bi- lateral relationship between Nigeria and the Western Sahara and how it should be improved?**

You know, Nigeria as far as we are concerned is very important. It is a key country within the context of relationship between the people of Africa. You know that I am representing here, a country which has become the last and the main colony and the final

of Africa. Nigeria since the mid- eighties until now has been one of the outspoken and leading countries in Africa that supports the right of the people and challenge discrimination. So, my vision about Nigeria is once again of the services and commitment of Nigeria's solidarity with the people also is a very important thing. I realise that this stand also does reflect the stand of the common Nigerian citizen, all political parties, the parliament, also the society. It is really something that goes with the consensus between the official stand of the government and also the feeling and support which you can see wherever you go in Nigeria. So, this is my impression about Nigeria.

You know the official stand of Nigeria in support to the Saharan struggle is something which you can understand within the principles which guide the foreign policy of Nigeria. So, by the end of the day, it is not something . . . it is not a present given to the people of Sahara, but it is working with the principle of the Nigerian foreign policy in support of the people and the right of the people to stop discrimination. We rely on the same line of support which Nigeria was giving to get the South African government liberated from the Apartheid. So, Nigeria is a giant on the continent, so you have Nigeria higher at the position on the basis of the fight against discrimination. So, you have a very solid and a very reliable position which you can conform. The new Saharan Republic is a full- fledged member of the African Union. Nigeria is playing together with other African countries such as Tanzania, Ethiopia, Uganda, Namibia, Zambia, Mozambique and the list is so much more. They are playing a leading role to make sure that Saharan people like other African countries who unilaterally will preserve the territory and that the situation will remain like that.

**What is the African Union's stand on the Western Sahara issue?** This is the same stand as the African Union, just to grant the Saharan people the right to decide. A referendum of public opinion should take place where generally the Saharan people will decide if they want to be Moroccans or Saharans. Now it is Morocco that doesn't agree with that approach because they know that the Saharan people will revolt for the independence of the Western Sahara. So, it is not a denial of the people to self-determination that Morocco is doing in this regard. But parallel, Morocco is always putting a very oppressive policy violation of the basic human rights of the civilians in Western Sahara. This was reported by so many International Human Rights Organisations. The last one was Human Rights Watch in December where they stated that Morocco is violating the very basic rights of the civilians occupying the territories.

It is often for something which all African countries now and international communities have regard that the UN mission in the territory must be responsible for monitoring the human rights in the occupied parts but even the part which is under the Saharan government control. We welcome the UN to be responsible for human rights on our part which is on the Moroccan occupation. But it is exactly the same thing with Morocco cancelling the Referendum and denying that to take place that also set in the UN from being responsible for their human rights, which is very contradictory. Yes, it is true that these people are Moroccans and they want to be Moroccans while you don't give them the right to express their attachment to their Moroccanity. If you are sure that you didn't commit any human rights abuses in the occupied part of the Sahara, why don't you open



it freely and let the UN to supervise the international human rights. So, it is very contradictory that we are saying as Saharans that a referendum must take place and let the Saharans choose if they want to be Moroccans. It is a wider choice. Our mission stopped at the point where the Saharans will be generally granted the right to democratically choose and decide on the final state of the territory. In deciding the result of the outcome of the referendum, we'll accept whatsoever the referendum says.

But if the Moroccans do not want the referendum to take place, it means that they do not want the UN to monitor the human rights situation there. So, the situation there is very complex. You see, it is not only the human rights abuses; it is not only the denial of the referendum to take place but also the wall which is dividing Western Sahara in two parts; you know, dividing the families to miss each other. You know, the longest wall in the history is more than 2700 kilometres and it is I mean 6 miles from Iran and everything. It is a sort of invading moral issues on the body of that group launching international campaign going around in the world, so it is a very complex story. Now, to the international campaign going on which is very successful so far to the present moral custom in any economic deal with any international company because according to the international law, the group is a non- self governed interim . . . But the natural resources must not be exploited unless the referendum is organised and their company is very successful so far. So, it is a very complex situation.

**To what extent is this development affecting the economy of the people?** It has affected it adversely, unfortunately in three basic ways. The livelihood of the ordinary people was largely affected by the conflict. Some companies might say that the situation normalised because rearing a situation is not easy as it was with the UN mission deployed there. So, you can't take risks of making a major investment on any one of the sides because you don't know what tomorrow will be or produce. That is a big problem now for the nomadic people; you know the economy is based on raising the camel, so they can't go on with the same activity because it is full of money. So, on a daily basis, you get people pleading and this so many enjoy the most or the one which is presently lucrative is the British Landmines Action. We have got big associations there in the territory trying to raise awareness among the civilians about the vision of working practically on the removal of the land mines.

On the other hand, I remember Morocco invaded the territory in 1975. Military planes bombarded people when they were trying to escape from the invasion so this part of the Saharan population is settled in a camp on the border with Nigeria. Those camps are now being administered by the Saharan government. In fact, the people are living mainly on international humanitarian assistance you see, and when you go into the territory, more than 360,000 Moroccan settlers inhabited the territory after the invasion. That is an act of voracious discrimination. In the case of jobs, people who occupy the big posts in the administration and the civil service are Moroccans and not the Saharans. So, people are really suffering and the consequences making almost everywhere in their lives unbearable. Honestly speaking, the Western Sahara issue is the most explicit case of this clash between the approach of legality, international laws, real politics and de- facto approach from the other part.

We agree that the referendum must take place. The UN mission was deployed in the territory to organise that referendum. The essence of the approach was the referendum against discrimination. When they issued the list of voters, Morocco departed or decided to step back because they know they will lose that referendum. Now, the conflict is dragging for a long time because Morocco is in the Security Council. There is no strong will to impose something on Morocco that is a big problem. Morocco got a very strong ally in the Supreme Military and Security Council which is bad. For the Security Council to uphold whatever approach which will lead to impose something on Morocco, take from the issue of human right. It's not simple. I'm proud to be known as one of the founding liaison of this human culture of democracy and human right. Last year, there was an assembly in the UN Security Council to partner in relation with giving response and priorities to the United Nations to monitor the human right situation of the territory.

Such Ambassadors still haven't enforced anything which will ban Morocco. That's the reason why Morocco is managing to carry on with the issue as it is. So for the international public opinion, it's a real challenge because it is a matter for international legality and law.

Morocco is occupying part of the territory but very strongly allies such as France and relatively sometimes United States of America but we are more than sure that at the end of the day, legality will prevail and that the voice of the people, the ordinary people and the just call of the ordinary people will prevail. That's why we care for to end our struggle now there is a cease fire, but nobody can guarantee for Morocco or the UN. Saharan government will keep all their hands tight forever because that's something we can't tolerate. We can't even control our public opinion because we've got the youth which on a daily basis challenging the political leadership. So how can we continue to accept the situation like this, we can control them for one, two, three years but we can't control them forever.

(Showing from a picture) You see Moroccans and you see this young man was almost burnt alive as the occupant of the territory. This lady was granted bail last November in the United States. She was beaten by the Moroccans in a public square. This lady is a student in Marsalis University and she lost her eyes by the Moroccans and you can see all these people. We have got a very interesting issue about the state. The foremost thing is that any approach must respect the right of sex discrimination of the Saharan people. Sometimes, they might privately take a policy approach as they have to take into consideration Morocco; you know they have interest in. But, you know it seems what public opinion in Spain is that there is a consensus across all political formation about solidarity in the Saharan people.

There is true saying that you might not find a church but you'll find a community of solidarity in the Saharan people. But that's a public opinion slightly, a difference with the new government. For the new government, I can't say that the right of sex discrimination but it's an approach which is not that clear when it comes to support the traditional approach to understand what the Saharan self-determination means because for us, the right of self-determination means giving freely democratically and giving the people the

right to choose between some option and not to impose something on them. Now, Morocco set up a plan for autonomy in the territory under the Moroccan sovereignty. We told them we don't have a problem with the autonomy, that it must be an additional option between the people and that you can't impose it on the people. Let the people choose between autonomy, total integration to Morocco and total independence for everyone but you come and impose something on them and you say no, that's not what they are. If you want to accept it, its fine but you can't settle conflict that way. Also for instance, often our missing people that have been abducted by the Moroccan authorities since the beginning of the conflict; some of them journalists, teachers, ordinary people, nobody knows anything about their whereabouts. So there is a national campaign going on to get information about them. In this case, you see the condition which our political prisoners are in the Moroccan prisons.

**So far, what is the stand of the countries of the Arab World on the matter?** The Arab world stand is just the easiest in the continent. They maintain that since the matter is in the hands of the UN and African Union, that there seems to be nothing they will do about it. That's a very easy position. But we do believe that among the Arab public opinion, there is a gradual increase of awareness and solidarity with the people of the Sahara in Jordan, Syria, and Caper, Libya. But the formal stand of the Arab league is that the issue of Western Saharan land is in the hands of the UN and the AU.

**What has been the stand of France and President Sarkozy in this regard since they have aware of the Western Sahara plight for some time now?** That's a question I think will be much more addressed to the French government. But if you want me to comment on that issue, it's very astonishing, very strange for us to live in the Sahara and to try to understand why France is adopting such policy. Even for the United States of America during Bush's administration, they were explicitly on the side of Morocco. We can understand the promotion of democracy but they are at the same time trying to violate the basic democratic right which is the right of self- determination. It's very contradictory. So what is going on is not something new. But since the beginning of the conflict until now, the French will blindly ally with the Moroccans' approach. We do think that since the new President Sarkosy, they might change because when Jacque Chirac was President of France, there was emotional dimension of the country's stand. Sometimes, he would sound very harsh about the issue and even sometimes, just taking the phone and calling some leaders and try to convince them to recognise the Sahara Republic. That is something only Chirac can do. Sarkosy will never do that. He might go with the French format, the approach to the complain in the Western Sahara at the formal level but Sarkosy will never get that emotional. I think he might be more sensitive to the issue of human rights more than Chirac. Anyway, we are very hopeful about President Sarkosy.

**Morocco announces \$10 billion investment in the energy sector: [afrol News](#), 9 March:**

Morocco has earmarked investments of more than Dh90 billion (\$10.29 billion) in the national energy sector by 2015, the country's Minister of Energy, Benkhadra Amina has said in a statement. The government statement said Morocco seeks to expand electricity

generation from wind six times from 6,000 MW currently to bring the share of total generation power from winds to 12 percent by 2015. The minister also said government will involve both private and public players to implement the vast majority of the investments to be made in the next six years.

“This plan links the government and the private sector to implement a strategy aimed at securing energy supply and diversifying energy sources at the right costs,” she said. Ms Amina further said the new strategy of electricity would guarantee Morocco’s economy and population needs in energy with the very affordable prices. Morocco’s electricity consumption is expected to increase by 7 to 8.5 percent per year in the next 10 years from 5 per cent average in the past five years, officials said.

Local reports said the government is also under pressure to cap the bill for energy, 97 percent of which is imported, saying the electricity costs strain its trade balance and test its capacity to avoid a wide budget deficit. The national statistics revealed that the energy imports value rose to Dh71 billion (\$8.1 billion) last year from Dh53 billion (\$6 billion) in 2007. The Moroccan minister said there are new laws made to pave the way for the extension and expansion of the energy sector. He also announced a shake up in his department to steer and regulate the transformation of the national energy system. Business leaders were worried that Morocco might fail to produce enough power to meet the needs of an economy growing at an average 5.3 per cent in the past five years according to national statistics.

**Ancient gold found in Egyptian tomb: [afrol News](#), 10 March:**

The Egyptian government has announced that Spanish archaeologists have found ancient golden jewelry in a pharaonic-era tomb that belonged to a senior official under Egypt’s most powerful queen who ruled the country some 3,500 years ago. Egyptian Ministry of Culture said in an e-mailed statement that the team found five gold earrings and two gold rings that could have probably belonged to Djehuty, the overseer of treasury, who supervised works under Queen Hatshepsut in a newly discovered burial chamber. The statement said the tomb was located on the west bank of the Nile River in Luxor, a southern Egyptian city famous for its Valley of the Kings and other ruins from pharaonic times. According to local reports, the tomb had been looted, and its gates were engraved with text from the “Book of the Dead,” which Egyptians believed would be needed in the afterlife. “The chamber, the second in the tomb, is the fourth dating to this period that has been found with painted walls,” the statement said. The Madrid’s National Research Center Jose Galan and his team have been excavating at the site in Dra Abu El-Naga on the west bank of Luxor since 2002 and discovered a 3-meter shaft inside Djehuty’s tomb at the end of the 2008 archaeological season. The new burial chamber was discovered earlier this year, the statement said. Queen Hatshepsut, was one of the few women to rule Egypt from 1479 BC to 1458 BC.

## **Business and Politics in the Muslim World**

### **Report on East Africa**

Week March 09-15, 2009

Presentation: March 18, 2009

Abdirisak Ismail

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## Summary of the report

### Sudan

#### Darfur Aid Workers Abducted

Five Darfur aid workers employed by the international medical charity, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), were abducted Wednesday night, the agency said.

#### Obama - Growing Crisis in Darfur is not acceptable

Washington, DC — President Obama and U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon have agreed to seek ways to end the immediate humanitarian crisis in Darfur and work toward long-term peace and stability in Sudan.

#### Obama Condemns Expulsion of Aid Agencies

In his most important intervention on Africa policy since his inauguration, President Barack Obama of the United States has condemned Sudan's expulsion of international aid agencies from Darfur.

#### Museveni Speaks Out On Bashir

Kampala — THE African Union will wait for its independent report before deciding on the arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for Sudanese president Gen. Omar el Bashir, President Yoweri Museveni has said.

#### Arrest Warrant against Sitting Head of State is Abuse of Law

Kampala — Though, the concept of "universal jurisdiction" is a principally novel and revolutionary idea cherished equally by all, unfortunately some non-African states and international entities for obvious political intentions have subjected it to manipulation, abuse and misinterpretation.

#### Other NGOs Ready to Move into Darfur – Official

Khartoum — several relief organizations from Arab and Asian countries have applied to work in the western Sudanese Darfur region to replace agencies expelled or stopped from working there, a senior official said.

#### We Will Fill the Aid Gaps, Government Insists

Khartoum — The UN and the government do not have the capacity to fill all the gaps left by NGOs asked to stop working in Sudan, a top humanitarian official warned.

## Somalia

Explosion Kills Five, Including High Somali Commander: Somalia — At least four soldiers including high Somali commander named Ubeyd Ali Fiidow have been killed in a land mine explosion targeted to his vehicle traveling on near Mana-boolyo neighborhood in Shibis district in the Somali capital Mogadishu, witnesses told Shabelle radio on Wednesday

Cabinet Approves Implementing Islamic Law: Mogadishu — Somalia's council of ministers on Tuesday endorsed a plan to introduce sharia, or Islamic law in the country, a key demand by Islamists who are opposed to the government, officials said.

Party of Islam Rebels Vow More Attacks on African Union Peacekeepers: The chairman of a recently-formed rebel alliance in Somalia has condemned the country's new government as an instrument of the West, Radio Garowe reports.

Ban Welcomes Somalia's Commitment to Reconciliation, but Notes Hurdles Ahead: Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has lauded the resolve of Somalia's leaders and people to press ahead with reconciliation efforts, in spite of the numerous challenges the Horn of Africa nation faces.

7,574 People Killed in 2008 - Elman Human Rights: A Somali human rights agency issued a report Monday in the country's capital Mogadishu to commemorate the death of a human rights activist, Radio Garowe reports

Fighting between Islamists Underway in Bardhere Tow: Mogadishu — Fighting between Ahlu Suna Waljama'a organization and al-Shabab Islamists is ongoing in Bardhere town in southwestern Somali; witnesses told radio Shabelle on Monday.

Military plane crashes into Lake Victoria: A military charter, headed to Somalia on an Amisom mission (African Union Peace keeping Mission) crashed into Lake Victoria on take off at Entebbe International Airport earlier this morning

Puntland President's First Trip to Ethiopia: The new leader in Somalia's self-governing State of Puntland flew to the Ethiopian capital Wednesday in his first foreign trip since winning the January election, Radio Garowe reports.

ICU Calls for Government to Implement Sharia Law: Mogadishu — Sheik Abdirahin Issa Adow, a spokesman of the Islamic Courts Union for the operations has called for the transitional government on Friday to implement to rule the country with Sharia law.

Parliament Meets in Mogadishu: Somalia — Somali parliament has met in Mogadishu for the first time on Thursday since the parliamentarians relocated from Djibouti to Mogadishu.

## East African states

East Africa: Uganda, Kenyan Ministers Discuss Disputed Island Today: Kampala — a bilateral ministerial meeting takes place at the Commonwealth Resort Munyonyo today to discuss the disputed Lake Victoria island of Migingo.

East Africa: Kenya Now Wants EAC Organs Shifted:Mombasa — as speculation becomes rife over a possible shifting of the East African Community (EAC) headquarters from Arusha, Tanzania, Kenya has come out to openly request for the relocation of EAC organs.

### Tanzania

The West Messes Up and the Continent Suffers - IMF Told: Dar es Salaam — Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete has accused the IMF of unequal treatment of its members as the American-inspired global financial crisis comes to bear on the African continent.

### Uganda

50,000 More to Get Free Aids Drugs: Kampala — ANOTHER 50,000 people living with HIV/AIDS are now eligible for free treatment under the new guidelines which the Ministry of Health released yesterday.

Getting Rid of the Ghosts for Returnees in Acholi:Gulu — Human skeletons are being buried and villages cleansed in northern Uganda's Acholi sub-region to ease the resettlement of returnees previously displaced by fighting between the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and government forces.

### **Detailed report**

#### **Sudan: Darfur Aid Workers Abducted**

12 March 2009

Five Darfur aid workers employed by the international medical charity, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), were abducted Wednesday night, the agency said.

Two Sudanese staff was later released but three others – a Canadian nurse, a French coordinator and an Italian doctor – were still being held by their abductors on Thursday. MSF did not reveal whether it had any information on the identity of those who seized the staff. “MSF is currently working to get more information about the circumstances and the motives surrounding this abduction,” it said in a statement on its website. It added that it was doing “everything it can to determine their whereabouts and ensure their safe and swift return.” The staffs, who work for the Belgian branch of MSF, were abducted in Serif Umra in North Darfur. Two other branches of MSF were ordered out of Darfur by the Sudanese government last week. The agency said in a statement then that the government had justified its action on the grounds that it could not guarantee the safety of staff after the announcement that the International Criminal Court at The Hague would issue a warrant for the arrest of President Omar al-Bashir on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity over his conduct of the war in Darfur.

#### **Sudan: Obama - Growing Crisis in Darfur is not acceptable**



11 March 2009: Merle David Kellerhals Jr

Washington, DC — President Obama and U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon have agreed to seek ways to end the immediate humanitarian crisis in Darfur and work toward long-term peace and stability in Sudan.

After Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir was charged by the International Criminal Court (ICC) with war crimes and crimes against humanity in the Darfur region of Sudan, he ordered 13 international aid groups expelled from the country in retaliation. The nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), which are not involved with the ICC's actions, were providing about 4.7 million people with foreign assistance for food, shelter and protection from an ongoing insurgency. "We have a potential crisis of even greater dimensions than what we already saw," Obama said during a March 10 White House meeting with Ban. "It is not acceptable to put that many people's lives at risk." U.N. officials said that the expulsion of the NGOs has paralyzed nearly half of the U.N.'s assistance programs to Darfur and limits the ability to meet ongoing humanitarian needs. "We need to be able to get those humanitarian organizations back on the ground," Obama said. Obama said the United States wants to work actively with the United Nations in arresting the immediate crisis, but also in setting the stage for long-term stability in a region that has not known peace for decades. Sudan has been wracked with civil strife for nearly four decades as more than 2 million people have died or been killed by intermittent fighting and famines, and millions more displaced from their homes within Sudan or to neighboring countries. The current fighting in the Darfur region, which is in western Sudan and about the size of France, began in 2003 when two rebel groups emerged to challenge the central government for control over Darfur, all of which has led to a major international humanitarian crisis. The United Nations and the African Union have a joint peacekeeping force in Darfur, though it has not reached full strength. The United States provides support to the peacekeepers. Although the United States is neither a member of the ICC nor a signatory to the 2002 Rome treaty that created it, the United States does believe that war criminals should be brought to justice and that the Sudanese government has an obligation to comply with the ICC. "The United Nations and the United States share common visions and objectives for peace, stability, development and human rights," Ban said at the White House meeting, which is the first since Obama became president in late January. Ban said he is concerned that 2009 is becoming a make-or-break year, which is full of crises on many fronts for the United Nations, the United States and the whole international community.

The "United Nations stands ready to work together with you, Mr. President, to make this make-or-break year turn into make-it-work, full of optimism and resolution," Ban said.

### **Sudan: Obama Condemns Expulsion of Aid Agencies**

11 March 2009: john Allen

In his most important intervention on Africa policy since his inauguration, President Barack Obama of the United States has condemned Sudan's expulsion of international aid agencies from Darfur.

Speaking Tuesday night after an Oval Office meeting with Ban Ki-Moon, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Obama characterized the Sudanese response to the International Criminal Court's indictment of President Omar al-Bashir on war crimes charges as one of having "kicked out some of the most important non-governmental organizations that provide direct humanitarian aid to millions of people who've been internally displaced..." This had created "a potential crisis of even greater dimensions" than was previously the case in Sudan, Obama added. He said he had impressed upon Ban the importance of sending "a strong, unified, international message that it is not acceptable to put that many people's lives at risk; that we need to be able to get those humanitarian organizations back on the ground; and that the United States wants to work as actively as possible with the UN to try to resolve the immediate humanitarian crisis and to start putting us on a path for long-term peace and stability in the Sudan. Obama was speaking after coming under criticism for his administration's failure to make any significant pronouncements on Africa so far. In recent days, members of Congress have called on him to act quickly to appoint a high-profile special envoy to focus on the crisis in Sudan. Last week Obama extended the sanctions imposed by his predecessor, George W. Bush, on Zimbabwean leaders whom the United States accuses of undermining democracy in the country. But he gave a higher profile to his remarks on Darfur by making them to White House correspondents after an Oval Office meeting.

### **Sudan: Museveni Speaks Out On Bashir**

10 March 2009: Felix Osike

Kampala — THE African Union will wait for its independent report before deciding on the arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for Sudanese president Gen. Omar el Bashir, President Yoweri Museveni has said.

On March 4, the ICC issued an arrest warrant for Bashir on charges of "crimes against humanity" and war crimes. Addressing a press conference at the Commonwealth secretariat in London yesterday, Museveni said investigations by a team, led by former South African president Thabo Mbeki, were underway." When the issue came up, we said we cannot condemn Gen. Bashir out of hand and we cannot condone what he is alleged to have done. We decided the best thing was to send our own high level team to do the investigations. That is what we are doing," Museveni explained. Asked if the union had no confidence in the ICC, he replied: "The ICC is doing their work, but there is no harm in us also confirming what they are doing before the African Union can take a position." According to the ICC, all the 108 governments that ratified its statutes are duty-bound to try and bring Bashir to justice. But African leaders and the Arab League have shown solidarity with Bashir and lobbied the UN Security Council to postpone the case by a year to give the peace process a chance. There are fears that violence in Darfur could increase and threaten the 2005 peace deal signed between Khartoum and Southern

Sudan. The US, France and Britain want the case to go on, while Russia and China with vast economic interests in Sudan are opposed to any trial of Bashir. Museveni also spoke of his experience as the current chair of the Commonwealth.

He said: "It is a good opportunity we have had to harmonize our views on the way forward in connection with a number of world issues concerning humanity like transforming societies. This is a very good plan of independent countries where we meet to evolve and share ideas." Museveni also said Africa was part of the solution to the credit crunch, which has affected the US and Europe, because consumption has gone up in the continent.

### **Sudan: Arrest Warrant against Sitting Head of State is Abuse of Law**

11 March 2009: Abdel Rahim El Siddig

Kampala — Though, the concept of "universal jurisdiction" is a principally novel and revolutionary idea cherished equally by all, unfortunately some non-African states and international entities for obvious political intentions have subjected it to manipulation, abuse and misinterpretation.

The arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) against a sitting African president, (the President of the Republic of the Sudan) is just a case in point. It constitutes an outstanding example of this abuse. Since the last meeting in Addis Ababa in January, in which a committee of four headed by former South African president

Thabo Mbeki has been entitled to tackle the issue of Darfur and the meetings in Sharm Alshek (AU Summit), Addis Ababa and New York African countries have unanimously resolved to combat the abuse of "Universal Jurisdiction". The Embassy of the Republic of Sudan in Kampala would like to reaffirm once again the full commitment of the Government of the Sudan in combating impunity in respect of perpetrators to all crimes against humanity. Accordingly, it has appointed a special independent prosecutor for Darfur who has already started his duties with the judicial body. This comes in conjunction with several steps and initiatives taken by the Government to pave the grounds for the final peaceful settlement to the Darfur crisis, namely: The initiative of the people of the Sudan, launched by the President of the Republic of Sudan during his recent visit to Darfur in 2008 has unfolded a political momentum that galvanized and united the Sudanese political spectrum in fostering a national solution to the Darfur crisis. The announcement of the declaration of principles comprising political, humanitarian, developmental, judicial and security services on October 16, 2008. In concurrence with the efforts of the AU-UN chief mediator for Darfur, Jibril Basole. The welcoming by the Government of the Sudan to the recent joint initiative by the Arab League and African Union to establish a committee on Darfur under a joint chairmanship of the AU Commission and the Secretary General of the Arab League is yet another step in the right direction. The issuance of the arrest warrant against the President of Sudan is undoubtedly intended to derail the ongoing peace process and it is also evident that the Prosecutor General of the ICC has clearly based his case and allegations on shaky legal

grounds. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that immunity of heads of state is preserved by well established international legal codes and treaties. The course of action taken by the ICC has in fact thwarted the road map agreed upon between the Sudan, the United Nations and the AU at the consultations on the situation in Darfur held in Addis Ababa in November 2006. The road map has been reaffirmed by the UN Security Council Resolution (1769/2007). The consultations have set the peace process as a priority followed by peace-keeping, humanitarian sector, rehabilitation and development. Therefore, pursuing a political agenda in cases of criminal responsibility already laid before an efficient and transparent judicial system will undoubtedly undermine the objectives of the consultations. Furthermore, it will weaken the prospects of peace as well as create instability in the Sudan and the entire region. It would further instigate the rebels to distance themselves from peace process, the JEM leader who signed a declaration of good intention days ago immediately after the warrant of arrest, declared war against the Government hence have a negative impact on the forthcoming general elections in 2009 which is expected to usher in a new phase of peace and democratic transformation in the country. The Rome Statute of the ICC should therefore not be used for purposes other than the intended objectives.

The Government of Sudan has repeatedly contended that:

The United Nations Security Council Resolution which referred the case to the ICC is deficient as it propagates selective justice and contravenes a recognized principle of international law (obliging a state with a treaty that it is not party to). The prosecutor failed to apply the principle of complementarity, a core principle of the Rome Statute by failing to determine whether the justice system in the Sudan was able and willing to investigate and prosecute, or not. The prosecutor's targeting of the President of the Sudan was political and not judicial. His failure to raise the matter when submitting the first case is further evidence to that. The law threshold for indictment in the pre-trial stage, and the ex-parte mechanism does not avail due process or equal chances to persons. It was evident that the prosecutor ignored the requirement of the statute of the necessity for the prosecutor to seek the truth by examining both incriminating and exonerating evidence, although he claims the opposite. His application was clearly one-sided. The prosecutor's demand for an arrest warrant against a sitting head of state is questionable as it contravenes a recognized principle of international law. The prosecutor's evidence is doubtful, as being based on testimonies of individuals and groups known for their declared hostility to the Sudanese government. His confessing of not being able to collect evidence from Darfur, the place of the alleged crimes which he failed to visit, testifies to the weakness of such evidence. The prosecutor has engaged in flagrant political activities that compromise his impartiality and credibility, including associating himself publicly with individuals and groups known for their hostility against the Government of Sudan, like the Save Darfur Coalition.

The position of the Sudan on the warrant of arrest is:

- The ICC failed to recognize and appreciate the critical juncture in the current search for peace and security in Darfur and in the rest of the Sudan, and the pivotal role of the President in this effort.
- The ICC failed to recognize its jurisdiction over Sudan as the country is not party to the Rome Statute or ICC.
- No engagement with the ICC, due to its deviation from its original objective and its transformation into a political tool in hands of certain powers.
- Sudan commitment to restraint in the face of conspiracies and pledges to shoulder its responsibilities in security and maintaining order and stability.
- Sudan will continue its cooperation within its regional and international spheres, and in the framework of the collective responsibility for a world that is based on the principles of justice and equality, far from policies of hegemony and double standards and selectively and interference in internal affairs of others.

### **Sudan: Other NGOs Ready to Move into Darfur – Official**

12 March 2009

Khartoum — several relief organizations from Arab and Asian countries have applied to work in the western Sudanese Darfur region to replace agencies expelled or stopped from working there, a senior official said.

"We have received many applications from Arab and Asian countries," Sudanese State Minister for Humanitarian Affairs, Ahmed Haroun, said. "They want to go to Darfur.

The applicants include the Red Crescent Societies of Iran, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and United Arab Emirates. Several doctors and medical supplies were also being sent to Darfur. Discussing Sudan's plans to replace the organizations expelled after the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants against President Omar el-Bashir on 4 March, Haroun said: "We have already begun the process."

### **Government confident**

Darfur is baking hot for much of the year, but the upcoming rainy season will put extra pressure on already vulnerable communities, aid workers say.

According to the UN, Sudan does not have the ability to carry out the work of the expelled agencies. However, said Haroun: "The assessment is not true; there is no evidence to support it on the ground?" Haroun is himself a war crimes suspect. A warrant was issued by the ICC in April 2007, detailing 51 charges of alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity for atrocities committed in Darfur in 2003 and 2004. "The UN is not in a position to order or advise Sudan. They should just deal with the new situation on the ground."

### **Needs assessment**

Sudanese government and UN officials were to travel on 11 March to Darfur for a week to assess the impact of the expulsion of aid agencies.

The assessment would be crucial in establishing how the country intends to address the key needs of some 2.7 million people displaced in Darfur. It would also provide some measure of the scale of the crisis and cover all three Darfur states." Three joint UN-government teams composed of experts from both sides will visit Darfur to conduct an assessment of critical short-term needs," Elisabeth Byrs, spokeswoman for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), said. The Sudanese order to 13 international and three local NGOs to stop work is expected to leave an estimated 1.1 million people, especially in Darfur, without food; 1.5 million without healthcare and more than a million without drinking water. The 16 agencies, according to OCHA, employed nearly 40 percent of the aid workers in Darfur - 6,500 national and international workers. In total, 7,610 humanitarian staff is affected in northern Sudan, including Darfur. The UN World Food Programme (WFP) said it had lost 35 percent of its food distribution capacity through the expulsion of four of its implementing partners - Save the Children USA, Action against Hunger, Solidarités and Care International.

"WFP does not have the capacity to fill this gap," said spokeswoman Emilia Casella. "Unless the NGOs are allowed to resume their activities, people are going to go hungry."

### **Attacks**

In Darfur, a UN-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) patrol was attacked on 9 March by unknown armed men, who fired at their vehicle with small arms. Four peacekeepers were wounded, one seriously. A UNAMID vehicle was also carjacked by armed men in El-Fasher, while an observer on his way to El Daein, about 160km southeast of Nyala, South Darfur, was shot at by two men.

### **Sudan: We Will Fill the Aid Gaps, Government Insists**

10 March 2009

Khartoum — The UN and the government do not have the capacity to fill all the gaps left by NGOs asked to stop working in Sudan, a top humanitarian official warned.

"We do not, as the UN system, the NGOs do not ... and the [Sudanese] government does not have the capacity to replace all the activities that have been going on, certainly not on any short- or medium-term basis," the UN's top humanitarian official John Holmes said. Thirteen international and three local NGOs were shut down after the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant for President Omar el-Bashir on war crimes charges on 4 March. Bashir has said Sudan would fill the gap with national agencies, but aid workers said many organizations put forward as replacements were closely allied to the government, raising issues of independence and accountability were they to act as partners for foreign aid." It is not a question of simply handing out food; it will not reach the most vulnerable [and] can be manipulated to target select groups or cut

out those who are not favored," one aid worker said. "There must be a system of accountability; if not, donors will soon dry up." The expulsions, according to the UN, will leave 1.1 million people, especially in the western region of Darfur, without food, 1.5 million without healthcare and more than a million without drinking water.

Aid workers in Khartoum warned that the camps in Darfur would reach crisis point "within a few weeks, perhaps even a fortnight", unless aid work resumed. "First the water supplies will go, without the technicians to repair [them]; then there will be problems with food supplies, then healthcare," said one.

### **Agency "thieves"**

Many Sudanese support Bashir. On 7 March, he described the expelled aid agencies as "thieves" who take "99 percent of the budget for humanitarian works themselves, giving the people of Darfur 1 percent".

On the streets of Khartoum, many believe the ICC warrant was an attack on national pride, while the crisis in Darfur is far from their minds." Why do the West come and want to attack Sudan?" asked Mohamed Omar, who runs a small shop in Khartoum. They dismiss arguments that aid agencies want to support Sudanese in Darfur. "They don't want to help us, they want to take Sudan over again," said teacher Ahmed Saddiq. "The NGOs are spies in the work of their governments and the ICC. We don't need them, we can do these ourselves." Sudanese media too has focused on support for Bashir, criticizing the arrest warrant as a "neo-colonial" plot. "It is simply a new draconian strategy aimed at staging the scene for regime change," stated one editorial.

One of Sudan's largest relief agencies, Sudan Social Development Organization (SUDO) - which supported some 700,000 displaced people from its 10 field offices - was also closed." Our work is and has always been purely humanitarian and is mostly needed at this time of our country," SUDO said in a statement. "We believe that the decision of the commissioner contradicts the Sudanese laws and violates the constitutional rights."

### **Camps threatened**

Analysts say the move appears to be a deliberate attempt to break up the camps, dozens of which are scattered across Darfur to house the 2.7 million who have lost their homes in six years of heavy fighting. Some of the larger camps - grim settlements with only basic services in baking heat - house up to 90,000 people. "They [the government] see them as the backers of the rebel movements," one aid worker added. "They cannot directly force people to leave, so they are doing the next best thing: making life intolerable so that people have to go." Many parts of the camps most strongly opposed to the government allowed entry only to international relief organizations, many now expelled." The expulsions will hit these areas the hardest and the quickest," said a former worker in the Kalma camp in South Darfur. Sudanese media has called for the closure of the camps. "We urge ... the concerned authorities to start seriously working out a plan to enable IDPs to return to their villages and dismantling the camps," the Sudan Vision newspaper said

in an editorial on 10 March. The majority of the 6,500 humanitarian staff in the expelled agencies is Sudanese nationals, many with years of experience in Darfur.

"I want to work again, to carry on my job, but we fear the government sees us as traitors because we worked for those they say were spies," said one Sudanese employee of an international NGO.

### **Somalia: Explosion Kills Five, Including High Somali Commander, in Mogadishu**

11 March 2009: shabelle media network

Somalia — At least four soldiers including high Somali commander named Ubeyd Ali Fiidow have been killed in a land mine explosion targeted to his vehicle traveling on near Mana-boolyo neighborhood in Shibis district in the Somali capital Mogadishu, witnesses told Shabelle radio on Wednesday.

Sources confirmed that the explosion was a land mine buried under the ground and targeted to the truck of Ubeyd Ali Fiidow, a security secretary of the former Somali PMs and added that all the people who were in the car were killed in the explosion. Witnesses said that the people died in the explosion were Ubeyd Ali Fiidow, the former security secretary of Somali MPs and his brother and two other soldiers who were all on board in the collapsed truck. More government soldiers reached at the scene where blast occurred after the explosion and began search operations in the area. People in the area have got shock and started to flee from the spot when the blast occurred there. No group has claimed the responsibility of the explosion.

### **Somalia: Cabinet Approves Implementing Islamic Law**

10 March 2009: Shabelle Media Network

Mogadishu — Somalia's council of ministers on Tuesday endorsed a plan to introduce sharia, or Islamic law in the country, a key demand by Islamists who are opposed to the government, officials said.

The cabinet members discussed deeply on the issue regarding the Islamic sharia law and the members unanimously approved full implementation," Information Minister Farhan Ali Mohamoud said." Islamic Sharia is the only option to get solutions for the problems in this country," he told reporters. All the 20 of the country's 36 ministers present at Tuesday's session backed the move. However, the proposal must be presented to parliament for approval as it is not part of the country's transitional federal charter. Last month, President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed agreed to proposals by local and foreign religious leaders for a truce with Islamists and the implementation of sharia. Islamic clerics, clan elders, and Islamist insurgents have been demanding the imposition of Sharia in the country.

### **Somalia: Party of Islam Rebels Vow More Attacks On African Union Peacekeepers**



9 March 2009: garowe online

The chairman of a recently-formed rebel alliance in Somalia has condemned the country's new government as an instrument of the West, Radio Garowe reports.

Dr. Omar Iman, chairman of the Party of Islam rebel faction, told a Sunday press conference in the capital Mogadishu that they will continue attacks against the African Union peacekeeping mission (AMISOM). "There is no government we recognize in Somalia, but the government created in Djibouti is an instrument of American interests," said Sheikh Iman, who is a highly educated Islamist politician. Party of Islam rebels were behind two days of battles in late February that killed upwards of 50 people and attracted condemnation from Mogadishu's community. The Party of Islam was created in January and consists of four Islamist rebel factions, including the Eritrea-based Islamic Courts faction led by Islamist hardliner Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys, who is on the U.S. list of terrorists." The AMISOM soldiers are trained by the U.S. military and are instructed to fight against Islamists in Somalia," Dr. Iman alleged. He was last reported to have condemned the attacks on AMISOM targets, but is not clear why he has issued new threats against the National Unity Government led by Somali President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed, former executive chief of the Islamic Courts movement. President Sheikh Sharif recently said he will institute Islamic law as Somalia's national law, pending ratification by the 550-member parliament composed of secular and Islamist lawmakers. The Somali leader is currently on a trip to East African capitals, including Uganda and Burundi, where he is expected to push for the withdrawal of AMISOM peacekeepers.

Al Shabaab Islamist hardliners have also refused to recognize President Sheikh Sharif's government and were responsible for a suicide bombing that killed 11 AMISOM peacekeepers in Mogadishu last month.

### **Somalia: Ban Welcomes Somalia's Commitment to Reconciliation, But Notes Hurdles Ahead**

11 March 2009

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has lauded the resolve of Somalia's leaders and people to press ahead with reconciliation efforts, in spite of the numerous challenges the Horn of Africa nation faces.

The recent expansion of the Parliament and the peaceful election of President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed are "clearly testimony of the commitment of the parties to move forward with national reconciliation," Mr. Ban wrote in his latest report on Somalia, made public today. He said he is "pleased" that the new Somali leader has stated that he plans to reach out to groups opposed to the UN-brokered Djibouti process, urging "all the people of Somalia to embrace the spirit of forgiveness and compromise and put the past behind them for the sake of peace and reconciliation." But the Secretary-General noted the many challenges ahead for the war-torn nation which has not had a functioning government since 1991. The simmering conflict between the forces of peace and those opposed to peace is just one example of those hurdles," he wrote, adding that the instability caused by hostilities, abductions and fear continue to hinder delivery of vital

humanitarian aid. A January UN analysis found that more than three million people in Somalia, a third or more of the total population, will remain dependent on humanitarian assistance this year. The new report also commended the international community's response to combating piracy off the Somali coast, calling on donors to help fund a Joint Security Force and effective government mechanisms to help fight the continuing threat posed by the scourge. Mr. Ban noted that among the aims of the UN's comprehensive strategy for Somalia is to help the African Union Mission there (AMISOM) reach its authorized full strength of 8,000 troops and police personnel, and give Somali security institutions the capacity to create a level of security to enable the Djibouti peace process. The UN Security Council has yet to decide whether to deploy a multidimensional UN peacekeeping operation that would take over from AMISOM, and "there remains uncertainty about whether peacekeeping is the right tool to support the political process in Somalia," he wrote.

He said he will put forth by next month recommendations on developing the mandate for a UN force, including assisting the flow of humanitarian aid, monitoring a ceasefire and assisting "in supporting the effective re-establishment and training of inclusive Somali security forces, including military, police and judiciary," as requested by Council resolution 1863.

### **Somalia: 7,574 People Killed in 2008 - Elman Human Rights**

10 March 2009: garowe online

A Somali human rights agency issued a report Monday in the country's capital Mogadishu to commemorate the death of a human rights activist, Radio Garowe reports.

Mogadishu-based Elman Human Rights group was named after Mr. Mohamed Ali Ahmed, popularly known as Elman, who was killed by militiamen on March 9, 1996, while walking with a young child along a city street. Monday's well-organized ceremony was held at Mogadishu's Amira Hotel, where Somali peace activists and government officials offered speeches to honor the country's peace and human rights movement. Abdullah Mohamed Mohamed, chairman of the INXA human rights group, commended Mr. Elman as a hero who organized armed youth and educated them during difficult times. Somali lawmaker Bontan Isse Alim, one of Mogadishu's notorious ex-warlords, offered a brief prayer and praised Elman as a champion of peace. "Any person who does the right is always remembered and Elman was one of the people remembered for his good actions," said Fartun Abdisalam, Elman's widow. Mr. Ali Fadha, Elman Human Rights chairman. Ali "Fadha" Sheikh Yasin, the Elman Human Rights agency's current chairman, thanked everyone for attending the ceremony and read aloud a list of human rights violations from 2008, including killings, rapes and kidnappings. According to the Elman Human Rights 2008 report, 7,674 people were killed mostly civilians in Mogadishu, while 16,914 others were forcefully displaced from their homes. There were 106 cases of rape reported and 1,164 cases of torture, although the report did not specify the culprits behind such crimes. Mr. Ali "Fadha" Sheikh Yasin, the Elman Human Rights agency's current chairman, thanked everyone for attending the ceremony and read aloud a

list of human rights violations from 2008, including killings, rapes and kidnappings. According to the Elman Human Rights 2008 report, 7,674 people were killed mostly civilians in Mogadishu, while 16,914 others were forcefully displaced from their homes. There were 106 cases of rape reported and 1,164 cases of torture, although the report did not specify the culprits behind such crime. Further, there were a total of 41 kidnappings of aid workers, including 16 foreigners. Currently, there are 12 aid workers being held hostage in Somalia, the report concluded. Ali Fadha called on the Somali national unity government and the Islamist rebels to stop the war and to enter peace negotiations.

Elman Human Rights group is frequently sourced by the media for its annual reports on human rights abuses in Somalia, especially in Mogadishu.

### **Somalia: Fighting Between Islamists Underway in Bardhere Town**

9 March 2009: shabelle media network

Mogadishu — Fighting between Ahlu Suna Waljama'a organization and al-Shabab Islamists is ongoing in Bardhere town in southwestern Somali; witnesses told radio Shabelle on Monday.

The fighting is continuing near a mosque called Gedweyne manned by Ahlu Suna Waljama'a. Ahlu Sunna adherents have been preparing for the festival of celebrating the birth of Prophet Muhammad (Peace of Allah Be Upon Him) ignoring a ban from al-Shabab in Bardhere. It is not known the exact casualties of the fighting, but some reports say the warring sides have inflicted each other injury casualties. Residents say the situation of the town is tense and sporadic gunfire can be still heard in the town. All business centers have been closed and the people have expressed concern about the clashes between the Islamists.

### **Somalia: Military plane crashes into Lake Victoria**

09 March 2009: smc

A military charter, headed to Somalia on an Amisom mission (African Union Peace keeping Mission) crashed into Lake Victoria on take off at Entebbe International Airport earlier this morning.

All the 11 on board – 7 including 4 crew members died in the crash. The plane, a Russian Illyussian 76 was hired by American company, DynaCorp. Works and Transport. Minister John Nasasira, who was headed for the scene of the accident, said at 9.30 is that details of the cause of the crash and the dead would be given promptly. He said details of the dead would be given after informing the next of kin.

### **Somalia: Puntland President's First Trip to Ethiopia**

12 March 2009: garowe online

The new leader in Somalia's self-governing State of Puntland flew to the Ethiopian capital Wednesday in his first foreign trip since winning the January election, Radio Garowe reports.

Dr. Abdirahman Mohamed "Farole," Puntland's elected president, flew from a small airstrip in the outskirts of the region's capital Garowe. Puntland government officials, including Vice President Gen. Abdisamad Ali Shire and Finance Minister Farah Ali Jama, were present at Garowe's Conoco airstrip as President Farole's plane took off. Dr. Farole and Dr. Alamu at Addis Ababa airport. The Puntland president led a delegation that included Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, Mr. Farah Adan Dhala, and the State Minister for the Democratization Process, Dr. Abdi Hassan Jum'ale. In Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital, the Puntland government delegation was welcomed at the airport by Ethiopia's State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Takade Alamu. Dr. Farole and Dr. Alamu spoke with each other briefly at the airport's VIP lounge, after which point the Puntland delegation was escorted to Sheraton Hotel in downtown Addis Ababa. Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi extended an official invitation to Puntland President Farole as an introduction meeting and to strengthen security and trade relations between the two parties. President Farole is expected to hold meetings with senior government officials in Ethiopia before flying to the neighboring Republic of Djibouti, where he will meet with Djiboutian President Ismail Omar Guelleh.

Puntland's new leader traveled to major towns in Puntland since winning a peaceful and democratic election in January, including the key towns of Bossaso and Galkayo. The self-governing State of Puntland is located along the strategic Gulf of Aden coast, which the Ethiopian government fears is a shipment point for Eritrean weapons imported to south-central Somalia. Ethiopia and Eritrea, two Horn of Africa rivals, fought a bloody two-year war that killed upwards of 70,000 people before ending in 2000.

### **Somalia: ICU Calls for Government to Implement Sharia Law**

13 March 2009: shabelle media network

Mogadishu — Sheik Abdirahin Issa Adow, a spokesman of the Islamic Courts Union for the operations has called for the transitional government on Friday to implement to rule the country with Sharia law.

The spokesman said that the government is required to implement the Sharia law though it had accepted to rule the country with Sharia law." We are suggesting for the transitional government to assure and implement the promise as it has already said for ruling the country and the people of Somalia with Sharia law and to prepare the courts, the judges and the clerics," Sheik Abdirahin said. On the other hand the spokesman of ICU Sheik Abdirahin Issa Adow said that it was unfortunate those who opposed the decision of the government for the implementation of Sharia law adding that those people are seen that that they are against the Sharia law. "We know that the president has already mentioned that the government wants to rule the country with Sharia law and we know that he has been the leader of the Islamic Courts Union so we welcome that matter and

the people who refused are seen that they are going to other aims," the spokesman added. The statement of the ICU spokesman for the operations Sheik Abdirahin Isse Adow comes as the transitional government of Somalia approved earlier to rule the country with Sharia law though the Islamic Insurgent Organizations of al-Shabab and Hisbul Islam (Islamic party) pointed out the statement was something to deceive the Somali people.

### **Somalia: Parliament Meets in Mogadishu**

12 March 2009: shabelle media network

Somalia — Somali parliament has met in Mogadishu for the first time on Thursday since the parliamentarians relocated from Djibouti to Mogadishu.

The speaker of the parliament, Sheik Adan Mohamed Nur (Madobe) said the agenda of the meeting was to see each other and swear some new members from the Alliance of the Re-liberation of the Somalia (ARS) and the civil society groups. Ten legislators have been sworn in. He said that the parliament did not pass any proposal to vote, but he added that they will discuss any proposals in the next meeting which is due to be held in Mogadishu on 16 March 2009. Two hundred and ninety eight lawmakers attended Thursday's meeting and the security of the temporary centre of the parliament has been tightened by government security forces.

### **East Africa: Kenya Now Wants EAC Organs Shifted**

12 March 2009: Gashegu Muramira

Mombasa — as speculation becomes rife over a possible shifting of the East African Community (EAC) headquarters from Arusha, Tanzania, Kenya has come out to openly request for the relocation of EAC organs.

Kenya's Minister for East African Affairs, Amason Jeffa Kingi, yesterday told The New Times in Mombasa that organs like the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) and the East African Court of Justice (EACJ) should be relocated to enhance equity and ownership within the regional bloc." Being alive to the trend the world over in regional blocs and where their organs are placed is what we should do. There is no single bloc that has all its organs under one roof. We are suggesting that the EAC organs be decentralized to enhance ownership of the community," Kingi said. Currently, all the three organs of the EAC namely; the Secretariat, EALA and EACJ are based in Arusha, Tanzania. While giving an example of the African Union (AU) and the European Union (EU) that have many of their organs spread all over their regions, the Kenyan minister said that they (Kenya) would formally register the proposal in the next Council of Ministers Meeting. In a Council of Ministers meeting held last month, Kenya requested that the construction of the EAC headquarters be put on hold because Tanzania had lost its centrality ever since Rwanda and Burundi were admitted in 2007. This sparked speculation with many saying that Kenya was indirectly asking Tanzania to fully embrace regional integration matters like negotiations on the Common Market Protocol, if it wanted to host the state-

of-the-art headquarters. The construction valued at Euros14 million, was initially planned to start in 2005 but had to be shelved to revise designs, following the admission of Rwanda and Burundi into the regional bloc. But Kingi maintained that relocation of organs of a regional bloc is a normal practice conducted all over the world and that it should not cause any alarm.

"This is nothing to lobby about; any East African who is well-meaning should be able to see the sense in it. If anybody doesn't see any sense in it, then they are state-clinging on national identity. That is the danger because we are people that cling so much on nationalities than the EAC picture," he said. Kingi's also added that this would eventually require amending the EAC treaty to provide for organs being spread across East Africa." Now, what we need to know is; what does the EAC headquarters mean? If it means the secretariat, then the Treaty doesn't have to be amended. But if it means all the EAC organs in Arusha, we might certainly have to move to amending it and that will give us equity, and ownership with the larger community," Kingi said

.Kingi's remarks came a few minutes after the Kenyan Vice President Kalonzo Musyoka had assured delegates at the 4th East African Petroleum Conference that Arusha would remain the seat of the regional bloc.

### **East Africa: Uganda, Kenyan Ministers Discuss Disputed Island Today**

12 March 2009: Milton Olupot and Reuben Olita

Kampala — a bilateral ministerial meeting takes place at the Commonwealth Resort Munyonyo today to discuss the disputed Lake Victoria island of Migingo.

By press time yesterday, five Kenyan ministers were already in the country. Uganda Media Centre chief Fred Opolot told journalists at the media centre in Kampala that the team comprised the provincial administration and internal security minister, George Saitoti and Moses Wetangula, the foreign affairs minister. Others, he said, were James Orendo (lands), Gerald Kajwang (immigration) and Paul Atuoma (fisheries development). Senior officials from Kenya and Uganda met yesterday at the foreign affairs ministry ahead of the talks. They reviewed information that will form the basis of the discussions, Opolot said. Some of the documents included the Order in Council 1926 and the Constitutions of the two countries. The parties are expected to adopt methods to transfer the boundary description from the information documents to the ground. The talks are expected to culminate into the joint marking of the boundaries and creation of a no-man's land. Relations between the two countries deteriorated over ownership of the island in November 2008. Last month, Nyanza provincial commissioner Paul Orlando, accused Ugandan fisheries officials of trespassing and illegally collecting sh50, 000 in annual operation fees in the Kenyan jarea. This led to eviction of over 400 Kenyan fishermen from the island. To avert a possible crisis, the two governments last month set up a joint border committee to verify where the contentious islands, comprising Migingo, Usingo and Pyramids lie. Opolot yesterday said the Government had proposed a comprehensive survey using a guideline on the boundaries set by the Kenya Colony and

Protectorate Order in Council, 1926. Police spokesperson Judith Nabakooba said marine officials and anti-riot Police were deployed to restore order after Kenyan police attacked Migingo and threatened a take-over.

Kenyan Members of Parliament on Friday demanded that troops be deployed to the island to defend their country against incursions. They alleged that Uganda had deployed the army on the island, which Prime Minister Raila Odinga said was annexed by ex-president Idi Amin between 1971 and 1979. The UPDF has, however, denied presence on the island. "The island is too tiny for a military occupation. Whoever is talking of a UPDF presence on the island is day-dreaming," said army spokesman Maj. Felix Kulayigye.

### **Tanzania: The West Messes Up and the Continent Suffers - IMF Told**

12 March 2009: Brian Benza

Dar es Salaam — Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete has accused the IMF of unequal treatment of its members as the American-inspired global financial crisis comes to bear on the African continent.

Speaking at the opening of an IMF conference on Africa here this week, Kikwete said the Fund was treating the US and the EU with kid gloves even though it was clear that the present crisis was the product of financial mismanagement and indiscipline in those regions. "I am sure if an African country had caused this crisis, the IMF would have jumped and screamed about lack of discipline and the need for countries to stick to (the) prescribed rules and guidelines of financial stability," the Tanzanian leader said. "There should be no 'untouchables' when it comes to financial control and sticking to agreed guidelines. Through its surveillance and early-warnings systems, the IMF should have played a greater role in preventing this turmoil." Kikwete's sentiments were echoed by the former Secretary General of the United States, Kofi Annan, who said it was unfortunate that Africa was facing untold suffering due to a problem not of its making. "Africa has every right to feel aggrieved at this moment," Annan said. "We could be the greatest casualties of a crisis that we did not create. Africa is not responsible for the lack of oversight, institutional recklessness and (the) perverse incentives that have triggered the financial crash." Annan also questioned the western countries' willingness to reduce poverty in low-income countries. "Industrialized countries have found incredibly large sums of money at short notice to bail out their firms and economies," he pointed out. "Trillions of dollars have been committed in the last few months for bailout and stimulus packages. This compares with a total of \$100 billion a year in development aid, yet more than that has been spent on rescuing (only) one US company." This undermines the credibility of the claim that relatively modest sums cannot be found to support the fight against global poverty. The real issue is political will."

Annan, who distinguished himself as arguably the world's most accomplished diplomat at a time of unprecedented aggression since WWII when he led the UN, went on to criticize growing protectionist sentiment among Western countries. "While the crisis is obviously

global, political responses to it have remained at national level (where) leaders in the industrialized world and the big emerging economies are focused on the fallout (on) their own countries," he said. But looking ahead, Annan said there was no need for Africans to feel sorry "for ourselves"; instead, Africa must spell out a compelling message in forthcoming international negotiations.

Tanzanian President Kikwete had also urged African participants to fully lobby the IMF to send a clear message to G20 leaders about Africa's concerns regarding the present global economic and financial crises. The crises had pointed out the dangers of the so-called market economy and emphasized the need for African governments to put in place social safety nets to safeguard the most vulnerable people. "As we are concerned that the economic crisis could turn into a humanitarian crisis, our greatest weakness is capacity," Kikwete said. "This is where we need to foster tighter relations with the IMF and other development partners." Many of the OECD countries are now putting in place stimulus packages to boost their economies. We want the IMF, through the G20 and other partners, to call for programmes to mitigate the crisis on African countries."

### **Uganda: 50,000 More to Get Free Aids Drugs**

Kampala — ANOTHER 50,000 people living with HIV/AIDS are now eligible for free treatment under the new guidelines which the Ministry of Health released yesterday.

The ministry recommended that anti-retroviral (ARV) treatment should start when the CD4 count of adults is less than 250, instead of 200 as has been the case, Sam Zaramba, the director-general of Health Services, said in a statement. CD4 count is a measure of the strength of the immune system. A higher CD4 count means that a person's immunity is still strong. Dr. Kihumuro Apuuli, the Uganda AIDS Commission chairman, said under the new rules, the number of people eligible for the treatment will rise from 350,000 to about 400,000 people. ARVs suppress HIV to the extent that it cannot be detected in the blood. As at the end February, about 160,000 patients had been initiated on the treatment, just 50% of the people who need the life-prolonging drugs. For pregnant women and children less than 12 months, the treatment can start when CD4 cell counts are above 250 but less than 350, Zaramba said. Research in Uganda shows that treatment should start at the CD4 count of 350. However, due to shortage of resources, for many years the Ministry of Health has kept the cut-off point at 200. Dr. Andrew Kambugu, the head of mentoring and training at the Infectious Diseases Institute, said: "The 250 cut-off points are the balance between what science says and what the health ministry can afford." Antiretroviral therapy first became available in 1998. About 1,500 patients are enrolled monthly. In August 2008, the drugs ran out and the ministry averted the shortage partly through soliciting for donations." In order to reach the majority of all patients who require ARVs, steps are being taken to scale up HIV counselling and testing services," Zaramba said. He said when people know their HIV sero-status; it can facilitate them to enter treatment early before they start getting complications. Only 25% of Ugandans know their HIV status. However, the Government has been encouraging people, especially the youth, to find out their HIV sero status to promote responsible living in case they are HIV-positive. Nearly 650,000 Ugandans unknowingly live with HIV-



positive sexual partners. If nothing is done to make them aware of the risk, about 13% of them (about 85,000) will become infected this year. This partly explains why Uganda's HIV infection rate is going up. More than a million Ugandans live with HIV. This translates to a prevalence rate of 6%.

### **Uganda: Getting Rid of the Ghosts for Returnees in Acholi**

13 March 2009

Gulu — Human skeletons are being buried and villages cleansed in northern Uganda's Acholi sub-region to ease the resettlement of returnees previously displaced by fighting between the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and government forces.

"Reburial and cleansing of villages is one of the activities being undertaken to ensure a smooth resettlement of IDPs [internally displaced persons]," said Sophie Agwoko, programmed officer for Ker Kwaro Acholi, the cultural institution in charge. Thirteen skeletons have been buried over the past three months and cleansing ceremonies performed in 17 villages in Gulu and Amuru districts, where several people were killed by either the LRA or the Ugandan army during the war. Acholi was the epicenter of the LRA conflict that left thousands of civilians dead and displaced about 1.5 million. Another 60 human skeletons are scheduled to be buried and 48 villages cleansed in 12 sub-counties. Burying skeletons involves slaughtering a goat or chicken near the grave while cleansing villages requires slaughtering a sheep and traditional dances for the dead. Agwoko said a sheep was slaughtered in Lukutu village in Koch Goma, where 12 civilians were burnt in a hut in 1987, and another in Kalang, where 10 civilians were shot dead during a funeral in 1990. "Civilians were massacred in villages across the region; people fear resettling in their villages in such areas saying they are being attacked by ghosts and evil spirits," she told IRIN on 10 March. Whenever they came across human skeletons in their villages, returnees in some sub-counties of Gulu and Amuru were reluctant to resettle. Some shunned areas where they believed massacres had occurred. In Oroko village, 30km south of Gulu town - where rebels killed several civilians and herded others into huts before burning them - returnee families told IRIN that unburied skeletons made it hard for them to go home. Nesarino Obol, a returnee, said he found two human skeletons in his compound. "I froze when I came across the skeletons; I will only go back when they are buried," he said. Another returnee, Marino Ojok, said he would only go home if the village was cleansed and the skeletons buried. "To the community, it is an indication that the war is coming to an end, it builds hope and confidence for people returning to their villages," Agwoko said. "It reduces fear and helps in the management of mental illness and psychological trauma."

Rwot Othinga Atuka Othoyai, a cultural chief, told IRIN at the Acholi paramount chief's palace in Gulu that cleansing the villages under Acholi cultural auspices was important to protect people from bad omens. "Locals trying to go back home still live in fear," Othinga said. "The programme helps restore confidence and a sustainable return of IDPs."

# **BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD**

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## BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

Weekly Presentation: March 25 2009

### Sub-Saharan Africa + Sudan (3) +MADAGASCAR

Abbas S Lamptey

Period: From 15<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2009

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#### THE HEADLINES

##### 72. SUDAN

- a. Darfur/Sudan: The Current Situation: updated March 2009: [www.crisisgroup.org](http://www.crisisgroup.org)
- b. Sudan: "After the Indictment", Nick Grono in International Herald Tribune: By Nick Grono: 3 March 2009: [www.crisisgroup.org](http://www.crisisgroup.org)
- c. "Sudan's False Dawn?" Nick Grono in Mail & Guardian: 6 March 2009: Mail & Guardian: [www.crisisgroup.org](http://www.crisisgroup.org)
- d. Sudan: "Deterring Future Darfurs", Nick Grono in Reuters: The Great Debate: 4 March 2009: [//www.crisisgroup.org](http://www.crisisgroup.org)
- e. Sudan: Fallout Scenarios: 20 March 2009: IRIN.
- f. Sudan: Darfur Rife With Violence Against Peacekeepers, Civilians, UN Says: 18 March 2009: UN NEWS SERVICE.
- g. Africa/ Sudan: Finding Justice in a Power-Asymmetrical World: Vikas Nath: 20 March 2009: opinion: Pambazuka.
- h. Sudan: UNAMID Peacekeeper Killed in South Darfur: 17 March 2009: [United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur](#) (El Fasher).
- i. Nigeria: Arrest Warrant On Al-Bashir: 19 March 2009: editorial: [Daily Independent](#) (Lagos).
- j. Ghana: No Mercy for Al Bashir: 17 March 2009: editorial: The Chronicle
- k. Sudan: The Indicted Head of State: Soyombo Opeyemi: 19 March 2009: opinion: [Daily Independent](#) (Lagos).

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- b. South Africa: SABMiller Acquires Brewery in Beer-Drinking Chinese Province: Nicola Mawson: 16 March 2009: [BusinessDay](#).
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- g. Tanzania: Africa's Freedom Railway - How a Chinese Development Project Changed Lives and Livelihoods in Tanzania - By Jamie Monson: 16 March 2009: [book listing: Indiana University Press \(Bloomington, IN\)](#).

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#### 84. SUDAN

#### **Darfur/Sudan: The Current Situation: updated March 2009: [www.crisisgroup.org](http://www.crisisgroup.org)**

The Darfur conflict has changed radically in the past year and a half. While there are fewer deaths than during the high period of fighting in 2003-2004, the conflict has mutated, the parties have splintered, and the confrontations have multiplied. Violence

again increased in 2008 while access for humanitarian agencies became more difficult. International peacekeeping is not yet effective and a political settlement remains far off.

Attacks by both government and rebel forces continued throughout the year, including major aerial bombardments and ground attacks launched by the government in West Darfur in February 2008. In turn, an assault on Khartoum by Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) rebels in mid-May 2008 left at least 200 dead and was a milestone in the Darfur conflict, constituting the first military strike on the capital since 30 years. An attack by government troops on an IDP camp in Kalma, southern Darfur in August 2008 killed more than 30 IDPs and drew widespread international condemnation.

Meanwhile the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) in Khartoum continued to deny the gravity of the situation and pursue destructive policies in Darfur. At the same time it has continued to resist key provisions in the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that ended the North-South war, thus triggering a crisis in that process, with heavy fighting between government and southern troops paralysing oil-rich Abyei in June 2008. The 14 July request by the ICC Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo for an arrest warrant against President Bashir for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in Darfur precipitated a redoubling of international pressure on Khartoum to find a peaceful resolution to the crisis, including efforts initiated by the Arab League in late 2008 to bring the the government and different rebel groups together for peace talks in Qatar. In spite of rhetoric from Khartoum emphasizing that it is serious about peace talks, including a November 2008 “Sudan People’s Initiative”, government and rebel attacks have continued.

The NCP wants Darfur in chaos to limit the room for an opposition to emerge, while resettling key allies on cleared land and defying Security Council resolutions by integrating its Janjaweed irregulars into official security structures instead of disarming them. Rebel signatories of the May 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), particularly the Sudan Liberation Army faction of Minni Minawi (SLA/MM), have been responsible for attacks on civilians, humanitarians, the AU mission (AMIS) and some of the violence in the internally displaced person (IDP) camps. Their leaders have been given government jobs and land and, as ardent supporters of the status quo and without a clearly defined role in the new negotiations, are potential spoilers. Rebel movements that did not sign the DPA have further splintered. As they divide along tribal lines, their messages become more fragmented and less representative of constituencies they claim to speak for. The IDP camps are increasingly violent, with residents manipulated by all sides while Khartoum also tries to force them to return to unsafe areas. Inter-Arab dissension has added new volatility to the situation on the ground. Some tribes are trying to solidify land claims as the UN/AU hybrid peacekeeping operation in Darfur (UNAMID) establishes itself. This has led to fighting with other Arab tribes, which have realized the NCP is not a reliable guarantor of their long-term interests and have started to take protection into their own hands. There is now a high risk of an Arab insurgency, as well as potential for alliances with the predominantly non-Arab rebel groups. A spillover of the conflict into Kordofan has also started.

The May 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement was a failure, too limited in scope and signatories. Those who signed – the government and a few rebel factions – hurt the peace process. After a highly publicised opening ceremony in Sirte, Libya, on 27 October 2007, new peace talks were put on hold. A new joint AU/UN mediator, former Foreign Minister of Burkina Faso Djibrill Bassolé, was appointed in June 2008, and the Arab League in September 2008 initiated a new effort to resolve the crisis with peace talks in Qatar. The new realities emphasise the necessity of broadening participation in the peace talks to associate the full range of actors and constituencies involved in the conflict, including its primary victims, such as women, but also Arab tribes. Incorporating broader and more representative voices can help remedy the uneven weight the process now gives the NCP and rebel factions. Core issues that drive the conflict, among them land tenure and use, including grazing rights, and the role and reform of local government and administrative structures, were not addressed in the DPA but left to the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation process that was supposed to follow the negotiations. They need to be on the agenda of any new negotiations if an eventual agreement is to gain the wide support the DPA has lacked.

UNAMID began deploying on 31 December 2007. The mission has faced difficulties in its first months, including staff shortages, and seven peacekeepers were killed in an attack on 9 July 2008. It continues to face troop and equipment shortages, and a number of its peacekeepers were killed in attacks during 2008. UNAMID must build upon lessons learned from its predecessor AMIS, including being more pro-active in protecting civilians and responding to ceasefire violations. Its leadership should also engage actively in the peace talks so as to ensure coherence between what is agreed and its capabilities. The international community must give it more support than it did AMIS, including strong responses, with sanctions as necessary, to further non-compliance by any party, as well as to actions that obstruct the peace process or violate international humanitarian law.

**Sudan: "After the Indictment", Nick Grono in International Herald Tribune: By Nick Grono: 3 March 2009: [www.crisisgroup.org](http://www.crisisgroup.org)**

Sudan's president, Omar Hassan al-Bashir, is likely to soon have the dubious distinction of being the first head of state to be indicted by the International Criminal Court. On Wednesday the ICC is expected to demand that he surrender himself to The Hague to face charges of crimes against humanity and war crimes for atrocities committed in Darfur. Of course, indictment is one thing: Getting Bashir before the court will be an entirely different challenge. Ideally, Bashir would step down and hand himself in, but this isn't going to happen.

So whether and when he faces trial will depend on internal Sudanese political dynamics, and the reaction of the international community. There are a number of possible scenarios. The nightmare one is that Sudan will retaliate against what it calls a Western attempt at "regime change." It could lash out at the UN missions in Sudan and international humanitarian operations, and could go so far as to unleash attacks on peacekeepers and Darfuri civilians in camps to ram home the message. There are also fears it will declare a

state of emergency and crack down on its political opponents. However, experience with international prosecutions in places such as the former Yugoslavia and Liberia has shown such dire predictions to be overstated. There are real constraints on the regime's ability to strike out. For a start, such a violent response would be highly destabilizing. Many of Sudan's partners have a strong interest in continued stability - China with its big stake in the oil industry, Egypt with its desire for regional security and access to the Nile waters, Gulf states with substantial economic investments.

They will be privately cautioning the regime against an overreaction. Senior figures within the ruling majority National Congress Party (NCP) and the Sudan Armed Forces have profited from Sudan's economic boom, and would also be loathe to see the investment climate destroyed. To back up these constraints, the ICC prosecutor should make clear that figures close to Bashir responsible for any violent response may end up sharing the dock with him. Then there are also elements within the regime that believe Bashir's violent suppression of the political demands of Sudan's peripheral regions (such as Darfur and Southern Sudan) has, far from ensuring stability and unity, weakened the state. Some also believe continued confrontation with the West may not be the wisest policy when oil prices have collapsed and the state's finances are increasingly parlous. Such views are gaining traction at the senior levels of the NCP. And, although Bashir and his security apparatus are still entrenched in power, the indictment is likely to weaken their hold. It may even cause the army and intelligence agencies, the ultimate wielders of power, to contemplate a future without Bashir. Given these constraints, the regime may reluctantly seek a genuine settlement of the Darfur conflict. This will only happen if it decides that this is the only way to maintain its hold on power, even if that power is itself reduced. The "declaration of intent" it signed recently in Doha, Qatar, with the rebel Justice and Equality Movement, while a welcome step, is nowhere near being such settlement.

It is in fact a continuation of the regime's tested tactic of offering a small concession to avoid bigger ones. The outcome the international community should be seeking is a political transformation in Khartoum. There needs to be a fundamental change in the NCP's destructive policies, and real steps toward holding those most directly responsible for atrocities in Darfur accountable. The regime needs to start by unconditionally implementing the Doha agreement, and then work to bring in other rebel groups and Darfuri representatives to negotiate an inclusive settlement of the Darfur conflict. There also needs to be full implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the North and South, ensuring the necessary transformation of Sudan's governing institutions.

These are big tasks, and the international community's leverage is limited, but the indictment creates a real opportunity to push for change. Its best leverage may be to hold out the prospect of normalizing relations and large-scale international aid. Another tool is the power of the UN Security Council to put ICC prosecutions on hold for renewable 12-month increments. But it should not rush to put either of these options on the table. Given that the indictment of Bashir may itself drive political change within Sudan, the Security Council in particular should set the bar very high, and demand demonstrated progress,

before it considers a deferral. It should also bear in mind impunity for past atrocities has fueled the regime's violent policies.

In the end the needed changes may go beyond the regime's willingness or ability to agree. But if that is the case, the prosecution of Bashir will proceed. Sudan will become, over time, a pariah state with an increasingly isolated president. And Bashir himself will be constantly looking over his shoulder, wondering if and when Sudan's powerbrokers will decide that it is time for him to go.

[Nick Grono](#) is deputy president of the International Crisis Group.

**"Sudan's False Dawn?" Nick Grono in Mail & Guardian:6 March 2009:Mail & Guardian: [www.crisisgroup.org](http://www.crisisgroup.org)**

The ICC's decision to indict the country's president for war crimes may force the ruling party to confront its strategy of violence, writes Nick Grono.

The decision of the International Criminal Court (ICC) on Wednesday to order the arrest of Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir for atrocity crimes in Darfur is a victory for the conflict's countless victims and offers a rare opportunity to bring peace to Sudan. Over the past few years, the Khartoum regime has conducted a scorched earth policy against its own citizens in the western region, leaving more than 300 000 dead and 2.6-million displaced. Much of the initial killing came at the hands of government-sponsored militias, the Janjaweed, who continued to harass and prey on the victims even when they had fled to displacement camps now scattered throughout Darfur and across the border in Chad. Although the ICC's decision will not, on its own, allow Darfuris to return to their destroyed homes, or undo the deaths and injuries caused, at least some semblance of justice is now on the horizon for people who have lost almost everything they once had. This landmark decision provides independent legal recognition of the massive crimes committed against them, and confirms that there are reasonable grounds to believe that al-Bashir is personally criminally responsible. The indictment also provides an opportunity to change for the better the political dynamics in Khartoum. Of course, no one expects to see al-Bashir in a courtroom in The Hague any time soon. But it is likely to force senior figures in his National Congress Party (NCP) to confront the reality that their strategy of disproportionate violence against their Sudanese opponents and aggressive confrontation of their external critics, has made Sudan less secure, not more so.

Up to now, al-Bashir and his security apparatus have been entrenched in their positions. Although they will continue to claim that the ICC is the tool of those seeking "regime change" in Sudan, there is growing tension in their ranks. Over the coming months, in an effort to preserve its economic interests and guarantee its survival, the NCP may well look for a way out by changing its policies or leadership. To succeed, it will need to change both. Sudan's allies can encourage this dynamic. China, Egypt and the Gulf States with investments there have an interest in stability, which will be further undermined if the government in Khartoum responds simply by lashing out at its own people, declaring

a state of emergency or clamping down on internal political opposition. And having already issued an arrest warrant for the president, the ICC prosecutor should not hesitate to pursue anyone responsible for further atrocities. The broader international community holds another card — sanctions can be lifted and reconstruction aid provided to Sudan. But given the regime's history of breaking its promises, these incentives should be offered only if al-Bashir's party provides irreversible and unconditional evidence of its commitment to the peace process.

Probably of more interest to al-Bashir is that the UN Security Council has the power to defer ICC prosecutions in the interests of peace and security, for 12 months at a time. If this measure was used to bring about credible accountability measures in Sudan, end a conflict that has devastated the lives of millions and transform the strife-filled internal politics of Sudan, it should be considered seriously, but again only following demonstrated progress on these fronts. While China, the African Union and the Arab League have already indicated that they will be pushing for a deferral, they will have to do more than simply echo Khartoum's demands to get a UN Security Council decision. There is now a glimmer of a peace process, since the Justice and Equality Movement rebels signed an agreement in Doha in February, but we have seen too many false dawns over Sudan already for this to be taken as evidence the government is changing. To prove its good faith, the NCP will have to dramatically change course and advance the cause of both peace and justice in Sudan, especially in Darfur. It may decide that this is a price it is unwilling or unable to pay. But if it does, then al-Bashir and his party will become increasingly isolated, with the threat of prosecution hanging over them. Meanwhile the Sudanese people will continue to pay a devastating price.

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**Sudan: "Deterring Future Darfurs", Nick Grono in Reuters: The Great Debate:4 March 2009: [//www.crisisgroup.org](http://www.crisisgroup.org)**

The decision of the International Criminal Court to order the arrest of Sudan's President Omar Bashir for crimes against humanity and war crimes will reignite the debate over whether pursuing justice helps or hinders peace. At one end of the spectrum are those who insist that any attempt to prosecute Bashir will obstruct efforts to end conflict in Sudan. But they have a difficult case to make, given the regime's violent history, and the lack of any significant moves towards peace in recent years. Then there are justice advocates who argue there will be no peace in Sudan until Bashir and his henchmen are held accountable for their atrocities. However, while such an outcome is obviously highly desirable, history is replete with peace deals achieved at the cost of impunity for perpetrators of atrocities. The reality is that we just don't know if prosecuting Bashir will accelerate or delay the prospects of a sustainable peace in Sudan. It is a question we will only be able to answer with the benefit of hindsight.

But there is a bigger question we need to pose, the significance of which extends far beyond Sudan. That is whether prosecution of Bashir will cause other would-be perpetrators to think twice before unleashing violence against their own people? Or, to

put it another way, can international justice deter leaders from committing atrocities against their own people?

In the preamble to the Court's founding document, the Rome Statute, there is a clearly expressed determination "to put an end to impunity for the perpetrators of these crimes and thus to contribute to [their] prevention", and it is not too difficult to demonstrate that the threat of criminal prosecution affects the calculations of abusive leaders. One of the reasons Zimbabwe's President Mugabe is so determined to cling to power is his fear of being hauled before an international court. What is much harder to establish is whether potential prosecutions can so influence leaders as to actually prevent future conflicts. There are plenty of examples in which the threat of criminal prosecution failed to deter perpetrators of atrocity crimes, and it is difficult to point to cases of successful deterrence. But this may simply mean that we can't concretely establish deterrence, not that it doesn't work. As with conflict prevention efforts more broadly, it is difficult to establish something that never happens: in this case, that a conflict would have ensued, and atrocities would have been committed, but for the deterrence.

In any case, history is of limited benefit when considering these issues, as international institutions and norms are much stronger today than they were even ten years ago, ensuring that the risks of prosecution are greater, and hence more likely to impact on potential perpetrators' calculations. Given these challenges, a more useful exercise is to analyse how deterrence can be made more effective. Deterrence proceeds on the assumption that actors are rational - and hence will respond to the prospect of punishment for contrary behaviour. Punishment here generally means incarceration following conviction, or delegitimisation leading to a weakening of the actor's hold on power. The effectiveness of deterrence largely depends on the certainty and severity of the consequences. Actors in a conflict may have different knowledge. In the early stages, rebels in remote areas may have limited understanding of the threat posed by international justice. Government leaders, however, particularly now in Africa, are much more alive to the possibility of ICC investigation, and will likely factor that into their considerations. Not all actors are rational when it comes to committing crimes. Individuals may act on impulse, with little consideration of the longer-term consequences. But this will rarely be the case in respect to atrocity crimes, particularly those meriting the attention of the ICC, which are — almost by definition — of a scale that requires systematic planning and implementation. In any event, actors will often calculate that the benefit to be gained from crimes outweighs the risk of punishment. Benefits for rebels include capture of the state, and for governments may include holding onto power. The risk of punishment may also be perceived as very low, and the likelihood of prosecution is a relevant factor. To the extent rebel leaders focus on the risk, they may calculate it as being minimal. The threat may not be much higher for government leaders, but that is changing - with Chile's Augusto Pinochet, Chad's Hassan Habre, Serbia's Slobodan Milošević and Liberia's Charles Taylor all having faced prosecution.

Maybe the best that can be said about deterrence is that the threat of prosecution and delegitimisation may influence decisions, and perhaps more so for government leaders



than rebels. But influencing is important, particularly when leaders are deciding how to respond to a challenge to their authority. In so responding they usually have a number of policy options: they can seek to crush those rebelling against their authority; they can try to undercut them politically (eg, by addressing some of the grievances of the rebels' constituency); or they can attempt to come to a deal with them. In today's world of instant global communications, large-scale atrocities can rarely be carried out in secret, so a decision to crush their opponents, which will almost invariably result in such atrocities being committed, cannot be hidden from the world's view. If leaders knew such attention was likely to result in investigation and prosecution, they may choose to respond differently to a challenge. It will not be decisive, but it could be an influential factor.

All of this should be borne in mind following the indictment of Bashir. When his fellow African and Arab leaders claim that his prosecution will destabilise Sudan and make peace more remote, there will be pressure to put the prosecution on hold. Those with power to do so must make their decision with the full understanding that such prosecution may be one of the few ways in which the world can effectively reduce the likelihood of future Rwandas, Srebrenicas and Darfurs. [Nick Grono](#) is Deputy President of the International Crisis Group.

### **Sudan: Fallout Scenarios: 20 March 2009: IRIN.**

Cairo — The expulsion or closure of 16 aid groups in Sudan could worsen North-South relations, stall the Darfur peace process and deter future humanitarian action, analysts said. The decision, and the 16 March announcement that Sudan would "nationalise" all humanitarian work within one year, have attracted condemnation from the highest levels of the UN and the US. "The ICC [International Criminal Court] row in general, and the expulsion of the aid agencies in particular, certainly have the potential to destabilise North-South relations," says Wolfram Lacher, a Sudan analyst with the London-based Control Risks Group consultancy. Though partners in a national unity government since a 2005 peace deal, the North's National Congress Party (NCP) and the South's Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) have been at odds over the border demarcation, distribution of oil revenue and timing of elections. "The [expulsion] decisions were made by the NCP without consultation and against the will of the SPLM and that certainly puts an additional strain on relations between the two parties," Lacher said. "The relations between the two are very volatile, very fragile, and on these relations depends the big question whether the North and the South will go back to war in the next few years."

### **Border tensions**

Relations are especially tense along the border, where the heaviest fighting took place. While the government has argued that the expulsions apply countrywide, the Southern government has encouraged NGOs to continue working there. But in contested areas along the border, especially three "transitional areas" singled out in the peace agreement - Abyei, the Nuba Mountains in South Kordofan state, and Southern Blue Nile state - it is unclear whose rules prevail. "We are telling [the NGOs that the decision to expel them] is null and void in these areas, and yet they were chased away by security," says SPLM

spokesman Yien Matthew Chol. Pushing NGOs out of areas desperately needing aid, he said, could provoke a reaction from the Sudan People's Liberation Army.

## **Resources**

In addition, communities could turn against each other as resources provided by NGOs disappear. In Darfur, the expulsion of the NGOs has wiped out half the aid effort; in South Kordofan, it meant "there's almost nobody left", according to Sara Pantuliano, research fellow at the UK Overseas Development Institute. According to the UN, in South Kordofan alone, the targeted NGOs provided health and nutritional services for up to 800,000 people; water and sanitation services for 400,000, and assistance in food security for 200,000. "People are already angered by the lack of peace dividends," Pantuliano says. "It's the area of the country least supported by the peace agreement." She says the lack of support for these areas had exacerbated tensions. In May and December 2008, fighting broke out in Abyei town, killing civilians, destroying infrastructure and sending thousands fleeing. Over the past year, the US administration and the UK Department for International Development had finally begun investing in the three areas, Pantuliano says, in an attempt to prevent a war that many analysts warned could restart.

## **Abyei**

In June 2008, the NCP and the SPLM agreed to a road map for Abyei, intended to pull the region back from the brink of war. The presidency promised money for a new administration that was to govern the oil-rich area. "Up to now there is no budget for the Abyei administration, even for services," says Kuol Deng, a chief of the Dinka group in Abyei. "I don't know what will be the situation if these organisations leave the area. It means the area will be evacuated of any services ... for the people of the area." That, says Foreign Minister Deng Alor, a native of Abyei, could lead to conflict, as people quarrel over limited resources - especially given that competition over land and water has always been a source of conflict between local communities. "If people are in need and there's nothing that can support them, you definitely expect some unrest," Alor said. Some of the NGOs provided a monitoring role, acted as bridge-builders between warring parties, and were the sole advocates for Sudan's arguably most sensitive areas.

## **Stalled peace process?**

As water pumps run dry, health centres shut down and food distributions stop, analysts fear unrest will begin to spread in some of the camps housing 2.7 million displaced people in Darfur - and that could play right into the hands of Darfur's rebel groups. "The longer these camps are in place and the worse conditions get, the more likely you are to have young women and men - and even old women and men - wanting and willing to take up arms," says Colin Thomas-Jensen, a policy adviser with the Washington-based Enough Project. The expulsion of NGOs could be linked to a future attempt to clear out some of the camps - the government says they are breeding grounds for the rebels - and move the displaced to "model villages". Such forced displacement could further encourage people to take up arms, he adds. Rebel leaders say the government's plan to

nationalise the aid effort is completely unacceptable, saying Sudanese organisations would always be controlled by the government."How can the killers of these people become their feeders?" Justice and Equality Movement leader Khalil Ibrahim was quoted as saying in the Sudan Tribune online on 16 March. "Darfur people will certainly not accept any relief from Bashir's security apparatus and will reject them."Abdolwahid Alnour, founder of the Sudan Liberation Movement, told the paper the move would push Darfuris to take up arms "because with arms they can control territory and invite the aid groups to reach them".

### **Peace deal**

On 16 February, JEM and the government signed a goodwill agreement in Qatar, committing themselves to the unrestricted flow of relief to Darfur. Gebreil Ibrahim, JEM's economic adviser and Khalil's brother, said the expulsion was a violation of that deal, and his group would now not agree to talks until the NGOs were reinstated. Analysts say JEM is already under pressure to back away from peace talks to maintain credibility in the face of the arrest warrant against Bashir. "If the expulsion of aid agencies causes massive population displacement in Darfur, this will also put pressure on JEM to withdraw from the talks and engage in a new offensive against the government," says Lacher. By choosing a confrontational response to the arrest warrant, Bashir plays into JEM's hands, Thomas-Jensen says. "JEM can rightly say, why would we negotiate? ... It weakens the prospect of a peace agreement in the near term."

### **US reaction**

"In general, the deteriorating relations between the government and the West are among the arrest warrant's most important repercussions," Lacher says. "This [the expulsion of agencies] is likely to provoke a more antagonistic, more hawkish stance towards Sudan by the [US President Barack] Obama administration," he says. Analysts say the US may take tough retaliatory action to show this type of behaviour will not be tolerated. However, it has limited options. It has already imposed heavy economic sanctions on Sudan and the international community can no longer use a possible arrest warrant as leverage. "This is clearly an escalation and a challenge from Khartoum," Thomas-Jensen says. "The call now is for diplomatic pressure and diplomatic isolation of Khartoum to reverse the decision," says Jerry Fowler, president of the Save Darfur Coalition. "We need a big diplomatic effort saying this is unacceptable. There will be a cost for it," says Enough's executive director, John Norris. But a tough reaction by the US, Britain or France could ignite a war, according to Alex de Waal of the New York-based Social Science Research Council. US officials, including Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Vice-President Joe Biden, have long said the US is considering a no-fly zone over Darfur. New York Times Columnist Nicholas Kristof and Gen. Merrill A. McPeak, US Air Force chief of staff from 1990 to 1994, have argued that destroying Sudanese aircraft may be the only way to gain leverage over Bashir. In such talk, Sudan sees the West's goal as regime change, De Waal says, and will not commit "collective suicide" without a fight. Sudan and the western powers on the Security Council are now at the "brink of an armed confrontation", De Waal says. "If they carry on escalating, it's a war."

## **Chad-Sudan relations**

Sudan and Chad are already engaged in a proxy war - each supporting rebels trying to topple their respective governments. Analysts fear relations could deteriorate, as some of the 2.7 million people living in Darfur's camps travel over the border. "There are 250,000 Darfuri refugees in Chad. If you had some of the big camps in Darfur emptying and all deciding to go into Chad, you could quite quickly double the number in Chad," says one aid worker, who requested anonymity. Thomas-Jensen says that could be just what Khartoum wants. In an attempt to defeat JEM, the government will try to bring down Chadian President Idriss Déby, and housing refugees who compete with local Chadians for natural resources will make Déby more unpopular. "The preferred strategy for [Khartoum] would be clearing out the camps and forcing people to go home - a knockout blow in Chad and weakening JEM," Thomas-Jensen says. "They think they can end this war and demonstrate to the international community that humanitarian assistance wasn't really necessary anyway and that ultimately it's not the nightmare scenario everyone thinks." But an increased Sudanese presence in Chad could do just the opposite, Lacher and De Waal say, by facilitating Chadian mobilisation of Sudanese rebels, thus intensifying the fight. If the absence of services does force Darfuris over the border, "they will likely go soon, before the rainy season makes travel ... far more difficult", CARE, one of the expelled agencies, recently warned. According to the aid worker, whose agency had informal talks with the Chadian government, Chad may attempt to close its border to pre-empt any such movement, causing relations to further deteriorate.

## **Harassment**

"Everybody is scared," says the aid worker, who worked for one of the expelled groups. "Staff have been harassed, interrogated; had all their personal cameras, laptops, phones stolen; been threatened with arrest; had their passports taken off them; had Sudanese newspapers print their names and accuse them of being spies. This all happened hours after we were reassured yet again by the government that nothing would happen." Remaining NGOs were "scared they will be next" and were therefore less likely to speak out in the future or to engage in sensitive programme work, including counselling and medical support.

## **Sudan: Darfur Rife With Violence Against Peacekeepers, Civilians, UN Says: 18 March 2009: UN NEWS SERVICE.**

Attacks on peacekeeping staff, carjacking, other banditry, and harassment of civilians continue to proliferate in Darfur, the African Union-United Nations mission in the strife-torn region of Sudan (UNAMID) reported today. A UNAMID vehicle was carjacked in Nyala, South Darfur, this morning by armed men in military uniforms, and on Monday, two of the mission's national staff members were stopped while they were driving a UN vehicle, beaten and left by five armed men dressed in civilian clothes in El Geneina, West Darfur. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon yesterday condemned an ambush that led to the death of a blue helmet, the second attack on a peacekeeping patrol in the region in a little over a week, and said he was "deeply concerned by the increased security threats faced

by UNAMID in Darfur. At the same time, concern continues to mount over the safety of humanitarian workers, many of whom have been ordered to leave the region following the recent indictment of Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Darfur. The joint UN/Government of Sudan assessments of humanitarian gaps in Darfur being conducted in the wake of those expulsions continue, having been extended by one day to be completed tomorrow, UNAMID added. The three assessment teams will have wrap-up meetings at the level of state Government tomorrow and then travel to Sudan's capital, Khartoum, where they will sort through the data for the following few days, the mission said.

Meanwhile, the number of internally displaced persons (IDP) fleeing violence and harassment continues to grow, with new arrivals in the Zam Zam camp in North Darfur pushing the total in the camp to 80,000. The majority of the newcomers are from villages and IDP camps in South Darfur, but there are also arrivals from North Darfur. An estimated 300,000 people have died and another 3 million have been displaced in Darfur, where rebels have been fighting Government forces and allied Arab militiamen, known as the Janjaweed, since 2003.

**Africa/ Sudan: Finding Justice in a Power-Asymmetrical World: Vikas Nath:20 March 2009:opinion:Pambazuka.**

*A just world is a noble goal, but in a 'power-asymmetrical' world in which richer nations mete out inappropriate measures for developing countries - from sanctions to arrest warrants - international rather than home-grown attempts to deliver justice can themselves easily become unjust, cautions Vikas Nath. The International Criminal Court's (ICC) recent issue of an arrest warrant for Sudanese president Omar al-Bashir, for example, is widely seen across the African Union as likely to inflame rather than resolve the Darfur conflict. Nath underlines that each of the existing 13 arrest warrants issued by the ICC have been solely for citizens of four African countries, despite the perpetrating of crimes against humanity in Iraq, Gaza, Colombia and the Caucasus region, and concludes that solutions native to the African continent represent a far more appropriate means of resolving conflict.*

We do not live in a just world. Delivering justice to those who are repressed and have no voice is a noble goal. It is only when justice starts to become a political tool that things start to become nebulous. And the act of delivering justice itself becomes unjust when it is not immune to power asymmetries and is only used against weaker parties. We are increasingly witnessing this trend where justice is becoming subservient to a power-asymmetric world in which rich and powerful developed countries have many more possibilities for wielding the tool of justice than poorer and weaker developing countries. For one, developing countries are not able to put economic sanctions on developed countries when the latter do not meet their binding commitments, on climate change or trade issues, say. Developing countries, however, have on several occasions been victims of economic and political sanctions slapped onto them by developed countries.

Another case in point is the recently issued arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for Omar al-Bashir, the sitting president of the largest country in the African continent, Sudan. The International Criminal Court, which is not a part of the United Nations, has issued warrants against 13 people so far, all of whom are either from Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Central African Republic (CAR) or Sudan. It was in 1998 that 120 countries adopted the Rome Statute with the idea of establishing an international court to judge genocides, crimes against humanity and war crimes happening anywhere in the world. Four years later, the ICC became operational in The Hague. One hundred and eight countries are currently party to the Rome Statute, including roughly half the countries in Africa. Significantly, within a month of the ICC's becoming operational, in August 2002 the United States passed the American Service-Members' Protection Act (ASPA), also known as the 'Hague Invasion Act', which protects US government officials from criminal prosecution by any international criminal court to which the US is not party. It authorises the US president to use all possible means to bring about the release of any US or allied personnel being detained by, or at the request of, the International Criminal Court. It then negotiated the 'Article 98' bilateral-immunity agreements with almost 100 countries to further protect US citizens from facing trial at the ICC, threatening the suspension of military assistance and US Economic Support Fund (ESF) aid to countries which do not sign these agreements.

This has rendered the US above the law and beyond the reach of international justice, giving them such rights as Europeans were once given under the 'unequal treaties' with various developing countries. A legitimate question to be asked - and that is being asked by some Africans - defies answer: Why is the ICC focusing mostly on African leaders and African warlords? Several groups and countries, including the African Union (AU), the Arab League, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and China have expressed strong disappointment over the arrest warrant issued by the ICC. The Organization of the Islamic Conference, headquartered in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, has strongly rejected this move and called it void of sound reasoning. The secretary general of this 56-member body, Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, has rejected the kind of selectivity and double standards applied by the international community in dealing with issues of crimes against humanity and war crimes, which directly affect the credibility of the international legal system. The quest for justice is important. But it is equally important that the quest for justice is not pursued in a manner that impedes or jeopardises the promotion of peace. Peace takes precedence over justice. It was the objective of ensuring peace that led to the creation of the United Nations, and its preamble clearly states that the United Nations was founded to prevent and resolve international conflicts and help build a culture of peace in the world.

'The African Union's position is that we support the fight against impunity, we cannot let crime perpetrators go unpunished', said AU commission chairman Jean Ping. 'But we say that peace and justice should not collide, that the need for justice should not override the need for peace.' Africa is being selectively targeted. What we see is that international justice seems to be applying its fight against impunity only to Africa, as if nothing were happening elsewhere, in Iraq, Gaza, Colombia or in the Caucasus region. The situation [in Sudan] is very serious and very dangerous. At the same time we are not convinced

that the decision taken, or the steps taken, within the criminal court have been well considered. That is why we need to consult and take a collective stand in cooperation with the African Union and in consultation with the United Nations', said Amr Moussa, secretary general of the Arab League, at a press conference after the emergency meeting of Arab foreign ministers in Cairo on 4 March.

China too has expressed its regret and worry over the arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court. In a statement available on the foreign ministry's website, Qin Gang, the ministry's spokesman said, 'China opposes any acts that might interfere with the peaceful overall situation of Darfur and Sudan. All parties should think carefully before taking actions.' Sudan is an African country and the stability of Sudan is the responsibility of the AU. This is the message being hammered home by Ramadan al-Amamra, the AU commissioner for peace and security. The African continent is fully capable of achieving its goal of a peaceful, stable, and secure Africa. The 2008 Kenya peace accord is holding strong and was brokered by none other than African leaders Kofi Annan, Graça Machel and Benjamin Mkapa. Home-grown solutions - and in the case of Africa, attaching that jurisdiction to the African Union - would be a more appropriate way to look for solutions in a power-asymmetric world, and to ensure peace in Sudan. \* *Vikas Nath is the head of media and communication at the South Centre in Geneva.*

**Sudan: UNAMID Peacekeeper Killed in South Darfur: 17 March 2009: [United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur](#) (El Fasher).**

Today, at about 13:20 hours, six UNAMID Peacekeepers were ambushed by approximately eight unknown gunmen, who opened fire on them, while they were returning to their base in Nyala, South Darfur after conducting an escort patrol. The Peacekeepers returned fire in self-defense and one peacekeeper was injured during the ensuing firefight. The wounded soldier was immediately taken for medical treatment at the Mission's hospital in Nyala and later died while being evacuated by helicopter to El Fasher for further medical treatment.

UNAMID strongly condemns these cowardly acts of violence against its Peacekeepers, and calls on all parties, including the Government of Sudan, to ensure the safety of UN personnel in the region. "These ongoing attacks against UNAMID Peacekeepers will not dissuade us from pursuing our Mandate in Darfur," said the Joint Special Representative, Mr. Rodolphe Adada. "I strongly condemn these unprovoked attacks against Peacekeepers who are here to help the people of Darfur," he added. This is the second time this month that UNAMID Peacekeepers have been ambushed by unknown armed men while conducting their duties in Darfur. Since the deployment of UNAMID in Darfur at the beginning of 2008, 14 peacekeepers (11 military personnel and 3 police officers) have died as a result of hostile actions.

**Nigeria: Arrest Warrant On Al-Bashir: 19 March 2009: editorial: [Daily Independent](#) (Lagos).**

The recent issuance of a warrant for the arrest of President Omar Hassan al-Bashir of Sudan by the International Criminal Court at The Hague, to face trial on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity, is sure to send shivers down the spines of dictators across the world. According to ICC's spokeswoman Laurence Blairon, "He is suspected of being criminally responsible for intentionally directing attack against an important part of the civilian population of Darfur, Sudan, murdering, exterminating, raping, torturing and forcibly transferring large numbers of civilians, and pillaging their property." Since some non-Arab (African) rebels took up arms in 2003 against the Arab-dominated regime, alleging abuse and discrimination against their tribe and demanding a greater share of resources and power, an estimated 300, 000 people, mainly civilians, have died and 2.7 million displaced in the Darfur region.

Opinions are divided as to the legality of the warrant on a sitting President given the position of the law on the sovereign immunity of a serving head of state. While the United States of America, Canada, the United Kingdom and other European Union (EU) countries support the warrant, China, the Arab League and the African Union (AU), see the indictment as an attempt to destabilise Sudan and heat up the already convoluted political atmosphere in Africa. Yet, the popular belief that sitting presidents are protected by certain clauses in their national constitutions and also shielded by some aspects of international law, became almost outdated in the international system especially in the mid-1990s after the end of the Cold War when there arose a global need to tame the reckless excesses of several intemperate dictators across the world.

As a girdle to the new global onslaught against human rights abuses and crimes against humanity, the global community has risen swiftly to implement some of the international laws and conventions governing such abuses. A signpost to the new ethos and communality in world affairs is the arrest of a few former dictators notable among whom were Augusto Pinochet, former Chilean dictator who was arrested in October 1998 in Great Britain, and Slobodan Milosevic, who eventually died in detention in 2006 while standing trial at the International Criminal Tribunal for the defunct Yugoslavia at The Hague. In endorsing the universality of the human condition, we note that it is impossible to aspire to a world without systems or rules. Far from it. A chaotic world would pose equal or even greater danger.

The challenge is to strike a balance so that the management of global affairs is responsive to the interests of all people in a secure and sustainable future. Such management must be guided by basic human values and make global organisation conform to the reality of global diversity. The reported massacre and dehumanization of the Muslim black civilian population in Darfur, Western Sudan, by military forces of the Al-Bashir regime does not give the world any cause to cheer. Consequently, the binge of international outrage and condemnation that followed on the heels of this macabre tale vis-a-vis the current approval of the ICC's warrant of arrest on Al-Bashir by the international community, is understandable. Amidst protracted denials by the government in Khartoum, the gory details of the crisis in Sudan cannot but enliven the imagination of skeptics of Al-Bashir's government.



Given the fact that the crisis in Darfur had assumed the status of vehement bestiality under the watch of the Al-Bashir regime, the United Nations (UN) had no choice but to invoke the powers of Article 27 of the Rome Statute (Irrelevance of Official Capacity) to try to make sense out of a senseless situation. This action may have been brought about by the intransigence on the part of Khartoum which had refused to recognize the jurisdiction of the ICC when the court, in May 2007, issued arrest warrants on the Sudanese Minister for Humanitarian Affairs, Ahmad Harun, and Ali Kushayb, a militia leader for their complicity in the crisis. Even as some lawyers have argued that President Al-Bashir's arrest can only be effected any time he leaves office, the onus rests on the United Nations Security Council whose Resolution 1593 (2005) mandated the ICC to handle the Darfur matter, and also asked all nations, either party to Article 87(7) of the Rome Statute or not, to cooperate fully with the ICC.

While we recognise the anxiety of the international community over the matter, we exhort that the warrant should not create a strong power which will sit to decide who should be prosecuted, just as we do not want the question of sovereign immunity of sitting heads of state to become a suit excuse for monsters to be protected. The law should not be made to serve as the cobwebs in which small flies are caught while the big ones pass freely with impunity. What is more, the African Union (AU) which is shielding all shades of dictators in Africa should not be exonerated from blame in the mass hysteria afflicting the continent. The failure of African leaders to call Al-Bashir to order made the situation in Darfur to degenerate to a state of anomie.

Above all, we condemn the indignant and sterile opposition of China to reason in matters of serious humanitarian concern. It is ignoble and self-serving for a nation of China's standing to want to oppose popular opinion just to have access to any nation's natural resources. Let reason prevail in Sudan.

### **Ghana: No Mercy for Al Bashir:17 March 2009:editorial:The Chronicle**

African Foreign Ministers who attended the NORDIC-Africa summit in Copenhagen, are reported to have condemned the International Criminal Court (ICC) for issuing an international warrant for the arrest of Sudanese President, Omar Al Bashir, describing the decision as wrongly timed. According to a report filed by the GNA it was the view of the Ministers that the ICC should have considered the concerns of the African Union (AU) that the warrant should be suspended, to allow the continuation of the peace processes in Sudan. The Chronicle finds the attitude of the Foreign Ministers and the African Union (AU) as a mark of hypocrisy. Where were these same Ministers and the AU when Charles Taylor was arrested and sent to The Hague to face justice over his alleged role in the Liberia and Sierra Leone conflict that killed thousands of innocent people? Clearly, there is no way Africa would develop if our leaders continue to support such naked robbery and murder by some of their colleagues.

The AU and African Foreign Ministers have witnessed the atrocities of Al Bashir, yet they have failed to bring him to book, or use mediation as they are now claiming, to stop the killings and human right abuses going in the Darfur region. If the world hailed the

arrest and trial of the late Serbian President, Slobodan Milosevic, for his role in the killings that went on in his country, why should leaders in Africa behave as if the international warrant that has been issued for the arrest of Al Bashir has never happened before?

If they are convinced that Al Bashir has not committed any crime, they should persuade the man to surrender himself to the court to defend his case. We do not think the ICC can deliberately put him behind bars if they do not have any incriminating evidence against him. The Chronicle is calling on civil right organizations on the African continent to rise up against the undue support being offered to Al Bashir by our African leaders, because it has the potential to encourage other Presidents on the continent to abuse power in order to commit heinous crimes and go away with it.

Zimbabwean and The Gambian Presidents, Robert Mugabe and Yahaya Jammeh have for something now been using all foul means to suppress opposition in their respective countries, which the AU is aware of, yet they have not made any single statement on it, but if the international community decides to crack the whip, the same African leaders will come out to support their colleagues.

The Chronicle is, therefore, not surprised with the latest attempts to shield Al Bashir. We however, urge that the ICC should not relent on its efforts to arrest the Sudanese President, if the court can prove that the evidence at their disposal is incriminatory enough.

**Sudan: The Indicted Head of State: Soyombo Opeyemi: 19 March 2009: opinion: [Daily Independent](#) (Lagos).**

"Let me take this opportunity to remind all agencies of state that it is a crime - I repeat that word - crime - to carry out orders that are unlawful. Do recall the once self-designated givers of life and death who are currently standing trial in international courts of justice, from The Hague in Amsterdam to the genocidaires of Rwanda. The world no longer accepts the self-exonerating plea of - I was merely carrying out orders. Maybe not now, maybe not immediately, but whenever humanity reasserts itself, speaks and demands explanations, you will be forced to answer."- Wole Soyinka (Guardian 16/12/2005).

Let me say for the sake of clarity and especially for the purpose of this article that the International Criminal Court (ICC)- generally - can punish crimes committed by Nigerians against Nigerians, crimes committed by Sudanese against Sudanese or crimes perpetrated by Americans against Americans. If one or a group of Nigerians commit genocide, war crimes or crimes against humanity against a segment/other Nigerians, it is the responsibility of the Nigerian State to punish such crimes. But where the Nigerian State refuses to punish such crimes, the International Criminal Court can punish such crimes, provided Nigeria is a state party to (the Statute of Rome that berthed) the ICC.

But even if Nigeria is not a signatory to the ICC, the criminal court can still punish such crimes, provided the matter is referred to it by the United Nations. For emphasis, if President Barack Obama of the US, in a bout of temper, orders the military to wipe out a portion of the population of a state of America because of one offence or the other, like the then President Olusegun Obasanjo did in Odi, Bayelsa state and Zaki Biam, Benue state, it is the responsibility of the American State to punish Obama for the 'crime against humanity'. But if the US refuses to do so, the International Criminal Court can step in to punish Obama, provided the matter is referred to it by the United Nations - America being not a state party to the ICC.

But you and I know that Obama, no matter the power of the demon that seizes him, cannot order the killing of other Americans as Obasanjo did in Odi and Zaki Biam. Even if he gives such an order, the military command will ignore it - they can't direct their guns against their own people! At the worst, the Secretary of Defence will tender his resignation; other resignations may follow from other quarters. This will certainly boomerang because the Congress - the true representatives of the people who came to the Capitol Hill through transparent free and fair elections - will not allow Obama to get away with such bout of madness. Even in Chechnya- the 'break-away' region of Russia and a centre of heavy resistance by separatists - the Russian forces did not (I do not countenance their acts) display such horrendous savagery that Omar Al-Bashir-backed Janjaweed militia could have attempted to parallel in Dafur, Southern Sudan: over 300,000 deaths and estimated 2.7million displaced - in a region that took up arms merely to demand for a fair share of the national cake. At any rate, the ICC jurisdiction only covers war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity perpetrated as from July 2002. It has no retroactive powers.

I deliberately introduced this slant in order to answer those who allege selective justice against Africa by the big powers, the United States in particular and European Union: Says the African Union Commission Chairman, Jean Ping, "What we see is that international justice seems to be applying its fight against impunity only to Africa as if nothing were happening elsewhere, (such as) in Iraq, Gaza, Colombia or in the Caucasus." I have heard the argument that the arrest warrant issued against President Omar Al-Bashir of Sudan offends International Law - as the ICC were a local law! Absolute sovereignty exists nowhere - except of course in a ghost nation that is an island onto itself. When you sign a bilateral or multilateral agreement or treaty, you surrender a measure of your sovereignty. Sudan may not be a signatory to the ICC but she is a member of the United Nations and bound to obey its charters. Sovereignty belongs to the State; the Head of State comes and go but the State remains. The Head of State only embodies the sovereignty of the state and that is why he enjoys immunity (at home or abroad) from arrest or prosecution while in office. Even that immunity is not absolute but varies from State to State.

An Al-Bashir visiting Nigeria, for instance, should be regarded as a visit of a dual personality. One, the Head of State of Sudan; two, a international fugitive that must not be offered sanctuary by any responsible and law-abiding member of the United Nations. The indictment of Al-Bashir (and those of his blood-thirsty lieutenants) followed due

process. The United Nations referred the worsening humanitarian situation in Dafur to ICC for investigation/ prosecution. The ICC prosecutor, Luis Moreno-Ocampo (an Argentine) presented a prima facie case before an ICC jury. The court has not said Al-Bashir is guilty but that there is sufficient evidence linking him to crimes against humanity - a very serious crime in the international community. Now, I must say that International Law, in a way, operates under the auspices of the UN. In fact, the International Law Commission (ILC) was set up by the General Assembly (GA) in 1948 for the purpose of promoting the progressive developments of International Law and its codification. Again, the first attempts to establish a permanent court like the ICC was referred to the ILC by GA and the body actually made two draft statutes, which no doubt, would have formed the background for the Statute of Rome.

It can be said that both the International Law, 'supervised' by the ILC, and ICC complement each other- it could not have been otherwise since they both operate, in a way, under the aegis of the UN. The fact is, we live in a world that is increasingly averse to human rights abuses. The law grows as society grows. This latest turn of event where a sitting president is indicted should not take anyone by surprise, for we live in a shrinking world where the power of technology (ICT) has obliterated national boundaries such that events in one country reverberate in others with the same tone and tenor. Perhaps at the turn of this century, our (grand) children should be dreaming of the United States of the World. Al-Bashir is already incapacitated by this indictment and cannot continue to embody the State of Sudan. He has become a deficit to Sudan because he can no longer operate in the comity of nations - he's already a pariah. He should surrender himself to the ICC or be removed constitutionally from office (but he's a dictator?!). The Al-Bashir lesson must not be lost on all givers of orders and executors of those orders: "Maybe not now, maybe not immediately, but whenever humanity reasserts itself, speaks and demands explanations, you will be forced to answer."

## 85. MADAGASCAR

### **Country Profile (BBC): Madagascar**

Madagascar is the world's fourth biggest island after Greenland, New Guinea and Borneo. Because of its isolation most of its mammals, half its birds, and most of its plants exist nowhere else on earth. The island is heavily exposed to tropical cyclones which bring torrential rains and destructive floods, such as the ones in 2000 and 2004, which left thousands homeless.

### **OVERVIEW**

The Malagasy are thought to be descendants of Africans and Indonesians who settled on the island more than 2,000 years ago. Malagasy pay a lot of attention to their dead and spend much effort on ancestral tombs, which are opened from time to time so the remains can be carried in procession, before being rewrapped in fresh shrouds. After sometimes harsh French colonial rule, which included the bloody suppression of an uprising in 1947, Madagascar gained independence in 1960. The military seized power in the early 1970s

with the aim of achieving a socialist paradise. This did not materialise. The economy went into decline and by 1982 the authorities were forced to adopt a structural adjustment programme imposed by the International Monetary Fund. The World Bank has estimated that 70% of Malagasy live on less than \$1 per day. Poverty and the competition for agricultural land have put pressure on the island's dwindling forests, home to much of Madagascar's unique wildlife and key to its emerging tourist industry. The island has strong ties with France as well as economic and cultural links with French-speaking West Africa.

## FACTS

- Full name: Republic of Madagascar
- Population: 20.2 million (via UN, 2008)
- Capital: Antananarivo
- Area: 587,041 sq km (226,658 sq miles)
- Major languages: Malagasy (official), French
- Major religions: Indigenous beliefs, Christianity
- Life expectancy: 58 years (men), 61 years (women) (UN)
- Monetary unit: Ariary
- Main exports: Vanilla, coffee, seafood, cloves, petroleum products, chromium, fabrics
- GNI per capita: US \$320 (World Bank, 2007)
- Internet domain: .mg
- International dialling code: +261

## LEADERS

**President:** Marc Ravalomanana (**resigned**)

President Marc Ravalomanana resigned on 17 March 2009 following a months-long power struggle with the opposition. He said he was handing power over to the military. Mr Ravalomanana, a wealthy businessman, won a second five-year term after taking 54.8% of the vote in elections in December 2006. His first term saw free-market reforms which were welcomed by donors and investors. Aid increased and foreign debt was cancelled. But poverty remained endemic and protesters took to the streets over rising

prices. For his second term, Mr Ravalomanana set out a "bold and aggressive" recovery programme - the Madagascar Action Plan. It aims to cut poverty levels by 50% over five years. He described the private sector as the engine of economic growth and said relations with the international community and donors were the keys to development. Voters in an April 2007 referendum supported moves to give the president more powers, notably allowing the head of state to legislate by decree in emergencies. Mr Ravalomanana is widely praised for his energy and commitment to economic reform, but he has been accused of having authoritarian tendencies. In January 2009 a fierce power struggle broke out between the president and opposition leader and former Antananarivo mayor Andry Rajoelina. Over 100 people were killed in the ensuing riots and protests. The self-made dairy tycoon first came to power in 2002 after an eight-month political crisis which followed elections. He used huge street demonstrations and military force to defeat Didier Ratsiraka, a Marxist, who had ruled Madagascar for 23 years. Marc Ravalomanana was born in the village of Imerikasina, near Antananarivo. In true rags-to-riches fashion, he began his working life selling home-made yogurt off the back of a bicycle. His dairy and oil products business is now the largest non-foreign-owned company on the island. He took to the political stage in 1999 and gained a huge following in Antananarivo. As mayor of the capital he was credited with instigating a major clean-up of the city.

### **Andry Rajoelina (AljAZEERA.NET)**

Andry Rajoelina, a successful businessman and one-time DJ, has made it his political mission to take on Marc Ravalomanana, Madagascar's president, who he accuses of behaving like a dictator. At just 34 years old; he is too young to stand for the presidency as the law requires candidates to be 40. But he has declared himself head of his own rival government as he tries to push Ravalomanana from power. He is regarded by some as a maverick and his quick-fire personality has seen him nicknamed TGV, after the French high speed train. The moniker stuck and Rajoelina turned the initials into his movement's name: Tanora Gasy Vonona, or Young Dynamic Madagascan. In December 2007, he entered politics, running as a candidate in municipal elections that saw him become mayor of the capital, Antananarivo, after trouncing Ravalomanana's party with 63 per cent of the vote. Over the next 12 months, Rajoelina's relations with the government worsened leading them to shut down his television network after it broadcast an interview with Didier Ratsiraka, a former president. Ratsiraka, who ruled Madagascar for 25 years, lives in exile in France after a drawn-out and violent political tussle with Ravalomanana over the result of presidential elections in 2001. Rajoelina accused the government of stifling free speech

and has since become increasingly critical of Ravalomanana. He has repeatedly condemned what he says are shrinking freedoms on the Indian Ocean island and also fiercely criticised a massive project to lease vast swathes of farmland to South Korean industrial giant Daewoo.

#### **MEDIA**

President Ravalomanana owns the Malagasy Broadcasting System, which operates MBS TV and Radio MBS. Many private radio stations in the capital are owned by pro-Ravalomanana politicians. A boom in privately-owned FM radio stations and more critical political reporting by the print media followed 1990's law on press freedom. Although nationwide radio and TV broadcasting remain the monopoly of the state, there are hundreds of private local radio and TV stations. There were around 110,000 internet users by September 2007 (ITU figure).

#### **Madagascar: Rajoelina Assumes Power; Fanja Saholiarisoa: 19 March 2009: Inter Press Service News Agency.**

Antananarivo — After 24 months as self-declared head of a transitional authority, the deposed mayor of Antananarivo, Andry Rajoelina, was confirmed as the new president of Madagascar by the Constitutional Court on Mar. 18. After the resignation of several members of his government on Mar. 17, the Rajoelina's predecessor, Marc Ravalomanana handed power to four army generals he designated himself. The transfer of power was categorically rejected by a section of the army that had earlier staged a mutiny and by Rajoelina himself. One of the generals, Hyppolite Raharison Ramarason, then announced they would transfer power to Rajoelina. Norbert Lala Ratsirahonana, a lawyer who represented Rajoelina at the court, said, "The constitutional Court took note of the order giving full power to a military directorate, as well as the order transferring full authority to Andry Rajoelina. He may now exercise the powers of the President of the Republic." Ratsirahonana is also chair of the Asa Vita no Ifampitsarana (Judged By Your Work) Party, and served briefly as acting president of the country in 1996. The young politician comes to power at the age of 34, after leading three months of street protests against his predecessor. Rajoelina plans to celebrate his victory at the Place du 13 May on Mar. 21 to thank those who supported him in the long struggle for power and conduct a swearing-in ceremony. This last act is seen by some analysts as unconstitutional. Jean Eric Rakotoarisoa, professor of constitutional law at the University of Antananarivo, tells IPS, "Madagascar has since Tuesday been a transitional institution of the 4th Republic. The country is out of the 3rd Republic. A swearing-in is thus not necessary because the country is operating outside of the constitution." Rakotoarisoa asserts that the former mayor can just continue the work of his predecessor. Addressing crowds in the capital on Mar. 18, Rajoelina seemed determined to prove to his supporters that he really wants to bring change to Madagascar. His speech evoked the hopes and expectations of the people of Madagascar, a country facing great poverty. He pledged repeatedly to improve the living standards of the people of Madagascar. The new president has promised to hold elections within 24 months. "I want to make Madagascar a leading country in Africa and the Indian Ocean. As part of this, I accept we will hold the General Assembly of the

African Union here in Madagascar," he said. The AU's General Assembly is scheduled to take place in Madagascar in late June and early July of 2009.

Monja Roindefo has taken up his duties as the new Prime Minister of the Transitional Authority. He was appointed by Rajoelina well before his accession to head of state. But the whereabouts of former president Ravalomanana remained a question. Some witnesses living near the presidential palace in Iavoloha, 12 kilometres south of the capital, say he left the palace and took Route 7 towards the south of Madagascar. He left behind him a palace destroyed by looting. According to military sources, people around the palace invaded it shortly after Ravalomanana's delegation had left. The police eventually had to resort to summons to disperse the looters. Meanwhile, civil society has begun meeting to discuss the post-Ravalomanana period, and the challenge of national solidarity. After the failure of talks to resolve the political crisis, civil society is proposing another kind of dialogue. "The organisation of Estates-general [a popular assembly with representatives from all walks of life] on democracy is the only way to resolve cyclical crisis in Madagascar," said Madeleine Ramaholimiaso, a member of a committee struck to prepare for the proposed assembly. Rajoelina's accession to power seems to be restoring confidence of opposition politicians, most of whom were under pressure from the former regime. The Arema Party, whose founding president is Admiral Didier Ratsiraka, the country's former head of state, was the first to comment on the matter. "We commend the military for their efforts to liberate the country and we hope the new president of the transitional authority will focus on the plight of exiles and political prisoners," says Samuel Ralaidovy, Arema's National Coordinator.

Officials from several ministries have also come forward and local committees in support of the new leader are mushrooming everywhere, to show support for the new leader. But the response from the international community so far has not been positive. The Zambian foreign minister, Kabinga Pande, said Rajoelina represented "a setback and danger to the entrenchment of democracy and constitutional rule on the continent." Following a special meeting of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in Swaziland on Mar. 19, the regional body decided not to recognise Rajoelina as president, calling for a return to "democratic and constitutional rule in the shortest time possible". The African Union is set to discuss its reaction on Mar. 20. To encourage his supporters, Rajoelina announced that foreign investors already want to come to Madagascar for tourism projects. Analysts say the new young president, the youngest in Madagascar's history, has ambition but his way is still fraught with pitfalls.

**Madagascar: President's Ouster Contrary to Rule of Law, U.S. Says: Stephen Kaufman: 20 March 2009: [America.gov](http://www.America.gov) (Washington, DC).**

Washington DC — The United States is suspending all assistance other than humanitarian aid to Madagascar, and the State Department described the installation of a new government headed by political opposition leader Andry Rajoelina as "tantamount to a coup d'etat." State Department acting spokesman Robert Wood said the Obama administration "condemns the process" by which President Marc Ravalomanana was forced to resign and was replaced by his political opposition with the support of



Madagascar's armed forces. The move was "undemocratic and contrary to the rule of law," Wood said in a March 20 statement. "In view of these developments, the United States is moving to suspend all non-humanitarian assistance to Madagascar." (See "State Department Daily Press Briefing.") Ravalomanana was elected December 3, 2006, to a five-year term heading the executive branch of a democratic government that also includes a parliament and an independent judiciary. Madagascar, which gained its independence from France in 1960, has experienced many periods of political instability in its national history. Wood called on the people of Madagascar to "immediately undertake a democratic, consensual process to restore constitutional governance, culminating in free, fair and peaceful elections." Rajoelina was declared president after Ravalomanana was forced to turn power over to the military March 17. The move followed weeks of political unrest during which at least 135 people were killed.

In response, the African Union (AU) announced March 20 that it has suspended Madagascar from the organization. Burkina Faso Ambassador to the AU Bruno Nongoma Zidouemba, who chairs the AU's Peace and Security Council, said the council "is of the opinion that what occurred in Madagascar is an unconstitutional change of government." Norway announced it has frozen its aid and said other countries would be taking similar action. The State Department's acting deputy spokesman Gordon Duguid previously had urged Madagascar's political leaders and supporters to resolve their differences through dialogue. In a March 13 statement, Duguid called for a national conference under United Nations auspices with representation from all sides to help resolve the political crisis, which he said had "entered a dangerous phase."

"Resolution of the difficult issues at stake is a matter for the Malagasy people," Duguid said. "Most importantly, this crisis must be resolved in a manner that is consistent with the constitution and democratic values. Extra-legal assumption of power by civilians or the military is unacceptable." (See "Statement on Madagascar's Political Crisis.")

### **Madagascar: Ban Madagascar From AU: 19 March 2009: Times Of Zambia.**

ZAMBIA has called for the immediate suspension of Madagascar from the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) following the unconstitutional change of government in that country. Foreign Affairs Minister, Kabinga Pande said at a Press briefing in Lusaka yesterday that the Zambian Government was totally opposed to the unconstitutional change of government in Madagascar, which took place on Tuesday. Mr Pande said that the Government condemned the forcing of a democratically elected head of state to resign by a mutinous faction of the military at the instigation of a small section of the Madagascar population led by the former mayor of Antananarivo. "The Government does not recognise the illegitimate government of Madagascar led by Mr Andry Rajoelina. It further calls for the immediate suspension of membership of Madagascar in SADC and the AU and for the return to constitutional order within the shortest possible period," Mr Pande said. Mr Pande said that the unconstitutional change of governments was a setback and a danger to the entrenchment of democracy and good governance in Africa, a development he said should not be allowed to take root.

Madagascar, Mr Pande said, should break from its past when unconstitutional changes took place in 1975 and 1991. He said that the Zambian Government upheld the Lome Declaration of the then Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 2000 and the Constitutive Act of the (AU), which condemn any unconstitutional change of government on the continent.

**Madagascar: African Union Suspends New Govt Over 'Coup': John Allen and Michael Tantoh: 20 March 2009: allAfrica.**

Cape Town — The African Union (AU) has taken the first step towards imposing sanctions on the new army-installed government of Madagascar. The AU peace and security council, meeting in Addis Ababa on Friday, [suspended the country's membership of the continental body](#). The decision followed three days after [the council had demanded](#) that all parties in Madagascar should "comply scrupulously with the provisions of the constitution of Madagascar on interim arrangements in the event of resignation."

When [former President Marc Ravalomanana](#) resigned on Tuesday, he purported to transfer power to a top-level military directorate, which in turn handed control of the government to opposition leader [Andry Rajoelina](#). However, the constitution stipulates that power should have been transferred to the president of the country's senate. On Thursday, leaders of the Southern African Development Community – of which Madagascar is a member – [denounced Rajoelina's seizure of power](#) as illegal and unconstitutional. The chairman of the AU peace and security council, Bruno Nongoma Zidouemba of Burkina Faso, was quoted by news agencies as telling journalists after Friday's meeting that the way in which power was transferred amounted to "a civilian and military coup."

Two separate civil society sources in Madagascar who attended a meeting to discuss the country's crisis on Tuesday told AllAfrica that pro-Rajoelina troops had disrupted proceedings and threatened participants – including church leaders and foreign ambassadors – with firearms. "One of the military men came in," one source reported, "and started shouting, threatening everybody, saying 'Why are you people here when we have already achieved our goal? What is the reason for this meeting when we have already taken power?'" After Rajoelina arrived and Ravalomanana's statement ceding power had been read, the source said that Rajoelina had intervened, cutting short the American ambassador to say: "According to me the president has no power to do this. I have taken over power, so this ordinance means nothing to me." Both sources said they believed that the generals to whom Ravalomanana wanted to hand power had been detained at the end of the meeting, after which it was announced that they had declined to accept the assignment. However, one source reported that the highest-ranking officer present had said during the meeting he did not recognise Ravalomanana's decree because he had no prior knowledge of it.

AU protocols provide that the Malagasy government now has six months in which to restore constitutional order. During the six months, it is suspended from taking part in the policy-making bodies of the organization – including the AU summit of heads of state,

which is scheduled this year to be hosted by Madagascar. The protocols say that after the expiry of six months, "a range of limited and targeted sanctions against the regime that stubbornly refuses to restore constitutional order should be instituted..." This can include visa denials for "perpetrators of an unconstitutional change," restrictions on government-to-government contacts and trade restrictions.

**Madagascar: Norway Freezes Aid to Country: 19 March 2009: press release: Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Oslo).**

Norway has frozen all payments of bilateral aid to Madagascar until further notice. No new development cooperation agreements will be concluded due to the crisis in the country. A number of other donor countries have also frozen their aid payments to Madagascar because of the uncertain situation in the country. Norway urges all parties concerned to engage in dialogue so that the crisis can be resolved in a manner that is in keeping with Madagascar's constitution. Norway condemns any attempt at a coup d'état, and calls on the parties to refrain from using violence and threats.

"We are assessing the situation on an ongoing basis. Any takeover of power that is not in line with democratic rules will have consequences for Norwegian aid to Madagascar," commented Minister of the Environment and International Development Erik Solheim. Together with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Norway has taken the initiative to draft a declaration on the protection of children in the current conflict. Norway supports the mediation efforts being carried out under the auspices of the UN and the African Union (AU). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs strongly advises against all non-essential travel to Madagascar.

**Madagascar: Communique of an Extraordinary SADC Summit of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation: Zulwini, Swaziland: 19 March 2009: document: Southern African Development Community (Gaborone).**

1. The Extraordinary Summit of the Organ Troika on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation met in Ezulwini, Kingdom of Swaziland on 19 March 2009 to discuss the political and security situation in the Republic of Madagascar.
2. The Extraordinary summit was chaired by His Majesty, King Mswati III, Chairperson of SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation.
3. The Extraordinary Summit of the Organ Troika was attended by the following Heads of State and Government and Government representatives:

\* Kingdom of Swaziland - His Majesty King Mswati III, Chairperson of the Organ on Politics, Defence & Security Cooperation

\* Mozambique - H.E. President Armando Emilio Guebuza, Deputy Chairperson of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation

\* Angola - H.E. Garcia Bires, Ambassador of the Republic of Angola in Mozambique

\* South Africa - Hon Charles Nqakula, Minister for Defence

4. The Executive Secretary of SADC, Dr Tomaz A. Salomao also attended the Extraordinary Summit.

5. The Extraordinary Summit noted that a SADC Troika Mission was undertaken on 09 February 2009 to assess the situation in the Republic of Madagascar following the brief by the Prime Minister of Madagascar to the SADC Ministerial Committee of the Organ (MCO) Troika at the margins of the AU Assembly in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 02 February 2009.

6. A preliminary mission to the Republic of Madagascar was undertaken by the SADC Executive Secretary from 06-07 February 2009.

7. A follow-up mission comprising the Organ Troika Member States – the Kingdom of Swaziland, the Republic of Mozambique and the Republic of Angola—took place from the 14-19 February 2009.

8. The Extraordinary Summit also noted that in an attempt to have insight of the political and security situation in the Republic of Madagascar, the Mission held consultations with the following stakeholders:

- i. The President of the Republic of Madagascar, His Excellency Marc Ravalomanana;
- ii. Prime Minister of the Republic of Madagascar, H.E. Charles Rabemanajara;
- iii. Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Republic of Madagascar, Gen. Marcel Ranjeva;
- iv. The National Electoral Council of Madagascar;
- v. The Council of Christian Churches in Madagascar;
- vi. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Antananarivo and the;
- vii. Members of the Diplomatic Corps accredited to Madagascar, and
- viii. The former Mayor of Antananarivo Mr. Andry Rajoelina.

9. During these consultations, the Mission observed the following notables:

- i. The need to encourage political dialogue among all the stakeholders in Madagascar.
- ii. The need for political tolerance and respect for the rule of law.
- iii. The need to resolve the current political challenges through peaceful means other than resorting to violence.
- iv. The need for respect for Human Rights.

**10.** The Extraordinary Summit of the Organ condemns in the strongest terms the unconstitutional actions that have led to the illegal ousting of the democratically-elected President of a SADC Member State. **11.** In the circumstances SADC does not and cannot recognize Mr Rajoelina as President of Madagascar because his appointment not only

violates the Constitution of Madagascar and democratic principles, but violates the core principles and Treaty of SADC, the African Union and the United Nations Charters.<sup>12</sup> The Extraordinary Summit of the Organ Troika therefore calls on the African Union and the International Community not to recognize the appointment of Mr Rajoelina and put pressure to bear on the de facto authorities in Madagascar to return that country back to democratic and constitutional rule in the shortest time possible.<sup>13</sup> The Extraordinary Summit of the Organ Troika further calls on all stakeholders to refrain from taking any actions that are unconstitutional, inconsistent with the democratic values of our region and the continent or lead to further loss of lives, injury or destruction of property.

14. Consistent with the Treaty of SADC Article 5 (b) and (c), SADC shall continue to promote common political values, systems and other shared values which are transmitted through institutions which are democratic, legitimate and effective. SADC will continue to engage all concerned parties in Madagascar with a view to facilitating the efforts to peacefully resolve the current political crisis in the country.

15. The Executive Secretary of SADC is mandated by the Troika Organ Summit immediately to engage the AU, UN, and all other role players to help define a comprehensive and coherent strategy that will lead to the resolution of the problem. The Executive Secretary is to report back to the Troika within 7 days.

16. In the event of non cooperation and non compliance by the de facto regime in Madagascar, the Summit of the Organ Troika shall recommend to Summit to consider imposing appropriate sanctions and/or use all relevant resources available to restore order in Madagascar.

### **Madagascar: Southern Africa Threatens Sanctions Against Govt: 19 March 2009: allafrika.**

Cape Town — The Southern African Development Community (SADC), which represents the governments of the region, has threatened the new rulers of Madagascar with sanctions unless they return the country to constitutional rule. In a strongly-worded [statement issued from Swaziland on Thursday](#), regional leaders refused to recognize the new Malagasy leader, Andry Rajoelina, as president. “His appointment not only violates the constitution of Madagascar and democratic principles, but violates the core principles and treaty of SADC, the African Union and the United Nations Charters,” the leaders said.

Their statement was issued after a meeting of the SADC “Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation,” chaired by King Mswati III in Ezulwini, Swaziland. The meeting was also attended by President Armando Guebuza of Mozambique and South African defence minister Charles Nqakula. The meeting said it condemned “in the strongest terms the unconstitutional actions that have led to the illegal ousting of the democratically-elected president of a SADC member state.” It called on the African Union and the wider international community not to recognize Rajoelina and to pressure his administration to return the country “to democratic and constitutional rule in the shortest time possible.” It

added that if Rajoelina did not comply, the group would recommend “appropriate sanctions and/or use all relevant resources available to restore order in Madagascar.”It did not spell out action but asked its secretariat to report back on an action plan within a week.

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## 86. CHINA-AFRICA RELATIONS

### Southern Africa

#### **South Africa: ANC Looks to Cosy Up to China: Mathabo Le Roux: 17 March 2009: BusinessDay.**

Johannesburg — AFRICAN National Congress treasurer-general Mathews Phosa says the partnership between China and SA will be stepped up after the election."After the election we will see an increase in co-operation between China and SA. The seeds have been sown," he said.Phosa was speaking at the launch of a representative office of the China-Africa Development Fund in Johannesburg -- the first of its kind in Africa.Established in 2007 by the China Development Bank, the fund stems from a pledge by Chinese President Hu Jintao at the China-Africa Co-operation summit in Beijing in 2006 to foster closer ties with the African continent.

It was set up with an initial capital injection of \$1bn by the China Development Fund, but capitalisation will eventually reach \$5bn, said Chen Yuan, chairman of the China Development Fund.The Department of Trade and Industry yesterday also signed a record of understanding with the fund to establish a framework for co-operation.Deputy Trade and Industry Minister Elizabeth Thabethe said the collaboration would earmark strategic sectors for investment, including mining, transport, energy, agriculture, manufacturing, infrastructure development, and the information and communication technology sector.Phosa said the fund's pledges to invest in the continent at a time when the financial meltdown had seen investment and trade finance in emerging economies dry up, should be welcomed.Since its inception, the fund has invested \$400m in 20 projects in Africa, notably a cotton project in Malawi, a power plant in Ghana, a glass factory in Ethiopia and trade zones in Egypt and Nigeria.

#### **South Africa: SABMiller Acquires Brewery in Beer-Drinking Chinese Province: Nicola Mawson: 16 March 2009: BusinessDay.**

Johannesburg — SABMILLER, the world's second-largest brewer, has expanded its presence in China by acquiring a brewery in the country's biggest beer-consuming province.China Resources Snow Breweries, SABMiller's joint venture with China Resources Enterprise, has made its first acquisition in northern Shandong province, the London-listed company said yesterday.The joint venture will acquire the brewing assets of Shandong Hupo Brewery for about \$42m. The brewery will be acquired through the

formation of a joint venture in which CR Snow will initially own 90%, purchasing the balance within three years. The brewery has an annual production capacity of 2,7-million hectolitres, but the company will spend \$8m to improve technology to increase capacity to 3-million hectolitres and ensure the production requirements are sufficient to produce the brand Snow, the largest selling brand in China.

The MD of SABMiller Asia, Ari Mervis, said Snow was seeing good growth in China and had been well received in Shandong. Mervis said "the significant import sales volume that the brand already enjoys in the province certainly justifies the establishment of a production base here". "The brewery has a strategic location in northern Shandong and is well connected by highways to the other major cities in this region." The brewery will then be the same size as the Heineken brewery that is being constructed in the south of Gauteng and is set to be complete by the end of this year, Mervis said. Absa Investments analyst Chris Gilmour said China was now the largest volume region in the world, but had low margins. "In some areas of China, beer sells for less than bottled water." He said it would take a while for industry consolidation to happen, which would result in rising prices. Prices would also rise as the economy grows.

China Resources Enterprise MD Long Chen said the acquisition would raise the beer's market presence. "It is a major step for us to complete the distribution network in the coastal regions of eastern China." Gilmour said China's vast size made it difficult to ensure geographic penetration. The brewery is in Zouping county, in the north of Shandong, China's largest consumer of beer. Zouping also serves as a transportation hub to major cities such as Binzhou, Jinan, Zibo and Dongying.

### **Zambia: State Sees Light at End of Tunnel: 20 March 2009: Times of Zambia.**

THE Government is optimistic about the future of mining following indication that China will this year increase its annual copper purchase from 600,000 to one million tonnes, Finance and National Planning Minister, Situmbeko Musokotwane has said. Dr Musokotwane said in Lusaka yesterday that if implemented, China's move would result in a deficit in the global copper requirement for 2009 and trigger higher prices. The minister said this in a speech read for him by Secretary to the Treasury, Likolo Ndalamei during the second Corporate Governance award-giving ceremony held at Hotel Intercontinental. Dr Musokotwane said despite having put in place various measures to support economic diversification, the Zambian Government would not abandon what it knew best: mining.

"This is the reason why we are optimistic with reports that China's State Reserve Bureau may this year raise purchases of copper to one million metric tonnes from 600,000 tonnes." Such a measure, if implemented, 'would easily turn the projected global surplus of between 350,000 tonnes and 400,000 tonnes this year' into a deficit. This is an encouraging signal for the Zambian mining industry," he said. Dr Situmbeko said that Government was equally positive about the future copper prices, which had gained by 25 per cent on the London Metal Exchange (LME) within this year after falling by 54 per cent last year. Currently, he said, the price stood at around US\$3,862 per tonne after

China's copper imports jumped by 55 per cent last month. This price level is the highest since November 2008. He, however, noted that in the 2009 budget, Government had put in place programmes to diversify the economy and increase the potential for wealth creation through agriculture, tourism and manufacturing. Dr Musokotwane said his ministry would this year address some challenges faced in the governance of State-owned enterprises some of which had been a drain on national coffers.

"To forestall this trend and improve overall performance, my ministry will reinforce measures aimed at improving oversight, supervision, general management, corporate governance, quality systems and service delivery in State-owned enterprises." In this regard, I am pleased to inform you that we have provided K2 billion in this year's budget for strengthening the implementation of the automated trading system on the Lusaka Stock Exchange (LuSE)," he said. He said the growth of market capitalization on the LuSE over the last few years gave government hope that the market in Zambia, though experiencing a momentary reduction, was sustainable and a worthy choice for stock investments. Dr Musokotwane noted that although share prices might have fallen, the overall performance of most listed companies had been satisfactory and was a testimony of the resilience of Zambia's economy.

"The evidence of our market attractiveness is manifested by looking back at 2008 when K1.302 trillion was raised in seven issues on the Lusaka Stock Exchange. This means that on average, the LuSE market capitalisation grew from K13.07 trillion or US\$ 3.188 billion in 2007 to K24.205 trillion or US\$ 6.538 billion in 2008." As a result, market capitalisation to GDP ratio also grew from 40 per cent to 61 per cent. This scenario makes the Lusaka Stock Exchange an illustration of the stability of our economy and a demonstration of the depth of private sector development in Zambia," he said.

**Zambia: RB Woos Chinese Investors: 17 March 2009: Times of Zambia.**

PRESIDENT Rupiah Banda has implored Chinese investors in the energy sector to invest in the country saying Zambia's investment climate is favourable. Speaking when a group of Chinese investors called on him at State House yesterday, President Banda said that investing at this particular time was appropriate as Zambia was experiencing a power deficit. "Your intended investment to our country is very welcome. We welcome your presence because we have a great shortage of power in our country as well as this region," Mr Banda said. He said that the potential to invest in the energy sector was abundant in the country saying there was abundant water, coal, uranium, sunshine as well as human resources among others.

Mr Banda said that it was imperative that the Chinese invested in Zambia particularly in the face of the global economic crisis and the falling commodity prices. "Your investment will provide jobs to our people and revenue," Mr Banda said. Commerce, Trade and Industry Minister, Felix Mutati said that he held meetings with the Chinese investors enlightening them on possibilities of exploring investment opportunities in the nation. With the falling copper prices and some mining investors intending to leave, he



said that the Chinese had been informed on the best sectors for investment as well as investing in the mining sector.

And Zhonghui Guohua Industry Group Company Limited chairman Wang Yaohui said that his organisations was in Zambia to assess the investment climate.He said that for many years, China and Zambia had cooperated in many economic sectors citing the construction of the Tanzania Zambia Railways Authority (Tazara) as one area of cooperation.Mr Wang said that China would continue offering loans at low interest rates to developing countries and Zambia would continue benefiting from the gesture.

And State Grid Corporation of China chief economist Du Zhigang said that in the face of the economic crisis, it was imperative that Chinese investors invested in Zambia.He said that toward the end of last year, his firm acquired prospecting licences in North-Western Province.He said that his organisation, which was one of the largest electricity firms in the world, would continue assessing the investment climate in Zambia.Chinese ambassador to Zambia Li Qiangmin commended the Government for ensuring that the investment climate in the nation was favourable.Meanwhile, two Chinese companies have shown interest in doing mineral exploration works in Mwinilunga district in North - Western Province.

Zhonghui Guohua Industry (Group) Limited and State Grid International Development made their intentions to invest in Mwinilunga during a meeting with Mines and Minerals Development Minister Maxwell Mwale and Mr Mutati in Lusaka yesterday.Zhonghui Guohua Industry (Group) Limited was represented by its chairman Mr Wang while State Grid International Development was led by Mr Du who is also the chairman.Mr Mwale said the Government was open to foreign investments and was happy to receive the two investors whom he assured of the support from the Government.Mr Mwale said past exploration surveys indicated that North Western and Western provinces also had gas and petroleum.He said the Government would this year advertise a block for would be developers in the petroleum industry in the country.Mr Mutati said even if the country was not spared by the effects of the global economic recession, the Government had in this year's national budget proposed major incentives that would boost the mining industry.Director geological survey department at the Ministry of Mines and Minerals Development, Kennedy Liyungu said Mwinilunga has strong indication of mineralisation.

### **Zambia: Chinese Firm Eyes Luanshya: 19 March 2009: Times Of Zambia.**

A CHINESE mining company, Zhonghui Mining is ready to take over Luanshya Copper Mines (LCM), which is now under care and maintenance.Zhonghui Mining chairperson, Charles Shi said in Ndola on Tuesday evening his firm was ready to take over the operations of Luanshya mine if they were given chance.He said this when a group of Chinese investors had a business meeting with Copperbelt Minister Mwansa Mbulakulima and the Ndola mayor, Anthony Katongo.Mr Charles said that his company had written to the responsible ministries in charge of mines and the country's economy that his company was ready to run any mine that had been left by its investors.

He said that Luanshya mine qualified as one that the company would be interested in since the investors were pulling out. Mr Charles said the company was also looking for other prospecting mining areas in the Copperbelt. He added that the company had been undertaking exploration works in Itimpi, Kitwe, and was now ready for a mining licence for that area. He said that the company started exploration works on the site in October 2007 and that they had been carrying out the exploration works everyday since then.

Mr Charles said plans were underway to get a mining licence later this year for Itimpi. And visiting State Grid Cooperation of China chief economist, Du Zhigang said that his company had 88 per cent of the energy market in China and was interested to cooperate with Zambian firms to invest in the power generation sector on the Copperbelt. Mr Du said that after the visit on the Copperbelt on Tuesday, his delegation realised that there was a lot of potential on the Copperbelt to invest in power generation. Mr Mbulakulima pledged Government support to the Chinese delegation saying that China had always been the country's all-weather friend.

**Namibia: China and Namibia, More Than 19 Years of Partnership: Ren Xiaoping: 20 March 2009: opinion: New Era.**

Windhoek — On 21 March 1990, after long and unremitting struggles against apartheid, Namibia finally and proudly proclaimed its independence to the world. The next day, the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Namibia established diplomatic ties, which was recorded as one of the earliest bilateral relations in the Namibian history. Every year, we celebrate these days—21st and 22nd of March, days that are of great significance to both the Namibian people and to the Chinese people. This year, on the joyful occasion of the 19th anniversary of Namibia's Independence and the diplomatic relations between China and Namibia, I, as Ambassador of the People's Republic of China, would like to offer my warmest congratulations to the government of Namibia and to all our Namibian brothers and sisters! The Namibian people have a glorious tradition. The heroic struggles you had waged, under the leadership of the Swapo Party, won you precious independence and freedom. Your victory also made historic contributions to the victory of the whole African people in gaining independence and freedom.

After independence, under the leadership of the Founding President Dr. Sam Nujoma and, in recent years, under the leadership of President Pohamba. Namibia has made remarkable progress in developing economy, improving the well-being of the people, and maintaining peace and stability. We rejoice at your achievements in implementing the National Development Plans and Vision 2030, and congratulate you for the important role you have played in Africa and international affairs. The year 2008 was an eventful and momentous year for China. We will not forget that immediately after the massive earthquake in Wenchuan, Sichuan Province, our Namibian brothers and sisters expressed sympathy to the Chinese Government and people. We will not forget that Namibian friends have consistently given us firm support on Taiwan and Tibet-related issues as well as other major issues concerning China's sovereignty and core interests. All these are vivid examples which show that the Chinese and Namibian people are true friends who have weathered storms together and shared weal and woe.

Since late last year, the international financial crisis has been worsening. It has rapidly spread from some parts of the world to the entire globe, from developed countries to emerging markets and developing countries, and from the financial sector to the real economy. It has put developing countries in a particularly disadvantaged position. Many African friends are concerned that in the face of the daunting challenge, their international development partners may scale back aid, debt relief and investment in Africa. It is against this background that Chinese President Hu Jintao appealed to the international community at the G20 Summit on Financial Markets and the World Economy held in Washington last November, to pay greater attention to the damage of the crisis on developing countries, especially the least developed ones, and do all it can to minimize the damage. During the times of adversity, it is all the more important for China and Namibia to support each other, work in concert and tide over the difficulties together. We need to strengthen solidarity and mutual assistance to meet the challenge of the financial crisis. China will earnestly follow through on the various measures announced at the Beijing Summit, continue to provide assistance to Namibia, expand trade and investment and strengthen practical cooperation with Namibia.

We need to raise the level of practical economic cooperation on the basis of reciprocity and mutual benefit. China supports Namibia's initiatives of empowering rural communities and will participate in the Green Scheme Project. The Chinese Government will continue to encourage established Chinese companies to invest in Namibia, create more jobs for the local people and transfer more technologies to their Namibian partners. The Chinese Embassy will continue to encourage Chinese companies in Namibia to forge amicable relations with the local people and contribute more to the local communities.

People-to-people exchanges and cultural cooperation are part and parcel to our good bilateral relations. China will increase exchanges with Namibia in culture, education, science & technology, health, sports, tourism, justice and other fields. Closer links should be set up among young people, women, non-governmental groups, media organizations and academic institutions of both sides. We will continue to work closely together and strengthen coordination in international affairs. China will intensify cooperation with Namibia in the United Nations and other multilateral institutions on such global challenges as climate change, food and energy security, poverty alleviation and development. I am proud to be Ambassador of my country to Namibia. The moment I touched upon the Land of the Brave, I felt a noble mission on my shoulder. That is the continuity and prosperity of friendship and cooperation between China and Namibia. I have confidence that, through our joint efforts, the long-existed brotherhood between the two countries will go deeper and a new chapter will be written in the annals of China-Namibia friendship.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Tanzania: Africa's Freedom Railway - How a Chinese Development Project Changed Lives and Livelihoods in Tanzania - By Jamie Monson: 16 March 2009:book listing:Indiana University Press (Bloomington, IN).**

*A masterful history of the construction and impact of rail power in Africa*

"An extremely nuanced and textured history of negotiated interests that includes international stakeholders, local actors, and—importantly—early Chinese policies of development assistance." —James McCann, Boston University. "Blessedly economical and unpretentious . . . no one else is capable of writing about this region with such nuance." —James Giblin, University of Iowa. The TAZARA (Tanzania Zambia Railway Authority) or Freedom Railway stretches from Dar es Salaam on the Tanzanian coast to the Copperbelt region of Zambia. The railway, built during the height of the Cold War, was intended to redirect the mineral wealth of the interior away from routes through South Africa and Rhodesia. After being rebuffed by Western donors, newly independent Tanzania and Zambia accepted help from communist China to construct what would become one of Africa's most vital transportation corridors. Drawing on first-hand experiences of engineers and laborers together with life histories of traders who used the railway, Jamie Monson tracks the railroad from its design and construction to its daily use as a passenger train that provided an important means for moving people and goods from one village to another. This engaging history reveals how transnational interests contributed to environmental change, population movements, the rise of local and regional economic enterprise, and one of the most sweeping development transitions in post-colonial Africa. *Jamie Monson is Professor of History at Carleton College. She is author of Women as Food Producers in Developing Countries.*

87. PAN AFRICA

West Africa

**Gambia: Africa United By a Single Currency? Momodou Camara: 15 March 2009: opinion: [The Daily Observer](#) (Banjul).**

We wish to continue from last week on the august discourse on the monetary institutes and policies that will ultimately see West Africa integrated under a single currency. This week we seek to proceed with the role and functions of the West African Monetary Institute (WAMI), thus: The role and functions of the West African Monetary Institute (WAMI)

4- Exchange rate mechanism and conversion rate

The WAMI would study the issue of exchange rate parities within the West African monetary zone and recommend the appropriate exchange rate mechanism and parities for the existing currencies in the second monetary zone. It would also provide a basis for the setting up of an exchange rate mechanism and the appropriate bands of fluctuation for currencies in the zone. It would be responsible for determining the value of the common currency and the conversion rates of national currencies into the common currency.

5- Organisation of sensitisation

It would embark on a programme of sensitisation of citizens of the participating countries in order to create wide public support for the introduction of the new currency. This would involve organisation of seminars/workshops etc. to educate the public on the new currency, the ECO. This activity would be undertaken in collaboration with member states which have set up National Sensitisation Committees (NSCs) in this regard.

#### 6- Design and technical preparation of the new currency

The WAMI will be responsible for the preparation of background work on the new currency to be issued by the common Central Bank. This would include the name, determination of par value, denominations, that would facilitate the printing of the new bank notes and coins by the WACB.

#### Modalities for setting up a common central bank

The Institute would also be responsible for the setting up of the common Central Bank, including drawing up the legal framework of the central bank and related institutions, proposals for selecting the Headquarters, the modalities for contributing to the capital, the physical infrastructure and drawing up guidelines for the hiring of key officers.

#### Foster cooperation among countries

The West African Monetary Institute will fulfill a role similar to that played by the European Monetary Institute (EMI). In this regard, the West African Monetary Institute would provide a platform for intense cooperation between the central banks in the West African Monetary Zone, and foster in the countries of the Zone the feeling of ownership of the future common Central Bank.

#### Create enabling environment

The institute would create the conditions for a smooth transition to the new common currency by ensuring that regulations in all countries are consistent with the introduction of a new currency; prices are quoted in the new currency as well as any other practical issues that would facilitate the smooth introduction of the new currency, and withdrawal of old currencies.

#### Organisational structure of WAMI

The West African Monetary Institute is headed by a director general and has five departments - Research, Operations, Finance and Administration, Internal Audit and Legal. The WAMI is supervised by a Convergence Council of Ministers and Governors of Central Banks.

#### Budget

An initial two-year budget was approved for the Institute in December 2000 to cover the period of activities of the Institute, in the years 2001 and 2002. The budget was subscribed to by central banks in accordance with the ECOWAS Budgetary allocation formula which is a coefficient of contribution based on GDP and population. Since 2002 annual budgets prepared by the Institute are approved by the Convergence Council for funding by the central banks.

#### Work programme

WAMI's initial two-year work programme, was expended in 2002 to focus on multilateral surveillance of macroeconomic convergence. The other aspects of the work programme include technical, institutional and policy harmonization issues that are to be implemented in order to set up the common Central Bank.

#### Conclusion

The Institute since its inception has been undertaking relevant activities that would enable it achieve its mandate as contained in its statute. It is envisaged that it would be able to accomplish its tasks to enable the common Central Bank to take off smoothly by December, 2009 as planned. It is hoped however, that the member countries would maintain their commitment to meet the convergence criteria and other obligations.

#### **Nigeria: Continent's Trouble Rises in the East: Owei Lakemfa: 13 March 2009: analysis: Vanguard.**

Lagos — The sun rises in the East, heralding a new dawn. But in Africa, her contemporary wars and conflicts are mainly in the East or arise from there. Virtually all the countries in the eastern tip of the continent are in conflict. The horn of Africa, the beautiful part that flows into the Mediterranean has seen bloody internal and external conflicts. Ethiopia for instance, periodically represses the opposition in bloody street and electoral battles. Externally it has waged brutal border wars with its former province, Eritrea which is now an independent country. The Ethiopian army has just returned home after long bloody battles with Islamic insurgents that saw it race through Somalia. They sacked the Islamic Courts but were unable to break them or provide a secured capital for the Somali interim government.

Eritrea has fought border wars with its two neighbours; Ethiopia and Djibouti. The Djibouti-Eritrea conflict is over a small hill running through their common border. As expected, the dispute is fuelled by external powers who want to control the lucrative water ways, trade and politics in the area. Eritrea is also known to provide some support for the Islamic Forces in Somalia not because it has religious affinities but in order to shore up some influence in the region and check mate what it considers Ethiopia's expansionist ambitions.

Somalia is a basket case. For eighteen years it has had no central government and has been run in bits and pieces by clan groups and war lords. The frequent interruption of aid

distribution led the United States to send its Delta Force into the country. Unfortunately, the American Forces changed focus; from protecting the aid distribution channel to hunting Farah Aideed one of the rebels. The hunt had disastrous consequences which saw the Americans withdraw in disgrace.

To re-establish a central government and check anarchy, a coalition; The Islamic Courts, seized most of the country before Ethiopian forces dislodged them. Over sixteen thousand civilians have been killed in two years of resumed fighting, while another Islamist group, the al Shabaab has arisen attacking AU Forces and threatening to attack Kenya. Kenya has been one of the most peaceful and prosperous East African countries. But its last general elections which pitched President Mwai Kibaki against Raila Odinga threatened to tear the country apart. Good sense prevailed, a unity government was patched which saw Kibaki remain as President. He however, shares power with Odinga who occupies a newly created office of Prime Minister.

The most peaceful country in the region has been Tanzania. Under the leadership of Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, the country witnessed very few violent incidents. This included an attempted military coup in the early 1960s which saw the dissolution of the army, and border wars with Idi Amin's Uganda which led to the ouster of the hated dictator.

Uganda, has been one of the most violent. Internally, a succession of coups and counter coups, two disastrous reigns by Milton Obote and the tragedy of Idi Amin's misrule culminated in a long drawn guerrilla war. This led to the rise of the Museveni regime. The later's triumph saw the birth of a multiplicity of guerrilla movements which has kept the country on the boil for over twenty five years. The most destructive of these groups, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) is led by Joseph Kony. After devastating Northern Uganda, the LRA fanned across neighbouring Southern Sudan where it wrought havoc before finding more fertile grounds in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) LRA activities late last year led to 150,000 Congolese civilians becoming either internally displaced or being forced into exile.

In December 2008, a joint military offensive by the Ugandan, Southern Sudanese and Congolese armies attacked the rebels. Subsequently the LRA broke into smaller groups to terrorise civilian populations in the DRC. The DRC is also under the siege of Rwandan rebels called the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) These are the remnants of the Hutu Force which fifteen years ago massacred 850,000 mainly Tutsi Rwandese. They had poured into the DRC with the advance of the Rwanda Patriotic Front. Now reduced to about 6,000 fighters, the FDLR which occupied two provinces in eastern Kivu was put to flight in January 2009 when 3,000 Rwandan troops crossed into the DRC and mounted a joint operation with the DRC army. In return for Congo's support, both armies attacked Tutsi rebels in the DRC led by General Laurent Kunda. The latter fled into Rwanda and was captured by that country's security forces. With the departure of the Rwandan soldiers, another joint military operation is planned by the DRC, this time, jointly with the 17,000 United Nations Force known as NONUC.

Some of the longest and bloodiest wars in the continent have been fought in the East African nation of Sudan. From the 1960s, it has witnessed three bloody civil wars. The first two were fought in the south where the mainly Christian people fought the primarily muslim leaders in the north to a stand still. Years of negotiations produced a semi autonomous Southern Sudan led by the late John Garang with capital in Juba . There is also a provision for a referendum which would determine whether or not the oil rich south will become a fully independent country. The third civil war which began six years ago is still raging in the Darfur region. It has witnessed massacres and the displacement of huge sections of the populace. This led the international Criminal Court (ICC) issuing a warrant of arrest against Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir. The charges against him include genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur. While most of humanity is striving for better life, many in East Africa are trying just to stay alive. In East Africa like most parts of the continent, the challenges are how to promote dialogue and build consensus. *Michael Chukwuemeka Osuji is a student of Geography and Regional Planning, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State, Nigeria.*

**Africa: 'Continent Must Take Greater Responsibility for its Own Problems and Solutions':20 March 2009: press release: Kofi Annan Foundation (London).**

Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan today urged Africa to take greater responsibility for its own problems and solutions. In a speech to mark the centenary of the birth of Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Mr. Annan set out his vision of how African nations can address the challenges and opportunities they face in the 21st century. Praising Chief Obafemi Awolowo as an “outstanding son of both Nigeria and Africa”, Kofi Annan reflected on how far Africa has come towards fulfilling his ambition of a “peaceful and progressive continent”, two decades after his death. In a wide-ranging speech, Kofi Annan said:

- There has been real, significant and widespread progress in many African countries, but not enough: The number of conflicts across Africa has fallen sharply, democracy is on the move, Africa’s economies have been performing strongly, and the number of people living in poverty has declined. But “on peace and security, economic and social development and governance and human rights – the three inter-connected pillars on which Africa’s continued progress rests – there is still much to be done.” The continent also faces “new and serious threats which risk undermining all that has been achieved so far”, not least the impact of the global financial crisis and climate change.
- Africa deserves the help of the international community to overcome these challenges, but must also work harder to put its own house in order: Africa must move beyond divisions on ethnic and tribal lines. “The cloak of government must protect all. Inequalities based on ethnic background are the fault lines on which societies fracture. There must be equal access to opportunity for all. Healing these divisions needs good, democratic leadership and strong civil societies. We



- need a much greater effort both nationally – and with international support – to build up the strength of our institutions and civil society”.
- Political leaders across the continent must recognise that democracy means they can be voted out as well as into power: “It is a profound shame that since independence so many of Africa’s leaders, once elected, come to believe that only they can be trusted to run their countries. The result, all too quickly, becomes Government for the benefit of a ruling elite rather than society as a whole”.
  - Africa must ensure that its natural wealth is used to improve the health and strength of their societies: “For too many countries in Africa, natural resources have not been a boon but a curse. We must see much greater transparency in the revenue which Governments receive from the extraction of natural resources and how the money is spent. African leaders must also work harder to ensure the continent’s natural wealth is not simply siphoned off by other countries”.
  - In too many places in Africa, human rights are disregarded, the rule of law ignored and the culture of impunity embedded: “It is a major step in tackling this culture that we are seeing Special Tribunals holding to account politicians and rebel commanders from Liberia, DRC, Sudan, and Uganda for war crimes and crimes against humanity. Those who criticize the International Criminal Court for seemingly concentrating on Africa seem to ignore the scale and the severity of the crimes that have taken place on the continent. They also fail to recognise that it is the people of these countries themselves who have called for justice against those responsible for their suffering”.
  - Africa must take a greater responsibility for its own problems and solutions: “The African Union is increasingly influential and important. But both the AU and Nigeria can, and must, do more. Across the continent there is huge potential for increased regional and sub-regional co-operation not least to improve infrastructure, boost trade and create jobs. Africa would be in a stronger position to demand and win the changes needed in international organisations if it showed the courage and will to tackle problems within our own continent”.

**Ghana: 100 Million Fund for Agricultural Development in Country And Others:  
Daniel Nonor: 19 March 2009: The Chronicle.**

In a bold bid to help agricultural development in Africa, Standard Bank, Parent Company of Stanbic bank Ghana, in partnership with Alliance for a Green Revolution (AGRA) has devoted \$100m in affordable loans for agricultural value chain in Ghana, Mozambique, Uganda and Tanzania, with each country accessing some \$25m of the fund. The fund to be financed in Ghana by Stanbic Bank Ghana, will offer loan opportunities to smallholder farmers and small and medium-sized agricultural businesses, previously considered too risky for lending. AGRA and other partners are providing \$10million loan guarantee fund while Standard Bank in turn will make available \$100 available for lending over three years.

The loan guarantee fund is expected to cover any losses up to 20% of the portfolio size in the first year, 15 percent in the second year and 10 in the third year. This was made known at the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) governing the partnership in Accra yesterday.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, AGRA Chairman, Kofi Annan said "Our action today recognizes that the global food crisis is exerting major problems in Africa, such as inflation, food shortages and trade imbalances all pose huge social, economic, and political risks. But while credit is frozen world wide, Africa cannot wait for programmes which increase the productivity of smallholder farmers and help catalyse an African Green Revolution , which will ultimately enable Africa to achieve food security and stability, and thus improve the entire global outlook." Lack of access to finance is a major obstacle that prevents farmers from investing in basic inputs such as good seeds, fertilizers and small-scale irrigation needed to raise farm productivity and generate profit. As a result, their yield remains one-quarter of the world average, leading to pervasive hunger and poverty across Africa.

Similarly, little or no commercial financing has been available to entrepreneurs seeking to build businesses that could boost Africa's food production and enable farmers to earn a profit. Standard Bank Group Chief Executive, Jacko Maree, also stated that "the large share of agriculture in Africa's gross Domestic Product (GDP) suggests that strong growth in agriculture is necessary for overall economic growth. There is a need and an opportunity for investment that will develop the middle ground in Africa's agriculture. Africa has enormous natural potential and the continent has to unlock this potential in order to reap the benefits of our natural resources." He stated that as a leading and emerging bank, their goal is to perform a transformative role in the continent's agricultural sector in partnership with other organizations, adding that transforming small scale farmers into medium-size enterprises is essential to address the food security and to stimulate economic growth.

The new loan programme built on the earlier work of the Rockefeller Foundation in Uganda that helped to leverage loans to small-scale farmers and that five years later had a loan default rate of less than 2 percent. AGRA's innovative financing programmes have so far helped to leverage US\$50 million in financing from commercial banks for small farmers and agricultural value chains in Kenya and Tanzania. Mr. Kwesi Ahwoi, Minister of Food and Agriculture, was grateful for the initiative, stating that the facility falls in line with the government's agenda for developing the agricultural sector which it said formed an integral part of the country's development. The agreement includes provisions designed to maximize the opportunities for farmers and small scale businesses to succeed, including technical and business development support, quality control of produce and support in applying for credit

**Burkina Faso: Ethiopian Film Takes Top Honours at Fespaco: Brahim Ouédraogo: 14 March 2009: inter Press Service News Agency.**

Ouagadougou — Filmmaker Haile Gerima's Ethiopian movie "Teza" has won the Golden Stallion of Yennenga at the 21st Panafrican Festival of Cinema and Television (Fespaco) in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. Gaston Kaboré, the Burkinabé filmmaker who presided over the jury for feature films, told IPS, "Teza is a masterpiece at all levels of creativity. From the strength of the film to the powerful images, it is a very accomplished piece of work." Altogether 18 feature films competed for the top prize; as the winner, Gerima receives about \$20,000.

The film tells of the adventures of a young man, Anberber, who in the early 1970s leaves his village Minzero to go and study in Germany. He comes back home in 1990, a changed man. Haile Gerima himself immigrated to the United States in 1968 and has taught film at Howard University in Washington since 1975. According to Kaboré, Gerima's film simultaneously addresses "times gone by, moments etched in memory, history and the culture of the continent," while also showing "how Africans can master their present and their future and leave behind the trauma and dilemmas they have experienced."

"The filmmaker's hard work, serious and determined attitude and pursuit of excellence really come across in this movie," says Kaboré. Selome Gerima, co-producer of the film, was in Ouagadougou to receive the award on behalf of her brother Haile, who could not make it. "This film conveys many messages to African intellectuals who suffer racism abroad - but do not draw lessons from their tribulations when they return home." Fespaco, celebrated its 40th anniversary this year under the theme "African Cinema, Tourism and Cultural Heritage." The aim was to stress the importance of imagery when disseminating African culture; the kind of imagery which will result in attracting tourists. But the problem of financing film remains the bottleneck of African filmmakers. According to Mauritanian filmmaker, Abdheramane Cissako, winner of the Yennenga prize in 2003 with his film "Heremakono", some countries have gone ten years without producing films while the most fortunate ones produce a film every three years. "African politicians choose not to view culture as a cornerstone for the development of countries," Cissako laments. He adds that, "this shows a lack of foresight because where there is vision, there is possibility."

According to the chair of the jury for short films, Baluku Bakupa Kanyinda, the origins of competing works in this category during this year's Fespaco gives an idea of the national policies governing film production in various countries. Of the 19 films in competition, 14 are from North Africa, five of them from Morocco alone. "This proves that Morocco is supporting its cinema industry. But it highlights the lack of participation from sub-Saharan Africa," says Baluku. He tells IPS that countries in sub-Saharan Africa need to realise they must master the short film genre before moving onto longer films. Baluku is nevertheless pleased that some countries have acknowledged this by supporting training and production in the short film industry. He explains that only television and film are able to tell stories etched in popular memory. The prize for best short film was won by "Sektou" (They are silent), by Algerian filmmaker Benaïssa Khaled.

"Africa has a problem: we are people who have been politically abused. We have a shattered image because Africa now absorbs strange and foreign images which are not of its own making," says Baluku, a native of the Democratic Republic of Congo. "When we wake up, we look in the mirror and see someone else, not ourselves. Then you get people wanting to lighten their skin and have long hair." The president of Burkina Faso, Blaise Compaoré, who presented the Golden Stallion to the winner, said he would take up the responsibility to talk to other African leaders so they could become more involved in supporting film production on the continent. "It's a quest for us in Africa, and now through Fespaco, to be able to produce films in Africa made by Africans and also to show an image that best signals our aspirations and expectations; our desire to present ourselves to the rest of the world," stresses Compaoré. Baluku tells IPS, "Africa's problem is not its economy. The problem is its image and the way the world portrays it. Only cinema can change that."

Southern Africa

### **Botswana: Leaders Vow to Compel G-20: Brian Benza: 17 March 2009: Mmegi.**

Dar es Salaam — African leaders and policymakers have vowed to take the G20 group of leaders head-on with their grievances on outstanding promises and their responsibility for the global economic recession when they convene in London next month. Speaking at the closing session of the IMF conference on Africa here last week themed "Changes: Successful Partnerships for Africa's Growth Challenge", South Africa's finance minister, Trevor Manuel, said he was going to send a clear message to the other G20 leaders about how the global crisis, which was triggered by the credit crunch in the US, is about to cause severe damage to African economies. Manuel, whose country is the only African state in the G20 group, said "when we meet in London next month, I am not going to be humble to the G20. They need to understand that Africa knows what is wrong, how it came about, and that we want it corrected. The IMF must also convey this message to them on behalf of Africa if our relations are to remain good.

"The Fund also needs to be reformed to prevent a situation where we go back to nationalism and protectionism. I am also going to (ask) for us the developing countries and emerging markets to be given a greater voice in the governance of the IMF". Protectionism is already sprouting in some developed countries where ailing banks are being bailed out by governments on condition that they do not lend out to markets outside their countries. Leaders from the world's 20 most advanced economies will meet in London on April 2 to look for ways of pulling out of the economic and financial crises. At the Dar-es-Salaam conference, it was agreed that Western countries must be prevailed upon to honour their aid pledges as the situation in Africa turns desperate with countries watching their traditional export markets disappear and access to credit and investment finance dry up. Due to the global economic crisis, the IMF now predicts the world economy to shrink by over 0.5 percent this year while sub-Saharan will see its decade-long growth rates decline to 3 percent this year.

Poorer countries, which could become the worst casualties of the crisis, also face the possibility of reduced aid flows because Western donors face budget pressures of their own. In his closing remarks, Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete said developed countries should honour their promise on development aid to vulnerable African nations against the backdrop of a World Bank prediction that the global economic crisis will pull 46 million people back into absolute poverty. Kikwete promised to deliver the message to the G20 consultative meeting that began in London yesterday. President Ian Khama is also attending the consultative meeting this week alongside leaders from Liberia, Ethiopia and Kenya. Although Kikwete spoke in restrained tones, the Managing Director of the World Bank, Ngozi Okongu-Iweala, was rather combative and insisted that the international community must fulfil its express promise to increase aid flows significantly.

"We should not feel ashamed to ask for development aid from the developed world," the former Nigerian finance minister said. "They owe it to us. Africa developed Europe and America with our resources that they plundered. Because of the crisis, we don't want them to shy away from us. Instead, we want this to be seen as an opportunity to invest in Africa." Although most leaders who addressed the conference emphasised the need for the developed world to bail Africa out of the crisis, chances that the G20 meeting will provide concrete aid plans for Africa are very slim, judging by the empty promises that have already been made in the past. At the G8 Gleneagles Summit in 2005, there was a commitment to more than double ODA to Africa by 2010 worth about \$65 billion in nominal 2007 terms, an amount which was attainable considering the trillions of dollars committed in stimulus packages in industrialised countries.

In his opening remarks to the IMF conference last Tuesday, former United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan had questioned the political will of the West to help poor countries. "Industrialised countries have found incredibly large sums of money at short notice to bail out their firms and economies," Annan said. "Trillions of dollars have been committed in the last few months for bailout and stimulus packages." This compares with a total of \$100 billion a year in development aid, and yet more than that has been spent on rescuing one US company. This undermines the credibility of the claim that relatively modest sums cannot be found to support the fight against global poverty. The real issue is political will. "Apart from the urgent call on the G20 to address the economic crisis, the African finance ministers and central bank governors that met here also agreed that African nations must continue to strengthen their economic policies and ensure good governance, which cannot be sacrificed in this time of crisis.

They also agreed that the IMF must increase its support for Africa with more financing, greater flexibility, enhanced policy dialogue and further strengthening of Africa's voice in the Fund. "Global solidarity is essential if we are to meet the severe challenges facing Africa and the world. Africa must be part of the solution to the global economic crisis, and Africa must be fully represented in the evolving global architecture," read a joint statement by the delegates at the end of the conference. Botswana was represented at the Conference by central bank governor Linah Mohohlo and Secretary for Economic and Financial policy, in the Ministry of Finance, Dr Taufila Nyamadzabo

**Botswana: Standard Bank Wins in Prestigious 2009 Africa Investor Awards:16 March 2009:Mmegi.**

The Standard Bank Group on, 9 March 2009, reinforced its position as the continent's leading financial institution by scooping the Best Africa Investor Analyst Awards in the banking sector in the prestigious annual African Investor Awards. The Awards were presented at a gala ceremony held at the Paris Stock Exchange in Paris. Standard Bank received four nominations in the competition; one for the Best Financial Reporting Company in the Banking Sector and, most significantly, three nominations for best analysts of the year for banking and other sectors, for Analysts based in Nigeria, and the UK.

The winners, from Standard Bank's Nigerian subsidiary, Stanbic IBTC Bank, Yemi Kale and Muyiwa Oni were nominated as best analyst in the banking sector. In the best analyst in other sectors, Kale was again nominated with colleague Bunmi Njugo along with Michael Hugman of Standard Bank PLC in London. Accepting the award on behalf of Standard Bank, Robert van Eyden, Head of Global Research said "This proves that Standard Bank is a leading African research house which has the research, analysis capabilities and skilled people strategically placed to offer their clients value-added information and investment services".

Stanbic IBTC Bank, Chief Executive, Chris Newson says, "The nominations and the awards also reinforce the Standard Bank belief that operating successfully in multiple markets around the globe requires an on-the-ground presence in key markets, like Nigeria. This ensures that clients gain the benefit of local insights, expertise and benefit from a presence and network in key emerging markets that spans Africa and the globe". The African Investor is Africa's leading international benchmark and index provider, which works closely with the New York Stock Exchange Euronext, the world's leader for listings. The awards are open to leading international analysts, financial journalists and investor relations professionals from Africa's leading publicly traded companies and cover categories ranging from Best Financial News Reporting: Best Financial Reporting Company (open to investor relations professionals within companies), and Best Analyst, which is open to all buy- and sell-side analysts covering African equities." We are therefore proud on two levels to have won the 2009 Ai awards as they recognize not only the skills of our people in Africa, but add independent confirmation of the success of our corporate strategy in emerging markets," Van Eyden concluded.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Eritrea: Egyptian Intellectual Stresses Need for African Countries to Work Jointly in Countering Negative Impact of Globalization:13 March 2009:Shabait.com (Asmara).**

Asmara — In a lecture he gave to staff members of the Eritrean Information Ministry, Dr. Mahmoud Mohammed Abu-Al-Ainen, Director of African Studies and Research Center

at Cairo University, stressed the need for African countries to remain vigilant and work jointly so as to counter the growing influence of globalization in the continent. In his lecture under the theme "Globalization and Identity in the African countries," Dr. Mahmoud indicated that western countries are increasingly resorting to cultural and psychological invasion against African countries through monopolizing the mass media and employing various other ploys in a bid to ensure and promote their vested interests. In this respect, he underlined that it is high time that African countries safeguard all-round sovereignty through rebuffing such conspiracy designed to exploit their resources and jeopardize their identity and independence.

Noting that globalization is a ploy designed to prompt neo-colonialism in Africa, Dr. Mahmoud reminded African countries to exert vigorous endeavors in countering the negative impact of globalization in general and preserving indigenous cultures and values in particular before they fall victim to the growing negative impact of globalization. He further pointed out that globalization involves imposing western political culture, exploiting one's resource and undermining the security and sovereignty of countries. In this regard, the Egyptian intellectual underscored that the so-called military commands envisaged to be set up in Africa under the pretext of terrorism and other guises is but a tool for such acts of conspiracy. Moreover, Dr. Mahmoud Mohammed Abu-Al-Ainen cited Eritrea as being exemplary among African countries for striving to counter the influence of globalization and called on other African countries to emulate Eritrea's correct strategy.

**London: Some African Countries to Suffer 50 Percent Drop in Income Due to Financial Crisis: 16 March 2009: press release: [ActionAid](#) (London).**

Africa will suffer a huge drop in income because of the financial crisis – with the worst affected countries seeing a fall in income of up to 50 per cent, according to a new report from ActionAid. The report, *Where does it hurt?* The impact of the financial crisis on developing countries, unpicks the different ways the crisis is affecting the economies of developing countries. It shows that the countries which will be hardest hit are those which have opened up their financial sectors the most over the past few years. As Gordon Brown meets African leaders in London on Monday to discuss the effects of the recession on their economies ahead of the G20 summit in April, ActionAid's research predicts that Africa will suffer a drop of income of up to US\$49 billion, as calculated between 2007 and the end of this year.

ActionAid argues that the fall is due to both the financial crisis and the global recession - 22 billion dollars due to the financial crisis, on top of a 27 billion dollars drop in export earnings, aid and income from rich countries that are now themselves in recession. The charity says that this is equal to a pay cut of nearly 10 percent for the continent as a whole. And in the worst affected countries such as South Africa, the drop in income could be as much as 50 per cent. Claire Melamed, Head of Policy at ActionAid, said: "Although developing countries didn't make this crisis, it has become all too clear that they are in the firing line when it comes to suffering its worst effects. "There is a real risk that development will start to go backwards in many countries as the money dries up and

that the recession will lead to worsening poverty and terrible consequences for the men, women and children caught in its grip.”The World Bank's chief economist for Africa has already predicted that 700,000 children may well die over the next few years as a result of the financial crisis and the ensuing recession.

ActionAid’s report looks specifically at how the financial crisis and the recession are playing out in middle and low income countries including South Africa, Ghana, Uganda, Mali, Brazil, India and China. In particular it analyses the extent to which previous policies have affected these countries’ future vulnerability to the turmoil currently affecting world markets. Unsurprisingly, it finds that countries that bought most heavily into the rhetoric of financial liberalisation, and that were big enough to attract significant amounts of capital from the richer world, will be most affected by the financial crisis. For example, it says that South Africa, which has been a paragon of free market economics since the end of apartheid, is likely to suffer a fall in financial flows from abroad equivalent to around a fifth of its entire GDP. However the report predicts that China will fare better. The majority of its growth has been based on expanding exports, which means that the recession is already hitting hard. But, the financial crisis is likely to have less impact because the government has restricted flows of foreign capital, whilst most Chinese investment and other finance comes from within the country.

Dr Melamed concluded: “The financial system hasn’t been working for development for a long time. Countries that have opened up their economies to global finance subjected themselves to massive risks but didn’t get much of a pay-off in development terms.” “But developing countries do need finance from somewhere and we need a system that can give them what they need without running the huge risk of another financial crisis.”

**Kenya: Livestock Vital to Rural Livelihoods: Joyce Mulama: 17 March 2009: Inter Press Service News agency.**

Nairobi — The Nairobi-based International Livestock Research Institute estimates 250 million people in Africa - a quarter of the population - rely on livestock for their livelihoods, yet African governments invest almost nothing to support the sector. “Livestock on the continent is extremely important, especially for the poor and also for large scale farming. Unfortunately there has been limited public investment in agriculture. It has been taken for granted, and subsequently investment in livestock has been rather low,” said Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, the African Union (AU) Commissioner of Agriculture and Rural Economy.

Tumusiime was speaking at the Fourth Ordinary General Assembly of ALive, a global partnership of organisations involved in supporting livestock development in Africa, held in Nairobi on Mar. 12-13. “There has been low and declining investment in livestock - not only in livestock but in agriculture and rural development in general. And in order to succeed in enshrining a system of development in Africa you need to consider agriculture. It needs to be the engine of growth and it will have a trickle-down effect to the livestock sub-sector,” Dr François Le Gall, the outgoing programme manager of ALive told IPS in an interview.



It is argued that if investment in agriculture as a whole goes up, it will result in a higher allocation of funds to the livestock sub-sector, which will enable governments to provide improved services to livestock farmers, particularly in the rural areas where 70 percent of the people rear livestock on a small scale, according to ILRI. At the African Union summit in Maputo, Mozambique in 2003, African leaders pledged to allocate 10 percent of their national budgets to agriculture within five years, in recognition of the fact that thirty percent of Africans are chronologically undernourished and that the continent had become a net importer of food. AU heads of state committed themselves to increase budgets for agriculture, including livestock. But the continent is far from achieving this target, observed Tumusiime. For example Kenya's budgetary allocation for agriculture stands at 4.5 percent.

"I think it is extremely important to step up efforts in livestock development because empirical evidence indicates that at the household level, livestock improves the lives of the poor better than crop-related agriculture. But both of them are extremely important for both economic growth and food security," Tumusiime told IPS. The dynamism of the livestock sub-sector is unquestionable. It accounts for over 50 percent of the agricultural capital stock in sub-Saharan Africa and is a significant contributor to agricultural GDP, according to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). Livestock is also a major source of food, particularly of high-quality protein, minerals, vitamins as well as micronutrients for the majority of people in Africa. It is estimated that meat, milk and eggs provide about one-fifth of the protein in African diets, says FAO. But to increase livestock productivity and realise its full potential as a development tool, it is crucial that governments offer support to farmers. For instance establishing a communal cattle dip to remove ticks from the animals, and stationing a veterinary officer there to assist farmers with additional treatment to ensure their animals stay healthy.

"This reduces the cost immensely because engaging services of a veterinary officer is very expensive for many small farmers and that's why many of them lose their animals from treatable diseases," said Lucas Simiyu, an official of Sirende Livestock Farmers Association, told IPS in a telephone interview from Sirende, in western Kenya. Providing small livestock farmers with subsidies is also crucial to helping them lower production costs, in much the same way as subsidies to maize farmers in Malawi have quickly restored food security. The government of Malawi took a bold decision to begin subsidising fertilisers and high-yielding seeds to small farmers in 2005. The result - the small landlocked country graduated from its status as a chronic recipient of food aid to become a net exporter of maize in just two years. It is now a food donor to other African nations. "The conventional wisdom has been that we don't want any subsidies; that has been sort of the religion of the last 10, 20 years. But I think the Malawi experience with fertilisers is a very controversial one, but in general there seems to be a consensus that it has helped in the short term in making them competitive," Carlos Sere, Director General of ILRI told IPS at the meeting.

According to Sere, this success story can be scaled up in the livestock sub-sector. "Small farmers can be competitive but they need support from governments. Large companies can do it themselves; small farmers need the right environment of public services

including subsidies. These are inputs into ensuring increased productivity."But the issue of subsidies for African farmers has been a thorny one, which has faced opposition from donors. Aside from subsidies, increased productivity in livestock could also be enhanced through early warning systems to alert farmers of any looming calamities. Such systems have proved effective in countries like Uganda where frequent floods in the north have in the past caused severe losses to farmers with their cattle being infected with fascioliasis (liver fluke infection), a fatal disease of the liver. In flood-prone Karamoja and Soroti regions, in northern and eastern Uganda respectively, agricultural officials have now taken advantage of early warnings from research institutions. "We have learnt a lesson. During each phase of floods we warn the farmers that after the floods they should deworm the animals immediately and in that way we have been able to prevent fascioliasis from occurring," said William Oluho Mukani, director of Animal Resources in the ministry of Agriculture and Animal Industry in Uganda.

But the capacity to respond is still limited in many African countries, where bureaucracy in government stands in the way of getting finances to help deal with threats of disasters. "Frequently it makes early warning not helpful because by the time the vaccination teams get out for example, the disease has already spread and has killed people or animals," argued Sere. He added, "We need to think how we organise ourselves in the veterinary services in a more effective manner, to quickly have a task force which can move, have budgets ready which the head of veterinary services can use for outbreaks for instance. You need a less bureaucratic way of tackling these emergencies." Unless such basic details are addressed, ensuring productivity of livestock and the wider agricultural sector in Africa may be a daunting task.

Central Africa

**Cameroon: Pope's Comments on Condoms Are Wrong and Irresponsible: Nathan Geffen and Rebecca Hodes: 20 March 2009: opinion: Pambazuka.**

*Following the Pope's discouraging comments in Cameroon over the use of condoms in relation to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, Nathan Geffen and Rebecca Hodes of Treatment Action Campaign charge that such papal views are misguided and fly in the face of evidence around the efficacy of both condom use and sex education for adolescents.*

On Tuesday 17 March, Pope Benedict XVI visited Cameroon and told reporters, 'You can't resolve [AIDS] with condoms... On the contrary, it increases the problem.' (Source: CNN) The Pope's comments are irresponsible. The evidence that consistent condom use is effective at reducing the risk of HIV transmission is incontrovertible. We've reprinted the abstract of a scientific meeting that analysed 138 peer-reviewed articles to determine the effectiveness of condoms at reducing the risk of contracting sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV. A key finding of the meeting was that the results of 'longitudinal studies of the sexual partners of HIV-infected persons indicate that consistent condom use reduces the risk of HIV/AIDS transmission by approximately 85%.' The evidence is considerable that abstinence-only programmes, apparently favoured by the Pope, are ineffective. The AIDS Research Institute of the University of California,

San Francisco, published a monograph in March 2002 that states:*An assessment of the peer-reviewed, published research reveals no evidence that abstinence-only programs delay sexual initiation or reduce STIs or pregnancy. By contrast, credible research clearly demonstrates that some comprehensive sex education, or 'abstinence-plus', programs can achieve positive behavioral changes among young people and reduce STIs, and that these programs do not encourage young people to initiate sexual activity earlier or have more sexual partners.*

The evidence shows that it is important to distribute condoms and that it is also important to provide sex education to adolescents, including accurate information on how to use condoms. In Khayelitsha, Cape Town's largest township, Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) activists distribute over 500,000 condoms every month. A dedicated Khayelitsha activist is nicknamed the 'Condom King'. A study conducted by Dr Virginia Azevedo proved that scaling-up the distribution of condoms to over a million a month in Khayelitsha resulted in a remarkable 50 per cent decline in STI incidence between 2004 and 2007.[1] This is further evidence of the efficacy of condoms as a means of preventing STI infection in poor, African communities. Preaching abstinence to many communities in Africa is alienating and irrelevant. Many sexual encounters in marginal communities with high rates of HIV infection are coercive or transactional. In contexts in which gender inequality is rife, to instruct women to abstain from sex or to remain faithful to only one partner demonstrates an ignorance of their sexual realities.

The South African Catholic Bishops Conference (SACBC) is a large provider of HIV services in South Africa, including antiretroviral treatment. It is concerning that the views of the leader of the Catholic Church are incongruent with the good work being done by the SACBC.

*\* Nathan Geffen and Rebecca Hodes are with South Africa's Treatment Action Campaign.*

*REFERENCES: [1] V. Azevedo, 'Scaling-up Male Condom Distribution in Cape Town Metro Region', poster presented at a Department of Health Conference in Johannesburg, 2009.*

## 88. HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER AND SOCIAL ISSUES

West Africa

**Nigeria: Our Ordeal as Albinos - Jake Epelle: Kemi Yesufu: 19 March 2009: interview: [Daily Independent](#) (Lagos).**

*Jake Epelle is the founder and Chief Executive Officer of a unique organisation, called the Albino Foundation. The foundation has four thousand members out of Nigeria's estimated two million-albino's population. Though evidently successful, Epelle, like many people with his kind of skin pigmentation has suffered discrimination. But he did not let*

*the treatment from those ignorant about albinism get to him. Epelle spoke with CORRESPONDENT, Kemi Yesufu, on albinism, his foundation and why he thinks albinism deserves special attention from government. Excerpts:*

**Why was the Albino Foundation set up? Have you achieved the objectives behind establishing the foundation?**The Albino Foundation was set up in 2006. We are still scratching the surface when it comes to the objectives of the foundation. We are still working on having more results. We visited the Honourable Minister for Women Affairs and Social Development because of a female albino who was raped nine years ago, and we think she deserves justice. Besides the child she has as a result of the incident wants to know his father, while the man responsible for the injustice is denying it. We have 14 indigent albinos whom we helped to treat themselves of skin cancer by convincing the Federal Government to pay for their treatment. The treatment would have cost each of them a million naira each. Up to the water and the food our members consumed during their treatment was taken care of by the Federal Government. We have also been able to carry out a number of social repairs in the sense that people whom we have carried our message to are beginning to change the way they look at albinos. All said and done I will say that we are living out our vision which is to provide good healthcare to albinos, change the wrong belief about albinos and stereotypes about albinism in Nigeria and the world at large. We are working both locally and globally to bring our vision to life. We have done quite a lot in terms of creating awareness about the health problems that albinos have. The most common is the skin cancer. But we are not stopping there. We are also doing a lot about society's perception of albinos because this affects us psychologically. We know that if society perceives albinos the right way, it will boost the morale of our members. Aside from helping albinos, health wise, we have also looked into the issue of economic empowerment. One of us, just a few days ago, got a role in a movie. We are happy about this because we want our members to be financially stable. Owing to limited resources, the foundation still cannot extend financial aid to many of our members. Most of the little financial aid we have been able to give came from me. I have four of our members benefiting from my scholarship. One of them just graduated from the school of Midwifery, while another one is still the same school. Yes, we have tall dreams but we are limited by funding. Everyday I sleep and wake up thinking about how to better the lives of albinos. Maybe, that is why I was created.

**You mentioned that albinos have to contend with certain health challenges most especially skin cancer. Aside helping a few of your members to access free treatment, what else has the Albino Foundation done in this regard?**One of the greatest things I have been able to achieve and which I work on each day is attracting help for albinos in need. We went as far as attracting the wife of the German president who came visiting our office last year. She came to see things for herself having partnered with her for some time. The wife of the German president said to me, "Jake, carry the cause of albinism to the world and tell them about the issues confronting albinos." You know, the issue of albinism has been underplayed for a long time. Albinism has long been swept under the rug. Albinism is not an issue in the United Nations, and it's not an issue in continental bodies. This is why I believe that we need to carry the crusade of albinism to the corners of the globe. Our crusade is yielding fruit

because for the first time in the history of democracy in the country, a bill on albinism is going to be read in both chambers of the National Assembly. We are co-sponsoring the bill with a House of Representatives member who shares our passion and vision for albinism. It is by creating awareness that people get to know that we are here to help them. A recent case is that of one gentleman from Onitsha who heard about the foundation and sent an email to us that he was dying of skin cancer. We responded by sending a letter to the national hospital, which then treated him for free. This man did not spend a penny of his money. He called me the other day, praising the foundation and I told him to give God the glory.

**Having talked about the health problems albinos face, how about the socio-cultural challenges confronting albinos?** There are a lot of socio-cultural problems that albinos face. The first one is the issue of opposite sex relationship. Most parents will not allow their children get married to an albino and vice-versa. This is a great problem. Not only has this led to painful separations of partners in a relationship, it has affected many albinos psychologically. We also have cases of albinos being abused, like the case of the young woman whom I told you earlier on, was raped and she has a nine-year-old son owing to the incident. The little boy now wants to know who his father is. Then we have workplace challenges, where albinos are sacked from work because of their skin type. They are told you are an albino you cannot see well, you don't have energy, so you cannot work here. Then they get sacked. The employer doesn't want to know that these albinos were employed in the first place because they had the prerequisite qualification or because they have a good track record. We have communities where albinos are ostracised. There are also communities where if a couple gives birth to an albino, they are treated like royalty. But both where albinos are rejected and where they are treated like kings and queens amount to a socio-cultural challenge. Because I look forward to the day albinos will be treated just like any other person, not with suspicion or undue reference. There are also cases of albinos with skin cancer who have been stigmatised. A particular case is that of one of our members whose landlord sent packing because of his disease with the excuse that he did not want other tenants or members of his family to contact the disease. But we all know that cancer is not contagious. So when you look at it you see that we have a great task ahead but I am not afraid because I have a God that is bigger than these problems.

**Have you faced some of the problems you just talked about?** Yes, from relationships to the workplace, I have come face to face with these problems. I don't know where to start. I have been sent out of a party because I am albino; a woman has rejected me because I am an albino. I have been sacked from the work place because I am an albino. This is why I can stand up for those who are going through these things now because I have suffered the same problems before. By standing up for them, I can help so they don't have to go travel the same road that I did.

**How did you rise above these problems so well that you now have enough to give others who suffer the same thing?** I refused to be bugged down by these problems. I work extremely hard, and sometimes I only sleep four hours a day. I have four offices in different countries and I have to make sure that they all are properly run. My message to

all albinos is simple, work hard so as to be successful and when you are successful the less you get stigmatised. I don't suffer overt discrimination. Some people may feel in their hearts that they don't want anything to do with me, but it doesn't bother me because those who see me don't reject me. They accept me due to the fact they perceive me to be successful.

**So, are you married to an albino?**No, I am not married to an albino.

**But do you have albino children?**No I don't for now, but I wish I do, so that I can teach people how to raise children who are born albinos. Maybe I will still have albino children.

**You complained earlier on that limited funding is an impediment to the operations of the Albino Foundation. How do you intend to improve on your funding so as to get help to the albinos in need?**Like I told you, most of what the foundation has been able to achieve comes from my donations. A few friends have helped in the past, same thing with friendly organisations but they haven't been regular. The last time we received any form of donations here was eight months ago. So I have to do the things we need to do and I have no regrets as long as God provides for me.

**How many members do you have in the Albino Foundation?**We have four thousand members, but this is a far cry from the two million albinos in Nigeria. We have 50 coordinators in the country, while we have three offices across the country. We don't have enough funds to expand our operations, but so far so good.

**From your experience here in the Albino Foundation, how can we as a people and the government help in ameliorating the sufferings of albinos?**The Federal Government needs to team up with us to create awareness on the issues affecting albinos. Just like they have done in case of HIV/AIDS where we have over four million people carrying the HIV virus, the Federal Government should support the establishment of an Albinism and Hyper pigmentation agency. Albinos need a voice; they need an agency to speak for them. We are also hoping to go a little further by creating awareness on climate change and how it affects skin pigmentation. Another segment of people whose skin defects have caused them to suffer stigmatisation are those suffering from vitiligo, a condition that causes a person with normal skin to start growing white. Some people even call it a disease but it is not. Some even equate it with leprosy but vitiligo is not leprosy. It is just like the same problem albinos have, that is the de-pigmentation of the skin.

**Gambia: Amnesty International Issues Statement: 20 March 2009:FOROYAA Newspaper (Serrekunda).**

Amnesty International has issued press release on Wednesday stating that up to 1,000 people in The Gambia have been kidnapped from their villages by "witch doctors", taken to secret detention centres and forced to drink hallucinogenic concoctions. The incidents are occurring in the context of a "witch- hunting campaign" that is spreading terror throughout the country. Amnesty International called on The Gambian government to put

an immediate stop to the campaign, investigate the incidents and bring those responsible to justice. Eyewitnesses and victims told Amnesty International that the "witch doctors", who they say are from neighbouring Guinea, are accompanied by armed security personnel and "green boys".

Amnesty International states that, according to information provided to them by victims and their relatives, "witch doctors" have been visiting villages with armed security and taking villagers they accuse of being "witches" - many of them elderly - by force, sometimes at gunpoint. They are then taken to secret detention centres. At the secret detention centres, where some have been held for up to five days, they are forced to drink unknown substances that cause them to hallucinate and behave erratically. Many are then forced to confess to being a witch. In some cases, they are also severely beaten, almost to the point of death.

The liquid they are forced to drink has led many to have serious kidney problems. Two people are known to have died of kidney failure after having been subjected to the ordeal. However, many people are telling Amnesty International that the "witch hunting" campaign will spread throughout the rest of the country. Hundreds of Gambians have already fled to the Casamance region in Senegal after their villages were attacked. The release also reported that on 8 March, Halifa Sallah, a prominent opposition figure who has written for the main opposition newspaper, Foroyya, about the activities of the witch-doctors, was arrested at his home. It added that he had since been charged with sedition and spying, and was in Mile II, the Central Prison in the Gambia.

### **Gambia: 'Witch Hunt' Shows Worsening Human Rights: 18 March 2009: IRIN.**

Dakar — Arbitrary kidnappings and beatings of citizens in The Gambia, allegedly involving President Yaya Jammeh's forces, signal a deterioration of human rights, says Amnesty International. Up to 1,000 people have been kidnapped by 'witch doctors' - from Guinea, rights activists say - since early February and taken to detention centres or to the President's farm in Kanilai, accompanied by the President's personal protection guards, the police and the army, according to an Amnesty International communiqué released on 18 March.

Amnesty says in its communiqué that witch doctors were invited to Gambia in early 2009 soon after the death of President Jammeh's aunt; the President reportedly believes witchcraft was used in her death. An unknown number of Gambians have fled across the border to Senegal's southern Casamance region and Amnesty International staff fear the hunts may expand. "We are concerned the hunt may spread to other villages," said Tania Bernath, Gambia researcher at Amnesty International in London. "For such a small country, with a small population [1.5 million], there are lots of human rights abuses [going on] on quite a big scale... We have great concern that the situation in The Gambia appears to be getting worse." Most Gambians have been "flabbergasted" by the hunt, Bernath told IRIN. "They say it is archaic and cannot believe it is going on in their country."

**Victims** Victims told the organisation they were held for up to five days and forced to drink herbal concoctions that made them hallucinate. Many said they were severely beaten, some at gunpoint, in many cases nearly to death. All have since been released."I was among several villagers who were forcefully abducted from home by a group of armed soldiers and some civilians on 9 March," Kebba Saneh\* from Makumbaya village in Kombo district told IRIN. "I was forced to drink drugs which made me unconscious. There was no way we could try to escape."Amnesty says two people have died from drinking the herbs, and several have been treated for harmful effects at the Royal Victoria Teaching Hospital in the Gambian capital Banjul.Lamin Jammeh\* said his stepmother was kidnapped in February and on release was hospitalised due to health problems related to the herbs. She died on 4 March.

**Government involvement** "We have no doubt these acts were condoned by the government because of the presence of the police, army and President's guards," Amnesty's Bernath told IRIN.Army spokespeople have denied involvement in the kidnappings and the President's office has remained silent on the issue, say local reporters.Many of the victims came from the Foni Jarrol district, near the President's farm, in the southwest on the border with Senegal, according to Amnesty.News of the kidnappings emerged on 5 February when opposition leader Halifa Sallah wrote about them in the local Foroyaa newspaper. Sallah was arrested on 15 March and charged with spying and sedition. Currently in prison in Banjul, he awaits a trial set for 25 March."The charges are directly linked to his speaking out against the kidnaps," said Bernath.Sallah has been detained several times since President Jammeh came to power in 1994.Amnesty International's 2008 State of the World's Human Rights report alleges a string of illegal detention, disappearances, torture and extrajudicial killings.In May 2008 President Jammeh threatened to expel or behead homosexuals in the country - comments he later retracted.Civil society is weak in The Gambia, Bernath said. "No one acts, no one resists because there is so much fear about [the consequences]."Pointing to the latest kidnappings market vendor Fatou in Banjul told IRIN: "It is people's rights that are worst hit. The international community should speak out against this inhuman act." *\*Not their real names*

**Sierra Leone: SPA Coalition Condemns Impunity: Sahr Morris Jr.:20 March 2009: [Concord Times](#) (Freetown).**

Concord — Special Programme on Africa (SPA) coalition, a group of six Sierra Leonean human rights organizations implementing the 'accessing justice in rural Sierra Leone programme' with support from Amnesty International, Netherlands, has condemned impunity in its entirety.It comprises campaign for good governance; Amnesty International Sierra Leone, centre for democracy and human rights in Makeni; Bo peace and reconciliation movement, rehabilitation and development agency Sierra Leone.

The project operates in five pilot districts of Bombali, Tonkolili, Port Loko, Bo and Pujehun since 2007 and aims at increasing access to justice for disadvantaged rural people, particularly women.Speaking to journalists at his Tengbeh Town office, programme officer of SPA coalition Bockarie Marrah intimated that human rights abuses



and violations against women and children were on the increase across the country especially in the rural areas. According to Marrah, this trend was largely due to the impunity that many perpetrators have enjoyed. He noted that despite the promulgation of a law against the initiation of children into secret societies, some people were still engaged in forceful initiation of children into the 'bondo' society, notably in Bombali, Tonkolili and the Western Area. Marrah mentioned an incident that was reported to him on Friday March 13 from Kissi Kama chiefdom in Kailahun district where five children under age five and a two-month old baby were forcefully taken from their parents with the motive of initiating them into the 'bondo' society. They were, however, but were saved by the timely intervention of a combined team of Police, human rights activists and traditional leaders from Kailahun town.

Marrah also revealed that the soweis' reason for the act was that the parents of those children had been involved in open quarrels and had used obscene language in the process so they had to give their babies to be initiated as a fine. The programme officer further narrated a series of human rights abuses which the coalition is currently monitoring. The chaining of a thirteen-year-old school girl in Matotoka in September 2008; the beating up of a seventeen-year-old boy allegedly by a police officer in December 2008 in Makeni; the detention of a suckling mother in handcuffs for three days in a dilapidated house for failing to produce Local Tax receipt in February 2009 in Masingbi; and the chaining of a woman by a chief in Kono district in December 2008 were a few examples of documented abuses in which the alleged perpetrators continue to enjoy impunity. Marrah further highlighted a series of sexual abuses and domestic violence cases which the SPA coalition partners had documented and reported in their areas of operation. They include rape, sexual harassment, wife battery, and neglect, and in most cases, perpetrators have not been prosecuted. This situation is unacceptable and can not be tolerated by the SPA coalition says the programme officer.

Since its inception, the SPA coalition's areas of intervention include training of professional trainers, human rights awareness raising; improving the dispensation of justice through community justice workshops; training chiefdom authorities and local courts personnel in the administration of customary law; organizing a series of interactive dialogue meetings with soweis on the abandonment of harmful cultural practices and promoting women's and children's rights through participatory drama. He elaborated on some of the hallmarks of the coalition's intervention which include the existence of a network of sixteen professional trainers and 108 human rights activists nationwide, active discussions on human rights now ongoing in many communities in the pilot districts, women have started challenging injustice in rural communities, and press statements and radio interviews have contributed to bringing the plight of disadvantaged women and girls to the attention of all stakeholders. Mr Marrah reiterated that despite these successes, the Coalition was still facing the challenge of impunity and therefore called on civil society and the international community to join forces to help enhance women's access to justice.

**Sierra Leone: War Crime Convicts to Serve Sentences in Rwanda: James Karuhanga: 19 March 2009: The New Times.**

Nyarugenge — Rwanda and the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL), a UN approved tribunal for masterminds of the crimes committed during the latter's past civil war Wednesday signed an agreement that will see some of the convicts completing their sentences in Rwanda. This came shortly after a visiting SCSL team concluded touring and inspecting country's detention facilities and, expressed their solid appreciation for the "quality of the facilities," an approval duly welcomed by government. "I want to express our positive sentiments towards this cooperation and tell you that this is in our view, part of our constant search for cooperation on the delivery of international justice," Foreign Minister Rosemary Museminali assured the delegation during the ceremony at her ministry. "Upon signing this agreement, we will commit to do our part, she noted. SCSL Registrar Herman Von Hebel underlined that his team had visited the detention facilities "which have been dedicated for the purpose of enforcing sentences of those people" convicted by international tribunals such as SCSL and, was impressed after touring the state-of-the-art prison in Mpanga, in Southern Province.

"I was very much impressed by the quality of the facilities. They meet international standards, or better put, they exceed international standards," he emphasized, underscoring his observations were based on "further consultations" during his stay. Von Hebel added that he was convinced that the current "maximum of eight" SCSL convicted persons will receive "an enforcement which meets international standards." Museminali reiterated that Rwanda has worked vigorously to ensure the delivery of justice but also sought the support of international bodies and other countries. "We feel that what we are doing here today reinforces that endeavour. It also emphasizes our commitment - giving our own contribution to international justice," she said. The signing was also witnessed by Justice Minister Tharcisse Karugarama, who pointed out that the agreement signifies Rwanda's modest contribution to cooperation in international justice.

He noted that the convicts have a place where they can serve their sentences while all their rights are respected in accordance with international standards. He stressed that Rwanda's current contribution is supported by the desire, "in the context of Rwanda's history" for the whole world to cooperate in enforcement of sentences against crimes against humanity and, that cooperation in all other aspects of justice to ensure that "people are brought to book." The UN approved the SCSL in 2002 and, unlike the Arusha-based International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), it is based in Sierra Leone where the atrocities were committed. It is believed that because SCSL combines both international and domestic law, it fronts a new generation of international tribunals which experts say will deliver justice "faster and at a lower cost" than its equivalents for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia.

**Nigeria: Ending Violence Against Women: Tayo Agunbiade: 19 March 2009: opinion: This Day.**

Lagos — The struggle to end violence against women is clearly still a long way off. Perhaps for this reason the theme of the recently celebrated International Women's Day was "Women and Men United to end Violence against Women and Girls". And rightly so too. Violence against women is an every day occurrence and it comes in several forms.

While the most commonly identified are domestic violence and rape, there have since been several more specific forms of acts identified as gender -based violence. These include women in conflict situations, trafficking in women, widowhood rites, early marriage, female genital mutilation, sexual assault etc. Our women have had these acts inflicted upon them by male folk under the guise of religion, cultural practices and other forms of social discrimination. Others are a result of merely inflicting mental, economic and physical superiority over a woman. The patriarchal nature of many of our societies permits women to be subjected to many of these practices. In some communities the elders will look you straight in the eye and say that what the world terms as violence is actually a valued cultural practice. Take female genital mutilation for instance. It is erroneously believed to be a way to curb promiscuity amongst young girls. As a matter of fact the practice has proven to be a health hazard and hindrance to a fulfilling sexual life.

Sadly these days there is another naked display of violence against our women is also demonstrated through heavy handed tactics of some of the security agents. This is an emerging form of violence as a result of women's more active and dynamic participation in civic action. In 2005 a group known as the Concerned Mothers of Nigeria went on a peaceful protest to call attention to the spate of domestic airline mishaps in the country. The protest is remembered more for the treatment the women received at the hands of the police. They were rough handled and this led to some of them sustaining injuries and being hospitalized. It is on record that the then Inspector-General of Police Mr Sunday Ehindero apologised the women. Apologies may be soothing in the short term but are not an effective tool in the fight against gender-based violence. The incident raised a few eyebrows and then became buried amongst other national issues at the time. It made the headlines for a few days and was consigned to the dustbin of history. A few weeks ago a similar incident occurred in Ogun State.

In Abeokuta, a group of women went on a peaceful march to protest what they perceived to be an injustice being perpetuated against female law maker Hon Titi Oseni of the Ogun State House of Assembly. Unfortunately the protest also turned very ugly. Members of the police in a bid to disperse the women tear-gassed, beat and chased them with dogs. Footage of a mobile policeman wielding a baton and chasing one of the women demonstrated the extent of the brutality. Many of the women including the elderly amongst them sustained injuries and were left breathless and disoriented from the effects of the tear gas. The women were neither armed nor threatening and it was quite disheartening to see them bloodied, battered and bruised after the authorities had dispersed them. The danger of women being confronted with violence from the hands of the police during peaceful protests is that such behaviour is bound to discourage them from participating in civic action. Active participation in civic action and exercising of fundamental human rights will be grossly stifled and undermined by the over -zealous response of security agents. If care is not taken the democratic space will be the poorer for it without the voices of women being heard. Should such cracks be allowed to widen within our democracy?

In the critical debate about violence against women, it is very clear that the fight can only be won in joint partnership with men. Hence it makes perfect sense to call upon men to

become partners in the journey to fight some of these heinous practices. This conviction is clearly demonstrated in this year's theme. But from recent events in our nation a lot of work still needs to be done. While the International Women's Day calls attention to the daily acts of violence being perpetuated against women, there still needs to be sustained campaigns to combat gender-based violence. It is not enough for us to speak about it for only a few days a year and expect massive changes in attitudes within society. For instance what stops the upper echelons of the female officers in the Nigeria Police drawing attention to the need for gender studies to be incorporated into the curriculum at the Police College ? Such developments can actually cut across all the armed forces, and other uniformed personnel such as the Customs and Excise, Immigration, Civil Defence etc. indeed all of society should be the target of massive awareness campaigns.

Incorporating gender awareness programmes and initiatives into aspects of our lives, education and society in general has become imperative. We have witnessed sustained campaigns in the fight against narcotics, road carnage, HIV/AIDS etc. This is one campaign that the corporate world must support and help in the fight to eradicate. Many of our corporate organisations appear to have converged towards the more 'glamorous' social and health concerns. A few of our more prominent corporate companies have thrown their weight behind dancing competitions, talent hunt shows, TV reality shows etc. How about the flagging up of anti- violence messages on their products or partnering with civil society to jump start a nation-wide awareness campaign? Some of our financial institutions have created gender-friendly services and products. This is ostensibly to improve the economic lives of women. How about supporting the fight against the violence many women and girls suffer? What about taking up the cause of violence against women as part of their corporate social responsibility profile? So many women occupy top positions in the corporate world do they not feel that the battle against gender-based violence is worthy off their support?

Violence against women has been described in Article 1 of the United Nations Declaration on the elimination of violence against women defines violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in public or private life". Women who form more than half of the population have made so many contributions to national development and have the potential to do so much more. We love to celebrate our female role models. By the same token we should continuously highlight the causes that hold women back and provoke so much suffering and pain.

Speaking at a press conference the Ogun State Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Welfare Ms Jokotade Odunuga appealed to the media to be "a voice for women so that all hands are on deck to ensure that acts of violence against women are totally eradicated from our society". What can be more truthful than this?The fight against acts of violence on women can only be successfully fought if we all join hands. Women and men can stand side by side on this issue and present a united front. Moreover the campaigns should not be once- in a'- while but a long and sustained one. This is an issue that should be kept burning in the public [domain.tayo\\_agunbiade@yahoo.com](mailto:domain.tayo_agunbiade@yahoo.com)

## **Burkina Faso: Child Brides Fight Child Marriage:17 March 2009:IRIN.**

Ouagadougou — It was not enough to argue that girls could not legally marry in Burkina Faso before age 17, or even that their lives might be put at risk. Tethered to tradition, some families and community leaders steadfastly resisted multimillion dollar efforts to wipe out child marriage, especially in the Muslim-dominant Sahel region in the north. UN Population Fund (UNFPA) has given US\$7 million dollars to fight child marriage in Burkina Faso since 2002, but child rights organisations noted that in five of the country's 13 regions, the fatal practice has persisted. The Sahel region, which has the country's highest incidence of child marriages, also has the country's highest incidence of the deadly fistula..

In February 2009, UNFPA, UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the governmental National Population Advisory Council launched a two-year \$1.6 million peer education, job training and health services project to bolster girls' overall security- both before and after marriage. "We do not mean to eradicate the phenomenon in two years, but we will make sure we have set up [a core group of advocates] to better fight early marriage because the practice is well-rooted in culture," Siaka Traoré, UNFPA's communications officer told IRIN.

**Married girls** He said for the first time in the fight against child marriage in the Sahelian country, married girls are being trained to counsel and educate other girls. The UN-led project has counted more than 400,000 girls aged 12-19 years old -some already married - living in 24 "high risk" zones throughout the country. These areas have the highest occurrence of child marriage, as well as the highest rates of poverty, maternal and infant mortality, and unemployment and school abandonment, according to the government.

The project has budgeted US\$255,000 to help girls- both married and unmarried- from cash-strapped families stay in school through giving them scholarships for books, supplies, fees, and bicycles for students in remote areas. In addition, savings clubs and small-business "start up kits" are intended to protect girls' rights and economic security, regardless of their marital status. Funded by the UN Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS), the project aims to prevent girls who face "limited mobility, constraints on their time, [and] lack of autonomy" from falling into extreme poverty and further deprivation. Primary school director Adama Sawadogo in Burkina Faso's northern village of Gankouna told IRIN once girls leave his school, it becomes much harder for officials to protect them. "If girls leave schools as early as at this age, how do we expect them to know their rights and duties?"

**Door-to-door** "We do not have the resources to blanket the country and will count on peer educators and community leaders," said UNFPA's Traoré. The two-year project aims to train 144 young married women to encourage both married and unmarried girls to attend school or work, seek health care and not marry early. In addition, 120 community "opinion leaders" will be recruited to denounce child marriage. But Traoré said long-held cultural beliefs cannot easily be dismantled. "You cannot change behaviours by decree." Meanwhile, he said young child brides will suffer less with access to lifesaving

health care, credit and legal information on their rights."You have to work at this over the long term," said Traoré.

Southern Africa

**Zimbabwe: International Community Demands 'Rule of Law': Tichaona Sibanda: 20 March 2009: analysis: [SW Radio Africa](#) (London).**

There must be a return to the rule of law in Zimbabwe, the international community has said, in reference to Robert Mugabe's call for US\$5bn in international aid to revive the country's shattered economy. Launching the inclusive government's Short-Term Emergency Recovery Programme (STERP) in Harare on Thursday, Mugabe appealed to the 'friends of Zimbabwe' to come to the country's aid. But the friends Mugabe was appealing to in Southern Africa and the Far East have not responded and have remained generally quiet. But those that can help revive the country's economy are demanding democratic reforms before they will inject any cash. The same Western countries Mugabe regards with disdain have donated humanitarian aid worth hundreds of millions of dollars in the last 10 years.

The visiting Danish minister for Cooperation and Development, echoed the same sentiments on Thursday when she said Zimbabwe must restore the rule of law and stop the fresh wave of farm invasions, if aid is to flow. I underlined to the Minister (Herbert Murerwa, Agriculture minister) that the evictions of farmers from their land and the lack of respect for Bilateral Investment Protection Agreements and the invasion of land without compensation is unacceptable,' Danish Minister Ulla Tornaes said. Tornaes arrived in Harare on Tuesday on a mission to assess progress in the implementation of the country's power-sharing agreement between Mugabe, Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai and Deputy Premier Arthur Mutambara. She will also explore areas of cooperation between the two countries. She has already met Acting Prime Minister Thokozani Khupe and Foreign Affairs Minister Simbarashe Mumbengegwi, and was expected to meet other ministers during her stay in Zimbabwe this week.

Political analyst Bekithemba Mhlanga told us the Western countries are essentially demanding that the inclusive government immediately strengthens the rule of law, which is key to ensuring long term security and stability in the country. Mhlanga said democracy and the rule of law provides the foundation for any sustainable economic development, adding that there cannot be democracy, let alone social democracy, without the rule of law, which is meaningful only if there is equal treatment of citizens. During the last 10 years, laws in the country were only applied selectively. Law breakers from ZANU PF always go free, while the authorities have always dealt harshly with MDC officials and supporters.

The economic blueprint launched on Thursday recognises that the anchor to a new Zimbabwe needs to address not only economic issues, but also issues around the rule of law, a new people driven constitution, and entrenched property rights. Finance Minister Tendai Biti said reforms in the country should be commenced as a matter of urgency. He

also said STERP, like the GPA, recognises the importance of creating a vibrant and free media as an important part of democratising institutions. This entails liberalising the air waves, freeing the media, and ensuring that plural voices are heard through both electronic and print media, consistent with Article 19 of the GPA. Although the words are good, action is needed soon to back them up.

**Swaziland: Escalating Violence Against Women in Country: Mantoe Phakathi:18 March 2009:interview:Inter Press Service News Agency.**

Mbabane — *Mantoe Phakathi interviews HLOBISILE DLAMINI-SHONGWE, gender activist*

*Still wearing a campaign t-shirt with the slogan "FED UP: with violence against women", Dlamini-Shongwe, the public relations officer for the Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA) is fresh from the Nov. 25 launch of the 16 days activism against gender-based violence at Jubilee Park in Manzini.*

**IPS: Today you were launching the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence which ends on Dec. 10. What do you hope to achieve through this campaign?**Hlobisile Dlamini-Shongwe: Basically it is when we look back and take stock of the achievements in the interventions against gender-based violence and also take stock of the level of violence in the country in terms of whether we are increasing or going down considering the statistics. It's also a time to bring people together and say hey it's not every day perhaps that you want to listen to us and take action, but during the 16 days let's be together and remember those who died through violence. This is a chance also to let society pledge that we are not going to engage in violent actions and also not condone violence done by others.

**The observation by the Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA) is that violence against women and girls in the country is on the increase despite efforts to curb this scourge. How is the level of gender-based violence in the country?**Disappointingly the numbers keep going up. We now talk of an average of 13 cases reported every week and, of these, 80 percent is violence perpetrated against women and children, particularly girl children.

**What are the reasons for the continued women violence despite the number of interventions against gender-based violence?**The increase in numbers is two-fold. One it could be fact that previously, which was before SWAGAA was formed, people rarely reported cases on gender-based violence because it was considered an internal issue kept within the family. But now a lot of people are coming out to report. Secondly, it could be that violence is escalating among society for a number of reasons.

**What could those reasons be?**It is not just the escalation of violence that is disturbing, but we're now seeing more and more of brutal violence than ever before, which is very worrying. This can be attributed to a number of factors such as social depression. As society we're at a period where we're very depressed because of the high rates of

unemployment, poverty, HIV/AIDS and unfortunately we are unable to deal with the issues and therefore we resort to violence. The other critical issue is that there is too much access to weapons in the country. Even school children are found in possession of pocket knives which they end up using in violent actions. Lastly, the law is a bit too lax in terms of addressing gender-based violence which is why people go on perpetrating this crime.

**While we're on the issue of laws, what kind of laws does the country need to accelerate the fight against gender-based violence?** There are number of loopholes regarding laws on violence in the country. Currently we have rape defined by the law as an unlawful sexual encounter with a woman and this leaves out boys who have been sodomised. We have a law dating back to 1920 where a case of a woman who has been battered by her husband is considered common assault which is a very minor offence. Given the rate at which such cases happen, we feel they should be moved to a higher level. According to the law, a child's statement is not enough evidence in cases of rape, there must be an adult who has witnessed this act. We feel a child's statement is enough to convict a perpetrator. In the era of HIV/AIDS, there is still no law in Swaziland that deals with marital rape yet we know that it's difficult for women to negotiate for safe sex yet there is no law which a woman would use against her husband who has raped her. This makes women to be even more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. Another critical matter is the delay in bringing alleged perpetrators to court.

**How does the delay in justice affect rape cases, especially among children?** Today we've seen cases of children who were raped when they were eight years old but three to four years down the line the matter has not been brought to court. Perpetrators end up being freed because the children forget some of the things as they grow older. You find that there also many contradictions in evidence - skinny dark man is no longer the grey-haired fat man who was arrested five years ago.

**HIV/AIDS prevalence remains high in the country. Thirty-one percent of women as opposed to 20 percent of men in the age group of 15-49 years are infected with HIV. What is the connection between HIV/AIDS and gender-based violence?** There is a strong link between gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS. In all the eight years that I've worked for SWAGAA I've never come across a rape case where the perpetrator has used a condom. Most women are physically abused and they fail to negotiate for safe sex and, what's worse, marital rape is not a crime in Swaziland.

**Recently we've seen rising numbers of property grabbing where families of people who've died come and forcefully take away property from orphans and widows.** Property grabbing is becoming the order of the day. Unfortunately, we don't have a comprehensive social welfare structure where children and widows can run to have their problems addressed. Right now we see a lot of orphans and widows being kicked out of their homes or have their properties taken away from them. There is little that is done to help them.

**Namibia: Training to Stop Violence: 20 March 2009: Namibia Economist.**



Windhoek — With the aim of reducing violence against women and girls in the country, Women's Action for Development (WAD), in collaboration with the Ministry of Safety and Security as well as the University of Namibia (UNAM) on Wednesday launched a country-wide training project. WAD trainers will undergo a two-week training workshop before going to the 107 constituencies of the country to conduct workshops on the reduction of violence against women and girls. "After this training workshop, which will be conducted over a period of two weeks, a total of 107 WAD trainers will have been prepared and trained by various UNAM lecturers and WAD, to conduct 214 workshops in all 107 constituencies of the country," said WAD Executive Director, Veronica De Klerk. She urged all interested stakeholders to participate in the training workshops. "I therefore appeal to all decision-makers, community leaders and the communities at large to attend, interact and support these important training workshops, in order to start the process of rooting out this social evil in society," De Klerk said.

Professor Osmund Mwandemele, the Pro-Vice Chancellor of UNAM who also spoke at the event, said the university is putting measures in place that are aimed at reducing violence against women on campus. "A policy on sexual harassment has been put in place. We are educating and training students to openly talk about sexual harassment and violence on and outside campus," he said. He said the action is inspired by the hope of reducing violence on campus and society as a whole.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Somalia: Somaliland Editor Sentenced to Five Months in Jail:18 March 2009: [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe).**

The editor of an independent newspaper in Somalia's breakaway republic of Somaliland has been sentenced to five months in jail, Radio Garowe reports. Mr. Mohamed Abdi "Urad," editor of the Yool weekly newspaper, was arrested by police on Feb. 27 in Hargeisa, the capital of Somaliland. In court, Mr. Urad was charged with operating an "illegal newspaper" and "publishing false reports" by the attorney-general, our correspondent reported. Further, the Yool newspaper has been ordered to shut down. Relatives of Mr. Urad called the sentence unfair and demanded an appeal. Mr. Urad is well-known in Somaliland journalism circles, as he once served as the editor of the independently-owned Jamhuuriya daily newspaper.

Somaliland's government has tough restrictions against the free press, including a complete ban on independent radio stations. However, newspapers and Websites operate freely in the breakaway region as source of independent reporting. Somaliland declared independence from Somalia in 1991 but has not been recognized internationally.

**Somalia: Islamist Official Calls for Islamist Insurgents to Release Aid Workers.19 March 2009: [Shabelle Media Network](#) (Mogadishu).**

Somalia — Mohamed Ibrahim Bilal, a chairman of the Islamic council of Amal has called for Islamist insurgents on Thursday to release all the aid workers detained in the

country. Mr. Bilal told Shabelle radio that most of the aid workers are detained in the south and central Somalia which are manned by the Somali Islamist insurgents and he called for the Islamist insurgents to free the aid workers to help the Somali people and give them food supply as soon as possible. On the other hand the chairman condemned the aid agencies for mismanaging the helpings intended for the people saying that they use the helping money for renting expensive hotels in the Kenyan capital Nairobi and flying airplanes through the world. The statement of Mr. Bilal comes as recently kidnapped aid workers were released from Waajid district in Bakool region in southern Somalia.

Central Africa

**Rwanda: Genocide Commemorations to Be Held Countrywide at Cell Level: Gilbert Ndikubwayezu: 18 March 2009: The New Times.**

Kigali — The National Commission for the fight against Genocide (CNLG) has announced that the forthcoming week-long commemoration activities will be held at Cell level all over the country so as to involve all Rwandans. With three weeks to go before April 7, officials at the one-year old commission say that preparations are on track, calling on all efforts to make the event a success. Speaking to Members of Parliament in Kimihurura on Tuesday, CNLG Executive Secretary Jean de Dieu Mucyo, noted that 15 years after the genocide, a lot remains to be done during the commemoration period, a process he thinks should be continuous. "We shouldn't be remembering genocide only during that week (from April 7 to 14)," he told the lawmakers urging them to help the commission in organising public lectures for ordinary citizens during the commemoration time.

He explained that having the commemoration activities at Cell level will help residents share the history of genocide in their respective localities, a fact that can help them know exactly what happened and those responsible. Mucyo also challenged lawmakers on the role they should play by writing on the genocide and helping people willing to write, through which he said the International Community will know exactly what happened in the country. A number of concerns raised by MPs reflected dissatisfaction on the way different genocide memorials are managed, on top of remains of victims across the country that are yet to be laid to rest.

It was also noted that there is need to dispense justice to genocide survivors, by punishing those who committed the atrocities and taking care of survivors, especially the vulnerable, including finding shelters for them and paying school fees for students. Parliamentarians also expressed concern over the fact that to date, the real number of the victims is still unknown, as well as the number of orphans who live on their own. Meanwhile, commission explained that it has plans for taking the commemoration activities outside the Rwandan borders through the country's Diaspora, Rwandan Embassies and students in various universities overseas. At the national level, this year's official event will be held at Nyanza in Kicukiro, a place where thousands of Tutsis were massacred after being abandoned by UN peacekeepers.

**Central Africa: UN Registers Over 5,000 Central Africans Uprooted By Violence:18 March 2009:UN News Service.**

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has registered more than 5,200 refugees in Chad who fled intensified fighting between Government forces and rebels in the north of their native Central African Republic (CAR) last December. These refugees are sheltering in the village of Daha in south-eastern Chad, roughly one kilometre from the border with the CAR. UNHCR and the World Food Programme (WFP) have distributed food to refugees this week, marking the second time they have received rations since their arrival in Chad.

Over 100 children have been enrolled at the local school and classes have started in two new facilities built by the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), which has also trained teachers. In addition, the agency has begun handing out high-protein biscuits to all children in the two camps in Daha, while it has begun constructing five wells for both refugees and the host population. Due to wide-spread fighting and armed banditry in recent years in the CAR, some 200,000 Central Africans have been either internally displaced by the violence or forced to live as refugees in neighbouring Chad and Cameroon.

**Congo-Kinshasa: Villages Abandoned as Militia Rampage in the East:19 March 2009:IRIN.**

Kinshasa — Whole villages are being abandoned as civilians flee attacks by Rwandan Hutu militia and Ugandan rebels in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, just weeks after joint army operations to oust the militias ended. "[On] Monday and Tuesday [16 and 17 March], the FDLR [Forces démocratiques pour la libération du Rwanda] attacked a FARDC [national army] position and burned some villages ... causing massive population displacement," Joseph Malikidogo, president of the North Kivu civil society, said. The FDLR comprises militias, some of whom are blamed for the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

The DRC government invited the Rwandan and Ugandan armies to North Kivu and Orientale provinces, respectively, to help quell the FDLR and Ugandan rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) threat in the east. The LRA is blamed for attacks on civilians in parts of Southern Sudan and Orientale Province. Since the end of the operations, hundreds of civilians have come under attack, with villages looted and women raped. The Rwandan army left on 25 February while the Ugandan army pulled out on 15 March. "The situation ... is characterised by a large number of population movements due to multiple FDLR attacks, particularly in the north ... the situation in Haut-Uele and in part of Bas-Uele [Orientale] is reminiscent of the one in the province of North Kivu," Nestor Yombo Djema, an information officer with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), told IRIN. Some of the FDLR militia had regrouped in Lubero, Walikale and Masisi, in North Kivu, and clashed with the FARDC, according to the spokesman for the UN Mission in the DRC (MONUC), Lt. Col Jean-Paul Dietrich.

"The FDLR are still in their hundreds and they always pose a threat to the population even though, according to different sources, the joint army operation weakened their capacity," said Dietrich. MONUC is to launch anti-FDLR operations with the army. According to government spokesman Lambert Mende, remnants of the armed groups were still harming the population. At least 8,000 people have been displaced in Lubero, 14,000 west of Musienene, and 17,500 in Kirumba in North Kivu where some returns have also been recorded, according to humanitarian organisations. The number of Congolese refugees has also increased by 7,622 since January. Rumours of attacks had also contributed to displacement in places like Kayna, North Kivu, where people had fled, only to return home later, said Yombo of OCHA. The FDLR had also displaced civilians in South Kivu. "In the past three weeks, the FDLR, which fled the joint operation [in North Kivu], has driven away at least 7,600 people from their villages north of Kalonge," he said. Some of the FDLR and newly integrated FARDC units were reportedly also kidnapping civilians for ransom and taxing farmers to access their fields.

**LRA attacks** Meanwhile, in the northern territory of Dungu in Orientale, civilians were still fleeing LRA attacks. "The LRA attacks on villages and civilians have displaced the population and complicated [the provision of] humanitarian assistance," he said. Medical NGO Médecins Sans Frontières Switzerland pulled out of Banda, Haut Uele, after the LRA attacked and pillaged its base on 5 March. About 20,000 people fled Banda, Yombo said. Oxfam GB was also forced to suspend an IDP verification exercise in Lubero following obstruction by FARDC soldiers' wives, while MSF Holland suspended its activities in Kitchanga. In addition, aid convoys were unable to use the roads, leaving thousands of people without assistance, although generally incidents targeting aid organisations have decreased in North Kivu.

## 89. REFUGEES, IDPs AND MIGRATION

### West Africa

**Nigeria: 'Citizens to Benefit From South Africa's New Visa Regime'** **Lola Adewoyin: 19 March 2009: This Say.**

Lagos — South African High Commissioner to Nigeria, Kingsley Mamabolo, yesterday assured Nigerians that his country was working on a new visa regime that would simplify the Mamabolo, who said this in Lagos, at the Nigerian South Africa Chamber of Commerce breakfast meeting in Lagos, described Nigeria as a great country whose contributions to democracy and end of apartheid in South Africa could not be forgotten in a long while. He urged both countries to look towards each other and save themselves from the global economic crisis and work towards strengthening bilateral relations to make both countries better.

Also at the occasion, Regional Director, Africa and Domestic Markets, South Africa Tourism, Phumi Dhlomo, said his agency was working closely with government, to remove visa restrictions and encourage more tourists to visit South Africa. He urged Nigerians to disregard the last xenophobic attack, which he said was not the general

feeling of South Africans towards Nigerians and assured that the government had put in all efforts to ensure that such do not happen again. Also speaking, Head, North Central and West Africa, South African Airways, Aaron Munetsi, said the two agencies of government were working together to encourage Nigerians to visit South Africa for leisure, medical tourism and for business, with an assurance that they would get value for their money.

Munetsi said hitherto, the bilateral agreement between both countries was allowed four flights per week, but this year, it has been increased to 10, to cater for the increase number of Nigerian tourist to the country and urged Nigerians to make the most of the opportunity. South African Tourism Storyteller, Chief Sunny Iroche, advised Nigerians to explore South Africa, and discover that most of their reasons for travelling to Europe and the Americas are within the continent at far less cost. He also urged those who could afford it to invest in real estate in South Africa and discover the financial wisdom in doing so.

### **Nigeria: 'Why U.S. Deported 65 Nigerians': 16 March 2009: This Day.**

Lagos — The Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS), Lagos State Command, on Sunday confirmed that it had received the 65 Nigerians deported from the US last week.

The Comptroller of the command, Mr Ayo Oredipe, told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Lagos that the deportees, consisting of 59 males and six females, started arriving from March 12. He said that they were deported for 19 offences, ranging from rape, fraud, robbery and overstaying to sexual misdemeanour. Oredipe said the offences also included the blaring of car horns, playing of loud music in their cars and over-speeding.

"Many of them are ignorant of what constitutes an offence because those things are taken for granted in Nigeria," he said. The comptroller said that the deportees would soon be handed over to the police for prosecution. NAN reports that more than 30 Nigerians were in February deported from the Republic of Ireland. Meanwhile, the NIS has prosecuted four persons for allegedly providing false information to obtain the Nigerian e-passport.

The Passport Control Officer in the command, Mr Chris Gaduya, who disclosed this to NAN on Sunday, said that the four culprits were arrested between January and March this year. He said that a nine-year-old boy, who had earlier been issued with a passport in Lagos, re-applied for another passport in Kano through his parents with falsified information. "The applicants will change their names, ages, and location as well as changing their signatures." But the computerised system of issuing passports will make the issue of multiple passports impossible as the thumbprint will detect it," Gaduya said. He said that most applicants wanted to obtain multiple passports so that they could obtain multiple visas to several countries.

### **Nigeria: Bakassi - Relief for Displaced Natives: Mary Ekah: 18 March 2009: This Day.**

Lagos — The headlines screamed "Over 700 families displaced" "5000 children exposed to risks of being displaced" "Bakassi: About 800 lose their Homeland" "Over 700 families set for resettlement", "Over 300,000 people displaced in Bakassi". For a long time, the Bakassi issue dominated the headlines in the media. It became, for most of that period, their cover stories. Some made scoops out of it. Significantly, in all of these, statistics were their common denominator. However, for the Wife of Governor, Cross River State, Mrs. Obioma Liyel Imoke, the Bakassi issue is more than mere statistics. She believes that the lives of the men, women and children that are exposed to several vulnerabilities make it imperative for intervention so the basic comfort of life can be provided for them. For her, these are human beings that are involved and "it could have been anyone."

Mrs. Imoke feels terrible that in addition to losing their ancestral homeland, these people are being traumatised psychologically due to no fault of theirs and expressed fear that people in this condition are not likely to contribute to national development. This is what has informed her humanitarian response to the displacement and resettlement of the men, women and children from that part of the world. She coordinated a response that was filled with love, compassion, and empathy. She did most of it without the klieglights of television cameras. She did not believe in attracting attention to herself in this particular matter.

She saw it as an opportunity to render service to humanity. She deployed every available resource, especially in attracting the right kind of government attention and some strategic private sector assistance to helping the Bakassi people. Mrs. Imoke's agitation is towards providing sustainable relief to the displaced people of Bakassi, especially the women and children as a way of ameliorating their emotional and psychological burdens. They must be made to have a sense of belonging, she emphasizes. She has put a human face to the figures and statistics with her regular visitations to their camp in Ikang Primary School in Akpabuyo local government area, near Calabar, the state capital of Cross River State. She uses such visits to motivate and encourage them not to give up in life.

Mrs. Imoke also mobilised material support and gifts of comforts which she personally gave to provide relief to them. She gave the materials through her initiative, Partnership Opportunities for Women Empowerment Realisation, POWER, a non-governmental organisation she has facilitated to add value to the lives of women and children in the state. Some of the items she donated include hundreds of household equipment like foams, bathing buckets, blankets, wrappers, toiletries, slippers, clothes, gallons of palm oil, beverages, detergent among other basic things needed to survive. This helped, in no small measure, in giving hope and a sense of belonging to "our brothers, sisters and children" who happen to have found themselves in that situation. Those who, perhaps, would have taken advantage of their exposure to the risks they faced to cause trouble and probably taken to vices such as militancy or theft did not because of the efforts the government and people of goodwill made in responding to their need. By some providence, Cross River State has been spared the agony of youth restiveness that has characterised the Niger Delta region. The Cross River State government has also been

pre-emptively engaging the youths and has demonstrated efforts to respond to their challenges. Government takes the opinion of the youths very seriously in its planning processes.

It has, in demonstration of its commitment to respond to the peculiar needs of the youth, created a ministry of youth and sports. The Bakassi youth have not been left out in the programmes rolled out by the youth ministry on behalf of government. By the last count, Senator Liyel Imoke, Cross River governor distributed 208 housing units to the displaced families as part of the commitment government made to properly compensate them. He said that the state government had embarked on the second phase of the resettlement exercise, which would involve distribution of fishing nets, boats and other necessary materials and equipment to boost the socio economic life of the people. The Bakassi issue is a long standing international boundary issue between the Republic of Cameroun and Nigeria. However, a ruling of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague, on October 10, 2002, put the disputed area in the territory of Cameroun. Four years after the judgment of the ICJ, former President Olusegun Obasanjo and his Camerounian counterpart, Paul Biya, in 2006, signed the Green Tree Agreement at the UN Headquarters in New York. The agreement spelt out the modalities of Nigeria's withdrawal, including the August 14, 2008 handing over which was successfully done in Calabar, Cross River State.

Southern Africa

**Zimbabwe: South African Court Postpones Eviction of Refugees: 21 March 2009: The Herald.**

Harare — At least for now, the more than 3 500 Zimbabwean and other African refugees and asylum seekers, who are living at the Central Methodist Church in Johannesburg, South Africa, can heave a sigh of relief following a high court ruling yesterday that stakeholders should move in to avert the suffering instead of chasing them away with no alternative solution. The asylum seekers and refugees had been facing immediate eviction from the church following a high court application last week by Pitje Chambers law firm which occupies the building next to the church. Advocate George Bizos, representing the church and the refugees, defended the asylum seekers, a majority of them Zimbabweans.

As a result of strong submissions from Adv Bizos in the previous hearing, Johannesburg High Court judge Justice Mayor postponed the ruling to enable the church and other concerned stakeholders to find alternative accommodation without evicting the refugees. The high court ruled against the eviction of the refugees but proposed that stakeholders responsible for the protection of refugees and humanitarian aid agencies assist in dealing with the problem. In his submissions, Adv Bizos accused the government of South Africa, United Nations High Commission for Refugees, South Africa's Department of Home Affairs, Department of Housing and other human rights non-governmental organisations of failing to assist the displaced persons, among them women and child-ren.

"It is my submission, your worship, that all stakeholders in this case should have a role to play in order to lift the plight of refugees and asylum seekers at the church.

"My lord, the government of the Republic of South Africa, which is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on Universal Human Rights, has failed these displaced people," said Adv Bizos.

Pitje Chambers agreed to have the case postponed and be resolved out of court. Earlier on the Pitje Chambers had alleged that the refugees and asylum seekers staying at the church premises were too many and were, thus, posing a health threat to the church and surrounding areas.

The lawyers' firm also accused that the refugees and asylum seekers of littering and urinating at the streets while others relieved themselves and bathed in public between Small Street and Pritchard Streets.

Adv Bizos is widely known for defending former South African president Nelson Mandela from the Robben Island prison as well as representing Zimbabwe's Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai when he was facing treason charges in that country. -- CAJ News.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

### **Somalia: Thousands Displaced in Galgadud Attack: 16 March 2009: IRIN.**

Nairobi — An estimated 30,000 people were displaced in Wabho town in the Galgadud region following fighting between Islamist groups over the weekend, locals told IRIN.

"Most of the residents of Wabho and the surrounding villages fled after intense fighting between two groups," said Khalif Kariye, the deputy district commissioner of Eil Buur, 40km northwest of the area of fighting.

He said local people had helped the displaced with food and shelter.

Many residents and [members of the] diaspora have contributed money to buy food, but it was not enough," Kariye said, adding that water was a big problem. "We have, so far, been unable to deliver water because we don't have enough resources."

Those displaced fled to the countryside, "with some areas lacking even one water well", he said. "Hopefully the situation will stabilise and we can begin returning people but at the moment it is desperate."

A local journalist, who requested anonymity, said the fighting between the Al-Shabab and Ahlu Sunna Waljama'a (ASW) Islamist groups began on 14 March, with ASW trying to dislodge Al-Shabab from the area.



He said the fighting "was most intense on Sunday, with both sides using heavy weapons".

Fighting began in late December 2008, with ASW dislodging Al-Shabab from Dusamareb, the regional capital, and Guri-Eil. At least 146 people were killed and 231 injured according to human rights sources.

### **Lack of medical supplies**

Faisal Haji, a doctor at the Eil Buur Hospital, told IRIN the hospital - supported by locals in the diaspora - had run out of all supplies.

"The only thing we have plenty of is gauze," he said. "We really don't have much to help the serious injuries."

He said the injured who reached the hospital were a mix of combatants and civilians. "There are a number of villagers caught in the crossfire."

The area was reported to be calm on 16 March but the journalist told IRIN the two sides were still facing each other. "I think they are taking their injured to hospitals and burying their dead."

### **Abductions**

Meanwhile, unknown armed men abducted four UN staff members on 16 March in Waajid, southern Somalia, according to a statement from the office of the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia.

"They were on their way to the airport when their convoy was stopped by gunmen," the statement indicated, adding that "no violence or shooting was reported to have occurred during the incident".

The UN and local authorities "are doing everything to secure the unconditional release of the staff".

Aid workers estimate that more than three million Somalis need assistance, but insecurity has made it difficult to access those in need.

### **Somalia: More People Displaced From Southern Regions:19 March 2009:Shabelle Media Network (Mogadishu).**

Baidoa — A lot of civilians have started Thursday to flee from Bay and Bakol regions in south western Somalia after al-Shabab Islamists and government soldiers fought a heavy battle in Rabdhure district in Bakol region in south western Somalia.

Seventeen people were killed in Rabdhure district on Wednesday.

Residents said more people have been fleeing from the fighting areas and other near by areas on Wednesday to safer places.

There is fear in the regions that fighting can erupt any time as the two sides who fought yesterday are regrouping and amassing troops.

The families fleeing from Bay and Bakol regions went to Gedo region where Islamists control.

**Uganda: 530,000 IDPs Return Home: Chris Ocowun: 17 March 2009: The New Vision.**

Kampala — AT least 538,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the Acholi sub-region have returned to their homes.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs report for northern Uganda for February, 280,000 more IDPs are in transit sites near their homes.

The report said 46,000 out of the 204,000 IDPs in Amuru district had returned to their homes.

It noted that 30% of the population, comprising mainly child-headed families, the elderly and disabled persons, were still in camps.

The report cited Gulu district where 176,000 IDPs have already returned home as the resettlement success story.

In Kitgum district, about 154,000 out of 257,000 IDPs have returned home. In pader district, 162,000 have resettled, the report said. It said a campaign to encourage parents to provide packed lunch to pupils was launched in Amuru district, to promote the Universal Primary Education. The report also said 3,000 former squatters in Nakapiripirit district had settled in Okudud in Namalu sub-county on the land de-gazetted by the Uganda Wildlife Authority. It said 2,000 families were returning home in Abim district. The residents, the report said, were settling in Nyakwae and Abim sub-counties.

In Kotido district, the report notes, authorities were finalising plans to resettle 1,500 families in Kapeta parish, Kacheri sub-county, where the land is productive enough to support agriculture. The report also said many IDPs were reluctant to demolish their huts at transit sites. "They resisted the demolition exercise in Amuru and Kitgum districts. In Amuru, the exercise is currently on hold in Anaka sub-county at the request of the local authorities," the report noted.

Central Africa

**Chad: Blazes Rip Through Sudanese Refugee Camps: 17 March 2009: UN News Service.**

The United Nations refugee agency said today it was hastening to replace supplies and put preventive measures in place after five accidental fires swept through two camps for Sudanese refugees in remote eastern Chad in the past four weeks. A 9-year old boy died and some 1,455 people were left homeless in the Amer and Djabal camps, due to the fires, which were caused by poorly tended open fires fanned by heavy winds, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said today. "Despite repeated fires in the camps in 2007-08, refugees remain reluctant to construct their shelters with more fire-resistant mud bricks, preferring instead traditional sticks and straw which are tinder dry," UNHCR spokesperson Ron Redmond said in Geneva today. After each fire, UNHCR staff in the two camps immediately distributed family tents and other household items, including plastic sheeting, mats, blankets, jerry cans and kitchen sets to those affected, he said.

"We continue to stress the need for caution with open cooking fires and are encouraging refugees to build their shelters with more durable materials like mud bricks," Mr. Redmond said. He added that UNHCR is seeking an additional \$350,000 to carry out a durable shelter strategy in 2009 that will entail fitting the houses of some 1,660 vulnerable families with durable roofing materials not as prone to fire. A total of 250,000 Sudanese refugees from the strife-torn Darfur region are hosted in 12 UNHCR-administered refugee camps in eastern Chad, and other 60,000 refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR) are in five UNHCR-assisted sites in the south of the country.

**Rwanda: Govt Removes Visa Fees: 15 March 2009: East African Business Week (Kampala).**

Kigali — Rwanda has announced it has exonerated East African citizens from resident visa or work permit fees. This, according to the Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration, started on March 9, 2009. The changes were announced following a cabinet decision last month, which requested the directorate to deal with issues of visa and work permits on foreigners going to work or reside in Rwanda. The directorate announced work permits fall under two categories: Category A for a foreigner whose monthly gross remuneration is Rwf500, 000 (US\$ 881) and Category B for those whose monthly gross is below Rwf500, 000 (\$ 881). The directorate said, for all other nationalities, resident visa fees will drop from Rwf200, 000 (\$352) to Rwf50, 000 (\$88) per year. The annual work permit fees will change from Rwf200, 000 (\$352) to Rwf50, 000 (\$88) for category A and Rwf10, 000 (\$17.63) for Category B.

90. HEALTH (HIV/AIDS, TB, MALARIA etc)  
West Africa

**Nigeria: Scientists Find Key to Stopping Malaria: Steve Dada with Agency Report: 18 March 2009: This Day.**

Lagos — Scientists may have recorded another milestone over malaria eradication, by the discovery of what triggers an immune response to the development of a parasite in several mosquito varieties that cause malaria in humans. This was the result of a study by

Johns Hopkins University Research Institute released to the public yesterday. Malaria kills more than one million people worldwide every year.

By silencing the gene, the scientists found they could stop the formation of the parasite in the gut of the mosquitoes, George Dimopoulos, PhD, the senior author of the study and associate professor at the Institute, said in a press release. The parasite that causes malaria in humans is called *Plasmodium falciparum*. It affects three varieties of mosquitoes found in Africa, the Americas and Asia. "When a mosquito is feeding on malaria-infected blood, the parasite will be recognized by the mosquito's immune system through receptors that then start the immune response. In the wild, this response is believed to occur too late to mount an efficient immune defence that would kill all parasites. At least a few *Plasmodia* will successfully develop inside the mosquito and enable transmission of malaria," Dimopoulos said.

"In the lab, we activated this immune response in advance of infection, giving the mosquito a head start in defeating the invading parasite," he added. The findings by Dimopoulos and his colleagues Lindsey Graver and Yuemei Dong was published March 13. The disease, a recurring phenomenon, has done greater havoc to humanity occurring in about 100 countries, largely in the tropics, with half of the figure affecting Africans. The efforts at global eradication of the hydra-headed disease started in 1600 when the first treatment emerged in Peru, where native Indians cure malaria with *Cinchona* bark and becoming available 50 years later in England with the name Jesuit Powder. In 1969, global malaria eradication programme stopped shortly after most countries in Europe such as Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, Spain, Italy, Poland, Netherlands and Portugal had succeeded in eradicating the disease, leaving Africa essentially as non-beneficiary of the eradication efforts.

In 17th century, Africa was named 'White Man's grave' which perhaps could best be described as the 'black man's grave' today due to the damage done to human's health by the disease from which 300-500 million attack cases are reported annually killing about 1.5 to three million people, with 85 per cent coming from Africa, accounting for five per cent of global fatalities with children less than five years and pregnant women being worse hit. One child, according to report, dies of malaria every second in Africa, while every 12 seconds someone somewhere dies of the disease in the world, in which *Plasmodium falciparum* accounts for 98 per cent of all cases in Nigeria causing high morbidity and mortality. Malaria accounts for 60 per cent of Out Patient Department (OPD) visits and accounts for 30 per cent of under-five mortality, 11 per cent of maternal mortality, while children experience one to four malaria attacks annually.

In Nigeria, according to report, rural dwellers suffer more than city dwellers in which 300,000 children die annually causing chronic anaemia in children, poor development and disability. Experts said prompt recognition and appropriate management of uncomplicated *falciparum* malaria is of vital importance as patient with the condition might present, with confusion, or drowsiness with extreme weakness. In addition, a number of complications may develop which include: acute pulmonary oedema and adult

respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS), circulatory collapse, shock, septicaemia, abnormal bleeding, jaundice, haemoglobinuria, high fever and hyperparasitaemia.

**West Africa: Measles Outbreak in Cameroun Threatens Nigeria: Onche Odeh:16 March 2009:Daily Independent (Lagos).**

There are fears that an outbreak of measles recorded at the Langui refugee camp, located in the North province of Cameroun, might soon spread to northern Nigerian settlements in Adamawa and Taraba states bordering the central African country. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) had reported the outbreak of measles in the camp, which houses Chadian refugees, triggering fears at the Federal Ministry of Health that Nigeria might be the next destination of the childhood killer diseases considering the country's proximity from the camp. Nigeria's Minister of Health, Professor Babatunde Osotimehin, who raised this alarm in a statement signed by his Special Assistant on Communication, Niyi Ojuolape, on Sunday said the ministry has commenced moves to ensure that all mechanisms to avert any spread of the disease to the Country is put in place.

Meanwhile, the Federal Ministry of Health has said the general public and parents in particular must watch out for certain signs and that are peculiar to measles. "People should report immediately to their nearest health centre if they notice any signs high fever, runny nose, cough, red eyes and small white spots on the buccal mucosa," the ministry stated. The ministry, however, said arrangements have been completed to integrate measles vaccine with oral Polio vaccine during the forthcoming Immunisation Plus Days in areas where the measles vaccination coverage was sub optimal during the last follow up campaigns in 2008 as a further step to curb measles outbreaks in the country. Measles is characterised by red rash that appears on the third to seventh day, commencing behind the ears and on the hairline and then spreading to the rest of the body. The temperature subsides after three to four days and the rash fades after five to six days.

Measles is one of top six causes of deaths in children and one of the most highly communicable diseases known to man. Deaths from the disease is more prevalent amongst malnourished children, children less than 5 years of age and those children living in overcrowded areas. It has an incubation period of 10-12 days. The ministry is afraid that a measles outbreak as a result of the Cameroun incidence would prove costly for Nigeria, especially at this time that the authority is battling to prevent further spread of Lassa fever and Meningitis that is ravaging parts of Nigeria. Only recently, the health minister constituted and inaugurated an Expanded National Epidemic Preparedness and Response (EPR) Committee. The committee, made up of representatives of the Ministry of Information and the Media and also Commissioners for Health from eight states and FCT. "The committee will monitor and coordinate all epidemic responses to epidemic prone diseases including measles," the statement said. The Federal Ministry of Health however, disclosed that it, alongside the National Primary Healthcare Development Agency (NPHCDA), is well placed to respond to this.

"There is presently a stockpile of 11 million doses of measles vaccine, out of which seven million doses are available for supplemental immunisation campaigns and the rest are readily available for the use of Health facilities across the Country for routine immunisation," the Ministry said. The minister's apprehension is not out of place as Northern Nigeria is one of the most heavily populated regions in what is considered the meningitis belt of Africa. The belt stretches from Senegal to Sudan and all areas having a long dry season and low humidity between December and April. FG Raises It will be recalled that the minister of health recently constituted and inaugurated an Expanded National Epidemic Preparedness and Response (EPR) Committee a multi-sectoral and multidisciplinary committee involving the Ministry of Information and the Media. It also has the representation of states through eight Health Commissioners from different states and the FCT. The committee is to monitor and coordinate all epidemic responses to epidemic prone diseases including measles.

**Nigeria: Corps Members Immunised Against Meningitis: 19 March 2009: This Day.**

Lagos — All the 1,681 batch " A" 2009 National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members undergoing orientation in Sokoto State, have been immunised against cerebro-spinal meningitis (CSM), NYSC Co-ordinator in Sokoto State, Alhaji Usman Shehu, has said. Shehu told the News Agency of Nigeria ( NAN) yesterday in Sokoto that the state government donated 2,000 doses of CSM vaccine for the exercise. He said officials and other workers at the camp were also immunised to prevent an outbreak of the disease there. "We thank God that we have not recorded a single case of the disease here and all our corps members are hale and hearty," he said.

He commended the state government for its sustained moral and financial support for the scheme, and called on it to expedite action on the planned NYSC permanent orientation camp in Wamakko. Shehu said the Government Technical College at Farfaru was becoming "too inconvenient for the corps members, officials and students." He added that "The students are always dislodged when the camp opens and this affects the academic activities of the school," stressing that the NYSC management in the state spends a lot of money to fix some of the structures before the orientation.

**Nigeria: Dearth of Skilled Manpower, Cause of Maternal Deaths - Idi Hong: Winifred Ogbobo: 20 March 2009: Leadership (Abuja).**

Abuja — The Minister of State for Health, Dr. Aliyu Idi Hong, has pointed at inadequacy of skilled birth attendants as reasons for the sordid state of the country's maternal and child health.

Dr. Hong noted that skilled attendants at every birth was critical for safe motherhood in the Africa region where only a few deliveries are assisted by experts. Dr. Hong, who made this disclosure yesterday, in Abuja, at the stakeholders' briefing on the Pilot Project on Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care (EMONC) for National Youth Service Corps doctors, said Nigeria currently lacks adequate human resource for providing skilled birth attendance. "In spite of this shortage, the few health professionals available are either

unevenly distributed or emigrate to developed countries in search of better conditions of service which further cripples the health system," Hong said. The minister who was represented by a director in the ministry, Dr. Nandul Darfa, explained that it was as a result of the deplorable state of human resource in the sector that newly qualified National Youth Service (NYSC) medical doctors have become a ready source for improving the despicable state of maternal and newborn healthcare, especially in emergency obstetric and newborn cases. Similarly, the Reproductive Health Adviser, World Health Organisation (WHO), Dr. Olusola Ogunjere, said that the objective of the scheme was for the 40 trained medical youth corpsers to be able to offer emergency obstetric care to pregnant women in Nigeria.

According to her, the trained NYSC doctors were deployed to eight states of the country: Kano, Katsina, Taraba, Benue, Akwa Ibom, Ogun, Lagos and Cross River states. While calling for collaboration with states and local governments to scale up the initiative to cover the entire country, she said, "The corp doctors amongst other things performed 2,824 emergency obstetric and newborn procedures, out of which 661 (23.4%) were emergency caesarian section with 98.5% success rate".

**Ghana: GMA Fumes Over Single Spine Salary Structure: Kingdom Sosu: 19 March 2009: The Chronicle.**

The President of the Ghana Medical Association (GMA) Dr. Emmanuel Adom Winful has called on the government to as a matter of urgency review the Single Spine Salary Structure (SSSS) in the health sector in consultation with all stakeholders before proceeding with any attempts to implement it. He also asked all labor unions to endeavor to discuss all the thorny issues concerning the SSSS as it affects them before the final implementation. Dr. Adom Winful was reacting at a press conference to some publications in the electronic and print media indicating that junior doctors intend to embark on a strike action has wrongly being interpreted.

"Let me state categorically that at no point in the letters submitted to the National Executives Committee of the GMA did the Junior Doctors of Korle Bu or Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospitals threaten strike action" he said. According to him, what they did was to forward critical concerns about the issues of the single spine salary structure to the National Executives, a matter which without mincing words is of great concern to doctors of all categories.

Speaking on the Single Spine Salary Structure (SSSS), Dr. Adom Winful noted that the policy which was introduced by the previous government was aimed at streamlining salary administration in all public sector was a laudable idea. The policy, which is set to begin operation in January this year, lacks other pertinent matters pertaining to the salaries of doctors and other health workers that have not been reviewed for the past three years with implications for improving the health sector. The President of GMA admitted that although the association was involved in some of the processes for the review as drawn up by the previous government, he denied the associations involvement in any meeting whatsoever, that discussed anything resembling, even remotely, placements on

the SSSS as contained in the drafted document sighted by GMA."Even more irregular was the premature announcement by the previous government of 16-35% salary increment aimed at kick-starting a so called single spine salary structure, discussions on which were inconclusive," he said.

He questioned at what point doctors and other health workers fit into the SSSS, which categories of health workers had been involved in the final draft document as proposed by the Consultant?He continued, what is the length of training and qualifications required for specific jobs, what are the requirements for progression and how did the government consultants assess job responsibilities and risk?The President questioned what became of the government appointed Consultant who only two years ago had occasion to fuse scales 1 and 2 of the Health Sector Salary Structure in an attempt to bridge a so-called gap, leaving health workers with further distortions that reignite what some referred to as tribal wars on the health front?Dr. Adom Winfil pointed out that the position of GMA and its expectation on whatever salary structure is proposed by government to be thoroughly negotiated, not just with the association but with all other trade unions.He said, observing complete distortion of our relativities in the health sector, to the extent that professionals at certain levels of the Ghana Universal Salary Structure, which was later known as Health Sector Salary Structure now find themselves ranked below those that they were previously senior to.

According to him, the Consultant who drafted the SSSS policy have shown lack of understanding of basic hierarchies in the health system and in the event that previous government's did, and in the light of current government's desire to proceed with implementation, the association have no choice than publicly state their reservations to the final draft.Furthermore, the GMA president pointed out that SSSS seems to reward longevity in service rather than spur health professionals on to constantly improve their practice through skills acquisition and constant professional upgrading."The point is that if a Medical Officer cannot call himself a Specialist (irrespective of whatever procedures he/she is capable of) after twenty years of medical practice, it beats our mind why any other category of health professional can aspire to the position of Specialist by dint of having marked time at the same place for over twenty years," he asked?

### **Liberia: First Anti-Hunger Strategy Since Start of War: 19 March 2009: IRIN.**

Monrovia — Health officials have launched a strategy to tackle hunger in Liberia, where 37 percent of children under five suffer chronic malnutrition.Stella Subah, nutrition adviser at the Health Ministry, told IRIN malnutrition will kill 74,000 children in Liberia by 2015 if urgent action is not taken.Chronic malnutrition causes stunting in nearly one-third of Liberian children and leaves one in five underweight, according to Subah. A further seven percent of children suffer from acute malnutrition.

The policy commits the government to improving food security for the majority of Liberians, decreasing dependence in imported foods and boosting education strategies to help prevent malnutrition."This policy refocuses nutrition and puts it where it ought to be - on the higher agenda of the government," said John Agbor, head of child survival at



UNICEF. This is the first nutrition policy the government has developed since before the war broke out in 1989. "Malnutrition...is a major problem here, because all the factors contributing to it still exist," said UNICEF nutrition specialist Kinday Ndella Samba. "You still have high rate of poverty, poor access to water and sanitation and a lack of health care." Only 30 professionally trained government medical doctors work in Liberia, along with 46 NGO doctors, for a population of 3.3 million. Moderate hunger has been endemic in Liberia for years, but thousands of additional people were put at risk of acute malnutrition in 2008 because of rising global food and fuel prices, according to aid agency Action Against Hunger (ACF).

**Children in Liberia** Liberia imports 90 percent of its rice, and prices have not dropped since they shot up to US\$35 for a 50-kilogram bag in early 2008 - the average monthly salary for a security guard in the capital Monrovia. Liberians told IRIN 50kg of rice will feed a family of seven for two weeks. Malnutrition in turn hampers economic growth, with conditions such as anemia and iodine deficiency lowering the country's economic productivity by \$431,000 each year, Subah told IRIN.

**Priorities** "If we want to address the issue, we have to address the underlying factors, such as food security, lack of access to water and sanitation, the failure of most mothers to breastfeed their babies and mothers not taking their babies for regular vaccines," Subah said. Improper care and feeding of children stems in part from low education rates and high rates of teenage pregnancy, according to William Dakel, director of local NGO Aid for the Needy Development Program (ANDP). Forty-six percent of teenage girls are pregnant in Liberia, according to 2007 figures - the latest available. UNICEF says just 39 percent of girls attended primary school in 2007. Agbor urges donors to maintain support to aid groups and the government to fight chronic malnutrition. "There are still a lot of children out there who need care, and if we have enough funding we can start to integrate aid groups' work into government facilities." ANDP's Dakel said: "It took us 14 years to fight a war, and it will not just take overnight to take care of all our problems. Donors and partners need to be patient."

**Nigeria: Non-Profit Syringe Factory to Fight Aids, Create Jobs:18 March 2009:interview:allafrica.**

Washington, DC — *The aid community often focuses its health projects on hospitals and clinics, but the Pan African Health Foundation chose to go in a different direction – by building a factory in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, to manufacture safe syringes for the Nigerian market.*

*Once it is fully operational, the factory will produce 20 percent of the country's syringes. AllAfrica interviewed **Amenya E. Wokoma**, executive secretary of the foundation, on how the factory was built, its future and its importance. Excerpts:*

**Tell us how this project got started.** We spent three years from 2000 going through management assessment. By 2003, we knew we could not get anywhere. [Former President Olusegun] Obasanjo was writing us letters, "Where is the syringe factory?" It

could not pass the risk assessment. The returns on investment [were] too low. For you to invest in Nigeria – in Africa – you need to have high returns on investment. That is the only reason why people go there. So we were advised... [to try] doing this through the not-for-profit route... It was not [going to be] very profitable, [so] why not set up a foundation and see whether you can promote it that way? That is how the foundation was set up. It took on the syringe factory as its first project.

**Where did you look to raise funds?** We went around the world. We went to the United States in 2004, to the United Kingdom, then to Nigeria in 2005. The idea was that we would raise money principally from the U.S., the UK, and Nigeria. Of course we had our eyes on the oil companies... [This project] encapsulates all you want to talk about in development. You are doing technology transfer, you are doing job creation, you are doing inward investment, you are saving foreign exchange, you are fighting diseases. Who would not like it? Especially the oil companies... When we started fund raising, everybody was saying [it was a] good idea but nobody was writing checks. We went to Nigeria... and we actually got a commitment in 2004 from the oil companies to give us U.S. \$3 million. We estimated that the plant would cost U.S. \$20 million, so \$3 million was a very good start. We also got a commitment from the host state government, Rivers State, for 200 million Naira, which is the equivalent of \$1.5 million, and a commitment from the [Nigerian] federal government for another \$1.5 million.

**What did you do next?** We decided to start... plant construction in 2004 with \$6 million in the bank because we were counting [on] \$3 million from the oil companies. Unfortunately, they did not redeem their pledges. They have not given us a penny, which is the most shocking aspect of this program if you ask me.

**With the oil companies out, where did you look for funds and how did you convince them to write the checks?** [Although] we started with \$3 million, we ran out of money by 2006. It was not an easy concept to get someone to write a check for. [It would have been easier if] we told them we were building a hospital or clinic – but not a factory. Most people think of a factory as commercial, you are making profits. So by the middle of 2006, we had to start talking very seriously with President Obasanjo because he was personally involved and very keen on this. So we went back to him, and he decided: "Pan African Health Foundation, don't think you can raise this money, so let me raise it." He wrote to the governor of Rivers State and to us, saying let Rivers State government and the federal government complete the plant on a 50/50 basis. By then we needed the balance of \$20 million. Rivers State immediately brought their 50 percent, so we bought equipment, but the federal government would not bring theirs. They are slow – their budgeting process is a little more tedious. Really, in Nigeria they say a lot about developing the Niger Delta, but... we did not see the money from the federal government. So at the end of the day, Rivers State government even covered the federal portion.

**In the end, who was responsible for most of the funds?** The plant was financed 90 percent by Rivers State government and the balance from the federal government, and a little money from other sources.

**What is the status of the factory now?**We have finished it and the test runs have just been completed. We are going to start operations once we get certification from Nafdac (the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control), which is the equivalent of the [United States] FDA (Food and Drug Administration). They have to certify the syringes for public consumption. We are confident that we should get that done. At peak we should [employ] about 300 people. Right now, we are at 200.

**What is the production level of the factory?**160 million syringes per annum – equivalent to 20 percent of what Nigeria consumes. Our market is not just Nigeria. We are looking at the whole of West Africa, Central Africa, reaching all the way to Sudan. If you are building a syringe factory in Nigeria, if you want syringes in Congo, do you want to go to India or China? If we are estimating market potential, we tend to see twice the Nigerian market size.

**What direction do you see the factory taking in the future?**We are currently talking about expansion. Producing 160 million syringes only is not very economical, if you want to produce quality syringes... We have been advised strongly that the minimum size is about 800 million.In places like China and India... they are doing two billion a year. So if you are making 160 million, you are not economical. Already the Rivers State government has said, yes, this is something we would like to get involved in, the expansion. If we expand we hope to reduce the per unit cost of production by about 30 percent. That is a lot.

Southern Africa

**Zimbabwe: USAID Releases U.S.\$2.2 Million for Malaria, Measles:19 March 2009:The Herald.**

Harare — The United States Agency for International Development has released an additional US\$2,2 million package of emergency initiatives for malaria, measles, and essential drugs to support Zimbabwe's health system.US ambassador James McGee announced the funding on Monday. Usaid gave US\$1,7 million for the expansion of medical supply logistics, ensuring that drugs and commodities are properly coordinated, managed, and reach the intended beneficiaries.

An additional US\$200 000 for malaria prevention will enable the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare national mosquito spraying programme to complete its mission this season.The national measles vaccination campaign was allocated US\$300 000.The indoor residual spraying programme will prevent malaria among more than two million Zimbabweans living in high-risk districts that were left unprotected.With US and other donor support, the measles campaign aims to vaccinate 1,7 million children aged 9 to 59 months throughout Zimbabwe.

**South Africa: Papal Comments Regarding Condoms Angers Aids Activists: Kim Sofroniou: 17 March 2009: [Health-e](#) (Cape Town).**

Pope Benedict XVI is in Africa this week (17th-23rd March) on his first trip to the continent as Pontiff and is already angering AIDS activists with his anti-condom stance. Pope Benedict is representing the Catholic Church on visits to Cameroon and Angola. Although the Vatican website describes his visit as an 'Apostolic Journey', with his itinerary including meetings with high-level political and Episcopal figures, it is the Pontiff's continuing controversial message regarding HIV/AIDS that has attracted the most international attention.

A staunch proponent of sexual abstinence and marital monogamy, the Pope has said that HIV/AIDS is "a tragedy that cannot be overcome by money alone, that cannot be overcome through the distribution of condoms, which can even increase the problem". Speaking to journalists en route to Cameroon, he said that a Christian "can never remain silent" and that the solution to the pandemic lies in a "spiritual and human awakening" and "friendship for those who suffer".

Rebecca Hodes, Head of Policy, Communication and Research, at the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) expressed the organisation's anger at these comments. "The Pope is correct that condoms are not the sole solution to Africa's AIDS epidemic," she said. "However, they are one of the very few HIV prevention mechanisms which are evidence-based - they are proven to work." TAC activists distribute over 500 000 condoms every month in Khayelitsha, a disadvantaged community which has traditionally seen high incidence of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. As a result of the TAC's distributions, however, medical officials in the area have reported a decline in sexually transmitted infections. Hodes explained that millions of rands have been spent on sexual abstinence campaigns in South Africa, but that "with over 1,000 new HIV infections daily in South Africa alone, it is increasingly apparent that current prevention strategies have failed and continue to fail". The Papal schedule lists a meeting with youth on Saturday March 21st in Luanda, Angola. The BBC has reported that the Pope is likely to speak to young people about AIDS and about the Catholic stance of abstinence being the best preventative measure. This would echo a speech he made to African bishops in 2005, in which he said that abstinence and monogamy - rather than condoms - were the best method of tackling the AIDS epidemic.

In response, Rebecca Hodes highlighted the importance of considering gendered power imbalances and the socio-economic context which fuels HIV infection rates. "Preaching abstinence to many communities in Africa is alienating and irrelevant," Hodes said. "Many, many women in Africa only know coerced and transactional sex. To instruct these women to abstain from sex or to remain faithful to only one partner demonstrates an alarming and pernicious ignorance of their sexual realities." The TAC suggests that the Pope, who is reported to have said that he wanted to "wrap his arms around the entire continent", with "its painful wounds, its enormous potential and hopes", could make a more practical contribution to the global struggle with HIV/AIDS. "If the Pope is serious about preventing new HIV infections, and about saving the lives of people living with HIV," Hodes said, "He will focus instead on promoting wide access to condoms and femidoms, and on disseminating information on how best to use these. He will also devote much more time to raising funds and spreading awareness about antiretroviral

drugs and their potent potential for HIV prevention".She concluded by saying that, "His opposition to condoms conveys that religious dogma is more important to him than the lives of Africans".

**South Africa: Durban to Get World's Most Advanced TB Centre: Kerry Cullinan: 19 March 2009:Health-e (Cape Town).**

With virtually all KwaZulu-Natal health facilities registering cases of extensively drug-resistant TB, the international research facility will be well placed to find research subjects.The world's "most advanced research centre" dedicated to tuberculosis and HIV research is going to be built at the University of KwaZulu-Natal within months.Some R308-million has been set aside for the six-storey building and 10 years' worth of research, according to an announcement made simultaneously in Washington and Durban yesterday (19 March).KwaZulu-Natal is the epicentre of HIV infection in the world, while 58 health facilities in the province had recorded cases of the incurable extensively drug-resistant (XDR) TB by mid-2007.

Scientists from the US and South Africa will lead the research programmes at the centre, which will also act as a training facility for African scientists."We want to be part of the brain gain, " explains the university's vice-chancellor, Professor Salim Abdool Karim, one of the main drivers of the centre."This centre will enable us to make a gigantic leap forward in research. We would never have been able to do so without a massive injection of resources. We will be dealing with very dangerous, infectious organisms and who would want to work with such things without such safety facilities?" added Abdool Karim.Two floors of the centre will be taken up by state-of-the-art Level 3 bio-safety laboratories that will enable scientists to work safely with highly dangerous drug-resistant TB bacteria. Only laboratories dealing with haemorrhagic fevers (such as ebola) have a higher safety level.The research aims of the centre will be three-fold, according to Professor Willem Sturm, medical school dean and interim director of the centre.

These are:

- The development of rapid tests to diagnose drug-resistant TB. Some newer tests are more rapid, but miss resistant strains or require too much high-tech equipment.
- Identifying the genetic characteristics of drug resistant strains of TB in an attempt to understand "what made TB more aggressive and resistant" over the past decade.
- Analysing people's immune responses to tuberculosis, particularly among people infected with HIV.
- Studying recurrent tuberculosis in people with HIV to ascertain whether the patient has become reinfected with TB or whether latent TB in the patient has become reactivated.

Patient facilities at Church of Scotland and McCord Hospitals and Prince Cyril Zulu Clinic will also be improved as part of the research programme.Construction begins in

September and will change the face of the medical school, the centre is expected to be completed by the end of 2010."Our cross-Atlantic partnership reflects a shared view that direct and substantial investment in basic, clinical, and transnational research in the heart of the pandemics of HIV and TB will yield significant discoveries that will alleviate the human suffering caused by these diseases," said "Thomas R. Cech, president of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI), which is the main donor. Other funding comes from Lifelab and the university itself.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Uganda: 'Spring, Borehole Water Unsafe':Gerald Tenywa:19 March 2009:The New Vision.**

Kampala — WATER experts have warned against drinking un-boiled water from boreholes and spring wells. They said less than 15% of such water was safe for human consumption. "Less than 15% of the water collected from boreholes and spring wells is clean," said David Mukama, a health ministry official. "Drinking water, which is not boiled, is a recipe for water borne diseases like diarrhoea." Mukama who is also a member of the Water and Sanitation Working Group, a network of organisations working on water issues, said contamination of the water starts at the point of collection with dirty containers.

He said further contamination was inevitable during transportation, storage and consumption of the water. Mukama was speaking in Kampala ahead of the World Water Day that will be celebrated on March 22. The national celebrations will take place in Namutumba district on March 23 during which the World Forestry Day and the World Meteorological Day would also be celebrated. Mukama warned that the sanitation coverage was only 62.5% and that households that lacked latrines posed a danger to the rest that had latrines because vectors do not have boundaries. "Prevention is better than cure," he said, adding that better sanitation would reduce disease incidences. He also said people should be encouraged to wash their hands, pointing out that for every sh1 invested in proper sanitation, sh9 was saved. Gaster Kiyangi from the Global Water Partnership, said the reduced funding for the water sector was a step backwards.

**Kenya: Cholera Affecting 10 Districts: 19 March 2009: IRIN.**

Nairobi — Cholera has killed at least 22 people and infected some 660 in different parts of the country since late 2008, according to a senior health official. The affected provinces are Eastern, Northeastern, Nyanza and Western. "Around 10 districts are affected in the country," Shahnaaz Sharif, the director of public health and sanitation, told IRIN. "At present, there are more cases being reported in Athi River [37km southeast of the capital, Nairobi]." New cases have also been reported in Kakamega, the main town in Western Province. "The cumulative total of 660 is of cases reported since November 2008," Sharif said. "If one case in an area tests positive for cholera then anybody else coming in with similar symptoms from the area is taken as having cholera," he said, commenting on the

number of cases. The outbreak has been attributed to water shortages as well as poor sanitation and hygiene.

Cholera deaths have also been reported in Moyale along the Kenyan-Ethiopia border <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=83421> . "A total of 65 cases and three deaths have been reported," the World Health Organization (WHO) said in an update on 8 March. "The neighbouring country [Ethiopia] is also experiencing an outbreak of acute watery diarrhoea in the same locality, and has reported 109 cases and 16 deaths. However, they have not confirmed it as cholera." Sharif said the recurrent cholera outbreak in Western and Nyanza regions had been caused by population movement between districts and the drawing of water from contaminated sources. "It [cholera] can be brought under control in one area, then it recurs as the people move." At least 46 deaths and 832 cases were reported after an outbreak a year ago. According to WHO, fewer than half the rural population in Kenya had sustainable access to improved drinking water sources and sanitation in 2006. The population with sustainable access to improved sanitation in urban areas was 19 percent. Improved sanitation includes connection to public sewers, septic systems, pour-flush latrines, simple pit latrines and ventilated improved pit latrines. Bucket latrines, predominant in parts of the Northeast, as well as public and open latrines, are not considered improved sanitation.

Health education campaigns and the chlorination of water sources are ongoing in the affected areas to stem the current outbreak. Cholera is an acute, diarrheal illness caused by infection of the intestine with the bacterium *Vibrio cholerae*. The infection is often mild but sometimes it can be severe; without treatment, death can occur within hours due to dehydration.

Central Africa

**Rwanda: Country Receives U.S.\$ 32 Million Worth Pneumonia Vaccines: Edmund Kagire: 18 March 2009: The New Times.**

Kicukiro — Rwanda has received a consignment of Prevnar Pneumococcal Vaccine worth about US\$32 million (Approx. Rwf 18bn). The vaccine will be used to immunise over 1.3 million children in the country against pneumonia and other Pnuemococcol diseases like Meningitis. The vaccine was donated by Wyeth Pharmaceuticals through United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United State Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI). Receiving the first of the two consignments of the drugs at Kigali International Airport, the Minister of Health Dr. Richard Sezibera revealed that the vaccine will help reduce cases of infant mortality which account for over 24 percent of deaths caused by preventable diseases in the country. "I thank our partners USAID, UNICEF and GAVI for considering Rwanda for this expensive vaccine initially used in developed countries. It will help the government of Rwanda realise the target of keeping immunisation rates above 95 percent." According to Sezibera, the government intends to include this leading vaccine against preventable diseases in the national routine immunisation programme and will be administered to children under 5 beginning this April.

"We are going to embark on a national sensitisation programme to inform mothers about the vaccine and by April, we will roll out on a national immunisation campaign, we expect to maintain immunisation rates above 95 percent, " added Sezibera. The vaccine will be dispatched directly to the Ministry of Health Cold Room from where it will be distributed to health centres countrywide. During the ceremony to hand over the drugs, the UN Resident Coordinator, Aurelien Agbenonci, noted that Rwanda is the first African GAVI-eligible country to be recommended to receive the drugs in 2009 following good performance in its national immunisation programmes. Over 80 percent of Rwandan children are immunised against the eight killer diseases which include measles and polio. "The arrival of this vaccine is an historical occasion for the country. Rwanda is the first GAVI-eligible country, the other being Gambia, that currently has in place a vaccination coverage and a cold chain system to deliver such a vaccine to its children," said Agbenonci. Pneumococcal diseases affect both children and adults and remains the leading cause of illness and deaths worldwide.

Sezibera noted that the vaccine will give children going for immunisation an extra prick while those who have already completed their immunisation will be required to return for the Prevar Vaccine. Only South Africa has used the vaccine known to be the most expensive in child vaccines with each child immunised at a cost of US \$20. Another shipment worth about US \$15m will follow. The ceremony was attended by UN, USAID and Ministry of Health officials. An estimated 1.3 children under five will be covered.

## 91. ENVIRONMENT

### West Africa

#### **Nigeria: Govt Seeks to Move Gas Flaring Deadline to 2010:17 March 2009: Vanguard.**

Lagos — NIGERIA'S government has proposed pushing back its deadline to end gas flaring in Africa's top oil producer to next year to allow time for the development of its gas sector, the energy minister said. Oil companies were supposed to have stopped all gas flaring in the OPEC member country by the end of last year or face hefty fines. But the deadline has passed without any companies being punished. The industry has said the timeframe was not realistic and urged the government to move the deadline to 2010. Nigeria flares more gas than any other country except Russia, burning 2.5 billion cubic feet of gas per day because there is not enough infrastructure to make use of it. "What we have done is to propose a time frame to end flaring, which would take effect from 2010 to allow for the provision of infrastructure," Odein Ajumogobia, minister of state for petroleum, told a House of Representatives committee on Tuesday. Parliament must approve the new deadline.

Environmentalists say gas flares burn day and night from most onshore oilfields in the Niger Delta, creating a health hazard to nearby communities and contributing to global warming. They are also a waste of resources. Despite having the world's seventh-largest gas reserves, Nigeria has been unable to exploit its natural resources to its full capacity due to mismanagement, a lack of funds and poor maintenance. Nigeria, as part of its gas



master plan, has invited foreign oil companies to help it build three gas gathering plants and pipelines that would provide enough supplies to its ailing power sector.

Russian gas giant Gazprom, Royal Dutch Shell, French oil major Total and several others have expressed interest in developing Nigeria's gas sector. Most of the country's 140 million residents go without mains electricity for weeks at a time, forcing them to rely on expensive gasoline-powered generators. The country's power problem is considered to be one of the main brakes on economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa's second-biggest economy.

**Nigeria: Lagos Partners FADE to Fight Desertification: Kingsley Adegboye: 17 March 2009: Vanguard.**

Lagos — The spate of natural disasters such as tsunamis, global warming, hurricanes and others happenings across the world are warning signs that the end of the planet earth is very near. No doubt, this threat to mother earth is causing panic and fear across the globe. However, those who passionately care about the earth and its green status are doing everything possible to save our beloved earth. It is against this background that Fight Against Desert Encroachment (FADE), a non-governmental organization committed to fighting desert encroachment in collaboration with Lagos State Ministry of the Environment has concluded plans to organise the 4th Sahara desert expedition in April in which 25 able-bodied men and women to be selected through screening, are expected to embark on four-week endurance expedition to London en-route the Sahara desert from Lagos. The first Sahara desert expedition was embarked upon by Dr. Newton Jibunoh, founder of FADE in 1966.

In his address at a press conference announcing the 4th Sahara desert expedition last Tuesday in Lagos, Lagos State Commissioner for Environment, Dr. Muiz Banire said the objectives of this reality programme are numerous, but above all, it would serve as an avenue to educate the Nigerian public to become conscious of the environmental degradation afflicting Africa through desertification, drought, migration and poverty. He added that the expedition across the Sahara desert will serve as an avenue to open up the Northwest Passage with the greening of the track project making it possible for roads to be constructed in future, pointing out that it is also aimed at mobilizing and sensitizing the sub-region towards a greening culture that will change the face and fortune of the dying planet.

Explaining the involvement of the state government in the fight against desertification, Banire said across the world and Lagos inclusive, desertification affects the livelihoods of millions of people, stressing that it reduces the ability of land to support life, affects wild species, domestic animals, agricultural crops and people. According to him, the reduction in plant cover that accompanies desertification leads to accelerated soil erosion by wind and water. As vegetation cover and soil layer are reduced, rain drop impact and run-off increases. "Water is lost off the land instead of percolating the soil to provide moisture for plants. Even long-lived plants that would normally survive droughts die. A reduction in plant cover also results in a reduction in the quantity of humus and plant nutrients in

the soil, and plant production drops further."As protective plant cover disappears, floods become more frequent and more severe. Desertification is self-reinforcing; that is: once the process has started, conditions are set for continual deterioration. The resultant effects of this are poverty and diseases which negatively affect human development. Statistics shows that some 10 to 20 per cent of dry lands, especially sub-Saharan are already degraded, it is also worthy to note that about one third of the world's land surface is arid or semi-arid and it is predicted that global warming will increase the area of desert climates by 17 percent in the next century.

"The area at risk to desertification is thus large and likely to increase. Hence, concerted effort must be put in place to halt this move through one of the many methods. Lagos State Government in collaboration with FADE recognises major policy interventions and changes in management approaches, both at local and global levels, are needed in order to prevent or reduce desertification. In the light of the foregoing, our Desert Warriors will be joining the global effort in combatting this menace through gathering of data and taking land-sat images of the area which will help demonstrate the impact on people and animals on the Earth.

"However, other types of remote-sensing systems, land-monitoring networks, and global data bases of field observations will also be obtained along the way. It would be recalled that one of the policy thrusts of the State Government is our resolve to take the beautification and greening of our dear State, Lagos to the next level with the launch of Tree Planting Campaign in September 2008 to sensitize and educate our people on the advantages of tree planting to individuals, communities and indeed mankind. It is also worthy of note that one of the ways to combat desertification is by planting of trees in areas that have been degraded", the Commissioner noted. In his address, Dr. Jibunoh stated that since the setting up of FADE, the NGO has been committed to the prevention and control of environmental degradation in Africa with emphasis on desert encroachment, desertification and drought control. He said the first major project embarked upon by his NGO was in Makoda, Kano State where in 2004 the FADE wall of trees was initiated with the planting of 10,000 seedlings. Dr. Jibunoh who noted that 78 billion trees are needed for the planet earth to be able to survive desertification, pointed out that the tree planting initiative has been replicated in seven other locations in Kano State, resulting in the healthy presence and growth of hundreds of thousands of three types of trees which now form a barrage to stop further desert encroachment. He added that the trees are Nim trees which serve as sun breakers, energy trees which when mature are used for firewood and agricultural trees which can be used to make juices for consumption as well as soap. "This is an on-going and expanding project with a very unique aspect of youth involvement, as school children are used to nurture the trees to inculcate in them the attitude of tree planting," he stated.

**Ghana: Newmont & Adamus Resources Face Opposition From Mining Coalition: Ebenezer Hanson :16 March 2009: Public Agenda (Accra).**

Accra — The National Coalition on Mining (NCOM) has appealed to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to withdraw the permits granted to Newmont Ghana Limited

and Adamus Resources Limited to mine in the Ajenua Bepo Forest in the Eastern Region and Teleku-Bokazo in the Western Region respectively. NCOM says that withdrawal of the licences will be in consonance with the position taken against mining in forest reserves by the Minister for Lands and Natural Resources, Collins Dauda. Addressing a news conference, at which the demand was made, Millicent Gyan-Badu of the Centre for Public Interest Law (CEPIL) observed that mining especially surface mining, as in the Ajenua Bepo Forest Reserve will adversely affect the role of the forest as carbon sink and further speed up climate change. It will also impact negatively on the capacity of rivers linked to the reserve to discharge surface water adequately for the benefit of those living along the banks of those rivers.

"Closely linked to the issue of water is the potential effect of the destruction of the river-ecosystem on rainfall pattern in the area. A publication attributed to the EPA attests to the fact that forests and tree population have important contributions to rainfall distribution. Environmental Scientists have identified the Ajenua Bepo Forest as a major factor in rainfall distribution in the area," she revealed. NCOM comprises Third World Network, ISODEC, Civic Response, WACAM, The African Challenge, Forest Watch Ghana, Friends of Nation, Friends of the Earth-Ghana, Community Rights Foundation and Youth for Action Ghana. Others are PROMAG NETWORK, Green Earth Organization, Action Aid Ghana, FIAN GHANA, Africa Water Network, General Agricultural Workers Union (GAWU) of TUC, among others. She insisted that, the EPA has abused the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process, one of the pre-requisites for the granting of permits to the detriment of mining communities.

"We register our displeasure in the way the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) uses Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to subvert and undermine community concerns and public interest, particularly in the recent cases of involving Newmont Ghana Gold Limited and Adamus Resources".

According to Ms. Gyan-Badu, despite the fact that NCOM has expressed reservations on the granting of permits to the mining firms last year in correspondences and at EIA programmes, the EPA went ahead to grant the permits. "We made this position clear at the public hearing and the EPA pledged to respond to our demands. We were very much disappointed to learn that the Agency (EPA) without responding to our concerns went ahead to grant Newmont an environmental permit," she stated. For its failure to address their concerns, NCOM demanded that the EPA should run parallel capacity building programmes for mining communities to enhance their understanding of the EIA process and environmental impact statement reports. "The Agency (EPA) has the power to and the option to impose a tax deductible levy on the mining companies to fulfill this demand".

Additionally, it demanded that timely and adequate notification be given to communities before public hearings. "The mode of notification to communities should also take account of the language and unique communication channels instead of limiting notices to the media and District Assembly notice boards". Reacting to questions, Abdulai Darimani, Programme Officer and Head of Environment Unit, Third World Network-

Africa, explained that, currently there is no technology that could restore a destructive mined forest to its pristine condition."We are for mining provided it meets three critical conditions- if it makes it significant contributions to the economy, if the processes involved do not lead to environmental degradation and if does lead to violation of socio-economic and human rights."He added that they would in due course make their views on the issue known to the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources.

On whether the law that spells the operations of the EPA regarding the granting of permit should be reviewed, Ms. Gyan-Badu says the issue is not one of revising the law but it is more of who polices the EPA.Mr. Kwabena Frimpong who introduced himself as a concerned farmer from Akyem Ahausina, the community where the Ajenua Bepo Forest is located, denied recent media reports that the chiefs from the area were in support of the mining in the forest. "What kind of chief will support a project that leads to the destruction of forest and pollution of water bodies to the detriment of his people. The report is false.He disclosed that the Newmont operations would involve digging the earth to a depth of 450 metres and cover an area of 2.9 km." Why don't they go into underground mining then?"

Southern Africa

**Zambia: F South Africa: Landfills to Offset Carbon Emission: Siseko Njobeni:20 March 2009;BusinessDay.**

Johannesburg — STATE-owned Central Energy Fund (CEF) wants to build several landfill gas sites in Gauteng and the Western Cape in a bid to offset emissions from coal-fired power stations.Owing to its over-reliance on coal, SA produces more than 40% of Africa's fossil fuel-related carbon dioxide emissions.But the global move to curb climate change has seen the country throw cleaner sources of energy into its energy mix.The government has set a target of 10000GWh renewable energy contribution to final energy consumption by 2013.

Environment assessment consultancy WSP Environment and Energy has given notice of its intention to carry out the scoping and environment impact assessment for the extraction and utilisation of landfill gas and the use of the recovered gas to produce electricity from landfill sites in Cape Town, Vanderbijlpark and Vereeniging. WSP is conducting the assessment on behalf of the CEF. The government's mandate to the CEF is to search for energy solutions to meet SA's future energy needs.According to the consultants, the Cape Town projects -- in Bellville South, Brackenfell, Muizenberg, Blue Downs, Khayelitsha and Morning Star -- would collectively generate up to 9MW of electricity, "which will offset emissions from coal-fired generation plants and provide further reduction of (greenhouse gas emissions)".

The projects at the Emfuleni municipality -- two in Vanderbijlpark and one in Vereeniging -- would collectively generate up to 2,8MW."The proposed activities are in line with the South African government's 2002 accession of the Kyoto Protocol on world climate change and its provision for the implementation of clean development

mechanism projects. The project objectives are to promote renewable energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions to the atmosphere," the consultants said this week. The release of the National Energy Regulator of SA's (Nersa's) long-awaited feed-in tariffs for renewable energy at the end of this month could stimulate the establishment of more landfill gas sites around the country. With no tariffs for the generation of renewable energy, prospective investors are cautious. The tariffs will indicate the returns that investors can expect from renewable energy projects such as landfill gas sites. In its consultation paper, released in December, Nersa proposed tariffs ranging between 40c/KWh and 43c/KWh.

Of the various renewable technologies that Nersa used, landfill gas had the lowest tariffs. Hydro technology had the highest tariffs, followed by wind and concentrating solar. Nersa has said that the feed-in tariffs that it is going to release are premised on a price that covers cost of generation and a "reasonable" profit to induce investment.

### **Zambia: Floods Devastate 15 Districts, Leave Many Homeless: 20 March 2009: Times Of Zambia.**

FIFTEEN districts countrywide are severely affected by this year's floods with Shang'ombo in Western Province being the most hit, after water displaced 45 households. Permanent Secretary in the Office of the Vice-President, Davies Sampa, said in Lusaka yesterday that the floods had caused damage to the roads, bridges, crops and several other installations in the affected districts. Apart from Shang'ombo, which has been cut off from the rest of the country, other districts include Lukulu, Kalabo and Kaoma all in Western Province, while in North-Western Province, the districts are Mwinilunga, Zambezi, Chavuma, Kabompo, Solwezi, and Mufumbwe.

Others are Kabwe and Serenje in Central Province, Mazabuka in Southern Province, Lusaka in Lusaka Province and Mungwi in Northern Province. Mr Sampa, who was giving an update on the national flood situation, however, said the Government had already put in place measures to address the plight of the affected communities. In the case of Mwinilunga, Zambezi, Chavuma, Kabompo, Lukulu, Kalabo, Kaoma, Solwezi, Mufumbwe and Mungwi, he said, the Zambia Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZVAC) would leave over the weekend to carry out rapid assessments. "It is the findings of these assessment missions that will ascertain the extent of the damage and the interventions required. But in the framework of preparedness, some districts like Zambezi, Chavuma and Kalabo have had relief food pre-positioned prior to the onset of the rain," he said

On Shan'gombo District, he said, so far three schools - Mutomena, Mambolomoka basic and Lupuka primary had been closed due to floods. Mr Sampa said the district had been completely cut off from the rest of the country while the stretch of the road connecting Shan'gombo to Sesheke had three wash-away points. He said the assessment carried out had established that 45 households had been displaced and were currently in two camps of 34 and 11 families. On intervention measures, he said, Zambia Air Force had been engaged to airlift tents, blankets, mealie-meal and other food stuff to help address the

plight of displaced families. He also said operation to reconnect Shang'ombo to the rest of the country through Sesheke-Sitoti-Shang'ombo route was in progress by fixing two bailey bridges at Mboiwa One and Mboiwa Two. Mr Sampa appealed to all affected families to exercise patience and calmness as the Government addresses their plight.

Meanwhile, more houses in Kitwe's Ipusukilo Township have continued to submerge on the banks of the Kafue River following the bursting of the river banks due to the incessant rain that the city has been receiving in the last three days. Some owners of the collapsed houses said they were ready to move to Kawama area where the Kitwe City Council serviced land for the affected to be resettled. A Times team that went to Ipusukilo to check on the situation in the area found that most houses on the banks of the river were submerged in water, while others had completely collapsed.

A team of KCC officials, which included public relations officer, Dorothy Sampa, was found in the area, inspecting the collapsed and submerged houses on the river banks. Mrs Sampa said the number of collapsed and submerged houses had continued to rise because of the heavy rain in the city. She said some victims were seeking shelter from friends and relatives in other townships. One victim, Dyness Zulu, said the residents in the area were now living in fear because hippos and crocodiles were coming near their houses. Mrs Zulu said she was ready to move to Kawama where the council had reserved land for the people who were living on the banks of the river.

#### **Namibia: Floods Cause Country to Declare State of Emergency: 18 March 2009: IRIN**

Johannesburg — Namibia declared a state of emergency on 17 March to address the "devastating floods" that have killed at least 92 people. Namibian President Hifikepunye Pohamba said in a statement that the flooding in the country's northern and northeastern areas had "caused extensive destruction to homes, schools, health facilities, mahangu [pearl millet] and maize fields, businesses, as well as economic infrastructure such as roads and bridges." The flooding, said by Pohamba to be "one of the worst such disasters in recent memory", had cancelled the benefits of the agricultural subsidies for subsistence farmers, and would require the distribution of large quantities of cereals "to prevent widespread hunger". An indication of the severity of the flooding was that for the first time in "several decades" the Kwando and Linyanti rivers had joined the course of Chobe River, and the Zambezi River had risen seven metres, compared to the five-metre rise that occurred during the 2008 floods.

#### **Angola: Floods Prompt Adjustment of School Calendar: 17 March 2009: Angola Press.**

Luanda — Pupils of the localities hit by the heavy rains in the southern Cunene province will have an indefinite pedagogical pause, as long as there are not minimum conditions for its resumption, Angop has learnt. This is expressed in a press communiqué issued on Tuesday by Angola's Education Minister. According to the document, during the

stoppage, the National Institute of Research and Education Development (INIDE), will work with other education organs to adjust the scholar calendar.

**Angola: Equatorial Depression Blamed for Abnormal Heavy Rains: 15 March 2009: AngolaPress.**

Luanda — The heavy rains pouring in some parts of Angola is due to the equatorial depression which emerged in the country recently, according to the head of the office of meteorological control of the National Institute of Meteorology.

Francisco Osvaldo told Angop that "despite the fact that this is the heavy rain season, this (abnormal) situation is also due to the equatorial depression stretching to climatic zones two, three and four". Of late, Cunene, Kuando Kubango, Uige and Moxico provinces have been devastated by floods leaving thousands homeless, dozens dead and a huge amount of material damage. According to Francisco Osvaldo, these abnormal rains will last up to April, then starting to decrease southwards.

**Namibia: Ten Dollars for a 200-Year-Old Tree: Servaas Van Den Bosch: 18 March 2009: Inter Press Service News Agency.**

Despite the investment of millions of donor dollars, the permit system in Namibia's Community Forests has failed dismally, say biodiversity experts. Illegal logging in the inland Kavango is more alive than ever. Namibia is a pioneer in community-based natural resource management. These projects see communities managing wildlife, natural resources and tourism in their areas. Over 50 Community Conservancies have been gazetted, covering 120,000 square kilometres and involving 220,000 people. In addition 16 Community Forests were established in the Kavango and Caprivi Regions.

Hailed as a benchmark in African conservation and supported by dozens of NGOs and government departments, they are the cornerstone of Namibia's rural development, wildlife, and nature conservation. But while some conservancies generate a substantial return - mainly through agreements with private operators - many others are failing. Last year the 16 Community Forests together earned about 30,000 U.S. dollars, down from \$47,000 in 2007. As much as 25 percent goes to the Traditional Authority. The remainder is spread over the 40,000 or more beneficiaries, mostly through Forest Management Committees and Village Development Funds. This translates to just over 50 cents per person, per year. This return is a mere trickle compared to the massive amounts that donors have poured into the Community Forestry in North-Eastern Namibia project. Critics point out that Community Forests and their bigger cousins, the Community Conservancies, are a money pit and will collapse as soon as donors pull out.

**Disappointing return** Jamba Joseph struggles with the door of a storeroom at the office of Ncumcara Community Forest, some 35 kilometres outside Rundu in northern Namibia. Inside the sparsely-lit space some furniture adorned with carvings of elephants and other obligatory 'big five' animals awaits a buyer. Ordered by a wealthy expat, but never collected, the assortment is still hopefully shown by Joseph to anyone who cares to have

a look. He somehow hopes to get compensated for the months of meticulous work. It sums up the predicament of Community Forests in a nutshell. In a documentary shot after the opening of Ncumcara in 2006, the community members are enthusiastic about the idea of turning natural resources in a sustainable enterprise.

But the dreams didn't come true. Last year the entire profits for the community of Ncumcara were a mere \$1,600. In Mile 20, the central kraal of the 15,218 hectare reserve, Joseph explains to IPS that some members of the Forest Management Committee have left disillusioned. Under a huge kiat tree in the middle of the village, he stubbornly works on, sawing, chipping, carving and polishing. And in the community centre across the highway bowls, chests, baskets and carved animals pile up, waiting for the accidental tourist. Even communities that are sitting on gold are hardly bathing in richness. Four forests in the Caprivi Strip, wedged between Zambia and Botswana, last year made about \$20,000 from selling devil's claw. This plant is the basis for medicines against rheumatics and arthritis. The revenues from the laborious harvesting process are a trickle, compared to the overseas profits that are made from Devil's Claw.

Meanwhile, the insatiable hunger of a multi-million dollar industry poses a real risk of over-harvesting. Still, it is not the question of livelihoods that worries scientists most. Despite the Forestry Act of 2001 which saw the establishment of Community Forests, illegal logging has continued. Community Forests are supposed to calculate extraction rates based on the available trees. They then get a block permit from the Ministry, which they sell on to companies or harvest themselves. But because of high demand, in 90 percent of the cases the loggers exceed the permit. As a consequence many undersized trees are cut down, argues Michael Pröpper, a scientist with the Biodiversity Transect Analysis (BIOTA) project who researched the ongoing deforestation in the Kavango. Worse, the highly inefficient - and illegal - practice of illegal pit-sawing leaves large parts of the tree to rot in the forest.

Since trees can take 200 years to reach harvestable size, these practices severely affect the regeneration of the forests. Jamba Joseph, from Ncumcara Community Forest, affirms the observations of the scientists. "We have to be there to keep an eye on the loggers. Otherwise they will just start hammering away and take out twice as much." But even with community members monitoring, offtake numbers from Ncumcara - some 300 trees in 2008 - are still much higher than is sustainable. According to Pröpper, in a soon to be published article on Kavango timber, only 30 trees should have been taken from Joseph's Community Forest.

This not only threatens biodiversity but also potential opportunities under international carbon trading agreements, such as the Kyoto Clean Development Mechanisms. Developing nations are holding their breath as the integration of Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) mechanisms into global carbon markets is being hotly debated. Recently the scientific journal Nature published a study that puts African forests on par with the Amazon rainforest as a potential carbon sink. A drawback of the REDD proposals is that unless the rights of indigenous people are protected, forest communities are believed to suffer under the scheme. If accepted into



the global carbon trading regime, REDDs could arguably assist to alleviate poverty in the communities. A condition, however, is that legal requirements for logging are strictly enforced.

Pröpper argues that currently the major part of the harvesting happens illegally due to a 'leaky' permit system. According to him, the Department of Forestry is unable to patrol the region, which measures 43,418 square kilometres - roughly the size of Switzerland. Outside the Community Forests there is no effective control, but even within the reserves "it is very questionable trees will remain untouched, considering the current attitude towards timber values", he states. Robert Mukuya is a Biota field worker and narrator of *Wiza Wetu! (Our Forest)*, a documentary that aims to create awareness among forest users. He explains how illegal timber gets mixed with 'permitted' timber and sold on. "The operators get the timber from as far as Angola where there is no real law enforcement. Once loaded on the truck it is very hard for forestry officials to estimate if the size of the shipment corresponds with the paperwork."

Three quarters of the wood is exported, explains Pröpper. "Though the profits are made at the end of the supply chain, the harvesters bear the risks, relying on minimal short-term cash income, earned by hard labour." While a full-grown tree is chopped down for as little as \$10 by the loggers, at the other end of the market high quality timber can fetch up to \$800 per cubic meter. "The most the illegal loggers will get paid is \$40 for a week of hard labour, but often it is way less," says Mukuya. "Many of them get paid in foodstuffs, for instance a large bag of mealie meal and 10 kilogrammes of fish." Because of the dynamics in the timber market, corruption is widespread and involves Traditional Authorities and headmen. "The idea that loss of biodiversity has long lasting impacts is not grounded in people's understanding", experiences Robert Mukuya, as he travels around the area to show his documentary.

Although the Forest Act aims to stimulate local ownership and sustainable use of resources, Clever Mapaure, who has researched the legal difficulties surrounding forest conservation, signals a possible conflict between the different parties. The beneficiaries in the Community Forest, the Traditional Authorities that own the land and the State, responsible for conservation and law-enforcement, have different priorities. "This uneasy relationship creates a silent conflict between the state and communities, with communities sometimes back-peddalling on government policies", comments Mapaure. For the forest communities in the Kavango to make a living at \$10 a tree requires enormous amounts of timber. "But a monetary value for the tree, measured according to market prices, is only one part of the story", says Pröpper. "In a system where nobody values irreplaceable resources yet - and neighbouring countries literally throw them away for peanuts - it doesn't mirror the real ecological value and the rising costs once the ecological function is destroyed."

**South Africa: Two Tons of Shark Fins On Taiwanese Boat: 15 March 2009: Cape Argus.**

A Taiwanese fishing vessel with nearly two tons of dried shark fins on board was seized at Cape Town harbour on Saturday. The fins were confiscated by Department of Environmental Affairs inspectors and the skipper and crew of 26 face criminal charges for providing false information about their catch. Carol Moses, spokesperson for Marine and Coastal Management (MCM), said it was clear the foreign-flagged vessel, the Chien Jui 102, had been finning. This practice involves hacking fins off live sharks and throwing them back into the sea where they either bleed to death or become prey for other sharks. The organisation World Conservation estimates that finning causes the death of tens of millions of sharks worldwide each year.

The demand for shark fins is mostly to supply the East with shark fin soup, where it is regarded as a delicacy. Blacktip, silky and blue sharks are among those targeted. Moses said that in terms of international regulations, the number of shark fins landed must correspond with the number of shark trunks on board. She said that both the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas prescribed that the weight of the fins should not be more than 5% of the shark trunk. Moses said the Chien Jui 102's permit had indicated they had 100kg of shark fin, 2,2 tons of shark trunk and 2 945kg of tuna on board.

But what they, in fact, had was nearly two tons of dried shark fins, which meant they should have had about 30 tons of shark trunk. Moses said the vessel would be blacklisted for illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and would remain in the harbour until the case had been finalised. She said the Marine Living Resources Act made provision for a fine of up to R2 million and up to five years' imprisonment. She said the charges were still being formulated. Moses said the vessel had been at sea since December, fishing off-shore on the high seas but had applied for an exclusive economic zone permit to enter South African waters. "If they want to come into our waters to offload or do repairs they have to apply for a permit and provide details of their catch and the type of fishing gear they have on board." The vessel was granted a permit on March 4 and two days later MCM inspectors boarded it at the harbour to do a spot check. She said that should the skipper and crew be found guilty, MCM would sell the fish and the proceeds would go into the Marine Living Resources fund.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Kenya: Late Rains to Worsen Food Security: 18 March 2009: IRIN.**

Nairobi — Food insecurity in Kenya, already affecting millions of people, is set to escalate because the long rains are late and unlikely to be sufficient, officials warned. The forecast has contributed to an upward revision of the cost of humanitarian needs in 2009, from US\$390 million to \$575 million. "Predictions are that the long rains [which normally start in the second week of March] could be poor; this would lead to a more serious

drought later in the year," Jeanine Cooper, head of the Kenya division of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), told IRIN on 17 March.

Abbas Gullet, secretary-general of the Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS), told reporters on 17 March that Kenya's humanitarian situation was deteriorating with the failure of the rains. "The situation has not improved; we were expecting rain but it has not started," he said while collecting donations in Nairobi for distribution in the worst-hit areas. Gullet said most of northern Kenya, Samburu, Moyale, Tana River, Narok, Muranga, Nyeri and the Ukambani areas of Makueni Kitui and Mwingi were affected.

**Combination of factors** Launching their revised Emergency Humanitarian Response Plan (EHRP) on 16 March, UN agencies and NGOs said poor rains, food shortages and high commodity prices had deepened food and livelihood insecurity across many parts of the country. They said instability and conflict in neighbouring Somalia had prompted a marked increase in refugees entering Kenya, hence the review of programme requirements in line with existing and emerging needs. The humanitarian community said emergency interventions were now essential to ensure life-saving food aid for an estimated 3.5-4.5 million. Increasing water availability through enhanced harvesting and storage was also vital.

"Long-term non-food interventions to support the livelihoods of vulnerable populations are also required to mitigate the impact of the current crisis and to cushion future shocks," OCHA Kenya said. It said thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs), especially those displaced in poll-related violence a year ago, were another target group for the revised EHRP. The IDPs' situation stabilised over 2008 due to political progress and joint humanitarian efforts, OCHA Kenya said, and, as a result, an estimated 347,418 IDPs had returned to pre-displacement or transit areas.

**Building resilience** "Nevertheless, many of the transit sites have inadequate basic services, including sanitation, hygiene and health facilities and limited access to schools," OCHA Kenya said. "Peace-building and reconciliation for displaced people and the communities that host them urgently need more and sustained engagement, while increased investment in livelihoods is essential to ensure that returnees can lead productive lives and meet their basic needs while rebuilding socio-economic security." Aeneas Chuma, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Kenya, who presented the humanitarian organisations' plan to support populations affected by climatic shocks, food insecurity and livelihood deterioration, post-election violence and a growing number of refugees, said: "As development partners in Kenya, we recognise the importance of tackling chronic, recurrent and predictable problems with durable and effective solutions." Cooper said the government and aid agencies were capitalising on the spirit of collaboration to strategise, prioritise and plan for 2009, "in order to tackle persisting chronic food insecurity, peace-building initiatives and restoration of livelihood to build the resilience of most vulnerable populations".

**Uganda: Government Should Be Serious on Kaveera Ban: Gerald Tenywa: 16 March 2009: opinion: The New Vision.**

Kampala — The Government is behaving like a toothless barking dog. It has serious work to do concerning plastic bags, but it is taking too much time listening to other actors including the producers who do not have good intentions. The Baganda have a clever saying that consulting a monkey on the fate of a forest is a waste of time. So the makers of plastics will always push for producing plastics. It is only the tactics that will change in order for them to stay in business.

In the 1990s, their argument was that they had sunk a lot of money creating the buveera making factories. They also complained that their investment employs thousands and that their closure would affect them. Instead of doing research and exploring possibilities of making eco-friendly packing materials, the buveera investors sat back making 'dirty money' from the polluting plastic bags. After two decades of making 'dirty money', the buveera investors could no longer advance the reason that they need to recover money they have invested in the factories. In the recent past, they have been pushing the Government to remove the tax imposed on plastic bags of above 30 microns, saying Kenya has already cut taxes on such plastics by half. Politicians in Kenya own most of the private businesses including the plastic industries. They have even reduced the buveera measures putting those for export at 10 microns for export, implying that they do not care where the plastic bags end up as long as they are being used outside their country.

Why is Uganda insisting on taking a common position with other East African countries when Kenya is working against such a position without even consulting Uganda? There are many issues where Uganda has gone it alone, why not take a separate decision on this? Uganda should take a bold step and tighten the noose on plastic bags and ban their manufacture and importation totally. Countries like Rwanda have banned plastic bags and their economies have not collapsed. Why can't Uganda pick a leaf from them? Many people go to Rwanda and come back praising Kigali over its sparkling cleanliness, but that is not achieved by simply talking. Other sources say the Rwandese government has made it because it is authoritarian. What is wrong with that when the benefits are obvious? The implication is that the public wants a clean and healthy environment, but the Government is failing to create a path to the 'promised land.' Governments globally apply the 'carrot and stick' strategy to enforce compliance. The carrot is the range of incentives and awareness that is given to people. But in case this fails, the Government has to swing the whip.

At some point, there was a time when the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) made a strategic paper on disposal of plastic bags. NEMA supported a total ban of plastics, but somehow the Government took them by surprise by coming up with measures described as the common East African position. They saw a bit of sense in this since half a loaf is better than nothing at all. By accepting a partial ban on plastics, they were unknowingly playing in the hands of the investors. Two years after coming up with the buveera measures, the plastic bags are still all over the place - most of them given free. Environmentally sound enterprises making alternative materials will also provide employment and pay taxes. The incentive, which such eco-friendly companies want is a total ban imposed on plastics in order to create demand for paper bags. As the

Government moves in circles over the issue of plastic bags, civil society should educate the public on reducing, reusing and recycling plastics.

Gayaza High School has created a setting that shows the way to manage waste. About a decade ago, Gayaza introduced four dustbins to sort waste. The plastics are separated from broken bottles and food residue. The different kinds of waste are then taken to a collection centre where food residue is processed into manure, the broken bottles used on top of wall fences in order to minimise intrusion by petty thieves and the plastics are squeezed into round balls that cannot easily be blown away by wind. But when Gayaza girls come out of their school, there is no continuity. This means that there is something wrong within our society. When the Gayaza ladies sort waste at their residences, the garbage collectors will take it to one dumping ground at Kiteezi dumping ground where garbage is mixed. So there is no incentive to continue sorting. We need to nurture a culture and responsibility of sorting waste collectively in order to emulate what the Gayaza girls do at their school.

The public should say no to kaveera. Personally I resist the practice of shop attendants packing each item I buy in a separate plastic bag. On top of this I have said no to straws. Anyone who has been to Nairobi or Johannesburg during international conferences will agree with me that it is easy to single out Ugandans from a crowd. They hang out drinking from straws, 'suckling like big babies.' Other groups from Kenya or South Africa take their drinks directly from their bottles and most of them look healthy. Ugandans should change their attitude and learn to say no to plastics in order to minimise waste. What would happen if all of us said no to plastics?

By using plastics, the public empowers the polluters to make even more plastics. When they are pointing at Kampala City Council or NEMA over the litter that is not removed from the city, the generators should not forget that the other four fingers are pointing at them. What is the cost of cleaning up the environment? Is it cheaper to clean up today or tomorrow? Will the makers of the plastics pay for the clean-up? It is sad that these questions have been begging for answers for two decades. The Government is duty-bound to protect public interest. The problem of plastics is rooted in the poor disposal of waste. But for a start the Government should swiftly impose a total ban on the manufacture and use of plastic bags because it will take a long time for the public to manage them. *The writer is environmental journalist*

**Uganda: Deadly Weed Invaded Country: Gerald Tenywa: 13 March 2009: The New vision.**

Kampala — AN alien weed that harms human beings, kills livestock and chokes crops has invaded Uganda. Congress weed, scientifically known as *Parthenium hysterophorus*, has been seen rapidly multiplying in several spots especially along the highway across Uganda from Busia and to Kabale. Dr. Gad Gumisiriza, head of the invasive species project in the agriculture ministry, said the weed has so far been detected in at least 12 districts.

"This is a very aggressive weed which requires quick response. If you delay it can grow and get out of hand." The most affected areas are Busiu along the Tororo-Mbale highway and Busia border town, each having over two acres of the weed. In Busia, a charcoal burner got a severe skin reaction and only improved after being hospitalised. Other affected areas include Karengare in Kabale district, Mbarara town, Bugembe town council near Jinja, Ibanda, Namutumba along Tirinyi road, Busesa in Iganga district, Namulemba in Bugiri district and Queen Elizabeth National Park in Kasese district. At Makerere University Kampala and Masaka town, two decorators were found growing congress weed as flowers without knowing it is a dangerous alien species. Witchdoctors also use the plant to invoke evil spirits, Gumisiriza said. Saturday Vision recently saw two herbal gardens in Bugembe where diviners have planted the weed.

**One of the diviners** Despite looking beautiful and smelling sweet, congress weed is among the world's 10 most dangerous weeds. On contact with the human body, it causes a burning effect that can peel off the skin. Human beings who inhale pollen from the flowers can get an asthma-like illness or persistent flu-like symptoms. Cattle that eat it produce foul-smelling milk or even die. Gumisiriza said the weed can reduce maize yield by 40-60%. It can also reduce the amount of pasture in a grazing area by 90%. The congress weed is thought to have been introduced into Uganda from Mexico through Ethiopia and Kenya. It accidentally got to Ethiopia through relief grain imported from Mexico during the great famine that hit the Horn of Africa in the mid 1980s. It is dispersed mainly by long distance trucks, rivers, water streams and storm water (floods). The Jinja district production and marketing officer, Dr. Stephen Kiwemba, was shocked by how fast the weed multiplied in Bugembe. "When we came here in December, the seedlings were not as many as you can now see," said Kiwemba.

The weed can grow to the height of an adult and produce tens of thousands of seeds in one to two months. The seeds germinate easily but if the ground is not moist, it can remain viable (able to germinate) for up to 20 years. "The situation may not be as simple as we had earlier thought," said Kiwemba. "We are headed to decline in agricultural productivity, food insecurity and poverty will set in as a result." Nalongo Zamu Mukoda, said the weed resembles another local herb known as buza. She said they had turned to the new weed because the indigenous look-alike is getting extinct. So far, Kiwemba has organised a meeting in Bugembe to create awareness about the weed. But despite mobilisation by LCs, the locals are reluctant to attack the weed, except if it grows around their homes. A group of boda boda riders at Bugembe told Saturday Vision that they could not stop their money-minting routines to go uprooting the weed. LC1 chief for Katende West in Budumbuli-Bugembe, Siraje Kisuule said for better results the Government should provide funding to fight the menace. "It is important to intervene today instead of waiting until the problem is out of hand," said Kisuule.

In Busia, the communities are organising to pluck off the weed and caution children not to touch it. Kiyemba points out that while such local efforts are useful, controlling the weed requires a massive national programme. "The problem is that people are not looking at it as an issue. But if we remain reluctant it will become a bigger problem." Agriculture ministry officials agree with Kiyemba. According to Gumisiriza,

the ministry is planning to deal with the weed using chemical spraying, uprooting it and bugs to kill the weed."We have prepared a programme to spray the weed in key areas. We have also contacted Kenya to see how we can handle the weed in the no man's land at Busia border," he said. "In the meantime, we are going to keep monitoring and creating awareness about the dangers of the weed."

Central Africa

**Cameroon: Experts Brainstorm on Forest/Land Tenure Management: Fred Vubem: 20 March 2009: Cameroon Tribune.**

*This was during a lunch seminar hosted by NESDA CA at the FGF office in Yaounde recently. With the increase in demand for arable land prompted by the increase in demand for bio-fuel, the Forest Governance Learning Group, GREG-Forêt, last Tuesday March 10 at the FGF hall in Yaounde, held a lunch seminar on forest and land governance in Africa.*

Justifying the holding of the seminar, the GREG-Foret Convenor, Chimere Diaw, said there has been an increase in demand for land in Africa and Asia where land is available by European countries who are in quest of arable land prompted also by the increase in demand of bio-fuel. Chimere Diaw said the purpose of the seminar was therefore to clarify the existing situation so as to enable decision makers know the stakes ahead and what steps to take.

Meanwhile the coordinator of the Network for Environment and Sustainable Development in Central Africa, Prudence Galega, traced the origin and purpose of GREG Foret. GREG Foret she said was founded some three years ago with the objective of improving the management of forest resources through reflections on forest governance and shared learning from other experts and organisations. GREG Foret she said equally samples institutions involved in environmental conservation as well as the activities they have been conducting. It is an alliance of independent organisations and comprises 25 members drawn from all sectors of the forest sector including governments, the private sector and national and international organisations. The representative of the Ministry of Forest and Wildlife, Yene Atangana, said forest governance constitutes the principal axis of the work of his ministry saying it is always important for the government to get an external view so as to improve on the work it is doing.

**Rwanda: Rwf 55 Billion Lost in 2007 Due to Stringent Regulatory Environment: Alex Ngarambe: 19 March 2009: The New Times.**

Kigali — Tax is the most problematic regulatory area and these problems arise from compliance with Value Added Tax (VAT), Corporate Income Tax (CIT) and Pay As You Go (PAYE) regulations, as well as preparing for tax audit .Rwanda's economy incurred regulatory compliance costs of at least Rfw 55 billion in 2007, which is approximately 3 percent of the country's Growth Domestic Product (GDP).

This means that the said amount of money was lost while investors and entrepreneurs were trying to conform with the business regulatory process in Rwanda. This is according to the report, 'Cutting the Costs of Red Tape for Business Growth in Rwanda,' that was launched on Tuesday. The report was commissioned by the Private Sector Federation (PSF) and funded by gtz a German organization. PSF's Secretary General Emmanuel Hategeka said, "The study will help us show the challenges faced by the business community in Rwanda and will propel us to draft an action plan that will help us solve some of these problems."

The survey that was conducted last year was based on a country-wide sample of 400 formal-sector businesses ranging from large corporations to small enterprises. In Rwanda, 27,000 businesses operate under the formal sector. According to the report, the regulatory costs is more than half of the government's education budget for 2008 which was Rwf103 billion, almost equal to the health budget of Rwf 58 billion and five times higher than the budget provided for under industry and commerce which is Rwf 11 billion. Tax is the most problematic regulatory area and these problems arise from compliance with Value Added Tax (VAT), Corporate Income Tax (CIT) and Pay As You Go (PAYE) regulations, as well as preparing for tax audit.

The report also says that interactions with Rwanda Revenue Authority (RRA), is still a problem to business people further increasing tax-related regulations. Business registration and compulsory business closure during business hours because of public meetings and other requirements has been cited as the second most likely areas to be identified as troublesome and time consuming. Businesses that are engaged in importing and exporting experience have very significant problems associated with regulatory activities. Seventy five percent of Rwanda's aggregate regulatory costs are suffered by firms in importing and exporting. Government was recommended to improving the efficiency and predictability of administrative processes associated with tax compliance, reviewing administrative processes associated with importing and exporting.

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West Africa

### **Nigeria: Halliburton - Atiku Denies Involvement: Mohammed S. Shehu: 21 March 2009: Daily Trust.**

Abuja — Former Vice President, Atiku Abubakar, has denied involvement in the bribery scandal allegedly committed by the American Company, Halliburton. Atiku also reiterated his innocence in the case involving a United States Congressman William Jefferson. Reacting yesterday to media reports that his former boss, Olusegun Obasanjo, had in a British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) television interview, linked him (Atiku) to the Halliburton scandal, Atiku said he played no role in the scam.

In a statement yesterday in Abuja by his media office, Atiku said media reports of the Obasanjo interview were inaccurate and wrong. The statement added that Obasanjo could not have accused Atiku over the Halliburton scandal because the former Vice President



never supervised the Ministry of Petroleum and the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), the two organizations under which the scandal was alleged to have taken place. On the Jefferson case, the statement said Atiku had no questions to answer in the United States of America and that Atiku has sufficiently proved his innocence in the matter. "Congressman Jefferson is at present being tried in the USA and Atiku has never been indicted on the matter," the statement added.

**Nigeria: Hope Rises As Oil Hits U.S. \$52: Chika Amanze-Nwachuku And Ejiofor Alike With Agency Report: 20 March 2009: This Day.**

Lagos — Crude oil prices, for the first time this year, hit a new high of \$52.25 a barrel yesterday after a decision by the Federal Reserve Bank of the United States to spend billions snapping up US bonds sent the dollar tumbling. Also yesterday, Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) of Nigeria and other operators in the oil and gas sector expressed fear over the oil and gas sector reform, and called on the Federal Government not to pursue the reform in a manner that could impede inflow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) or discourage private sector participation. Since oil is priced in dollars, when the US currency weakens, it inevitably makes crude cheaper. The dollar dropped against other major currencies yesterday morning. The euro traded at \$1.3691, up more than 2 cents.

Benchmark crude for April delivery surged \$2.17 to \$51.07 a barrel in light trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange yesterday. Prices had hit \$52.25 earlier in the day, a price last seen on December 1, last year. With the April contract set to expire today, most of the trading had shifted to the contract for May delivery where prices jumped \$2.38 to \$51.28 a barrel.

In other Nymex trading, gasoline for April delivery jumped 5.3 cents to \$1.4186 a gallon, while heating oil rose 7.85 cents to trade at \$1.3425 a gallon. Natural gas for April delivery rose 42 cents to \$4.10 per 1,000 cubic feet. In London, Brent prices rose \$2.62 to \$50.28 on the ICE Futures exchange.

Analysts said investors flocked to crude stocks after the Federal Reserve announced late Wednesday that it would buy long-term government bonds, a measure that's expected to jolt the economy with lower rates on mortgages and other consumer debt. The Federal Reserve also said a \$1 trillion programme to jump-start consumer and small business lending could be expanded to include other financial assets. The deepening global recession, which eroded world oil demand, had left oil prices to around \$40 per barrel since this year. To help revive prices, the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), which pumps a third of the world's oil had reduced output by 4.2 million barrels per day (bpd) since September last year.

However, at its meeting in Vienna last week, the 12-member group agreed to keep production unchanged, but urged its members to fully implement the output reductions announced late last year in order to stabilise the market. The group said it would continue to monitor market developments, to determine its next line of action. There has been

growing concern by Nigeria and other oil-producing nations over the fate of their economies following the continuous decline in oil prices, which plunged to an all time low of \$32 per barrel late last year, after a record high of \$147 in July. Nigeria's initial 2009 budget proposal was based on projected oil production of 2.3 million barrels per day at a benchmark price of \$62.5. But due to the downward swing in the price of oil, government reduced the oil benchmark for the 2009 budget to \$45 per barrel, well below the \$59 used in 2008.

Fears have been expressed that the volatility of crude oil price at the international market may endanger the implementation of the 2009 budget, which was predicated on a daily crude oil production of 2.19 million barrels at \$45 per barrel. The danger faced by this year's budget owing to the cyclic rise and fall of oil price, is worsened by several predictions of imminent fall in global crude oil demand in 2009 by OPEC, International Energy Agency (IEA), Goldman Sachs and several other global bodies.

Meanwhile, speaking yesterday in Lagos at the First Quarterly Business Forum of the Nigerian Gas Association (N.G.A), the Vice-President (Production) of Shell Africa and Managing Director of S.P.D.C., Mr Mutiu Sunmonu, submitted that certain sections of the reform bill currently before the National Assembly were unclear and subject to multiple interpretations. Sunmonu also said that the bill seeks to provide too many regulators in the sector. This, he said, could lead to the elimination of the rights of the operators, especially the rights to international arbitration. "Fiscal uncertainty slows down decision for new projects. The fiscal terms are either unclear or inconsistent. As an industry, we welcome government efforts such as the proposed incorporation of the Joint Ventures (JVs). It is a promising incentive but getting it right is essential. Many of the bills are unclear and subject to multiple interpretations," he said.

Speaking on the issue, a renowned legal consultant in oil and gas, Mr. Gbite Adeniji of Aalex Law Firm, said that the bill provides that the incorporated Joint Venture shall account to the National Oil Company (NOC). He said that this was not in conformity with the position of the law. The incorporated JVs he said, should account to the shareholders and the country's company law. He also expressed concern over possible overlap of roles between technical and commercial regulators, stressing that the too many agencies provided for by the bill should be streamlined. "My concern is that the OGIC (Oil and Gas Sector Implementation Committee) bill does not take care of consensus issues that will drive the gas sector. The issue of Gas Master Plan was not taken care of by OGIC. The instrument should have gone round to all stakeholders for consultation; that is the best form of legislation. But the stakeholders were not involved," he said.

However, Sunmonu, who was represented by the Managing Director of Shell Nigeria Gas Limited, Mr. Bayo Opadere, said that the way forward was for the government to adopt a two-phased implementation of the reform process. "We would like to have a two-phased implementation of the bill during the transition period. The institutional reforms should come first before the fiscal and commercial reforms," he said. Sunmonu stressed that Shell was keen to take on new gas projects provided that they were commercially viable. He said there was the need to secure the environment, adding that the volume of

gas Shell had lost to the closure of some of its gas facilities in the Niger Delta was enough to power a 500-megawatt gas-fired power plant. Also speaking, chairman of the event and former Group Managing Director of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Mr. Funso Kupulokun said: "Yes, the bill is the right way to go but there are a number of issues- the institutional reforms should go ahead and later fiscal and commercial reforms."

Group General Manager, National Petroleum Investment and Management Services (NAPMS), an investment arm of the NNPC, Dr. Musa Baru, said that the threat to security in the Niger Delta posed great threat to the supply of gas estimated to gulp \$2.2 billion for the country to attain a generating capacity of 6,000mw by the end of this year. "If you are seeing it the way I am seeing it, the security issue in the Niger Delta is much more difficult than many people are seeing it. But if some plans are implemented, it will give us respite to achieve the 6,000mw. But we need to do some work beyond 2009." There are challenges of securitisation. The joint ventures and other partners would not like a situation where the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) cannot pay for gas. Again, the Independent Power Producers (IPPs) would like to be paid when they generate power," Baru said.

**Ghana: Gas From WAGP Due in March 2010: Daniel Nonor: 17 March 2009: the chronicle.**

The long awaited West Africa Gas Pipeline Project (WAGP) is expected to be completed by January 2010, with the first free flow of natural gas from the pipeline to generate power at the Takoradi plant, to begin by March 16, 2010. Nigeria's Minister of State, Petroleum Resources, Odein Ajumogobia, disclosed this at the opening session of the Committee of Energy Ministers of West Africa Gas Pipeline Authority (WAGPA) and WAGPCo, in Cotonou, Benin Republic, at the weekend. The Minister assured members of the WAGPA, Ghana, Togo and Benin Republic that despite the initial hiccups, January 2010 was certain. He also said that the Nigerian government was determined to ensure that the 133 million square cubic feet per day (mscfd) of natural gas signed under the initial agreement was available on completion of the project. "As you are aware, we have taken every opportunity through our resolve and commitment to underscore the point that this project will bring with its importance to our sub-region. "Our commitment rests on our conviction that this project shall lead to regional cooperation and economic integration that would raise the living standard of our people. This is the foundation of our unflinching commitment," he said.

He said, "To us in Nigeria, the (WAGP) project is one major milestone in achieving one of our own policy goals which is to carve out and develop a vibrant gas sector and to properly stimulate the gas business in the country. Furthermore, President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua is disposed to making the necessary efforts in finding solutions together with other countries to ensure that this project succeeds". Ajumogobia further stated that the "common efforts in the past years have allowed the project attain a very important milestones today with the completion of the main offshore pipeline from Lagos to Takoradi, and the temporary facilities put in place to supply free flow of gas to

Takoradi. We are happy to note that the system has been successfully commissioned and ready for operation. It is our hope and expectation that the Takoradi plant will soon be commissioned and start generating power from natural gas. This will be a concrete achievement of part of our goal of this project."

The Minister said with the achievements "made by various partners and stakeholder groups to reach this stage of the project, it is my hope and expectation that these cooperative efforts, buoyed by the support and good will among partners and stakeholders will be sustained into the future as the project will soon move into the operation stage by the grace of the Almighty God. We hope that this dynamism will be sustained so that the remaining works will be completed to enable the countries benefit from the gas from Nigeria". WAGPCo, according to Jack Derickson, its Director General, has so far spent a whopping \$719 million on the project since it took off in 2004, and stated further that the shareholders have just approved an additional \$255 million to be spent on the project over the next one year.

In all, the company would have spent \$974 million for the completion of the project from inception to completion by 2009. He said the amount of money would be devoted to the completion of the project, which is due to begin delivery of natural gas to the member countries in commercial quantity by January 2010. The WAGPCo has an installed natural gas capacity of 170 million square cubic feet of gas per day but with an additional capacity to upgrade to 474 mscfd. Under the foundation agreement, Nigeria is to supply WAGPCo with 133 mscfd, but there is pressure on the Nigeria government from member countries to increase the quantity by another 100 mscfd, but Nigeria is yet to commit to it. Those who were present at the meeting chaired by Ajumogobia were the host Minister of Energy and Water, Benin Republic, Sacca Lafia, Minister of Energy, Ghana, Joe Oteng-Adjei and Minister of Mines, Energy and Water Resources of the Republic of Togo, Dammipi Noupokou. Others were the director generals of WAGPA, WAGPCo and members of the Board of Governors of the company.

#### **Nigeria: Russia, Govt Sign Energy Pact: 20 March 2009: This Day.**

Lagos — Russia has signed an accord with Nigeria calling for cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, including the construction of nuclear power plants and establishment of uranium mining in Nigeria. The two countries signed a memorandum of mutual understanding in Moscow during the third meeting of the Russian-Nigerian Intergovernmental Commission on Economic and Scientific Technical Cooperation. The accord was signed by Rosatom Deputy Director general, Nikolay Spassky, and Emmanuel Egbogah, special adviser to the president. Rosatom said that the memorandum could lead to bilateral cooperation on the development of nuclear energy infrastructure, including on nuclear power plants and research reactors in Nigeria.

Russia would also assist Nigeria in the field of nuclear research and in the production and use of radioisotopes. The memorandum also covers the joint prospecting and development of uranium deposits in Nigeria. Following the signing of the memorandum, the two countries will now draft a full intergovernmental cooperation agreement. To address

rapidly increasing base-load electricity demand, Nigeria has sought the support of the International Atomic Energy Agency to develop plans for up to 4000 MWe of nuclear capacity by 2025. Nigeria is Africa's most populous country and its power demand is expected to reach 10,000 MWe by 2007 - current grid-supplied capacity is 2600 MW.

**Nigeria: Shell Commissions N23 Million Projects in Bayelsa: Samuel Oyadonga: 20 March 2009: Vanguard.**

The people of coastal settlement of Bilabiri I & II, Agoro and Agorogbene, on the Atlantic fringe of Ekeremor and Sagbama local government area in the Bayelsa West senatorial districts yesterday had cause to smile as the Anglo Dutch oil giant, Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) commissioned the Mein Cluster Development Board projects worth over N23million.

No fewer than 58 natives of Bilabiri I&II in post-primary schools and 12 in post-secondary schools were awarded scholarship worth N30, 000 and N75, 000 each under the Global Memorandum of Understanding the company entered into with the board. The company had earlier commissioned its first set of projects, including local market boat, 10 Deep Sea Fishing Boats, 10 no 15HP engines and 2, 40HP engines in Warri as well as water scheme at Agorogbene, while a steel footbridge, science laboratory block in Agoro, community town hall, public and micro credit in Agorogbene, water project for Bilabiri I&II and market boat for Bilabiri II are ongoing. Speaking at the commissioning ceremony in Yenagoa, SPDC Government and Community Relations Manager (Central), Mr. Funkakpo Fufeyin, called on the Mein Cluster Development Board "to ensure that the projects are well maintained and run profitable to the communities."

Describing the projects as a testimony of SPDC's commitment to improving lives in the Niger Delta, he said the projects would help to facilitate sustainable development in the communities, particularly in the key areas of economic empowerment, human capital development and social infrastructure. "Our participation in the GMoU is evidence of our commitment to sustaining our corporate social responsibility programme through our support in developing our local communities and managing the environmental impact of our operations responsibly as well as promoting economic prosperity," he said. Earlier, the chairman of Mein Cluster Development Board, Ati Robert, commended the company for the award of scholarship to indigenes of Bilabiri I&II in post-primary and post-secondary schools, assuring that the communities would continue to partner with SPDC to ensure hitch-free operation in the area. Robert, who said the cluster was set up with the aim of promoting sustainable development, peace and security in the area as well as providing open and accountable governance, strengthening member communities and their capacity to plan, design and implement their own development agencies, called on the local and state governments and other stakeholders to avail the communities all necessary assistance that would bring development and peace to the people.

The spokesman of Mein Cluster Development Board, Mr. Franklin Simon, who spoke to Vanguard at the end of the ceremony, called on the state to implement the 13 percent

derivation fund for the benefit of the oil producing communities, saying this would bring about lasting peace in the state.

Southern Africa

**Zimbabwe: Unity Govt Spells Out Economic Recovery Plan: John Allen: 20 March 2009: allafrika.**

Cape Town — Zimbabwe's new unity government has published an ambitious short-term economic recovery plan which portrays a vivid picture of the extent of the crisis it faces and estimates the cost of addressing its most urgent priorities at U.S. \$5 billion. A 121-page report outlining the plan, entitled "[Short Term Emergency Recovery Programme: Getting Zimbabwe Moving Again](#)," was unveiled in Harare this week by President Robert Mugabe and finance minister Tendai Biti, who was appointed from Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai's Movement for Democratic Change. The report reveals that:

- Only between 15 and 50 percent of health workers report for duty each day as a result of the high costs of transport and basic necessities;
- 68 percent of doctors' posts in the country are vacant;
- Getting teachers back to work and dealing with other urgent education sector challenges will cost an estimated U.S. \$440 million;
- The country produces only 20 percent of the 2 million tonnes of maize and 500,000 tonnes of wheat it needs to feed its people every year, and needs help to buy the rest;
- Annual gross domestic product (GDP) has been declining at an average rate of -5.9 percent since 2000, with total output dropping by more than 40 percent in the past nine years; and
- Output has declined in nearly all sectors of the economy. Manufacturing has been hit worst, by an estimated 73.3 percent decline. Mining output has dropped an estimated 53.9 percent, and agriculture by 7.3 percent.

The recovery plan calls for urgent financing for this year's (southern hemisphere) winter crops and for the 2009/10 summer crop. It promises an end to farm invasions which disrupt production, and an audit of land holdings "for the purpose of establishing accountability, eliminating inefficiency and multiple farm ownership." The plan said it aims to "ensure equitable land distribution as well as ensuring security of tenure to all land beneficiaries."

The report calls for the lifting of sanctions which deny the country access to credit from international financial institutions and prevent Zimbabwean companies from securing lines of credit. It says the new government has already begun talks with the European Union, the European Commission, the United States government, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Bank with a view to having sanctions lifted, as provided for in the agreement establishing the unity government.

Singling out the United States, the report declares: "It is imperative that the Zimbabwe

Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZIDERA) be repealed...” The act, passed by the U.S. Congress in 2001, banned financial assistance and lending to Zimbabwe for everything except “basic human needs.” The new government sets ambitious targets. While its immediate plan – which it brands “STERP” reflecting the acronym for its full name – is characterized as “an emergency short term stabilisation programme,” it says it wants to lay the basis of “a more transformative mid-term to long-term economic programme that will turn Zimbabwe into a progressive developmental State.”

“STERP recognises the need to stimulate investment,” the plan says. “Therefore it is the intended objective of increasing investment capacity from 4 percent of GDP to over 25 percent of GDP. These increases are meant to underpin sustainable economic growth and development.” In perhaps its boldest statement of intent, the report declares: “Priority for the new investment will be given to the area of technology to ensure that not only production capacity is enhanced, but also to fast-track the country into a technological and industrial giant. The South East Asian Model will be embraced to inspire future transformative development programmes succeeding STERP.” Returning to “short-term emergency policy areas,” the report says sector specialists estimate the costs of rehabilitating Zimbabwe’s infrastructure and social services as follows:

### **Unity Govt Spells Out Plan**

- Agriculture – U.S. \$980 million
- “Specially targeted vulnerable groups” – U.S. \$100 million
- Education – U.S. \$440 million
- Health – U.S. \$300 million
- Water and sanitation – U.S. \$740 million
- Giving capacity to local authorities – U.S. \$240 million
- Giving capacity to rural district councils – U.S. \$15 million
- Support to industry – U.S. \$1,150 million
- Electricity – U.S. \$370–\$2,000 million

The plan asserts that detailed technical work has been done to produce “a well balanced and realistic budget for STERP.” It names the plans priorities as food, water treatment chemicals, education, health, public service employment costs, basic commodity supply, social welfare payments, crop inputs and the rehabilitation of roads.

### **South Africa: Industrial Zone Signs Up to Sell Biodiesel to Germany: iseko Njobeni: 19 March 2009: BusinessDay.**

Johannesburg — THE East London Industrial Development Zone (Elidz) had secured a long-term contract to export between 70% and 90% of the output from a planned 400000-ton -a-year biodiesel plant in the Eastern Cape to Germany, the body said this week. According to Elidz, the project would generate about 17000 jobs through commercial and small-scale farming in the Eastern Cape. Elidz business development manager Msokoli Ntombana said the project would stimulate economic activity in the

province. This included transportation of feedstock to silos to be erected in East London, Mthatha, Mount Ayliff, Butterworth, Queenstown and Alexandria.

Ntombana said Elidz had a "long-standing" contract to export the output from the plant to Germany, "as this is suitable biodiesel for the cold European conditions that other feedstock cannot meet". He said an environmental impact assessment was under way and production would commence next year. The plant would be located in the Elidz area. Canola would be the feedstock for the plant. He said Elidz and its partners in the project -- the Eastern Cape Development Corporation, Asgi-SA Eastern Cape and the Department of Agriculture -- had chosen canola because it met the strict European Union quality specifications. Meanwhile, the Southern African Biofuel Association (Basa) has moved to defend the industry amid perceptions that its development in SA could hamper food security.

The advent of a viable biofuels industry has often raised questions about its impact on food security. In a move that has dented the hopes of the proponents of biofuels, the South African government has excluded maize from potential feedstock of biofuels as it is a staple crop for most South Africans. Rising maize prices also motivated the move. Basa president Andrew Makenete said: "Biofuels is more of an opportunity than a threat. Unfortunately in SA it is viewed as a threat."

He urged SA to be bold and emulate what he said was a political commitment by the government of Brazil to set ambitious targets for renewable energy in the 1970s. Brazil is regarded as the world's leading biofuels market. He said access to food, "and not food production", was the problem in SA. He said the food sector had "severe market inefficiencies," citing the recent allegations of collusion among bread and milk producers. Asgi-SA Eastern Cape CEO Simphiwe Somdyala said biofuels would have no impact on food security "if handled well".

East Africa/Horn of Africa

### **East Africa: Comesa Electricity Woes Expected to Worsen: 17 March 2009: Times Of Zambia.**

THE Government anticipates that the deficit in electricity supply in the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (Comesa) region will worsen because of economic and population growth. Speaking during the official opening meeting of the launch of the regional association of energy regulators in Lusaka yesterday, Energy and Water Development Minister Kenneth Konga said that the deficit in electricity supply, currently estimated at 20 per cent of the demand was expected to rise to 46 per cent by 2011.

In a speech read for him by his deputy Gladys Lundwe, Mr Konga said that the total installed capacity of the Comesa region was around 35,000 megawatts and almost 69 per cent was thermal whereas 30 per cent was hydro. Mr Konga regretted that in many Comesa countries, the use of wood fuels was predominant owing to the high percentage of people living below the poverty line. He said that in Zambia for instance, according to



the 2000 census, 61 per cent of the households use firewood for cooking whereas the country's installed electricity generation capacity was 1,910 megawatts."The region's modern energy resources such as fossil fuels and electricity and their infrastructure such as electricity grids and pipelines are under-developed and there is low levels of industrialisation in most of the member states," Mr Konga said.He said that inadequate access to energy was one of the major supply side constraints saying it was important to address the challenge through the harmonisation of the regulatory frameworks in the region."The Eastern Africa Power Pool (EAPP) which is one of the specialised institutions of Comesa is carrying out a study to develop a regional master plan for the entire eastern African region which will be completed by March 2010," Mr Konga said.

He said that he envisaged the regulatory association enhancing energy reliability as well as reducing energy cost in the Comesa region.Speaking earlier, Comesa secretary general, Sindiso Ngwenya said that the challenge to develop the energy sector among member countries has been lack of adequate finances.Mr Ngwenya also said that the high-energy losses were resulting into low levels of competitiveness among member countries.He, however, noted with happiness that Egypt was reducing the levels of energy losses from 25 per cent to 12 per cent."Energy is security to the country and is required for the country to meet the millennium development goals (MDGs)," he said.With a regional regulatory framework in place, he said that Comesa member countries would be able to attract investments in the energy sector."Even in the face of the global meltdown, prospects for the region are good. Not all is lost as the prospects are still bright," Mr Ngwenya said.

### **Tanzania to introduce reforms in the mining sector: [afrol News](#): 20 March:**

Tanzania has promised to have a new policy and legislation in place by mid-year to improve the country's earnings from its lucrative and expanding mining sector.Energy and Mining minister William Ngeleja, told reporters today in Dar es Salaam that the government was considering most of the recommendations made by the review committee on the Tanzania mining sector.Tanzania's head of state, President Jakaya Kikwete last year set up a review committee, which recommended amongst others, an upward review of royalties and tax reforms to help boost mining revenues in the country.

The commission also recommended that government should take a stake in all mining operations as a way of guarding the country's interests.According to Mr Ngeleja, government is considering most of the recommended and a law should be in place by June this year.He however said, even with the envisaged changes, government will ensure that investors currently in the country are not affected much, saying the policy would strife for a win-win situation for both government and the investors.

Tanzania is currently rates Africa's third largest producer of Gold, while it also has

sizeable investments in its Tanzanite stones and germ diamonds. Mining revenues are said to have fetched over 50 percent of the country's collections last year, with critics saying the country could do much better with reforms in the sector. The country is however also cautious that in introducing the new laws, existing investments which have been affected by the current global financial crisis will not be shaken further. Some major improvements and investments in the mining sector are already said to have been suspended or held back while major companies revise their costs amidst the declining global demand of the precious metals and germ stones.

**Uganda: Bujagali Dam Investor Refunds U.S.\$75 Million: David Muwanga: 19 March 2009: The New Vision.**

Kampala — The \$75m the Government lent to the Bujagali power project has been paid back. The Government had also given the company another \$17.5m for the resettlement of people living along the transmission line.

The money was lent to the firm, BEL, to enable it start the project immediately as it mobilised its own funds. "We are going to use this \$75m and other funds raised internally for the construction of a dam at Karuma falls," the President said.

"The dam had been estimated to produce 200MW, but we have found that it can produce 700MW." He made the remarks yesterday while addressing members of the Presidential Investors Round Table at the Serena Hotel Kampala. The group comprises business executives and was formed in 2007 to promote investments. Museveni said in order to improve the business climate, the Government had concentrated on energy and infrastructure.

"Depending on external partners made us make a lot of mistakes, especially in the area of energy and we ended up with a shortage," he said. "Even now many factories depend on generators, but we created an energy fund to help us move the power projects quickly and among them is Karuma."

Museveni said the Bujagali Dam, with a total price tag of \$770m, would generate 250 Megawatts when complete in 2011. He also said the Government also experienced problems with donors in the construction of roads. "Today they promise they are to work on this road and they do not implement it, so we developed the road fund of about \$600m and all major roads will be done." He said the Government was working with Kenya, Tanzania, Southern Sudan and Congo to develop a railway network. The Government, he said, had implemented the neighbours' recommendations to stop encroachment on national parks. In any case, he noted, tourism was more lucrative than cultivation of maize or sweet potatoes in the parks.

He said the Government would not compromise on strategic forests. Uganda Investment Authority board chairman Patrick Bitature said investors had complained about the high fuel and food prices and inflation. Bitature hailed the partnership between

the Government, the private sector and international entrepreneurs to improve the business climate in Uganda.

**Uganda: Heritage to Spend Sh4 Billion to Develop Oil Districts: Francis Kagolo: 19 March 2009: the New Vision.**

Kampala — HERITAGE Oil Corporation, the Canadian firm exploring for oil in western Uganda, is to spend sh4b annually on developing the districts where it operates. The corporation's general manager for East Africa, Bryan Westwood, said the company had allocated \$2m (about sh4b) in its budget for the corporate social responsibility projects.

The money will be used for constructing roads, clean water sources, schools, hospitals and other social amenities in Hoima, Buliisa, Pakwach and other districts where Heritage operates. Westwood said this while handing over a primary school the company built in Buhuka parish, Kyangwari sub-county, to the Hoima district officials. The seven-classroom school has staff quarters, offices and a house for the head teacher and his deputy. The classrooms also have enough furniture. The school, which cost \$300,000 (about sh600m), was named after Carl Nefdit, the Heritage official who was shot on Lake Albert last year.

"Production has not yet started but we consider corporate social responsibility as a task we must undertake in order to transform the villages where we operate from," Westwood explained. Yokonea Nyamayaro, the school's head teacher, revealed that Carl Nefdit Buhuka Primary School was the only one in the parish and commended Heritage for helping to transform the peoples' standards of living. Westwood said the company had spent over sh1b on constructing three boreholes in Buhuka parish. Abdul Byakagaba, the firm's senior geologist, said the company would produce about 40,000 barrels (over 300 litres) of oil per day.

About 28,900 barrels are expected to be produced from the three wells in Block 3A in Buhuka.

The company has also drilled three wells in Block 1, which runs from Wanseko in Buliisa through the Murchison Falls National Park to Pakwach in West Nile. "Uganda is capable of joining the class of super oil-producing countries," Byakagaba said. "We are still testing the oil fields to determine how much we have and how to harvest it." He said the company would start tangible production in 2011. Dr. Kasuki Kayizzi, a soils expert with the National Agricultural Research Organisation, dismissed allegations that oil exploration had affected soil fertility in the region. He said they treat the rocky soils that are excavated from underground and confirmed that the exercise has had no negative impact on the environment so far.

**Uganda: Make Oil Revenue Public – Activists: Anthony Bugembe: 19 March 2009: The New vision.**

Kampala — THE oil revenue sharing agreements should be made public to enable the different stakeholders understand what they stand to benefit, activists and policy makers have advised. Oil discoveries have recently been made in Hoima, Buliisa and Amuru districts where exploration is being undertaken by Tullow Oil and Heritage Oil companies. Uganda's oil production potential is currently estimated at nearly 1 billion barrels of oil.

Exploration is also being carried out by oil exploration firm Dominion in Rukungiri and Kanungu districts. "The issue of information disclosure is very important. It is unfair that even the members of Parliament have not been in position to look at the oil revenue sharing agreements," said Geoffrey Kamese from the National Association of Professional Environmentalists. Kamese was addressing a panel discussion on preparing for Uganda's oil and gas industry yesterday at Protea Hotel in Kampala. He observed that all Ugandans were entitled to information on how the revenue from the production would be shared.

Brian Glover, Tullow Oil's country general manager, said the disclosure of information on the agreements was determined by the Government. Buyaga MP Barnabas Tinkasimire said transparency was necessary if the country was to benefit. Stephen Birahwa, the MP for Buliisa and a member of Parliament's natural resources committee, said all available information must be shared by the stakeholders to enable comprehensive planning. Birahwa appealed to the public not to politicise the oil exploration. "The oil is meant to benefit the entire country and not a small section as some people are alleging," Birahwa said. Environmental activist Ken Lukyamuzi said Tullow Oil must provide a guarantee to Ugandans that the different environmental concerns arising from oil exploration and production would be addressed.

Central Africa

**Rwanda: WB Pumps Rwf 45 Billion Into National Budget: Gertrude Majyambere: 20 March 2009: The New Times.**

Nyarugenge — The World Bank has made a grant donation of \$80 million (approx. Rwf45.4 billion), to be channelled through the national budget. Provided as the 5th Poverty Reduction Strategy Grant (PRSG), the grant will, according to officials, enhance the development agenda in support of the implementation of the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS). The grant agreement was signed yesterday between the Finance and Economic Planning Minister James Musoni and World Bank Country Director Victoria Kwakwa, at the Ministry of Finance.

"This is the first time in the PRSG series that we are using the Common Performance Assessment framework (CPAF), a mechanism that has been agreed between the Government of Rwanda and all the budget support donors for harmonizing assessment of Rwanda's performance to underpin our support through the budget," Kwakwa said. The sectors to benefit from the funds include private and agriculture sectors where some of the funds will be channelled to the Agriculture Guarantee Fund that will help farmers to

access loans to boost their production especially in rural areas. It will also enhance access to energy, transport and creation of an attractive business environment.

The education sector will benefit through investment in science and technology studies. According to Musoni, the first disbursement will be made immediately after the parliament approves the grant, a process that is expected to happen within two weeks."The grant is timely, we expect this form of assistance to enhance our national ownership, directly targeting quick reduction of poverty through pro-poor growth," said Musoni after the signing of the agreement. The country's current economic growth is projected at over 11 percent, the highest in the region."This highlights the importance attached to EDPRS and we are confident that the support will make a difference in creating job opportunities and increase agricultural produce," Kwakwa said. The EDPRS is a medium term framework adopted by government as a modality of achieving its long term development agenda embodied in the Vision 2020.

**East Africa: Railway Project to Cost U.S.\$ 3.5 Billion: Sam Nkurunziza; 19 March 2009: The New Times.**

Kigali — The development of the railway line project that will link Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania as part of the Central Development corridor will cost an estimated \$3.5 bn. This was revealed at the meeting on the multi national project which concluded Tuesday in Tunisia bringing together 65 representatives from the three countries. Rwanda was represented at the roundtable meeting that also attracted potential investors for the project, by Infrastructure Minister Linda Bihire and officials from the transport sector.

The roundtable which was convened by the African Development Bank (AfDB), aimed at sharing findings of the feasibility study of the project with various stakeholders interested in its development and implementation with a view to harnessing their opinion and advice on the way forward. The line which will eventually reduce the cost of imported merchandise is set to start from Isaka in Tanzania via Rusumo Boarder. It is also to proceed to Bugesera District from where it will turn to Kigali at Nyandungu which is to be the main stage for loading and assembling wagons.

Later this year Burundi and Rwanda are expected to start works on a 691 km (430 mile) railway line connecting both countries to Tanzania. The proposal of the route is based on the financial and other studies carried out by DB International, a German railway consulting company. Economic analysts say that the railway will lower the cost of transporting merchandise from 40 percent (of total costs) to five percent. It will accommodate both electric and locomotive trains as the Dar-es-salaam to Isaka will be upgraded to meet all requirements.

**Rwanda: MTN Donates 50 Generators: Sam Nkurunziza: 19 March 2009: The New Times.**

Kigali — MTN Rwanda, Wednesday, donated 50 second-hand generators worth US\$500,000 (Approx Rwf 280m) to the ministries of Education (MINEDUC) and Health

(MINISANTE).20 of them will go to the MINEDUC while the rest were donated to MINISANTE for use in schools and health centres respectively.According to the MTN Rwanda CEO, Themba Khumalo, the generators have only been used for less than a year and are in perfect working condition.While announcing the donation, he explained that the increased capacity demands on networks required MTN to upgrade the power generation at base stations."This is why we have decided to give away the generators to these institutions given the power shortage currently characterized due to the current insufficient electricity supply," Khumalo said.He added that breaking from the tradition of disposing of used property through public auction, the company has shown commitment through its Corporate Social Responsibility Programme by donating the equipment.

Speaking at the ceremony, State Minister for Education Theoneste Mutsindashyaka, acknowledged the development and urged MTN to keep up the spirit."Many schools lack electric power and with the newly introduced ICT education on the curriculum, the generators will definitely have an impact," Mutsindashyaka said.Twenty head teachers from some of the remotest schools attended the ceremony and their schools will be among the beneficiaries.On behalf of MINISANTE Steven Karengera commended the donation and accepted it was a life saved in case of danger."They will go along way to benefit health centres located in isolated regions," Karengera observed.Before announcing the donation, the telecoms company held a series of consultative meetings with the two ministries and agreed the modalities of the donation which are contained in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was signed at the handover ceremony. The ministries on their part made the selection where best to allocate the generators.

### 93. PEACEKEEPING, CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND SECURITY MATTERS

West Africa

**Nigeria: My Mission to the Great Lakes Region, By Obasanjo:20 March 2009:This Day.**

Lagos — *Does Africa have leaders capable of solving Africa's problems? Former President Olusegun Obasanjo is one of the continent's most experienced leaders. He was president of Nigeria twice and his last eight year term ended in 2007. Now he's a UN special envoy to the troubled eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Does his record inside Nigeria lend him any credibility as a regional statesman? He gave his answer to these questions to BBC's Stephen Sackur in Hardtalk Africa.*

**Let's start with your role in the Democratic Republic of Congo. You were appointed last year by the secretary general of the United Nations as a special envoy, mediator. Do you believe that you have made progress to stabilizing and pacifying Eastern Congo?**Of course, I do believe that substantial progress has been made. I won't say were there yet but by the time of my appointment what does the world say about the Congo? Almost a monumental humanitarian crisis that really shocked.The situation which led to

that monumental humanitarian crisis and of course everywhere in the world people were concerned and that was what led to the Secretary General of the United Nations appointing me as a special envoy.

**If I may interrupt, what we saw in January was a new military offensive, this time the Congolese army and the Rwandan army. Joint military offensive against the Hutu militiamen. Was that something you were in favour of?** On the seventh of November last year, the leaders of the great lake region called for a summit. The Secretary General of the United Nations himself was at that summit, leaders of the AU were at that summit, and that summit took certain decisions, one to confirm my appointment not only as special envoy of the Secretary General but also as the facilitator and mediator for the great lakes region and the AU and also for former president of Tanzania, Benjamin Nkapa.

**Are you in favour of the joint military operation of the Congolese army and the Rwandan army working together to try to using the phrase used by the President of Rwanda, to eradicate the Hutu militias. Do you favour them?** At that point, the main problem of the humanitarian crisis has been stemmed, but on the seventh of November as I told you when the leaders met in Nairobi, President Kagame and President Kabilla will not exchange greetings let alone shake hands. Now, that is the major problem because if two neighbours are so crossed against themselves that they would not talk to themselves, you cannot talk of peace. Now, the situation started moving, they started talking to themselves, to the point that they even came to work out a joint operation for peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and President Kagame said that in his own lifetime, he hasn't seen any time he is confident of peace in the Congo as it is now. And if he said that, he knows what he is talking about.

**He says that all the peace forces are now out of the Congo. Is that true?** I have no reason not to believe him but coming back to the point I made, the fact that the two countries agreed to have a joint operation, must be applauded.

**I appreciate the points you are making but it raises questions as well. One questions is the fate of Laurent Nkunda who was one of the leaders of the militia fighting the Hutus. He was supporting Rwanda but they now hold him under some kind of House arrest and the Congolese government wants Nkunda to stand trial for war crimes inside Congo. Is your message to Rwanda that they should hand him over to Congo for trial?** I have no message for Rwanda. I have peace mission in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. I have peace mission in the whole of Great Lakes region. Now, I don't tell Rwandan government or Congo's government what they should do. And now, if Laurent Nkunda had committed any crime against his country or against anybody and he has to be held responsible that is the responsibility of the DRC.

**But you are there as an adviser and as a mediator and as a man who sends messages on behalf of the UN Secretary General for both sides.** I am not adviser, I am mediator and facilitator.

**And sending messages on behalf of UN Secretary General in your opinion would it lead to stabilization for Nkunda to be sent for trial in Congo?**There is extradition agreement between Congo and Rwanda and Nkunda is a wanted man in the Congo and in the hands of Rwanda and that part of the agreement would have to be accepted and worked upon. It may be on terms that they would agree within themselves but that is the way it goes.

**Do you believe that president Kabila has the capacity to unify and pacify whole of his country?**I believe Kabila can lay the foundation of long term peace in his country. What are the ingredients for this? Kabila of all the leaders that have come before independent of the Congo is the one that has legitimacy through a nationwide democratic election. So he has that to his credit. Congo is very weak in the institution of state. What the international community can do is to help Congo to establish those necessary institutions to really make Congo a strong state. Congo is not a failed state but a very weak state.

**I am interested that you talk about the role of the international community. Do you support the international criminal court indictment and warrant of arrest of President Bashir for crimes against humanity?**I have to know what the crimes are and how they were committed before I give you an answer. As at the moment, I don't know what the crimes are.

**But we know that hundreds of thousands of people have died and many were wounded and many many more have been forced out of their homes in Darfur. Once accused of crimes against humanity, it is safe to assume very serious allegations of his directing a military campaign against civilians. The international court wants to put Bashir in front of it so that it can test the level of his responsibility. They believe that there is enough evidence to have a trial.**

Well, if they put those pieces of evidence open publicly and we can all see it.

**We can trust the international criminal court. It sounds to me that you are defending the Sudanese government position.**No, I am not defending the Sudanese government position, I am not even holding brief for anybody. In government, I was one of those who supported and signed unto ICC and in the belief that it will be fair, just, nonpolitical and absolutely doing what it should do but today, I am not sure how nonpolitical ICC is.

**Is it not the case that Africans around the continent want to see their leaders held to account. They want to know that the institution of justice has some practical impact on their lives.**But I have given you example. If you can be sure that President Bashir had given troops order to commit genocide, of course, I will be one of the first people say, then, he must face the music. Until we get that proof.

**If you get the proof before the trial, isn't that putting the cart before the horse?**Before I condemn anybody, I want to have evidence.



**I have listened to news emanating from the Nigerian press, the National Assembly and other sources and there are serious allegations concerning you and your family on corruption and kick backs. Now are you prepared to face those charges?**I am very much prepared. And if you have any evidence, Steve, please show it to me and I will defend myself anywhere in the world. Because, it is absolute nonsense, with due respect. I am the only leader in Nigeria that has investigated and cleared by the anti-corruption bodies in Nigeria.

**Your successor was quoted as saying that corruption was endemic in Nigeria and that it was the elite that were responsible?**

*Cuts in.* Well, he is one of them. He is one of the elite.

**Because as he said as he takes over what is happening inside government was corruption to the very top. What he said..?***Cuts in.* Did he mention Obasanjo. Did he mention Obasanjo, Steve?

**But you were the President?**I was the President.

**But you were the head of the government of the country?**Oh, I'm not responsible for the corruption of every Nigerian.

**But you were the Chief Executive of Nigeria presiding over a system that was endemic in corruption?**You have made strong allegation against me as a person and you have no way to substantiate it. Substantiate it. You are taking undue advantage.

**Now, let's talk on specifics. Halliburton has paid vast amounts of money in fines in the United States because of bribes and corruption paid out to Nigerian officials. And the testimony?** Now, those officials, am I one of them?

**No, let's talk about that. I know Jack Stanley confessed last year in the US to bribing three successive holders of top executive, the executive branch of the Nigerian government negotiated with them about how much bribe that was to be paid?**

Who are the officials?

**I'm coming to that. You can cross check that with the testimonies before a French prosecutor. Jeffrey Tesler, another Halliburton official named you as one of the three successive Nigerian Heads of State who had been involved in negotiations with the Halliburton subsidiaries which were later in the US found to have been guilty of bribery and corruption on a massive scale.**Tesler will never say that. Let Tesler bring out because when you say somebody is guilty of corruption, there must be the giver, there must the taker and there must be the evidence.

**Are you saying you never met with Mr. Tesler?**No. Never. Absolutely no.

**Do you know he has been arrested and the US is now seeking his extradition. And are you worried..?**I'm not worried. He should bring evidence. I'm very sure of my position and my stand. I do not say that people in my government were not corrupt. But I'm not corrupt.

**Let's stop it just there. Are you saying that people in your government were corrupt?**Of course, I will not say that people in any country or government are not corrupt.

**I am talking about senior people in government, ministers and your allies. Do you now believe that some of them were corrupt?**Well. My Vice President had something to do with Jefferson, which is part of the case in America. I don't know whether corruption has been proved or not but he had questions to answer.

**That is terrible failure on either side, because you personally can be held to account. Would you accept there was terrible failing on your part as the President to see inside your government because according to your successor, there was rampant corruption?**I did not accept that because if somebody is found to be corrupt in any government, the onus lies on the head of that government to bring that man to book. When I was head of government there was no case of corruption against any minister, any high government

**That explains the system doesn't work?**No, I don't agree with you.

**That means that when you were in government there was no single official convicted of corruption?** I don't agree with you. You don't have facts right. In my government so many officials were charged to court. In fact one died in the process. The Inspector General of Police was charged and convicted. The President of the Senate in my own party was charged to court. And the Minister of Education was charged to court. So what do you want? Don't insult me.

**Now let's talk about the case of your daughter?**Yes, what happened to my daughter?

**She is being investigated by the anti-corruption agency inside your own country?**

And so what?

**Would you take responsibility for her? Why should I?** She is old enough. She is a girl of 42 years old. Would you accept responsibility for your son at the age of 21 for whatever he does? Don't ask me that type of question. I find it very insulting with all due respect. Would you ask a European leader that type of question?

**You are the leader and your daughter is accused of serious offence..?**That's an allegation. And anything can be alleged. You can be alleged to be a liar. And when it is investigated and proved that you are not a liar then the allegation goes. I don't work on allegation.

**Nigeria is about the number seven country with the richest resources in the world?**

*Cuts in.* We are a potentially rich country. We are not a rich country.

**Your oil reserves are vast and yet according to UN figures about a third of your population are living in extreme poverty. Can you explain why that was the case when you left office?**We have oil, but compared with the population of Nigeria which is over 150 million you will see the difference. Take the example of Saudi Arabia what is her population? Saudi Arabia is producing nine million barrels of oil per day while Nigeria is producing today less than 1.8 million a day. You cannot compare that or with Kuwait or the UAE.

**So would you accept that Nigeria has not utilized the opportunities and resources that it has?**Nigeria has used the opportunities and the resources that it has to the best of her ability. But I will say there have been lapses. And you can say the same thing of any country. The fact is that Nigeria is fighting these lapses and doing something about them. I think the right thing is to say hurrah to Nigeria. There are many countries where all these things are covered up. In our own case, we are ready to go out and say yes. We set up under my own administration two bodies like any other country which is fighting corruption. And even here the Metropolitan Police gave us kudos.

**Some of the words of your successor appear to suggest that he was unhappy with the way you handled certain things. Are you happy with the direction which he is taking Nigeria today?**I don't want to comment on that because it is too soon for me to do so.

**After two years? How many years does he need before you can comment?**You should ask him. If you have said he said is true then you should ask him. And I believe that what you said he has said is not true because he won't say so. I know that this man is to the best of my knowledge for now a good person. But even he himself knows that being a good person alone does not make you as a person a successful and a great president. You need much more than that.

**Olusegun Obasanjo, thank you very much.**

**Security Council: Funding Hurdles Thwart Expansion of AU Peacekeeping Capabilities – Ban: 18 March 2009: UN News Service.**

Difficulties in securing necessary funding are impeding the ability of the African Union (AU) to maintain and expand its peacekeeping capacities, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon cautioned today. "A peacekeeping mission that is under-resourced can imperil the initial benefits gained through its deployment, and can raise expectations without providing the means of fulfilling them," he told the Security Council. The 15-member body met today to discuss how to bolster the UN-AU relationship and on how better to support the peacekeeping capacity of the AU, which has troops in areas such as Somalia.

The Council was also briefed by former Italian President Romano Prodi, who heads a panel to support AU peacekeeping operations established under a UN mandate. Mr. Prodi presented a report which offered recommendations on how to boost the AU's "ability to respond to crises and in its need for a capacity that is capable of promoting long-term stability on the continent." The publication further stressed the need for a "more effective strategic relationship" between the Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council, as well as between the UN Secretariat and the AU Commission.

"A shared strategic vision is essential if the United Nations and the African Union are to exercise their respective advantages: the African Union's ability to provide a rapid response and the United Nations capacity for sustained operations," the report said. The ties between the UN and the AU have been expanded but have "yet to develop the responsiveness that will enable us to work together and to prevent conflicts rather than only respond to crises," the Secretary-General said at today's meeting, which will hear from dozens of speakers. The suggestions provided by the panel headed by Mr. Prodi are a first step, Mr. Ban said, towards developing a more effective partnership - which "has the potential to affect millions of people on the African continent" - between the two organizations.

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**Somalia: Country On Path to Consolidating Stability - Top UN Envoy: 21 March 2009: UN News Service.**

New York — Somalia, long dogged by conflict, is "back from the brink" following a peace pact, the top United Nations envoy to the Horn of Africa nation told the Security Council today, calling for a three-pronged approach targeting governance, security and development to ensure stability.

Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, the Secretary-General's Special Representative, pinned most of the blame for the collapse of Somalia, which has been beset by factional strife since the overthrow of Siad Barre in 1991, on the country's elite. But he stressed the need for both Somalis and the international community to join forces to help Somalia reach the end of its "long march to normalcy," stressing the importance of curbing volatility to allow wide-scale recovery and rehabilitation efforts to succeed. The envoy called for a "strategy with achievable goals," urging the following targets over the next 100 days: employment, infrastructure renovation and humanitarian assistance. Extremists, many of whom are young, "are generally far more interested in their share of revenues than in ideology," he told the Council in an open meeting.

The international community must provide aid, which should be effectively and quickly disbursed, by providing immediate support to the Government, helping the African Union (AU) peacekeeping force known as AMISOM, ensuring the unimpeded delivery of relief, addressing impunity and tackling piracy off the Somali coast, Mr. Ould-Abdallah said. But he noted that Somalis must also draw upon their own resources - their coastline is Africa's longest, with rich fish resources and hydrocarbon deposits, as well as an

entrepreneurial business community - to pull itself out of chaos. Last year's UN-facilitated Djibouti Agreement between the Transitional Federal Government and the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia, in which the two agreed to end their conflict, has helped to bring Somalia "back from the brink," the Special Representative said.

"I would argue that with the Djibouti Agreement, the country has passed the crossroads," he said. "It is on a one-way street - going forward." Last month saw the formation of the Government of National Unity, as well as its return to the violence-plagued capital, Mogadishu. "Today, state legitimacy is established and the legality of the new institutions is recognized regionally, internationally and indeed by the vast majority of Somalis," Mr. Ould-Abdallah said. At the end of today's Council meeting, the 15-member body welcomed the "positive political developments" made during the course of the Djibouti peace process, including the creation of an expanded Parliament, the election of President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed and the formation of the Unity Government. In a press statement, the Council commended the new President for reaching out to parties outside the peace process as well as for re-establishing security and the rule of law in both Mogadishu and the rest of Somalia.

"They reiterate their call for the peaceful resolution of the Somali conflict as the only way to a durable peace and genuine reconciliation and call upon all parties that have not yet joined the political process to do so," the statement said.

Condemning all attacks against AMISOM, the Council expressed its grave concern at ongoing insecurity in parts of Somalia, human rights violations and the precarious humanitarian situation. The UN estimates that some 3.2 million people, or 40 per cent of the population, are in need of assistance. In a related development, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has reported continued uprooting of people in Somalia due to conflict and drought.

At least 2,000 Somalis were forced to flee fighting between two rival groups from the Ceel Buur area in the Galgaduud region in the centre of the country, bringing the total number of people in the region uprooted since last December to over 50,000. Nearly 5,000 people have left drought-stricken villages in the western Gedo region in the past week, heading south in search of pasture and water regions. UNHCR also noted that there have been reports that Somalis continue to stream into neighbouring Kenya, with over 16,000 refugees having been registered since January. The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), in response to concerns over water scarcity, is trucking water to over 50,000 people and will continue its deliveries for at least a month until the start of the rains or the maintenance of water yards is completed. For its part, the UN World Food Programme (WFP) has distributed nearly 1,500 metric tons of food to 58,000 people in the south-central Bay region in the past week.

**Demonstrate in Support of Restoring Peace: 19 March 2009: [Shabelle Media Network](#) (Mogadishu).**

Mogadishu — Hundreds of Somali people most of them were the students of Banadir region have demonstrated in Hodan district in the Somali capital Mogadishu on Thursday for supporting to restore the peace and stability in the capital. The demonstration was largely organized by the Somali Students Union in Banadir region and Women development Organization and attended many people who walked on the streets near Taribunka area and carrying boards written slogans for restoring peace and reopening the closed streets in the capital.

Many people including teachers, women and students took part the demonstration and talked more about the importance of peace for Somali people demanding to reopen the streets in the capital to open the schools of the students. The chairman of the Women Development Organization Halimo Sheik Hussein was also one of those who organized the demonstration and lastly addressed the people in Taribunka square saying that many students missed their education for reasons of fighting and closed streets and demanded from all sides of Somalis to reopen the streets to the restart the education of the students.

**Somalia: African Union Peacekeeper Wounded in Blast: 18 March 2009: [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe).**

At least one African Union peacekeeper (AMISOM) was wounded in a Wednesday bomb explosion in Somalia's capital Mogadishu, Radio Garowe reports. AMISOM peacekeepers on a mine-sweeping mission along the road leading to Aden Adde International Airport were targeted in an explosion, witnesses said. At least four people, including one AMISOM soldier and a Somali policeman, were wounded in the blast with unconfirmed reports saying two civilians were wounded in the subsequent gunfire.

Gen. Francis Okello, the AMISOM commander in Mogadishu, confirmed the attack and stated that the wounded soldier was receiving medical treatment. No group has claimed responsibility for the bombing, but Al Shabaab insurgents have repeatedly targeted AMISOM peacekeepers and demanded their immediate withdrawal. The 4,000-strong AMISOM peacekeeping force, composed of soldiers from Uganda and Burundi, has come under growing scrutiny since the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from Somalia in January after an unpopular two-year military intervention.

Last month, Al Shabaab claimed responsibility for twin suicide bombings that killed at least 11 AMISOM soldiers from the Burundian contingent. Two Islamist factions, Al Shabaab and Hizbul Islam, have vowed to continue the bloody insurgency until all foreign troops leave Somali soil.

**Uganda: Revive LRA Talks, NGOs Urge Govt: Henry Mukasa: 19 March 2009: [The New Vision](#).**

Kampala — CIVIL society organisations have appealed to the Government to revive peace talks with Joseph Kony's LRA rebels. The activists, under the Civil Society Organisations for Peace in Northern Uganda, said only a political solution could end the conflict. They said the joint operation by the Uganda, Southern Sudan and the DR Congo

armies against the rebels was costly and could strain cross-border trade."Military solutions to conflicts are not sustainable without development programmes to address the underlying causes of the conflict," the activists said in a press statement on Wednesday.

They called for the establishment of physical infrastructure, social services, restoration of the rule of law by strengthening the Police, courts and civil society agencies.They argued that affirmative action for the region should be for 10 and not three years as proposed in the recovery programme.Responding to the release, the deputy government chief negotiator at the Juba peace negotiations, Henry Okello Oryem, said the talks ended and what remained was the signing of the final peace accord by Kony."What they (civil society) are saying is nonsense," he said.Oryem, who is also the foreign affairs state minister, explained that the UN and AU had commended the agreement as the best outcome of the two-year talks.

"My advice to them is to try to talk sense into the LRA leaders to sign the agreement. President Yoweri Museveni does not need any convincing," Oryem said.He said the NGOs had nothing to show for the funding they received from donors.

Central Africa

**Chad: Blue Helmets Take Over From European Force in Chad, Central African Republic:15 March 2009:UN News Service.**

United Nations peacekeepers in Chad and the Central African Republic (CAR) today took over the military and security responsibilities of European forces in the two strife-torn nations.Today's transfer, which took place at midnight local time, was marked by a ceremony, attended by Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Alain Le Roy, held in the Chadian city of Abéché, where MINURCAT's headquarters are located.In January, the Security Council approved the deployment of over 5,500 blue helmets -- 300 police officers, 25 military liaison officers and 5,200 military personnel -- with the UN mission (MINURCAT) to replace the European troops (EUFOR), which has been in place since March 2008.

In a statement issued by his spokesperson, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today commended EUFOR for the key role it has played in bolstering security for internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees and other vulnerable groups in eastern Chad and north-eastern CAR."As MINURCAT assumes its new responsibilities, the Secretary-General is confident that the force will build upon and strengthen EUFOR's military achievements while continuing to execute the full range of its mandated tasks, including to contribute to the promotion of human rights and the rule of law and to support the development of the Chadian community police (Détachement Intégré de Sécurité) deployed in eastern Chad," the statement added.Eastern Chad faces an acute humanitarian challenge with over 290,000 Sudanese refugees from the Darfur war, more than 180,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) and a further 700,000 individuals among host communities in need of food, water and health care. Northern CAR has also been affected by a spill-over from the Darfur conflict as well as by other armed groups.In its January

resolution, the Security Council stressed that the multidimensional presence in Chad and military presence in the CAR is intended to help create the security conditions conducive to a voluntary, secure and sustainable return of refugees and displaced persons, by boosting security protection, facilitating the provision of humanitarian aid, and promoting reconstruction and economic and social development.

The resolution empowers MINURCAT to "take all necessary measures, within its capabilities" to contribute to protecting civilians in danger, particularly refugees and IDPs, facilitate delivery of humanitarian aid and the free movement of humanitarian personnel, and protect UN personnel, facilities, installations and equipment. Mr. Ban also said today that he is "grateful" for several EUFOR contributors' and new troop contributing countries' commitments to the UN force, and encouraged Member States to continue filling remaining gaps to ensure that MINURCAT is equipped to execute its mandate. Currently, the Mission is composed of some 300 uniformed personnel, mostly police, plus some 325 international civilians. "In order to succeed, MINURCAT will need the active support of the Governments of Chad and the Central African Republic," the Secretary-General said, adding that he is grateful to both Governments for "their cooperation during the transition period and looks forward to working with them in the implementation of MINURCAT's mandate."

In September 2007, the Council approved the establishment in Chad and CAR, in concert with the European Union (EU), of a UN-mandated, multidimensional presence, including European Union (EU) military forces, in Chad and CAR to help protect civilians and facilitate humanitarian aid to thousands of people uprooted due to insecurity in the two countries and neighbouring Sudan.

#### 94. MILITANCY ,REBELS,TERRORISM AND THE ‘WAR ON TERROR’

West Africa

#### **Nigeria: Terrorism Threat - Makinde Seeks FG's Action: Mary Ekah:19 March 2009:this Day.**

Lagos — Prelate, Methodist Church Nigeria, Dr Sunday Ola Makinde, has called on the Federal Government to take seriously the alarm raised by the General Secretary, Christian Association Nigeria, CAN in the North, Mr. Saidu Dogo that some persons described as "foreign terrorists and religious fundamentalists" were planning to invade Nigeria. In a release made available by the Church's Head of Media and Communications, Reverend Oladapo Daramola, the cleric said it would be dangerous if those in authority and relevant agencies ignore the cry and treat it with levity. "The security of this nation is a collective responsibility, hence when people with credibility and integrity raise alarm over a situation or looming danger, we must take it seriously. It is pertinent to note that an Islamic group raised similar alarm just last week and in fact identified some Northern states as targets of these terrorists-cum-fundamentalists who intend to cause mayhem and in the process destabilise the country." Even the Bible enjoins us to watch and pray, so



when people are praying for the peace and stability of this country, there is also need for us to be vigilant and be watchful", Makinde said.

He said it was expedient that something serious and drastic be done because Christians were always the primary targets of such mayhem when they are unleashed in the North."History shows that when these faceless attacks occur in the Northern parts of the country, Christians suffer the most. They not only lose property they have laboured for, some lose their lives in the process which are irreparable. That is why it is salient that this government takes security seriously," he said."We cannot continue on the path of destruction, but we must be seen to be taking proactive steps as a people towards the actualisation of a truly peaceful nation which at this point is non-negotiable and fundamental if we are to realise our dreams and not be seen to be paying lip service to the concept of a one-and-indivisible Nigeria," he said.The Methodist Prelate added that "we must learn from the ugly and unpalatable history of the last unfortunate Nigeria civil war."Let those mixing religion with politics to destroy Nigeria desist or face the wrath of God. Nigeria is too diverse to have a State religion. It is impossible", he charged.

#### **Nigeria: CAN Alleges Terrorists' PresenceL: George Oji: 16 March 2009: This Day.**

Kaduna — The Northern region of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) has raised alarm over alleged presence of terrorists in the country. General Secretary of CAN in the North, Elder Saidu Dogo, who raised the alarm in an interview with newsmen in Kaduna at the weekend further alleged that some of the terrorists were already receiving training in some undisclosed bushes in the region."We should be expecting more crises because there are trainings going on in the bush and the security people know about this."There are terrorists and fundamentalists that have invaded this country and if care is not taken, definitely this country may not remain one .We are leaving in a dynamic society. Many of our youths today are becoming educated and that is a potential time bomb because most of them are jobless.

"They may become an easy tool in the hands of those who are bent on destabilising this country. The government must take urgent steps to address this."I don't have to tell you where this thing is going on, but definitely, there are trainings going on in the bush. Go and investigate what I am telling you you will see over 100 people in a trailer or a truck saying they are going on hunting, they are not going for any hunting, they are gong for training in the bush to learn how to fight."In Kaduna, the governor had to order that those going for the so-called hunting should stop. That is what is happening all over the North. Reports have been reaching security agencies."Some of them are from Niger Republic; some of them are from Chad. If care is not taken, these people will destabilise this country. The government must do something about this," Dogo said.According to him, some of those operating as commercial motorcyclists in some cities, especially in the North were part of those who had been imported to the country and were being trained in the bush."We discovered that some of those people doing Okada are not Nigerians; they don't understand any Nigerian language. Who gave them these motorcycles? They are very easy to be detected. They cannot speak any of the Nigerian languages and they don't know the name of any street or place within the town were they stay.These are the people

who are imported into this country to cause confusion. This was very evident in the Jos crisis of November last year. So as long the security of this country is not taken seriously, we will continue to have crises. But the security agents must investigate and do some thing about these people training in the bush" the CAN scribe said further

Dogo who said he led a delegation to visit displaced victims of the recent religious violence in Bauchi also lamented the condition of the victims who were being camped at the military barracks in Bauchi."We visited Bauchi last week and discovered that many of those who were displaced, those whose houses were burnt were still in the army barracks and other places where they are being camped."To the greatest of our surprise, we discovered that since the crisis, neither the Bauchi state governor nor even any official of the government visited the camp. In the army barracks, we discovered that there are over 2000 displaced people still there. Some of them were taken away by their relations. The presence of the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) was yet to be felt."Many of the displaced victims of the crisis have no mattresses, no blankets, they sleep on bare floor. We also discovered to our dismay that they don't have enough food to eat. This is very unfortunate. We don't know why they are treating Christians like this. This is a glaring case of discrimination.

"We had to mobilize some relief materials for them. Many of the victims, including children have no clothes to wear. The children cannot go back to school because they have no uniforms to wear."Why is the Bauchi state governor discriminating against Christians? Interestingly the federal government has also not said anything about the Bauchi crisis. You can remember how the federal government reacted over the Jos crisis in November last year."The federal government sent various delegations including even the wife of the President, Turai Yar'adua. They sent relief materials to Muslims in Jos and even set up a panel to investigate the matter."But in the Bauchi case, the federal government is pretending as if nothing has happened. Nobody is saying anything about it. The federal government is playing double standard. Even the man who is alleged to be the cause of the Bauchi crisis is moving about freely without being questioned."We understand that for two weeks, one Imam called Fantami was preaching in his mosque located near the Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN) and inciting people. He mounted public address system and was abusing Christians and inciting his followers against them. Yet nobody has called the young man to question him on the role he played in the crisis. He is untouchable. We are dismayed at the whole thing" Dogo said

### **Guinea Bissau: Perspectives On a Crisis: 20 March 2009: interview: Pambazuka.**

*In an interview with Pambazuka News, CODESRIA researcher **Carlos Cardoso** analyses events leading up to the assassinations of both Guinea-Bissau's military chief General Tagme Na Wai and President Nino Vieira within hours of each other on 1 March, and charts out his thoughts on what lies ahead for the country.*

*On 1 March 2008, a bomb exploded at the army headquarters in Bissau, killing military chief General Tagme Na Wai. The conflict between the general and President Nino Vieira had at this point reached its apogee. A few hours later, assailants as yet*

*unidentified, but doubtless members of the security forces, assassinated Vieira at his residence. With the subsequent power vacuum, Guinea-Bissau is living through the bloody epilogue of a conflict between two men that has dominated the country's political life. CODESRIA researcher Carlos Cardoso analyses the events leading up to this dramatic end and charts out what lies ahead for the country.*

**Pambazuka News: The political and institutional crisis engulfing Guinea-Bissau has long revolved around the rivalry between President Nino Vieira and the military chief Tagme Na Wai. Does their simultaneous and violent death present a chance at stability for the country?** Carlos Cardoso: I don't think we should overestimate the impact of the recent event. Other factors must come into play for the political space to change. Bad governance generally afflicts Guinea, but needless to say, the elimination of Na Wai and Vieira will lead to dramatic changes given that they had an enormous influence on political and military life. It is also important to point out that these two men were the embodiment of the intractable contradictions that have characterised the instability in Guinea-Bissau.

**Pambazuka News: What was the nature of their conflict?** Carlos Cardoso: This goes back a long time. Tagme Na Wai and Nino Vieira share a long history in the politics of Guinea-Bissau, but also personal ties dating back to the liberation struggle. One can speak of rivalry between two men who distinguished themselves as soldiers. In spite of the personality and stature of men like Amílcar Cabral and others at the forefront of the liberation struggle, Nino was able to build up his own personality cult. Along with others like Tagme Na Wai, these personalities grew over the course of time. Relations worsened during the 1985 coup d'état against Nino, when Tagme Na Wai was fingered as one of the key role players.[1] Again, during the 1998 rebellion, Tagme Na Wai sided with Ansumana Mané.[2] In spite of all of this, when Tagme Na Wai was appointed military chief [following the assassination of General Verissimo Correia Seabra in 2004] and Nino Vieira was elected president [in 2005], the two men maintained a fractious relationship. Each knew that he could not stand, but also could not do away with the other. There were two centres of power; one political, the other military. These relations were so intricate that the politics of Guinea-Bissau was plagued with strong interference by the armed forces as a result. This said, it is true that the deaths of these two men will change things in Guinea-Bissau, but to what extent, we are still not sure.

**Pambazuka News: Why is it that 30 years after the liberation struggle, the army still holds such sway in political life?** Carlos Cardoso: This is in large part due to the violent heritage that characterises Guinea-Bissau's society. This is particularly the case because after independence, the new government did not set in place mechanisms to redefine the role of the military in a civilian state. Furthermore, there was the tendency by political leaders to either claim or cling to power by co-opting the military. The military thus occupied a central role, whereby political differences were no longer settled peacefully, but with their involvement. Politicians were thus accustomed to using the military to their own ends. This combination of factors has placed the military in a very influential political position.

**Pambazuka News: Are there countervailing forces that can help Guinea-Bissau out of the current situation?** Carlos Cardoso: It is possible, but only if the politicians take account of the enormous responsibilities they have. For years, the need to reform the armed forces as a prerequisite for political stability has been discussed. The inherent obstacles do not necessarily mean it is altogether impossible. Everything hinges on political will. And I believe things will get easier, now that there is a new and focused generation, a generation who were not a part of the liberation struggle. In this generation, Guinea-Bissau has well trained cadres with a different understanding of politics, governance and civil order. They still have to contend with the old guard, but the change will happen. The change can start now, if the military is reformed into a modern institution that can rise above the challenges facing the country.

**Pambazuka News: At the end of the 60-day transition period with Raimundo Pereira at the helm, elections are scheduled to take place. Do you think this will happen?** Carlos Cardoso: I had indeed foreseen a scenario where a transition period would take place in a power-vacuum. But again, I remain optimistic that the constitutional timeframe will be respected if the political will exists. Granted, there are structural deficiencies. Guinea-Bissau is practically bankrupt, with huge deficits, but in life, where the will to do right exists, financial means are not the sole determinant. I am gratified that the prime minister reaffirmed plans to hold elections in the stipulated period. If the international community comes to the party with the necessary support, if ECOWAS (Economic Community Of West African States) commits itself to the process, it can be achieved. I am however, under no illusion that, in a country with such structural and administrative problems, it will be smooth sailing. I just think that the challenges are surmountable, and everything else is open to conjecture.

**Pambazuka News: If the elections do take place, do you foresee real political stability holding?** First and foremost, the current government elected in November 2008 must remain in place. If a dialogue takes place now with other political actors (this is necessary during the transition period), it will be possible to hold free and fair elections. I do not think the opposition is strong enough to mount an upheaval. The November 2008 elections, in my opinion, demonstrated that the opposition had lost traction. And contrary to conventional logic, the PAIGC [African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau, the majority party] is likely to become even stronger following Vieira's death, because he embodied the very contradictions that weakened his party, in particular, leadership differences between himself and Carlos Gomes Junior [the current prime minister]. With the demise of Vieira, it will be easier for the PAIGC to heal itself and govern the country with a stable parliamentary majority. But I am basing this on the assumption that the PAIGC wins the upcoming elections. At the moment, we do not know who the candidates will be. If the eventual winner is not from the PAIGC, he will have problems governing. But then again, this depends on the personality of the winning candidate.

**Pambazuka News: You have touched on the contradiction between the political and military spaces in explaining the power crisis in Guinea-Bissau. Are there, in your view, other factors contributing to the violence?** Carlos Cardoso: Indeed, there are many other factors. But I do not subscribe to the notion that Guineans are naturally

violent, hence the violent culture. This kind of determinism is neither justified, nor justifiable. It is true that violence as means of resolving disputes has entrenched itself and become a political reality. One could also point to the culture of machismo that may have led to certain violent behaviour. But it is more a tradition of violence than a culture of violence. Also, the majority Balante ethnic group have a warrior heritage, and played a major role in liberation struggle. In the estimation of some, the Balante, who Amílcar Cabral singled out as having been a significant force,[3] were never fully compensated for their part in the struggle. After independence, leadership and all its trappings went to the intelligentsia, consisting mainly of the ethnic Pepel. This in part explains the situation, but this is not enough to justify the labelling the society as violent.

**Pambazuka News: Guinea-Bissau is currently seen as a narco-state. What impact has the drug trade played in the current violence?** Carlos Cardoso: It is indeed a key factor in the current crisis. Drug trafficking seems to involve the military. Given the ubiquity of the military in political life, anything that affects it, affects the state. Tagme Na Wai put on a public show of fighting the drug scourge. Nino Vieira, by contrast, was not as visible. It is possible that they had differences on this score. All the same, Nino's negative image came from the manner in which he returned from exile to contest the 2005 elections, and won. He arrived in Bissau by helicopter, even though the airspace was closed to him. This was a blatant challenge to the country's laws. In the same way, drug traffickers seem to be able to land their small planes anywhere and leave undetected.

**Pambazuka News: In Angola, the death of Jonas Savimbi was a major factor in the re-establishment of peace and political stability. Do you think the demise of Tagme Na Wai and Nino Vieira could have the same effect?** Carlos Cardoso: There are limits to this comparison. In Guinea-Bissau there was a political polarisation that translated into the personalisation of power by two individuals. And it was clear that each sought to eliminate the other from the public stage. In fact, Tagme is credited with stating that if he died in the morning, Nino would be buried in the evening. This was the prevailing situation in Guinea-Bissau. In Angola, the death of Savimbi weakened UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola), while the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) still had dos Santos. In Guinea-Bissau, both protagonists are dead. Furthermore, let us not assume that Angola's problems went away with the death of Savimbi. The country continues to face serious problems linked to resource distribution, notably petroleum revenues. The stability of a state cannot be reduced to politics and the military.

*\* Philosopher and anthropologist Carlos Cardoso is a researcher and programme officer at CODESRIA. Translated from French by Josh Ogada.\* Please send comments to editor@pambazuka.org or comment online at <http://www.pambazuka.org/>.*

## NOTES

[1] On assuming power in 1980 through a coup d'état that deposed first president Luis Cabral, Nino Vieira survived three coup attempts in 1983, 1985 and 1993 before being

*removed in 1999. Tagme was detained and subjected for a long time after the 1985 coup attempt.*

*[2] In 1998 an armed revolt led by military chief Ansumane Mané failed to remove Nino from power, thanks to the intervention of Senegalese troops.*

*[3] Amílcar Cabral, assassinated in 1973 by Portuguese forces, was the head of the PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau), that fought the liberation struggle leading to independence in 1974.*

East Africa/Horn of Africa

**East Africa: United States Extends Friendly Hand to Region: Jacquelyn S. Porth: 20 March 2009: [America.gov](http://America.gov) (Washington, DC).**

Washington, DC — The U.S. Navy, the U.S. Coast Guard and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which have extended a helping hand to a number of West African countries in the past few years, are now reaching out to East Africa, too. The broad program is known as the Africa Partnership Station (APS). It started in 2007 as an international security effort offering training and other forms of collaboration to improve maritime safety and security off the West African coast. (See "Naval Engagement in Africa

The United States launched APS to help African nations achieve stability and economic prosperity through civilian-military maritime mentoring as well as military-to-military training. Seeing the benefits of the program, African officials on the other side of the continent asked for similar help. This paved the way for the first APS visit to Mozambique, Tanzania and Kenya this year by the USS Robert G. Bradley. The naval vessel carried a team of U.S., European, South American and African personnel that coached personnel in three host countries on ways to combat piracy; drug, weapons, and human trafficking; and fish poaching.

Illegal fishing is a significant problem in East Africa. The region loses an estimated \$310 million every year because it lacks the maritime infrastructure to combat the problem. That is where this kind of good neighbor initiative can make a difference. Its training focuses on information sharing that will give African maritime forces a complete image of what is happening in nearby waters through a shared communication network. Hands-on training is offered to help develop a professional maritime corps that will be ready to respond to a host of potential security challenges.

U.S. Navy Captain Nicholas Holman returned recently from several weeks leading the crew of the Bradley during training, humanitarian assistance and partnership-building ventures. He said the goal of the effort is to improve ocean monitoring activities so that they will be on par with airspace monitoring efforts. Holman told the Defense Bloggers Roundtable March 11 that this is important because some of the regional navies and coast guards do not have the capability "to do much about anything that's going on in their

waters."Most of the training occurred onboard, but in some cases simulated boarding of ships was conducted using small boats in the host countries. Training included instruction in navigation and handling emergencies at sea.During the Bradley's visit to Mozambique, instructors worked with indigenous forces on maritime search-and-seizure techniques. "This is a new adventure on the East Coast [of Africa]," Holman said.

**MARITIME SAFETY IS KEY TO SUCCESS** Wherever they went, training instructors hammered home the need for maritime safety. Two African sailors died at sea in 2008 in an accident involving excessive speed. Better ship handling and crew safety are themes that Navy captains emphasize whenever they have the ear of a student audience.East African navies are also interested in acquiring more vessels. Holman said the State Department is looking at ways to provide additional Archangel patrol boats.He said Kenya is interested in resuming U.S. naval visits to its Indian Ocean port, Mombassa.Community outreach is another important aspect of the APS initiative. When a ship docks at a port, crew members disembark and head to local orphanages, schools and hospitals where they repair and repaint. The Navy pitches in and buys the paint and sailors provide the labor.This is how it worked when the sailors helped paint the Kidz Care orphanage in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Holman said his sailors enjoy these opportunities to interact and leave behind a lasting touch.Community outreach also entails the delivery of donated supplies through the Navy's Project Handclasp. Collected toys and personal hygiene products were carried in the Bradley's hold and distributed during shore visits. For more information, see Africa: Partnering for Prosperity.

Central Africa

**Rwanda: Fresh Attacks By Hutu Rebels Lead to More Displacement in DR Congo – UN: 20 March 2009: UN News Service.**

The United Nations refugee agency said today that attacks by a Hutu rebel group are continuing to uproot thousands in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), reportedly displacing nearly 30,000 people just over the past two weeks.Altogether, an estimated 1 million people are displaced in North Kivu province by a series of conflicts involving Government forces and various rebel groups, according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).The ethnic Hutu militia known as the Democratic Liberation Forces of Rwanda (FDLR), which has been the target of a joint military operation conducted by DRC and Rwanda since January, has been retaliating against civilians and attacking villages in North Kivu.

"The FDLR fighting has left more than 160,000 civilians displaced since mid-January," UNHCR spokesperson Ron Redmond told reporters in Geneva.Local authorities tell UNHCR that in the province's Lubero territory, fresh attacks on civilians by the FDLR have displaced nearly 30,000 people over the past two weeks. Newly displaced families in the Lubero area report that FDLR raids increased during the first half of March, along with growing human rights violations.Also, further south in Masisi territory, local authorities said the FDLR mounted attacks that killed at least three civilians on 15 March and caused a number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to flee. The rebel group has

reportedly threatened to continue its attacks in the area."Most of the displaced from the continuing FDLR attacks are spending their nights in the bush for fear of attacks and harassment," said Mr. Redmond.He added that UNHCR is reinforcing its activities in Masisi and trying to establish presence in Lubero for the swift delivery of humanitarian assistance and protection.

Meanwhile, the agency is concerned that continuing violence against aid workers will hinder assistance to the displaced. In the latest incident, armed men attacked and looted a vehicle belonging to an international non-governmental organization (NGO) in Rutshuru on 18 March. No fatalities were reported.During a visit to North Kivu yesterday, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's Special Representative for DRC, Alan Doss, pledged that the UN peacekeeping mission there - known as MONUC - will reinforce its presence in localities and continue to logistically support the Government army in its operations against the FDLR.

## 95. NORTH AFRICA

### **Tunisia: New Publication Presents Country's Development Model as 'a Way for Africa' 18 March 2009: Tunisia Online News.**

Tunis — A new book entitled "Emerging Tunisia: a Way for Africa?" ("La Tunisie émergente: une voie pour l'Afrique?") authored by some twenty African intellectuals, journalists and scholars and published in Paris by Mediane Edition, presents Tunisia's development model as a possible way for some African countries "beset with socio economic stagnation and regression."During a signing ceremony held in Tunis on Wednesday, a panel composed of several of the book's authors and chaired by Mrs Jamila Mejri, the president of the Tunisian Writers' Union, presented the book to journalists and intellectuals invited to the event.

In his foreword, Mr Nicanor Ngandjouong, the book's editor, writes that "One of the best testimonies of a developing Africa is assuredly Tunisia. A country with modest natural resources, Tunisia has moved from the stage of developing country to an emerging one. The number and the quality of its infrastructure, the life quality of its inhabitants and its social achievements are bringing it closer to European countries".Mr Ngandjouong adds that "the competitiveness of its economy and the climate and security which prevail in the country stand out in the eyes of visitors, especially those who come from a part of the continent where chronic instability, political disorders and social insufficiencies sidetrack efforts for progress."

The publication which examines the various aspects of Tunisia's development policies, notably hails the country's good governance, its solidarity based economy, the status of Tunisian women and the successful integration of Tunisians living abroad into the national economy.It also looks at the country's health facilities, its capacity to train highly skilled personnel, the investment in the knowledge economy, the generalized use of ICT, its tourist infrastructure, as well as its growing middle class which makes up 80% of the country's population.Stressing Tunisia's reliance on its human wealth, the book concludes



with a daunting question "Why can't Sub-Saharan Africa find inspiration in Tunisia's philosophy and method?"

**Tunisia: Foreign Direct Investment Rises by 46 Percent in 2009:16 March 2009: Tunisia Online News.**

Tunis — Figures recently announced by the Director General of the Foreign Investment Promotion Agency (FIPA), Mrs Mongia Khemiri, Tunisia attracted 3,3 billion dinars in foreign investments in 2008 which represents an increase of more than 54% in comparison with 2007. In the manufacturing industry, foreign direct investments (FDI's) increased by 35%, enabling the creation of 17,000 employments, but also contributing to increasing the country's GDP by some 6,5%. Mrs Khemiri also announced that during the two first months of 2009, FDI's increased by 46% in comparison with the same period in 2008, amounting to 246 million dinars. FDI's mostly concern off-shoring, shared service platforms and aeronautics.

She also added that 70% of investments in Tunisia stem from reinvestments, indicating that after investing in a project investors, are attracted by other unexplored investment opportunities. In a related event, she noted that there are currently some 5000 women entrepreneurs in Tunisia, 34% of whom are active in the sector of information and communication technologies (ICT), 30% operate in industry and between 12 and 13% are in commerce and handicrafts.

**Tunisia: President Ben Ali Receives Message From Libyan Leader:18 March 2009:Tunisia Online News.**

Tunis — President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali received on Wednesday a message from Libya's Leader Mouammar Kadhafi. The message was handed to him by the Libyan Leader's Special Envoy, Mr Ahmed Kadhef Eddam. The Libyan emissary said that on the occasion of Tunisia's independence Day, he conveyed a message of congratulations from Libya's Leader to the Head of State, declaring that "Tunisia's independence Day is a common celebration for both countries." He also said that the message evoked the latest developments in the Maghreb in the Arab world and in Africa, as well as bilateral issues and ways of strengthening cooperation in light of the world financial crisis.

Mr Eddam stressed the similarity of views between the two countries on the different issues raised. The meeting took place in the presence of the State Minister, Special Advisor to the President of the Republic and official spokesman of the Presidency of the Republic, and the High Representative of Libya's Jamahiriya in Tunis.

**Tunisia: BNP Paribas Opens 6 Branches:17 March 2009:Tunisia Online News.**

Tunis — In line with its strategy of expansion in the Mediterranean area, the French banking group BNP Paribas has opened 6 new branches in Tunisia. In 2008 the group has launched 200 new branches in the region increasing its network to 3900 units, including 3000 units in France and in Italy. The group also has a network of trade centres working

for international enterprises in 6 Mediterranean countries, including Tunisia, Italy, France, Algeria, Egypt and Turkey. In the Maghreb, BNP Paribas has 22 branches in Morocco, 13 in Algeria, 48 in Libya and 6 in Tunisia.

**Eritrea/Libya: President Isaias Holds Talks With Delegation From Libyan Revolutionary Committees Movement: 19 March 2009: [Shabait.com](http://Shabait.com) (Asmara).**

Asmara — President Isaias Afwerki today received and held talks with a delegation from the Libyan Revolutionary Committees Movement headed by Dr. Romodan Abdelaziz, Coordinator of Public Relations in the Movement. In the meeting at the Office of the President, the two sides conducted discussion on joint political ideology programs and enhancing Eritrean-Libyan relations, as well as regional issues of mutual interest to both countries.

The delegation briefed President Isaias regarding the details in which the PFDJ and the Libyan Revolutionary Committees Movement agreed in principle to hold a major international conference in Asmara on the question of democracy in Africa.

**Egypt: Labour Strikes Point to Economic Pain: 16 March 2009; Inter Press Service News Agency.**

Cairo — Egypt has seen a wave of labour strikes in recent weeks by workers in a range of professions from lawyers to truck drivers. Although strikers' specific demands vary, commentators generally attribute the phenomenon to increasingly difficult economic circumstances.

"Recent strikes were called chiefly for economic reasons, not least of which has been the steadily increasing inflation seen in the last two years," Hamdi Abdelazim, economist and former president of the Cairo-based Sadat Academy told IPS.

In mid-February, lorry drivers declared a five-day strike over provisions in a new traffic law banning articulated trailers. Days later, more than 40,000 privately owned pharmacies also staged a strike for several days to protest a government decision to apply taxes to pharmacies retroactively. Late February and early March saw more workers' actions. Lawyers called a strike protesting proposed legislation in parliament that called for increased court fees, while administrators employed by the ministry of education also declared a strike over unpaid bonuses. Most recently, on Mar. 5, employees at a newly privatised textile factory announced a strike after a dispute over profit-sharing. Education ministry administrators are still awaiting an official response to their demands. The other workers' actions, however, have succeeded in prising some limited gains from the government. After intervention by President Hosni Mubrak, truck drivers were given a longer grace period to comply with required safety standards. Pharmacists received promises from the state that the offensive tax regime would be reconsidered.

Lawyers, too, received government assurances that the new draft law on court fees would be subject to re-evaluation. Textile workers have kept up their strike, although they

received a degree of satisfaction after the new owner of the formerly state-owned company, citing financial losses, offered to return the firm to Egyptian public ownership."Every decision the Egyptian regime makes seems to meet with a workers' strike," Abdelhalim Kandil, editor-in-chief of prominent independent weekly Sout Al-Umma, wrote on Mar. 9. "The people's insistence on realising their demands is consistently forcing the government to overturn its decrees."While specific demands may vary, local economists say the recent spate of workers' actions can be attributed to the increasingly difficult economic circumstances faced by the general public.

"All of the strikes were ultimately motivated by economic factors, chiefly the rise in inflation," said Abdelazim, pointing out that inflation rates in Egypt climbed steadily throughout 2007 and 2008 to 20 percent. "At the same time, average incomes have not kept pace, sorely reducing the average citizen's purchasing power."This has led to tremendous frustration over the government's inability to protect the public from runaway retail prices," Abdelazim added.Indeed, the global economic crisis - a de facto worldwide depression - has led to a recent bout of deflation on international markets. But Abdelazim says that prices in Egypt have declined only slightly relative to global price declines."There has been less deflation in Egypt as a result of the economic crisis than elsewhere," he said. "This can be attributed to the existence in Egypt of numerous market monopolies on vital goods, in tandem with weak government oversight of the domestic market."According to Abdelazim, local inflation rates have now fallen to somewhere between 14 and 18 percent. "But for the bulk of Egypt's teeming population - some 40 percent of which currently lives on the poverty line - this is still much too high," he said.Egypt is no stranger to labour unrest. From early 2007 and throughout 2008, Egypt was gripped by a similar wave of workers' actions, the most serious of which was a series of strikes by public sector textile workers. After several months of angry strikes and demonstrations, the government finally conceded to most of the strikers' chief demands, which included salary increases and bonus payouts."The success of the labour actions in 2007 and 2008 encouraged workers to demonstrate and call strikes to realise longstanding demands," said Abdelazim. "Many people now see labour strikes as the only means of forcing the government to address their grievances."

Last year, public disaffection climaxed with a nationwide labour strike on Apr. 6 - involving workers of many professions in both the public and private sectors - to protest skyrocketing food prices and political stagnation. Although the number of participants was never determined, the Apr. 6 strike - organised largely through social networking website Facebook - has come to be viewed as a successful recent example of nationwide labour solidarity."The people have woken up twice," wrote Kandil. "Once on April 6 of last year, and now again in recent weeks, which have seen a wave of strikes that have paralysed the regime's decision-making."Egypt is seeing three new workers' strikes every day, and the phenomenon is set to increase further," Kandil said, warning of the dangers of widespread economic hardship and labour disaffection. "Sooner or later, this wind will turn into a storm, which will sweep away this unrighteous regime."

**Western Sahara /Morocco: Aid Partners to Assess State of Western Sahara Refugees On UN-Led Visits: 17 March 2009: UN News Service.**

Concern over malnutrition among long-term refugees from Western Sahara have sparked two assessment missions to their camps in western Algeria by humanitarian partners, the first of which embarks tomorrow, the United Nations refugee agency announced today. Staff of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Food Programme (WFP) will accompany representatives of donor countries and their partners from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on a three-day mission to the camps of Sahrawi people, starting tomorrow.

"The aim is to see first-hand the situation in the sites and to assess the overall conditions of the refugees," UNHCR spokesperson Ron Redmond said in Geneva, noting that in the last survey conducted in 2008, 61 per cent of the children and 66 per cent of pregnant women in the camps were suffering from anaemia. Later this month, nutritionists from UNHCR and WFP will visit the camps to assess the current nutritional status of the most vulnerable refugees and to evaluate the current programmes and practices.

The mission will also decide on whether to include additional foodstuffs with high nutritional value in the food assistance, specifically targeted to children, and pregnant and lactating women. As a result of the last survey conducted in 2008 by Médecins du Monde (MDM) and WFP in coordination with UNHCR, the UN refugee agency already provides supplementary food in addition to the 125,000 general food rations distributed by WFP, it said.

WFP has also added supplementary and school feeding programmes to its operation, distributing fortified, blended foods to malnourished children, pregnant women and lactating mothers and is working to diversify its basic food basket. In the last five years, however, donor funding has been erratic and in 2008, UNHCR only received 39 per cent of its budget, and both it and WFP still need additional funding for 2009.

Sahrawi refugees started arriving in Algeria in the mid-seventies. UNHCR has been providing assistance to this group since the influx into the Tindouf area in 1975-76 while WFP has been providing food assistance since 1986. Tomorrow's mission will include ambassadors and diplomats from more than 19 countries, including Brazil, France, Indonesia, Italy, Switzerland, South Africa, Spain, Nigeria and the United States, as well as representatives of the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO).

Participants will visit two of four refugee camps and will meet with beneficiaries, refugee leaders and Algerian authorities, according to UNHCR. The refugees have been living in four desolate camps in south-west Algeria since the mid-seventies, when a dispute arose between Morocco and the Frente Polisario over the status of Western Sahara. Since 1991, the UN mission in Western Sahara (MINURSO) has been tasked with monitoring the ceasefire between the two parties and organizing a long-stalled referendum on self-determination.

**Morocco: Renewed Efforts to End Violence Against Women: Amina Barakat: 17 March 2009: Inter Press Service News Agency.**

Rabat — The campaign against violence towards women has been the focus of media attention in Morocco recently, in order to press for an end to gross abuses committed by men against women and make victims aware of the need to break the silence which allows it to

The government, together with civil society, has stepped up efforts to end the plight of women in this North African country. In February, the Union for Women's Action (Union de l'action féminine - an organisation working against all forms of discrimination against women) in collaboration with the Anaruz Network of listening centres, launched a campaign to raise awareness for victims of violence. In the 16 municipal districts of Casablanca, the economic capital of Morocco, public forums were organised to sensitise local communities and encourage them to adopt a strategy to curb the scourge of violence against women.

This campaign encourages women in distress to speak about their traumatic experiences. Halima Idrissi, a married mother of two, opened up about the abuse she endured for seven months before breaking free. She calmly told IPS, "I lived a nightmare with a violent man who only knew how to communicate with beatings and obscene insults." Numerous listening centres were created to help abused women, and a telephone hotline is now available. The options are either to file a complaint with the crown prosecutor - followed by a court process - or to get a lawyer to handle the case, if the victim can afford one. "By God's grace I managed to walk away from it once and for all and this only after hearing of the Annadja Listening Centre (annadja means 'to help' in Arabic)," said Idrissi. "It has been a great help to me. The centre's social worker gave me guidance and advice on what steps to take."

Since 2006, when a new Family Code came into force, women have had greater support and protection under the law. The new code gives women the right to demand a divorce in cases of violence. Before the revision of the Family Code, a divorce application could take up to three or four years, but now the handling of a case does not exceed six months. "The coming into force of the new Family Code has helped victims to step up and demand justice," says Fatima Maghnaoui, president of the Annajda Listening Centre in Rabat. "Today, ending a marriage is no longer left only to the husband, but must be subject to prior authorisation from the court before it can be effectively implemented. It also requires the judge to rule within a period of six months."

Fawzia Badri, a secretary at the Moroccan Ministry of Culture, told IPS: "The revision of the Family Code allowed me to escape my tyrant of a husband, who'd spend his time taking his issues out on me. I was so badly beaten my body became a boxing ring. If not for the Code, I would still be hanging about in the grim corridors of the court." Idrissi and Maghnaoui are only two of many women in the same situation. According to a study conducted in 2007 by the Moroccan Secretariat for the Family, in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund, battered women face an alarming situation. The report

found nearly 28,000 acts of violence were called into a free hotline set up to give legal help and counselling to women; just over 75 percent of reported assaults were committed by husbands.

Saadia Lachgar, a lawyer based in Rabat, explains that there are still legal loopholes in the law. "In instances of domestic violence, we must introduce repressive articles to the Penal Code and annul others, such as those requiring the woman to provide evidence of an act of violence, even though these acts usually take place in the absence of witnesses. The woman's word must stand as evidence." Also mentioned in government's 2007 study is a subject that is becoming less and less of a taboo: economic violence. "The economic problem is a culmination of this scourge. A man who finds himself in need, is often restless; a restlessness which translates into uncontrollable violence. Unfortunately, it is the woman who suffers the consequences," Saïd Amor, a bank employee in Rabat told IPS. Maghnaoui believes that the question of violence against women must be taken very seriously. "Violence against women is a problem that must be handled at all levels; we need to institute a culture of gender equality, human rights and citizenship." The media awareness campaign has led to victims logging an increasing number of distress calls, while creating a certain solidarity between all stakeholders working for the condemnation of violence against women: listening centres, associations for the protection of women's rights, civil society.

Abdou Mortada, a lawyer made this suggestion: "It will be important to establish a pilot rehabilitation centre, designed to help men to control certain violent behavioral patterns linked to psychological problems." For her part, Sawssan Boufous, an economics student at the University of Rabat, tells IPS: "I condemn all acts of violence against women and hope that this awareness campaign will bear fruit and encourage victims to speak out. I also hope that the laws are not only deterrent but also punitive in nature." Fadela Anwar, chief TV news editor at Morocco's second television channel (2M) in Casablanca, tells IPS: "We cannot trivialise violence against women ... To play our part, we are joining forces with others fighting this scourge to call for an end to this social phenomenon. We broadcast many reports and advertisements also invite guests to come on air and discuss this problem."

### **Morocco: 2 Moroccan nationals on Interpol alert following Belgian jail escape: [afrol News](#), 16 March:**

Two Moroccan nationals have been named in an international security alert, or Orange Notice, that has been issued by INTERPOL today, following a jail-break in Belgium. The alert was published following Sunday morning's escape from the prison in Nivelles, south of the Belgian capital. The two Moroccan fugitives - Mustapha Lahnachi, aged 30, who was serving a sentence for rape, distributing and possessing drugs, and for illegally entering the country, and Ahmed Yaagoubi, aged 45, who was serving a sentence for distributing and possessing drugs - broke out of jail after allegedly taking a prison guard

hostage with a knife, said the Interpol statement, also adding that a third escapee, whose nationality was not given, was later recaptured.

Sent via its secure police communications network to all of INTERPOL's 187 member countries, the Orange Notice includes identifying details - such as fingerprints and photographs of each of the fugitives to help law enforcement officers worldwide in their search and eventual identification when located and arrested. The Orange Notice also strongly recommends that INTERPOL's member countries alert their relevant border authorities and specialist units responsible for fugitives. "Experience has shown us that making key identification elements and information available to officers on the ground is crucial to efforts to locate and arrest fugitives, as it severely limits their movements and ability to cross borders," said INTERPOL's Executive Director for Police Services Jean-Michel Louboutin. "We commend the Belgian authorities for alerting the global law enforcement community to the escape of these dangerous individuals by asking for INTERPOL's assistance, since this will ensure that all INTERPOL member countries are made aware of the potential danger that these men represent to the public at large," the statement added.

**Morocco: \$1.5 million grant for Morocco tech development: [afrol News](#): 20 March.**

Morocco has received a US\$1.5 million grant from the Chinese government to fund the bilateral cooperation projects. The national news agency, MAP has reported, Finance Minister, Salaheddine Mezouar, saying the grant agreement which is geared towards technology development will also explore opportunities offered by the two countries in the areas of industrial development. Morocco has expressed interest and willingness to set up an industrial zone for Chinese businesses, also offering itself as a gateway to Africa with a number of the north African country's businesses being operated in the continent. To reduce Morocco's trade deficit with China, the Chinese Vice Minister of Commerce, Fu Ziyang, called on Moroccan businesses to market their products in the Chinese market, stating that the two governments also agreed on the means to cushion the effects of the current global economic crisis. Mr Ziyang voiced China's readiness to provide Morocco with its experience in the field of solar energies to reduce the effects of global warming.

According to MAP, the two countries have agreed to slash trade deficit to give a new drive to trade and economic exchanges, especially through encouraging businesses from both countries to invest in each other. The Chinese minister is currently on a visit to Morocco which ends on 21 March. China and Morocco established diplomatic relations in November 1958. Over the past 51 years the political relations between China and Morocco have been developing steadily and smoothly.

**Algeria launches election campaign:** [afrol News](#), 20 March:

Algeria's President Abdelaziz Bouteflika has officially launched election campaign ahead of April election at the first election rally at Batna, 435 kilometres southeast of the capital Algiers. Addressing thousands at a rally, President Bouteflika called on eligible voters to vote though none of his five rivals are expected to oust him. "You have to vote, even vote against us, even with a blank vote, but vote," Mr Bouteflika said. The elections have come under spotlight and criticisms from both the opposition and local and international rights organisations because of a controversial amendment passed in November, which allows President Bouteflika to seek a third term in office.

Well-known opposition figures have threatened to boycott the 9 April elections saying the amendment of the constitution was meant to cement President Bouteflika's seat in power.

As part of his campaign he has promised to pursue state investment in oil and natural gas and also to fight the high rate of unemployment with US\$150 billion over the period of five years, further pledging a million new homes. Earlier this week, the presidential candidates have expressed concern over the lack of funding from the state as the election date draws near. The run-up to the election has been clouded by violence, with several attacks waged by terror groups on security forces over the past couple of years and especially in the past few months. The 71-year-old president, a veteran of Algerian politics was first elected in 1999. He has overseen a return to relative peace, though there has been a series of suicide bombings over last two years blamed on militants linked to al-Qaeda.

**Algeria: Candidates concerned about delayed party funding:** [afrol News](#): 18 March.

Algerian presidential candidates have expressed concern over the lack of funding from the state as the election date draws near. The Algerian constitutional council has endorsed six presidential contenders for the April 2009 election earlier this month. Independent candidate Mohand Oussaid Belaid said that his team filed a request last week to receive the promised state funding, but they have yet to receive the assistance. "This could indicate a desire to ruin our chances even before the campaign period begins," he said. The official launch of the campaign is to resume soon, with all the presidential candidates gearing for the elections, but the expected 15 million dinars (US\$2.7 million) has not landed in the candidates purses to resume campaigning, opposition reports have said.

The Algerian National Front (FNA) spokesman Mohamed Tin said the party has chosen to run a modest campaign to overcome the shortage of money, saying the party was able to collect a "small budget" for their candidate. "To raise funds, we resorted to contributions from party offices in all 48 campaigners and our MPs. The aid granted by the state won't even be enough to cover our preparations for the campaign," he said.

Meanwhile, five Algerians have been killed since Saturday, as violence escalated ahead



of the presidential elections slated for the beginning of next month. According to local news reports, Algerian officials have also said they are expecting terrorists to increase terror attacks within the coming weeks in order to derail the presidential elections. The run-up to the election has been clouded by violence, with several attacks waged by terror groups on security forces over the past couple of years and especially in the past few months. Thirty-three people, most of them security personnel, were killed in attacks in February alone. -----END TEXT-----.

## **Business and Politics in the Muslim World**

### **Report on East Africa**

Week March 16-23, 2009

Presentation: March 25, 2009

Abdirisak Ismail

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#### **Headlines**

##### Somalia

Rwanda President Pledges to Assist New Leader  
Somaliland Leader Vows to Step down 'Only to Elected President'  
Somalis Demonstrate in Support of Restoring Peace  
African Union Peacekeeper Wounded in Blast  
17 People Killed in Fighting  
Banadir Administration Condemns WFP  
President Speaks With His Yemeni Counterpart  
Country on Path to Consolidating Stability - Top UN Envoy  
Government Officials Say They Will Attack Bay and Bakol Regions  
Topple leader- Osama Bin Laden  
map of somalia

##### sudan

No Mercy for Al Bashir  
UNAMID Peacekeeper Killed in South Darfur  
Obama Names Special Envoy  
map of sudan

##### Eritrea

President Isaias Holds Talks With Delegation from Libyan Revolutionary  
Committees Movement

##### Kenya

Church Council Makes 'New Elections' Demand

##### East Africa

United States Extends Friendly Hand to Region  
Uganda Opposes Tanzania, Kenya on Lake Victoria

##### Uganda

Citizens held hostage in Sudan  
Abducted Children Need Special Care

## **Summary of the report**

### **Somalia**

**Rwanda President Pledges to Assist New Leader:Rwandan President Paul Kagame warmly received Somalia's new leader, President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed, where the two leaders discussed bilateral cooperation, Radio Garowe reports.**

**Somaliland Leader Vows to Step down 'Only to Elected President:The leader of Somalia's separatist republic of Somaliland has rejected opposition demands and has vowed to step down 'only to an elected president,' Radio Garowe reports.**

**Somalis Demonstrate in Support of Restoring Peace:Mogadishu — Hundreds of Somali people most of them were the students of Banadir region have demonstrated in Hodan district in the Somali capital Mogadishu on Thursday for supporting to restore the peace and stability in the capital.**

**African Union Peacekeeper Wounded in Blast:At least one African Union peacekeeper (AMISOM) was wounded in a Wednesday bomb explosion in Somalia's capital Mogadishu, Radio Garowe reports.**

**17 People Killed in Fighting:At least 17 people were killed in Wednesday clashes in southwestern Somalia between pro-government militias and Islamist insurgents, Radio Garowe reports**

**Banadir Administration Condemns WFP:Somalia — The deputy governor of Banadir administration has condemned World Food Programme(WFP) on Thursday**

**President Speaks With His Yemeni Counterpart :Mogadishu — Somalia's president Sheik Sharif Sheik Ahmed spoke to the phone with the president of Yemen Ali Abdullah Saleh on Thursday, Saba News Agency reported on Friday**

**Country on Path to Consolidating Stability - Top UN Envoy:Somalia, long dogged by conflict, is "back from the brink" following a peace pact, the top United Nations envoy to the Horn of Africa nation told the Security Council today, calling for a three-pronged approach targeting governance, security and development to ensure stability.**

**Government Officials Say They Will Attack Bay and Bakol Regions:El Barde — the government officials in El Barde have threatened that they will attack recapture**

**towns in Bay and Bakol regions from the Islamist insurgents of al-Shabab, witnesses told Shabelle radio on Friday.**

Topple leader- Osama Bin Laden:**Osama bin Laden, the leader of al-Qaeda, has called on the people of Somalia to overthrow Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, their president.**

**Map of Somalia:**The map of Somalia and its major cities and ports

## **Sudan**

**No Mercy for Al Bashir:** African Foreign Ministers, who attended the NORDIC-Africa summit in Copenhagen, are reported to have condemned the International Criminal Court (ICC) for issuing an international warrant for the arrest of Sudanese President, Omar Al Bashir, describing the decision as wrongly timed

**UNAMID Peacekeeper Killed in South Darfur:** Today, at about 13:20 hours, six UNAMID Peacekeepers were ambushed by approximately eight unknown gunmen, who opened fire on them, while they were returning to their base in Nyala, South Darfur after conducting an escort patrol.

**Obama Names Special Envoy:** Ending the suffering and the humanitarian crisis in the Darfur region of Sudan is a significant U.S. foreign policy goal, says President Obama. And to further that objective, Obama has named a new special envoy for Sudan.

**map of sudan:** map of sudan and it's major cities.focus on darfur

## **Eritrea**

**President Isaias Holds Talks With Delegation from Libyan Revolutionary Committees Movement:** Asmara — President Isaias Afwerki today received and held talks with a delegation from the Libyan Revolutionary Committees Movement headed by Dr. Romodan Abdelaziz, Coordinator of Public Relations in the Movement.

## **Kenya**

**Church council makes new election demand:** Nairobi — The National Council of Churches of Kenya is calling for fresh elections in the east African country due to what it charges is a crisis of leadership and bad governance under President Mwai Kibaki and Prime Minister Raila Odinga.

## **East africa**

**United States Extends Friendly Hand to Region:** Washington, DC — The U.S. Navy, the U.S. Coast Guard and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which have extended a helping hand to a number of West African countries in the past few years, are now reaching out to East Africa, too.

**Uganda Opposes Tanzania, Kenya on Lake Victoria:** Kampala — Attempts by Kenya and Tanzania to close Lake Victoria to commercial fishing have previously been blocked by Uganda

### **Uganda**

**Citizens Held Hostage In Sudan:** Kampala — SOLDIERS of Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) protesting non-payment of their salaries have taken hostage, several Ugandan traders and vehicles destined for Kampala from Juba along the Nimule-Bibia road.

**Abducted Children Need Special Care:** The two decades of war in northern Uganda have left many scars among the people of this region. However, there is a special category of people that was most vulnerable and yet bore the brunt of the insurgency children.

### ***Detailed report***

Somalia: Rwanda President Pledges to Assist New Leader

### **17 March 2009: garowe online**

Rwandan President Paul Kagame warmly received Somalia's new leader, President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed, where the two leaders discussed bilateral cooperation, Radio Garowe reports.

Rwanda's leader pledged to assist President Sheikh Sharif's new government in the areas of security and development, in two-day talks held in Kigali, the Rwandan capital. Joint meetings between Rwandan and Somali government officials focused on security cooperation, especially with regard to Rwanda's previous promises to train Somali security forces. Mohamed Ali "America," the Somali ambassador to Kenya who is part of President Sheikh Sharif's delegation, told reporters that Somali and Rwandan ministers for foreign affairs and defense held talks to discuss areas of cooperation and mutual interest. Somali President Sheikh Sharif visited a number of sites while in Rwanda, including the memorial compound for the 1994 victims of the Rwandan Genocide.

Since his election in January, the Somali leader has visited a number of countries in East Africa, including Ethiopia, Kenya, Burundi and Uganda, to shore up regional support for his nascent government.

Somalia: Somaliland Leader Vows to Step down 'Only to Elected President'

**18 march 2009: garowe online**

The leader of Somalia's separatist republic of Somaliland has rejected opposition demands and has vowed to step down 'only to an elected president,' Radio Garowe reports.

Mr. Dahir Riyale, the president of Somaliland, returned Tuesday from a foreign trip with stopovers in London, Addis Ababa and Djibouti. In Djibouti, Mr. Riyale met with Djiboutian President Ismail Omar Guelleh where the two leaders discussed bilateral relations. Confidential sources in Hargeisa, the capital of Somaliland, told Somali news agency Garowe Online that President Riyale requested the financial backing of the Djiboutian leader in the upcoming election, which was postponed from March 29 to May 31 by Somaliland's election commission. Mr. Riyale's desire for hard currency to finance his re-election campaign comes at a time the opposition leader, Mr. Ahmed Mohamed Silanyo, has demanded that Somaliland's two houses of parliament vote to establish a caretaker government to lead the region until May 31. But President Riyale rejected the opposition's demand, telling a Hargeisa press conference that he will leave office "only to an elected president." He expressed confidence in direct talks with the UK Foreign Office Minister while in London, saying that it is "the first meeting" with such a high-profile official in the UK.

Somaliland's presidential election, which was originally slated for May 2008, has been postponed two times due to technical issues involving the voter-registration process.

Located in northwest Somalia, Somaliland unilaterally declared in 1991 but has not been recognized internationally.

Somalia: Somalis Demonstrate in Support of Restoring Peace

**19 march 2009: shabelle media network**

Mogadishu — Hundreds of Somali people most of them were the students of Banadir region have demonstrated in Hodan district in the Somali capital Mogadishu on Thursday for supporting to restore the peace and stability in the capital.

The demonstration was largely organized by the Somali Students Union in Banadir region and Women development Organization and attended many people who walked on the streets near Taribunka area and carrying boards written slogans for restoring peace and reopening the closed streets in the capital. Many people including teachers, women and students took part the demonstration and talked more about the importance of peace for Somali people demanding to reopen the streets in the capital to open the schools of the students. The chairman of the Women Development Organization Halimo Sheik

Hussein was also one of those who organized the demonstration and lastly addressed the people in Taribunka square saying that many students missed their education for reasons of fighting and closed streets and demanded from all sides of Somalis to reopen the streets to restart the education of the students.

Somalia: African Union Peacekeeper Wounded in Blast

**18 March 2009: garowe online**

At least one African Union peacekeeper (AMISOM) was wounded in a Wednesday bomb explosion in Somalia's capital Mogadishu, Radio Garowe reports.

AMISOM peacekeepers on a mine-sweeping mission along the road leading to Aden Adde International Airport were targeted in an explosion, witnesses said. At least four people, including one AMISOM soldier and a Somali policeman, were wounded in the blast with unconfirmed reports saying two civilians were wounded in the subsequent gunfire. Gen. Francis Okello, the AMISOM commander in Mogadishu, confirmed the attack and stated that the wounded soldier was receiving medical treatment. No group has claimed responsibility for the bombing, but Al Shabaab insurgents have repeatedly targeted AMISOM peacekeepers and demanded their immediate withdrawal. The 4,000-strong AMISOM peacekeeping force, composed of soldiers from Uganda and Burundi, has come under growing scrutiny since the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from Somalia in January after an unpopular two-year military intervention. Last month, Al Shabaab claimed responsibility for twin suicide bombings that killed at least 11 AMISOM soldiers from the Burundian contingent.

Two Islamist factions, Al Shabaab and Hizbul Islam, have vowed to continue the bloody insurgency until all foreign troops leave Somali soil.

Somalia: 17 People Killed in Fighting

**18 March 2009: garowe online**

At least 17 people were killed in Wednesday clashes in southwestern Somalia between pro-government militias and Islamist insurgents, Radio Garowe reports.

The fighting erupted at 6am local time in Bakool region, along the Somali-Ethiopian border, after clan militias who are reportedly loyal to Somalia's new government attacked Al Shabaab guerrillas in Rabdhure district. The battle continued for four hours, as both sides used machineguns and armed trucks to gain the upper hand. Al Shabaab guerrillas burned armed trucks from the other side, while capturing one truck from the fleeing clan militia, local sources reported. Sheikh Hassan Mohamed "Abu Ayman," the Al Shabaab head in Bay and Bakool regions, confirmed that their forces were attacked and admitted that some of their fighters died in the subsequent battle. Bay region's deputy governor,

Mr. Shine Mo'allim Nurrow, confirmed to reporters that one of the pro-government militia's armed trucks was burned. He was speaking from El Barde district, after the clan militias retreated." The fighting was very heavy and I counted 17 dead bodies," a Rabdhure resident told local media, adding that Al Shabaab fighters remained in control of the area. The Somali Islamist group, Al Shabaab, controls many regions in the country, including the town of Baidoa, capital of Bay region. Baidoa-based government officials and allied clan militias fled to neighboring Bakool in January, after Al Shabaab seized Baidoa hours following the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from the town that once served as Somalia's seat of parliament.

The pro-government clan militias have been regrouping in parts of Bakool region in recent weeks, although Al Shabaab fighters recently advanced into many Bakool towns.

Somalia: Banadir Administration Condemns WFP

### **19 March 2009: shabelle media network**

Somalia — The deputy governor of Banadir administration has condemned World Food Programme (WFP) on Thursday.

Abdifitah Ibeahim Shaweye, Mogadishu deputy mayor said that WFP does not contribute the aid food properly. He said that the aid food intended to the poor people does not reach them adding that the food is stored in department stores in Mogadishu and then sold in some Mogadishu markets. The statement from the deputy mayor comes as the governor of Banadir region Mohamed Osman Ali better known as Dhagahtur said he met World Food Programme officials in Nairobi, the Kenyan capital and talked about how to help the poor people that live in Mogadishu and its outskirts.

Somalia: President Speaks With His Yemeni Counterpart

### **20 March 2009: shabelle media network**

Mogadishu — Somalia's president Sheik Sharif Sheik Ahmed spoke to the phone with the president of Yemen Ali Abdullah Saleh on Thursday, Saba News Agency reported on Friday.

The two leaders talked about the security situation of Somalia and how it can be solved. President Sheik Sharif thanked his counterpart for the efforts of taking part the peace process in Somalia. President Saleh said he supported the unity of Somalia and restoring peace and order in the country.

Somalia: Country on Path to Consolidating Stability - Top UN Envoy

### **20 March 2009: gabiley news**



Somalia, long dogged by conflict, is "back from the brink" following a peace pact, the top United Nations envoy to the Horn of Africa nation told the Security Council today, calling for a three-pronged approach targeting governance, security and development to ensure stability.

Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, the Secretary-General's Special Representative, pinned most of the blame for the collapse of Somalia, which has been beset by factional strife since the overthrow of Siad Barre in 1991, on the country's elite. But he stressed the need for both Somalis and the international community to join forces to help Somalia reach the end of its "long march to normalcy," stressing the importance of curbing volatility to allow wide-scale recovery and rehabilitation efforts to succeed. The envoy called for a "strategy with achievable goals," urging the following targets over the next 100 days: employment, infrastructure renovation and humanitarian assistance. Extremists, many of whom are young, "are generally far more interested in their share of revenues than in ideology," he told the Council in an open meeting. The international community must provide aid, which should be effectively and quickly disbursed, by providing immediate support to the Government, helping the African Union (AU) peacekeeping force known as AMISOM, ensuring the unimpeded delivery of relief, addressing impunity and tackling piracy off the Somali coast, Mr. Ould-Abdallah said. But he noted that Somalis must also draw upon their own resources - their coastline is Africa's longest, with rich fish resources and hydrocarbon deposits, as well as an entrepreneurial business community - to pull itself out of chaos. Last year's UN-facilitated Djibouti Agreement between the Transitional Federal Government and the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia, in which the two agreed to end their conflict, has helped to bring Somalia "back from the brink," the Special Representative said. I would argue that with the Djibouti Agreement, the country has passed the crossroads," he said. "It is on a one-way street - going forward."

Last month saw the formation of the Government of National Unity, as well as its return to the violence-plagued capital, Mogadishu.

"Today, state legitimacy is established and the legality of the new institutions is recognized regionally, internationally and indeed by the vast majority of Somalis," Mr. Ould-Abdallah said.

Somalia: Government Officials Say They Will Attack Bay and Bakol Regions

20 March 2009: shabelle media network

El Barde — the government officials in El Barde have threatened that they will attack recapture towns in Bay and Bakol regions from the Islamist insurgents of al-Shabab, witnesses told Shabelle radio on Friday.

Aden Mohamed Nor known as ( Saransor), a government member in El Barde told Shabelle radio that they are ready to attack Rabdhure, Wajid and Hudur towns in the

regions where the Islamic organization of al-Shabab controls. Mr. Saransor said that they prepared more militias from Bay, Bakol and Lower Shabelle region and added that they are ready to launch attacks against the Islamist insurgent forces of al-Shabab in the regions. Asked about whether Ethiopian troops supporting them, he denied saying more on that and also yesterday's meeting with the Ethiopian troops in El Barde in Bakol region. The statement of the government officials in El Barde comes as the traditional elders and scholars of Bay and Bakol regions called for the warring sides earlier to halt fighting as soon as possible to remain the displacing people in their houses.

### **Somalia: Topple leader- Osama Bin Laden**

19 march 2009: smc

Osama bin Laden, the leader of al-Qaeda, has called on the people of Somalia to overthrow Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, their president.

Bin Laden made his comments in an audio recording that was posted on a website on Thursday. He described Sheikh Ahmed as a person who disowns Islam. As-Sahab, al-Qaeda's media company, released the tape entitled *Fight on, champions of Somalia*, in which Bin Laden said:

"He [Sheikh Ahmed] must be dethroned and fought."

Bin Laden compared Sheikh Ahmed to Hamid Karzai, the Afghan president, Burhanuddin Rabbani, a former Afghan president, and Ahmed Shah Massoud, a prominent commander who fought during a 10-year war against Soviet occupation in Afghanistan." These sorts of presidents are the surrogates of our enemies and their authority is null and void," the Bin Laden said. Bin Laden also called on Muslims to help Somalis topple the "apostate government".

It is his second message in less than a week.

The previous message accused Arab leaders of being "complicit" with Israel and the West against Muslims and urged them to liberate the Palestinian territories. At least 60 messages have been broadcast by Bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri, his second-in-command, and their allies since the attacks on the US on September 11, 2001.

The al-Qaeda leader has a \$23 million US bounty on his head.

Sudan: No Mercy for Al Bashir

**17 March 2009**

African Foreign Ministers, who attended the NORDIC-Africa summit in Copenhagen, are reported to have condemned the International Criminal Court (ICC) for issuing an international warrant for the arrest of Sudanese President, Omar Al Bashir, describing the decision as wrongly timed.

According to a report filed by the GNA it was the view of the Ministers that the ICC should have considered the concerns of the African Union (AU) that the warrant should be suspended, to allow the continuation of the peace processes in Sudan. The Chronicle finds the attitude of the Foreign Ministers and the African Union (AU) as a mark of hypocrisy. Where were these same Ministers and the AU when Charles Taylor was arrested and sent to The Hague to face justice over his alleged role in the Liberia and Sierra Leone conflict that killed thousands of innocent people? Clearly, there is no way Africa would develop if our leaders continue to support such naked robbery and murder by some of their colleagues. The AU and African Foreign Ministers have witnessed the atrocities of Al Bashir, yet they have failed to bring him to book, or use mediation as they are now claiming, to stop the killings and human right abuses going in the Darfur region. If the world hailed the arrest and trial of the late Serbian President, Slobodan Milosevic, for his role in the killings that went on in his country, why should leaders in Africa behave as if the international warrant that has been issued for the arrest of Al Bashir has never happened before?

If they are convinced that Al Bashir has not committed any crime, they should persuade the man to surrender himself to the court to defend his case. We do not think the ICC can deliberately put him behind bars if they do not have any incriminating evidence against him. The Chronicle is calling on civil right organizations on the African continent to rise up against the undue support being offered to Al Bashir by our African leaders, because it has the potential to encourage other Presidents on the continent to abuse power in order to commit heinous crimes and go away with it. Zimbabwean and The Gambian Presidents, Robert Mugabe and Yahaya Jammeh have for something now been using all foul means to suppress opposition in their respective countries, which the AU is aware of, yet they have not made any single statement on it, but if the international community decides to crack the whip, the same African leaders will come out to support their colleagues. The Chronicle is, therefore, not surprised with the latest attempts to shield Al Bashir. We however, urge that the ICC should not relent on its efforts to arrest the Sudanese President, if the court can prove that the evidence at their disposal is incriminatory enough.

Sudan: UNAMID Peacekeeper Killed in South Darfur

### **17 March 2009: el-fasher**

Today, at about 13:20 hours, six UNAMID Peacekeepers were ambushed by approximately eight unknown gunmen, who opened fire on them, while they were returning to their base in Nyala, South Darfur after conducting an escort patrol.

The Peacekeepers returned fire in self-defense and one peacekeeper was injured during the ensuing firefight. The wounded soldier was immediately taken for medical treatment at the Mission's hospital in Nyala and later died while being evacuated by helicopter to El Fasher for further medical treatment. UNAMID strongly condemns these cowardly acts of violence against its Peacekeepers, and calls on all parties, including the Government of Sudan, to ensure the safety of UN personnel in the region. "These ongoing attacks against UNAMID Peacekeepers will not dissuade us from pursuing our Mandate in Darfur," said the Joint Special Representative, Mr. Rodolphe Adada. "I strongly condemn these unprovoked attacks against Peacekeepers who are here to help the people of Darfur," he added. This is the second time this month that UNAMID Peacekeepers have been ambushed by unknown armed men while conducting their duties in Darfur. Since the deployment of UNAMID in Darfur at the beginning of 2008, 14 peacekeepers (11 military personnel and 3 police officers) have died as a result of hostile actions.

Sudan: Obama Names Special Envoy

### **18 March 2009: Merle David Kellerhals Jr.**

Ending the suffering and the humanitarian crisis in the Darfur region of Sudan is a significant U.S. foreign policy goal, says President Obama. And to further that objective, Obama has named a new special envoy for Sudan.

The president selected retired Air Force Major General Scott Gration as U.S. special envoy for Sudan March 18. Gration, a foreign policy adviser to the president, has deep experience in the region. He speaks Swahili and grew up in Africa as the son of missionaries. Gration traveled with Obama in 2006 when the president, then a U.S. senator, visited Africa, including stops to visit Darfur refugees in Chad, which borders Sudan. "General Gration's personal and professional background and his service to the country as both a military leader and a humanitarian, give him the insights and experience necessary for this assignment," Obama said in a White House announcement. "Sudan is a priority for this administration, particularly at a time when it cries out for peace and for justice. The worsening humanitarian crisis there makes our task all the more urgent," the president said. The announcement by the White House comes as the Obama administration continues to formulate a new strategy for Sudan and the Darfur crisis. U.S. Senators Russ Feingold, a Democrat from Wisconsin, and Johnny Isakson, a Republican from Georgia, who is ranking members of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on African Affairs, praised the appointment of Gration.

"His knowledge of Africa and his experience there, coupled with his distinguished military career, make him well-equipped to help craft a strong, reinvigorated policy toward Sudan," they said in a joint statement. The senators said the appointment comes at a crucial time as the Darfur crisis worsens.

### **INTERNATIONAL COURT CHARGES SUDANESE PRESIDENT**

On March 4, the International Criminal Court in The Hague, Netherlands, indicted Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir on two counts of war crimes and five counts of crimes against humanity for his government's alleged targeting of civilians during its 2003--2008 campaign against rebel groups in Sudan's western Darfur region. Bashir "is suspected of being criminally responsible," reads the ICC indictment, "for intentionally directing attacks against an important part of the civilian population of Darfur, Sudan, murdering, raping, torturing, and forcibly transferring large numbers of civilians and pillaging their property." At least 300,000 people have been killed in the conflict and 2.7 million others have been driven from their homes, according to the United Nations.

After the indictment, Bashir ordered 13 nongovernmental humanitarian assistance groups, including Doctors without Borders, CARE, Oxfam Great Britain and Save the Children, expelled, and saying they had spied against him and his regime for the international court. The nongovernmental organizations have used foreign assistance to provide food, shelter and protection from the fighting between rebel forces and government-backed forces for nearly 4.7 million people.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said March 17 that Bashir will be held responsible for any deaths that result from his order to expel nongovernmental organizations from the country." This is a horrendous situation that is going to cause untold misery and suffering for the people of Darfur, particularly those in refugee camps," Clinton said. "The real question is what kind of pressure can be brought to bear on President Bashir and the government in Khartoum to understand that they will be held responsible for every single death that occurs in those camps." Total U.S. humanitarian assistance to Darfur and eastern Chad since October 2007, the beginning of fiscal year 2008, is \$936.43 million, the State Department said March 18. "We take this very seriously," Clinton said. "We are looking for the most effective ways to convince and demonstrate to the government of Sudan that they have now assumed an even greater sense of responsibility and infamy in the eyes of the world by turning their backs on these refugees, whom they created in the first place."

### **INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING FORCE**

Obama said the United States fully supports the full, unobstructed deployment of the joint African Union-United Nations peacekeeping force and the negotiation of a political solution to end the fighting. The government of Sudan's disastrous decision to expel humanitarian relief organizations leaves a void that will be filled by deprivation and despair and they will be held accountable for the lives lost," Obama said.

Eritrea: President Isaias Holds Talks With Delegation from Libyan Revolutionary Committees Movement

**19 March 2009: shabait**

Asmara — President Isaias Afwerki today received and held talks with a delegation from the Libyan Revolutionary Committees Movement headed by Dr. Romodan Abdelaziz, Coordinator of Public Relations in the Movement.

In the meeting at the Office of the President, the two sides conducted discussion on joint political ideology programs and enhancing Eritrean-Libyan relations, as well as regional issues of mutual interest to both countries. The delegation briefed President Isaias regarding the details in which the PFDJ and the Libyan Revolutionary Committees Movement agreed in principle to hold a major international conference in Asmara on the question of democracy in Africa.

**Kenya: Church Council Makes 'New Elections' Demand**

**19 March 2009: Fredrick Nzwili**

Nairobi — The National Council of Churches of Kenya is calling for fresh elections in the east African country due to what it charges is a crisis of leadership and bad governance under President Mwai Kibaki and Prime Minister Raila Odinga.

"The impression and expression of most Kenyans is that they have a moribund president and an ineffective prime minister," said the council's general secretary, the Rev. Peter Karanja, in Limeru near Nairobi on 18 March. "We are convinced Kenyans should call for new elections now to replace the current parliament." Kibaki, a Roman Catholic, and Odinga, an Anglican, agreed on a coalition government a year ago, after mediation by former U.N. secretary-general Kofi Annan following weeks of violence that came after disputed elections at the end of 2007. About 1500 people lost their lives in the unrest and another 300000 were driven from their homes. Karanja said the coalition government is not working. "Ministers spend their time quarrelling about peripheral issues, rather than undertaking their duties," he said. He recommended downsizing the cabinet, taxing all holders of constitutional offices, and severe punishment for government officers who misuse public resources. At the same time, the NCCCK has launched a campaign to get one million signatures on a petition to call on Annan to make public the names on a list of suspected election violence ringleaders. The former U.N. secretary-general was given the list by a commission of inquiry into the unrest. The church council also wants the alleged perpetrators to face prosecution at the International Criminal Court in The Hague. "Had Kenyans had faith in the judiciary, the post-election violence would never have happened," said Karanja. "However, the judiciary continues to display a lethargy that is making Kenyans seek justice elsewhere. The call for elections has been strongly contested by some politicians." Religious leaders have no business calling for elections as

the matter is guided by the constitution," said the speaker of Kenya's parliament, Kenneth Marende.

Richard Onyonka, an assistant minister for foreign affairs, said, "If they say, 'Let's hold elections now', does that mean they want the president to abdicate from the constitution. Why are they sounding so naïve?"

East Africa: United States Extends Friendly Hand to Region

### **20 March 2009: Jacquelyn S. Porth**

Washington, DC — The U.S. Navy, the U.S. Coast Guard and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which have extended a helping hand to a number of West African countries in the past few years, are now reaching out to East Africa, too.

The broad program is known as the Africa Partnership Station (APS). It started in 2007 as an international security effort offering training and other forms of collaboration to improve maritime safety and security off the West African coast. (See "Naval Engagement in Africa Offers Health Dividends.")

The United States launched APS to help African nations achieve stability and economic prosperity through civilian-military maritime mentoring as well as military-to-military training. Seeing the benefits of the program, African officials on the other side of the continent asked for similar help. This paved the way for the first APS visit to Mozambique, Tanzania and Kenya this year by the USS Robert G. Bradley. The naval vessel carried a team of U.S., European, South American and African personnel that coached personnel in three host countries on ways to combat piracy; drug, weapons, and human trafficking; and fish poaching. Illegal fishing is a significant problem in East Africa. The region loses an estimated \$310 million every year because it lacks the maritime infrastructure to combat the problem. That is where this kind of good neighbor initiative can make a difference. Its training focuses on information sharing that will give African maritime forces a complete image of what is happening in nearby waters through a shared communication network. Hands-on training is offered to help develop a professional maritime corps that will be ready to respond to a host of potential security challenges. U.S. Navy Captain Nicholas Holman returned recently from several weeks leading the crew of the Bradley during training, humanitarian assistance and partnership-building ventures. He said the goal of the effort is to improve ocean monitoring activities so that they will be on par with airspace monitoring efforts. Holman told the Defense Bloggers Roundtable March 11 that this is important because some of the regional navies and coast guards do not have the capability "to do much about anything that's going on in their waters." Most of the training occurred onboard, but in some cases simulated boarding of ships was conducted using small boats in the host countries. Training included instruction in navigation and handling emergencies at sea. During the Bradley's

visit to Mozambique, instructors worked with indigenous forces on maritime search-and-seizure techniques. "This is a new adventure on the East Coast [of Africa]," Holman said.

### **MARITIME SAFETY IS KEY TO SUCCESS**

Wherever they went, training instructors hammered home the need for maritime safety. Two African sailors died at sea in 2008 in an accident involving excessive speed. Better ship handling and crew safety are themes that Navy captains emphasize whenever they have the ear of a student audience. East African navies are also interested in acquiring more vessels. Holman said the State Department is looking at ways to provide additional Archangel Patrol boats. He said Kenya is interested in resuming U.S. naval visits to its Indian Ocean port, Mombassa. Community outreach is another important aspect of the APS initiative. When a ship docks at a port, crew members disembark and head to local orphanages, schools and hospitals where they repair and repaint. The Navy pitches in and buys the paint and sailors provide the labor. This is how it worked when the sailors helped paint the Kidz Care orphanage in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Holman said his sailors enjoy these opportunities to interact and leave behind a lasting touch. Community outreach also entails the delivery of donated supplies through the Navy's Project Handclasp. Collected toys and personal hygiene products were carried in the Bradley's hold and distributed during shore visits.

East Africa: Uganda Opposes Tanzania, Kenya on Lake Victoria

### **15 March 2009: Arthur Oyako**

Kampala — Attempts by Kenya and Tanzania to close Lake Victoria to commercial fishing have previously been blocked by Uganda.

Now, as a compromise measure, Uganda's Agriculture ministry has drafted an amendment to the Fish Act that will allow the lake to be tightly monitored to allow fish to regenerate. Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization, (LVFO), the body charged with the monitoring of fish resources in the lake has on a number of occasions suggested that the lake be closed to commercial fishing but Uganda has opposed such suggestions. Uganda's state minister for fisheries, Fred Mukisa said the Uganda government had preferred to look at all the possible alternatives." While we were in Dar es Salaam for the LVFO meeting the issue of closing Lake Victoria to fishing because of the dwindling fish resources came up," Mukisa said. The measures have not met the kind of welcome they had expected because of the lack of redress to people whose lives depend on the lake."That is the reason we are looking at alternative measures to save the fish, measures like the amended Fish Act," Mukisa said. The amended Fish Act that has already gone through a series of stages is now due for final presentation to cabinet before it can be sanctioned to Parliament for deliberations. The amended Fish Act is a replacement to the 1967 Fish Act. Stakeholders in the fish sector, however, are skeptical of the proposed act



because it gives excessive powers to the minister in charge of fisheries, powers like licensing of fishermen and vessels that have previously been a preserve of local governments. Licensing will now be under the Department of Fisheries Resources (DFR). Other preserves that are going to fall under the DFR are supervision of the Beach Management Units (BMUs), creation of closed areas for breeding purposes, overseeing the activities of people involved in aquaculture and introduction of new taxation policies on the lake as a means of generating revenue that will remain at the DFR. Mukisa said it was necessary to have the money stay within the department because of financial problems that had in the past affected the supervisory roles of BMUs by DFR and other stakeholders." The bill has major changes. We are seeking to retain the proceeds from licensing so that we can plough back that money into the sector especially for research and supervision purposes," Mukisa said. Some of the measures that the amended fish act is aiming to address are the closure of some sections of the lake to facilitate fish repopulation. The first time the amended Fish Act was tabled before parliament, the Uganda Fish Exporters and Processors Association, (UFEPA), the body that governs fish exporters and processors in Uganda was not happy with some of the amendments in the bill but kept on declining to comment. On a number of occasions UFEPA executive director, Musoke Katiiti, has said that UFEPA has not seen the draft bill and would comment when parliament was done with the bill.

The amended act proposes to empower the minister to make decisions in 'emergency situations' such as suspending fishing in breeding areas and over-fished waters where it is thought that certain species need to be allowed time to regenerate. The amendment also seeks to recall powers that were formerly delegated to local governments to license fishermen. It is also expected that licenses will be readjusted to make it an obligation for fish factories to dedicate part of their capital to fish farming, as one of the ways to ensure a sustainable supply of fish and to safeguard employment in the sector. On top of the current licensing procedures provided for by the 1967 Fish Act, the ministry through the amendment of the Act will begin licensing containerized boats, fish trucks, fish exporters and registering boats and issuing registration plates, an act that has been outside the ministry's domain. The amendment also proposes a change in the procedure of choosing the leadership of the crucial Beach Management Units (BMUs) from having leaders previously nominated and elected by the fishing community, to having the nominations done by the ministry, with the fishing community electing from among the fronted nominees." From 2006, export volumes have been going down. Despite rising fish prices in the world market, export earnings dropped from \$145 million in 2005 to \$95 million in 2008." Commissioner for Fisheries in the Ministry Dr. Wilson Mwanja said.

"A drop of \$50 million is not small change for a country like Uganda. The situation would have been worse if fish prices had not appreciated," Mwanja added.

## Uganda: Citizens Held Hostage In Sudan

20 March 2009

Kampala — SOLDIERS of Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) protesting non-payment of their salaries have taken hostage, several Ugandan traders and vehicles destined for Kampala from Juba along the Nimule-Bibia road.

The mutinying SPLA soldiers are demanding salary arrears for the last seven months. The Sudan Tribune on Friday quoted officials who said a section of SPLA war victims staged similar demonstrations on Wednesday morning in Yei, Kaya and Moyo, paralyzing business there. Other border points paralysed by the mutineers include Kajo-Keji which links Oraba and Moyo to Southern Sudan. The media reported that residents in the area have stayed indoors to avoid likely confrontation in case of interference with the angry veterans. Nimule is the gateway to Uganda in Eastern Equatoria State of Sudan. A source who spoke to Saturday Vision on phone from Yei said South Sudan President Salva Kiir flew in and addressed the disgruntled soldiers in the stadium. While Kiir was in Yei, all shops and offices were closed. No vehicle was allowed to travel towards Kaya that connects to Ugandan border post of Oraba. The airstrip was also closed to all flights. Ali Mukiibi, a Ugandan trader who had delivered groceries to Juba and was returning to Kampala said, "The soldiers have roughed up some people and robbed them of their property." Mukiibi said during the hostage taking, the mutineers shouted that they were not only demanding payment from the government of Southern Sudan; but also wanted reparations from Uganda. They argue that Southern Sudan incurred damages as Ugandan soldiers fought Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army there. Mukiibi who said the standoff began on Wednesday told Saturday Vision that there are over 1,000 vehicles including buses, trucks trailers, and saloon cars, stranded along the route. "These people have said we are the negotiating tool and we will not be released until their demands are met. We've had no food or water for three days," Mukiibi said. Ali Ssebi, a Ugandan truck driver from Nakasongola, said a senior SPLA officer was on Friday morning chased away from the town where he attempted to address the mutineers. "Our cars have nothing to do with their salaries; but the soldiers say that by burning some of our vehicles, it will affect revenue collection for the Government and compel the top officials to act," Ssebi said. Julius Musoke, a banana trader who had delivered matooke (green bananas) to Juba said, "I thought we could appease these soldiers with some money; but they are not accepting anything. They have guns. Some of the drivers are sick."

An official at the Kampala GOSS liaison office in a telephone interview said, "I have received reports that the road is blocked by former SPLA combatants asking for higher pay. I'm not aware of harassment of Ugandan traders. I will try to find out." Still open are the access routes through Afogi and Kajo-Keji. The in-charge on the Sudan side, Peter Todo and his Ugandan counterpart Moses Muhairwe said motorists plying from Koboko in Uganda, can access Sudan only through these border points. Afogi and Kajo-Keji link Moyo district to the Central Equatorial Province of Sudan.

## Uganda: Abducted Children Need Special Care

18 march 2009:weekly observer

The two decades of war in northern Uganda have left many scars among the people of this region. However, there is a special category of people that was most vulnerable and yet bore the brunt of the insurgency children.

Thousands were abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and turned into involuntary fighters, sex slaves or labourers. Others were forced into Internally Displaced People's camps where life has been miserable. Some of those abducted were lucky to be rescued or to escape from the guerrillas. Not surprisingly, the returnees have been welcomed with excitement. However, when the cameras stop flashing at these boys and girls, they are normally left alone and frightened. In most cases they are unable to return to school and have no income generating activities to earn a living. They could even be forced back into rebellion or criminality because of such challenges. There seems to be no elaborate plan by the government to rehabilitate such children. Many of them have been left to their own devices or the few NGOs operating in northern Uganda. But these NGOs are overwhelmed by the numbers of returnees in dire need of help. That is why we welcome the suggestion made by President Museveni while receiving the last Aboke girl who returned from rebel captivity last week. He said that his government would find a way to help such returnees. Indeed such help is long overdue. When the NRA/M captured power in 1986, it established Kadogo schools for children that had been caught up in the war. The aim of these schools was to rehabilitate the child soldiers and arm them with an education to ensure a brighter future for them. Indeed many of these child soldiers studied and became professionals both in the army and outside.

Similar schools should be established for the former abductees of northern Uganda, and perhaps extended to children raised in Internally Displaced People's camps (IDPs) who have not had a normal childhood because of this conflict. Taking back these children to school won't only help them discover their potential, but it is also a gesture of goodwill on the part of government, given the mistrust between the NRM and many people in northern Uganda.